

## Park and Recreation – Development Projects

This section provides more detailed grant information and guidance for development projects involving the rehabilitation and development of public parks, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, greenways and river conservation projects.

### Ready-To-Go Checklist

This Checklist is to be used by the applicant to ensure the Development Project is “Ready-To-Go”. The items below need to be addressed, included and/or uploaded in the application. It will be used by DCNR in the grant application evaluation process. Projects that are Ready-To-Go will be given priority Bureau consideration for grant award recommendation. If you have questions regarding this Checklist, please contact the [DCNR Regional Advisor](#) assigned to the region in which your project is located.

**\* Ready-to-Go Status is worth 15 points. It is essential to provide high quality, well-defined and/or detailed information for these items.**

Yes	Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contacted Regional Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible Project
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant owns the project site or controls through a lease (minimum 25 years)
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Project site is open to the public
	<input type="checkbox"/> Property has no known environmental hazards
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Match secured and Letters of Match Commitment stating amount and source uploaded
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed list of eligible cash match and non-cash match included
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Site Development Drawing(s) completed by a licensed design professional and consistent with the <a href="#">DCNR Park Site Development Drawing (SDD) Checklist</a> uploaded
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Realistic, accurate, and detailed cost estimate/budget outlining all cash costs, non-cash value, and/or land donation value uploaded
*	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear, concise, and detailed scope of work included
	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">PA Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Receipt</a> uploaded
	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate project site location map(s) uploaded
	<input type="checkbox"/> County/Municipal notification letter(s) uploaded
	<input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed the <a href="#">Sample Development Project Timeline</a> and agree that the project can be completed within 4 years from date of grant award.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of lease or easement uploaded (if applicable)
	<input type="checkbox"/> If Land Donation is part of the match: Upload a Full Appraisal Report by a state certified <b>General</b> Real Estate Appraiser for the land defined in the project scope and any donated parcels. Appraisal to be ordered by and prepared for the applicant. Review the <a href="#">DCNR Requirements for Property Appraisals</a> for more information.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Properly completed Resolution Page uploaded

## General Information and Funding Conditions

1. All facilities/sites renovated or developed with DCNR funding must serve a public purpose and help advance [DCNR goals](#) and [priorities](#). Applicants are encouraged to re-invest in existing park and recreation facilities.
2. All facilities/sites must be open for use by the public.
3. More than one development application per funding period may be submitted. However, we strongly encourage applicants to prioritize multiple applications and discuss with their BRC Regional Advisor prior to submission.
4. An application for development and/or rehabilitation is limited to a single park/recreation facility. Funding will not be provided for development and/or rehabilitation of multiple parks/recreation facilities under a single grant application.
5. Applicants may not seek funding for the same site, in the same funding cycle, under both Small Community Development and Community Park Rehabilitation and Development project types. Municipal applicants that meet the population requirements under the Small Community Program are not required to apply under this project type. The decision to apply under the Small Community Program should be based on project scope of work and the total project cost.
6. Match is required for all projects and is usually equal to the grant funds awarded (\$1 for \$1 match requirement). The local match may be eligible cash, non-cash or a land donation value.
7. If a project is selected for funding, DCNR will review the proposed cash and non-cash values and work items to determine eligibility. Adjustments to the proposed cash and non-cash values outlined in the application may be required.
8. Cash contributions being provided by other organizations to be used as a portion of the required local match should be transferred to the applicant/grantee to expend. If an outside organization/agency wishes to expend funds on behalf of the applicant/grantee, an agreement defining roles and responsibilities must be executed by all parties. Funds may include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, County Gaming funds, County Redevelopment Authority funds, etc. Draft Agreements should be provided to DCNR for review and approval prior to execution.
9. For land donations, the market value of the donated land, as determined by a state certified General Real Estate Appraiser, may be used as all or part of the required local match for the development project.
  - a. Land accepted for donation must be acquired during the grant agreement period unless the applicant has been granted a Waiver for Retroactivity by DCNR to acquire the land prior to the grant agreement beginning date.
  - b. The value of the donated land will only be considered as match for the development of the donated land and/or adjoining park.
  - c. Lands acquired by mandatory dedication, by court order, or by other state/federal agencies may not be used as local match.
  - d. Applicants must provide an appraisal from a state certified General Real Estate Appraiser.
  - e. If selected for funding, a second appraisal may be required for DCNR to determine and approve the actual land donation value.

- f. Appraisal and other costs related to a land donation are not eligible for grant reimbursement on development projects.
  - g. Land accepted for donation must provide both public value and public use.
- 10. Grant applications from non-municipal applicants must include evidence that the municipality(ies) and county where the facility/site is being renovated or developed have had the opportunity to comment on the project proposal. As a general policy, DCNR will not approve grant funding where local elected officials have expressed opposition to the proposed project.
- 11. Property that is not owned in fee simple must be controlled through a permanent easement or long-term lease agreement (minimum 25 years) with terms and provisions acceptable to DCNR. If the property is currently leased, a copy of the lease(s) must be included with the grant application. If the property will be leased, the applicant should discuss the terms of the lease with the DCNR Regional Advisor. A draft lease should be included with the grant application for review and approval by DCNR.
- 12. All facilities developed or rehabilitated with grant assistance must comply with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards). This includes accessible parking areas and accessible routes linking the parking area to all elements of the project scope of work. Additional information about the 2010 Standards is available on the [U.S. Department of Justice website](#). Technical assistance can be provided by BRC or the [United States Access Board](#).
- 13. All facilities renovated or developed with DCNR funding must comply with the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act (Act 45 of 1999, as amended) (35 P.S. Sections 7210.101 et seq.), as implemented by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Regulations, 34 Pa. Code Chapters 401-405.
- 14. A qualified design professional (architect, landscape architect or engineer licensed to practice in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania) is required to prepare drawings and/or specifications used for the layout and construction of any public facility. Final drawings and specifications must be signed, sealed, and dated by the design professional. Professional services such as design, engineering, preparation of bid documents and construction inspection are eligible expenditures.
- 15. Generally, projects are required to be publicly advertised and bid for the award of construction and/or materials contracts. The Department of Labor and Industry annually publishes competitive bid requirements for political subdivisions and other entities where open and competitive bidding is required by law. The base amounts are recalculated and published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin annually in December. The adjusted base amounts become effective January 1 of the following year. It is the responsibility of the applicant/grantee, in consultation with their solicitor/attorney, to follow the established bid requirements.
- 16. Upon project completion, the design professional will be required to submit a letter to the DCNR certifying that the final construction was completed in accordance with the drawings and specifications. Therefore, construction observation or inspection should be included in the design professional's contracted scope of work.
- 17. Routine maintenance is ineligible for funding. Routine maintenance is defined as small-scale activities generally associated with a regular set schedule (daily, weekly, monthly, or annually) for general upkeep of a park and recreation facility. Examples include but are

not limited to mowing, replacing safety surfacing, painting, graffiti removal, cleaning, trash removal and any other general activity to preserve an asset's operational status. DCNR will determine, at its own discretion, what is routine maintenance.

18. Elements of the project scope of work may be completed by municipal and/or in-house staff and volunteers with DCNR approval. Improvements of any kind made or provided by the municipality through its own employees, volunteers, or donated labor may be exempted from bidding requirements. However, all materials used for those improvements that cost in excess of the bidding threshold established by law are subject to the bidding requirements. The total cost to construct the project (labor, materials, equipment) must be used when determining if the project exceeds the formal bidding threshold. Grantees shall not evade provisions of advertising for bids by purchasing materials or contracting for services in a piecemeal manner for the purpose of obtaining prices under the established bidding limits.
19. If a proposed project includes development of new or renovation of existing structures, such as swimming pools, recreation and/or environmental education centers, ice rinks, gymnasiums, bridges, etc., a feasibility study prepared by a licensed design professional must be submitted with the grant application. In rare instances, a structural assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis by DCNR after the applicant/grantee has provided a written request and justification and that material has been reviewed by Central Office staff in consultation with Regional staff.
20. Projects may be rehabilitated or developed in phases; however, the project scope of work to be funded with grant assistance must result in a complete and useable facility. Phased projects will only be funded one phase at a time. Approval of one phase does not guarantee funding of additional phases in future grant rounds. A current master site development plan showing the phasing should be submitted with the grant application, if available. For development of new, large-scale park and recreation facilities, a master site development plan may be required.
21. For facilities that serve both eligible and ineligible areas and/or uses, DCNR will determine their eligibility and calculate a prorated percentage of the support facility and/or area eligible for grant funding. The applicant/grantee should discuss this possibility with the DCNR Regional Advisor.
22. DCNR is a strong proponent of green and sustainable best management practices and encourage all applicants/grantees to incorporate appropriate practices into their projects.

## **Project Types**

### **1. Park and Recreation Areas**

Area of land for use as a neighborhood, community or regional public park and recreation site. Property may be programmed for active and/or passive recreation use to create new park and recreation areas and/or expand existing recreational sites.

#### **a. Community Park Rehabilitation and Development**

These projects involve the rehabilitation and development of public indoor and/or outdoor park, recreation, and conservation areas and facilities. All construction must be completed in accordance with the applicable federal, state and local laws, including the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

**SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Rehabilitation and further development of Owen Park, Clearfield Borough, Clearfield County. Work to include construction of new access road and parking area; baseball fields; installation of playground equipment with required safety surfacing; ADA access; landscaping, project sign and related site improvements.

**b. Small Community Development**

Commonwealth municipalities with a population of 5,000 or less, as documented in the most recent U.S. Census, are eligible to receive grant funds for rehabilitation and/or new development of basic outdoor recreation and park facilities that provide a high level of recreational value. Eligible municipalities may request a minimum of \$60,000 and a maximum of \$100,000 in grant funds. The first \$30,000 in grant funds does not require a match. Every grant dollar above \$30,000 requires a \$1 for \$1 match. A grant request for less than the minimum will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The funding legislation requires the separation of costs for Professional Service Fees, Materials/Equipment, and Labor related to all Small Community Program projects.

