

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

***Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)***

Administrative Policy/Grant Guidelines

**SUBJECT:** Development Grant- Administrative Instructions and Process

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 10/7/15

**REVISED DATE:** 1/19/17; 11/30/17

**Background:** The following is an overview of the Bureau's grant process for implementing development grant projects. The term "**Grantee**" refers to a grant applicant that has been awarded a grant.

**Grant Administration Roles and Responsibilities**

**Local Project Coordinator**

The Grantee designates the Local Project Coordinator. The Bureau considers this coordinator to be the official contact person on all matters related to the administration of the grant project. All official correspondence will be sent to the Local Project Coordinator. If the Grantee's Local Project Coordinator changes during the course of the project, the Grantee must provide the assigned Bureau Project Manager with written notification on Grantee's letterhead of the change, including the name, title, mailing and email addresses, and daytime telephone number of the new Local Project Coordinator.

**Bureau Project Manager**

The Bureau assigns a staff member to serve as the Project Manager to work with the Local Project Coordinator 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.

**Grant Administration Process**

It is BRC's intent to provide each Grantee with as much assistance as needed, on a step-by-step basis, to ensure a successful project. There are steps requiring the Grantee to wait for DCNR's review and approval before proceeding to the next step. The standard process for implementing a development grant is as follows:

## 1. DCNR Award and Contracting Stage

- DCNR/Governor sends a “Notice-of-Selection”/Award letter to the Grantee.
- DCNR conducts a pre-contracting call with Grantee to confirm the designated Local Project Coordinator, Cash and/or Non-Cash Match, Project Scope, Grant Agreement Dates and next steps in the Grant Process.

**Timeframe:** Completed within 3 weeks after receipt of “Notice-of-Selection”/Award Letter.

- A fully executed copy of the Grant Agreement/Contract is sent to the Grantee by DCNR, signifying the beginning of the project management process.

**Timeframe:** Completed within 3 months of the pre-contracting call.

## 2. Initial Project Start-Up Letter and Next Steps Instructions Stage

***Note:*** *This stage can run concurrently with the DCNR- Contracting Stage.*

- The Grantee receives an initial Project Start-Up Letter and Instructions Packet, from their designated Bureau Project Manager. This letter provides guidance information, application review comments, as well as, DCNR required forms and attachments, to assist the Grantee and their Design Consultant prepare the initial project submission for DCNR review and approval.

**Timeframe:** Completed within 6 weeks of the DCNR/Governor “Notice of Selection”/Award Letter to the Grantee.

- Upon receipt and review of this letter, the Grantee is to contact the Bureau Project Manager to establish a conference call, to include the Design Consultant and the Local Project Coordinator. During this conference call, the grant process, project issues and related comments from the review letter, as well as, the packet of “Instructions, Forms, & Submission Checklist” will be discussed. Grantees are reminded to review these items with their selected Design Consultant and their Solicitor/Attorney, as applicable, prior to the DCNR conference call.

**Timeframe:** Conference Call to be scheduled and conducted within 3 months of receipt of the “Initial Project Start-up Letter”.

- After the grant agreement is fully executed, Grantees are eligible to receive an initial partial payment. This is outlined and discussed in the initial Project Start-Up Letter and the Conference Call. *Grantees are eligible for and strongly encouraged to complete the Partial Payment Request form requesting 50% of the total grant amount and return to the bureau’s Fiscal Unit within two weeks of receiving the fully executed grant agreement.*

### 3. Initial Submission Review and Approval Stage

- After the Grantee and the Design Consultant have had the initial conference call with their Bureau Project Manager, the Design Consultant, in conjunction with the Local Project Coordinator, prepares the initial submission for DCNR to review and approve.
- Although, the timeline for the initial submission may vary, it is expected that it should be compiled and submitted to DCNR within 2-3 months of the conference call.
  - ◇ This submission will include DCNR Forms, Construction Drawings, Bid Packet, etc. The more complete the submission packet the more quickly the review process.
  - ◇ Please allow for a 4-week review period of the initial submission.
  - ◇ If the design submission is acceptable and/or if there are only minor issues to resolve, DCNR will provide written authorization for the Grantee to advertise and bid the project. In this letter DCNR will remind and outline the next steps in the grant process to the Grantee.
  - ