

BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

Title: Development Grant- Administrative Instructions and Process		
Issued by: Bureau of Recreation and Conservation	Effective Date: 10/7/15 Scheduled Review: Annual	Document Number: 2300-013
Reviewed: 12/14/23	Revised: 1/19/17; 11/30/17, 10/23/20, 6/01/22, 12/14/23	
Approved By: Tom Ford, Bureau Director	Program Area: Parks, Recreation and Rivers	

AUTHORITY

Act 18 of 1995, Section 306, Community Recreation and Heritage Conservation. The Department shall have the power to administer Federal and State programs for grants and loans to local governments, municipal authorities and nonprofit organizations for community and regional projects involving the planning, acquisition, rehabilitation and development of public park, recreation and conservation areas, facilities and programs.

SCOPE

Provides directive for administration of the Community Conservation Partnerships Grant Program

PURPOSE

The following is an overview of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (Bureau) grant process for implementing development grant projects. The term “Grantee” refers to a grant applicant that has been awarded a grant.

POLICY

A. Grant Administration Roles and Responsibilities

1. Local Project Coordinator (LPC)

A LPC is designated by the Grantee and serves as the official contact person on all matters related to the administration of the grant project. All official correspondence will be sent to the LPC. If the LPC changes during the project, the Grantee must provide the assigned Bureau Project Manager with written notification of the change, including the name, title, address, email, and daytime telephone number of the new LPC. If the new LPC does not have a Grants Portal Account, they will need to register as a new user. Click [here](#) for instructions.

2. Bureau Project Manager

A Bureau Project Manager is the assigned DCNR staff member serving as the Project Manager to work with the Grantee to successfully complete the grant project. It is the Bureau Project Manager’s responsibility to provide information and assistance to the Grantee to ensure that the project is completed, that grant program requirements are met, and that the project can be successfully closed out. All correspondence and communications regarding the project should be directed to the Bureau Project Manager.

B. Grant Administration Process

It is the Bureau’s intent to provide each Grantee with as much assistance as needed on a step-by-step basis to ensure a successful project. The project will be managed through the [DCNR Grants Customer Service Portal \(Grants Portal\)](#). The grant management process is outlined in the Grants Portal Project Checklist and Project Resources and consists of a series of Grantee submissions and Bureau approvals. The standard process for implementing a Development grant is as follows:

1. DCNR Award and Pre-Contracting

- a) DCNR sends Notice of Selection correspondence to the LPC and Chief Elected Official listed in the grant application.
- b) Bureau Project Manager conducts a pre-contracting call with the Grantee to confirm the designated LPC, match, project scope, grant agreement dates, and next steps in the grant process.
- c) DCNR emails a copy of the fully executed Grant Agreement to the Grantee signifying the beginning of the project management process. The Grant Agreement will also be available on the Grants Portal under “Project Resources – Agreements, Amendments and Payments”.

2. Introduction & Grant Administration

- a) Bureau Project Manager generates a checklist in the Grants Portal and sends project start-up correspondence to the Grantee outlining the initial phase of the grant management process and project requirements. The correspondence will also be available on the Grants Portal under “Project Resources – Correspondence”.
- b) Grantee is instructed to review the Grant Agreement, correspondence and access the Grants Portal prior to scheduling an initial conference call with the Bureau Project Manager.
- c) Grantee is strongly encouraged to request a Partial Payment of 50% of the Grant Award through the Grants Portal Payments link upon receipt of the fully executed Grant Agreement.

3. Initial Conference Call or In-Person Meeting

- a) Bureau Project Manager conducts a conference call or in-person meeting with the Grantee LPC and Design Consultant to review the Grant Agreement, Project Start-up correspondence, and Grants Portal.
- b) Bureau Project Manager also reviews “Project Start-up” and “Approval to Proceed” submission requirements and guidance documents outlined in the Project Checklist.
- c) Throughout the life of the project, the LPC will receive an email on a regular basis requesting a Progress Report. Progress reports will all be submitted through the Grants Portal.

4. Project Design Submission Review

- a) Grantee uploads the submission documents to the Project Checklist in the Grants Portal for Bureau review and approval.
- b) The “Project Start-up” and “Approval to Proceed” submission may include the following:
 - Local and County Planning Agency Notification & Response Letters
 - Municipal Agency/Authority Intergovernmental Agreement (for Municipal Agency/Authority Grantees only)
 - Municipal Agency/Authority Governing Body Member Approval Letters (for Municipal Agency/Authority Grantees only)
 - Executed Consultant Contract or Resolution for Professional Services
 - DCNR Certification of Title Form (including easements/leases for each project site)
 - Updated Project Timeline
 - Updated Detailed Budget & Purchasing Plan

- Cooperative Purchasing Program Quotes
 - DCNR Certification of Compliance with Bid Requirements Form
 - Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Review Receipt and/or Clearance Letters.
 - DCNR Certification of Design Form
 - Draft/Final Bid Documents (including Bidding Requirements, Contract Forms, Conditions of Contract, Specifications, Drawings, and Addendum)
- c) If the “Approval to Proceed” submission is incomplete or unsatisfactory, Bureau Project Manager sends review comments to the Grantee and requests a revised submission for review and approval.

5. Approval to Proceed and Final Draft Submission Review

- a) If the final design submission is acceptable, the Bureau Project Manager sends an Approval to Proceed with Competitive Bidding correspondence outlining the post-bid submission requirements. The correspondence will also be available on the Grants Portal under “Project Resources – Correspondence”.
- b) Grantee is responsible for following the competitive bidding/purchasing requirements that apply to their organization and the [DCNR Competitive Bidding/Purchasing Policy](#).