A maximum of \$10,000 of the grant award is earmarked for Professional Service Fees only and does not require a match. In small communities where capacity may be limited, the Professional Service Fees allowance is intended to support a greater leadership role by a design consultant to ensure compliance with program requirements and successful completion of the project.

A minimum of \$20,000 of the grant award must be used for Materials/Equipment Costs and/or additional Professional Service Fees and does not require a match.

Municipalities with large and complex projects should apply for Park Rehabilitation and Development (PRD) grant provided by DCNR.

If an eligible municipality applies for a Small Community Program grant, they may not also apply for a Park Rehabilitation and Development (PRD) grant for the in the same grant cycle.

**SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Rehabilitation of Township Park, Penn Township, Perry County. Work to include the installation of a small playground with required safety surfacing; ADA access; landscaping, project sign and related site improvements.

**2. Rivers Conservation**

These projects restore and enhance the cultural, ecological, and recreational aspects of waterways. For more information, reference the Rivers Projects section of the grant manual.

**Special Requirements and Conditions**

- a. Eligible Applicants – This program is open to non-profit and municipal entities. However, non-profit organizations are encouraged to partner with a municipal entity to develop and execute this type of project.

- b. Eligible Projects – Eligible projects include those that implement river conservation plan recommendations, enhance water trails, expand public access to aquatic resources, or increase awareness of Pennsylvania’s river systems.
- c. Ownership/Control – For projects that are not intended to be open to the public, such as stream bank improvements, cattle fencing, etc., an agreement between the applicant and the landowner, giving the applicant access to construct and maintain the improvements, is required. An exception to this rule can only exist if other provisions satisfactory to DCNR are made which satisfy the construction and maintenance requirements of the grant agreement.
- d. Project Feasibility – If a proposed project includes the renovation of an existing structure, such as a small impoundment, aqueduct, marina, etc., a signed and sealed structural assessment will be required and should be submitted with the grant application.

**SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Development of Hough Park, Hamburg Borough in Berks County. Work to include the construction of a fishing pier and boat ramp; stabilization of stream bank restoration; ADA access; landscaping; project sign and other related site amenities.

## Resources

The following resources may be helpful for developing a competitive Grant Application.

### Grant Program – Grant Management Documents

#### Development documents

- Sample Estimated Project Timeline (Development)
- Non-Cash Match Record Keeping Sheet
- Park Site Development Drawing (SDD) Checklist
- Design Consultant Selection

#### Planning documents

- Indoor Recreation Facility - Feasibility Study - General Information and Scope of Work Guidelines
- Swimming Pool Complex - Feasibility Study - General Information and Scope of Work Guidelines

#### Grant Program – Policies

- Acquisition Conversion Process Policy LWCF
- Acquisition Conversion Process Policy State
- ADA Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Community Gardens Policy
- Competitive Bid Policy
- Development Grant Administrative Instructions and Process Policy
- Development Eligible and Ineligible Grant Project Activities/Costs Policy
- Greening Policy
- Ownership and Control Policy
- PNDI Policy
- Professional Services Fees Policy
- Public Value and Use Policy

- Sign Policy
- Small Community Program Policy
- Waiver for Retroactivity Policy

### General Design

- Planning and Design of Outdoor Sports Facilities- Technical Manual (Depts. of the Army and Air Force- 1988): [https://www.wbdg.org/FFC/ARMYCOE/COETM/tm\\_5\\_803\\_10.pdf](https://www.wbdg.org/FFC/ARMYCOE/COETM/tm_5_803_10.pdf)
- Green and Sustainable Design:  
[https://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1753165&DocName=d\\_001279.pdf](https://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1753165&DocName=d_001279.pdf)
- U.S. Dept. of Justice - 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards)  
<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADASTandards.htm>
- U.S. Access Board:  
<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/guides/sports-facilities/accessible-routes>
- Time Saver Standards for Landscape Architecture (Charles W. Harris & Nicholas T. Dines), 1998 Second Edition.
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission – Handbook for Public Playground Safety (Pub. #325) and Safety Alerts: <https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf>
- ASTM International: [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)
  - a) ASTM F1487-07 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use
  - b) ASTM F1292-04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment
  - c) ASTM F1951-09 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment
  - d) ASTM F2075-10a Standard Specification for Engineered Wood Fiber for Use as a Playground Safety Surface Under and Around Playground Equipment
  - e) ASTM F2223-10 Standard Guide for ASTM Standards on Playground Surfacing
  - f) ASTM F2373-11 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Public Use Play Equipment for Children 6 Months through 23 Months
  - g) ASTM F2479-12 Standard Guide for Specification, Purchase, Installation and Maintenance of Poured-In-Place Playground Surfacing