6. Post-Bid Submission Review

- a) Grantee uploads the post-bid submission documents to the Project Checklist in the Grants Portal for Bureau review and approval.
- b) The post-bid submission may include the following:
- Bid Tabulation
 - Bid Form from Lowest Qualified Bidder (Successful Bidder)
 - Notice to Proceed
- c) Bureau Project Manager reviews bid tabulations and the bid form from the lowest qualified bidder.

7. Approval to Proceed with Construction

- a) Grantee uploads the fully executed Construction/Materials Contract and/or executed Cooperative Purchasing Program Purchase Orders to the Project Checklist in the Grants Portal.
- b) Bureau Project Manager sends Approval to Proceed with Construction correspondence approving the construction/materials contract and cooperative purchasing program purchases (if applicable); authorizing Grantee to proceed with construction; and outlining the DCNR Final Site Inspection, Final Payment Request and closeout requirements. The correspondence will also be available on the Grants Portal under “Project Resources – Correspondence”.
- c) Grantee is strongly encouraged to request a second Partial Payment. The Bureau can approve partial payments up to 90% of the Grant Award with documentation of incurred eligible project costs and/or non-cash match values. The Bureau withholds a minimum of 10% of the Grant Award for final payment at closeout. Payments are requested through the Grants Portal Payments link.

8. Final Site Inspection

- a) Upon completion of project construction and posting of the DCNR funding acknowledgement sign, Grantee contacts Bureau Regional Advisor to schedule the final site inspection.

- b) Bureau Regional Advisor inspects the project for satisfactory completion of the Grant Agreement scope of work and takes photos.
- c) Bureau Regional Advisor sends Finals Site Inspection Report and correspondence to Grantee and uploads to RACERS. If remediation is required, comments are provided in the correspondence. Remediation must be completed in consultation with the Bureau Project Manager. A satisfactory inspection is required for final payment and project closeout. The correspondence will also be available on the Grants Portal under “Project Resources – Correspondence”.

9. Final Payment Request

- a) Per Article XII of the Grant Agreement, Grantee must submit the DCNR Final Payment Request and associated closeout documentation within 60 days of either completion of the project activities or the end date of the Grant Agreement, whichever occurs first.
- b) Grantee requests a Final Payment through the Grants Portal Payments link and uploads required close-out documents as outlined on the Grants Portal Project Checklist. Close-out documents may include the Consultant Certification Letter, DCNR Final Costs Spreadsheet, Invoices, Proof of Payment (canceled checks, bank statements, and/or paid-in-full letters), Non-Cash Match Documentation (if applicable), and DCNR Final Site Inspection Letter, Report Form, and Photos. Additional documentation may be requested on a case-by-case basis.

10. Final Payment Approval and Project Closeout

- a) Bureau Project Manager reviews and approves the Final Payment Request and associated closeout documentation and sends the Grantee a Final Payment and Project Closeout correspondence outlining the final eligible project costs, approved final payment, and post-completion requirements of the Grant Agreement. The correspondence will also be available on the Grants Portal under Project Resources – Correspondence.
- b) Final Payment by ACH will be processed within 6-8 weeks of Bureau Project Manager approval.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A. Grant Payments

[See the Payment Request Processing Policy.](#)

B. Interest Income and Refund Grant Funds

All grant funds must be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in the grant agreement. Please consult your grant agreement and the [Payment Request Processing Policy](#) for specific instructions on depositing and managing grant funds.

C. Project Changes/Grant Agreement Amendments

If there is a need to modify the scope of work, contract timeframe, budget, etc., during the grant project, the Bureau Project Manager will advise the Grantee of the process for requesting an amendment.

D. Record Keeping

It is the responsibility of the Grantee to maintain all original records related to the project for a period of three (3) years from the date of the final payment and made available for a possible program audit. Any costs presented in the summary information, not verifiable by an audit, may be considered an ineligible project cost.

It is important that the Grantee maintain records of all types of approved cash and non-cash costs throughout the grant management process. The following information should be documented for In-House Staff, Donated Professional Services, and Volunteer Services: Name of Person Performing Work, Day and Date of Work, Description of Work Performed, Hours Worked, Hourly Rate, and Total Value of Work Performed.

For all projects, this will include:

- All project-related invoices and records of payment.

Additional documentation may include:

- Original payroll and accounting records relative to In-House Professional Services.
- Activity logs and time sheets relative to Donated Professional and Volunteer Services.
- Signed letters from firms, groups, or persons providing donated professional and/or volunteer services describing the type and amount (i.e. hours and rates) of services provided.

E. DCNR Funding Acknowledgment

In accordance with the grant agreement, a permanent funding acknowledgment sign or plaque must be installed and maintained at the project site identifying funding assistance from the DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The sign must be shown on the drawings and comply with the standard design as outlined in the “[Sign Policy](#)” unless local ordinances or local sign design standards require it differently. Proposed changes must be pre-approved by the DCNR Project Manager.

DISCLAIMER

The policies and procedures outlined in this guidance document are intended to supplement existing requirements. The policies and procedures herein are not an adjudication or a regulation. There is no intent on the part of DCNR to give the rules in these policies that weight or deference. This document establishes the framework within which DCNR will exercise its administrative discretion in the future.

PAGE LENGTH

5 pages

EFFECTIVE DATE

Immediately. This policy is to be reviewed and updated every year.

EXPIRATION

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.

Tom Ford, Bureau Director

12/14/2023

Name/Title of Bureau or Office Director

Date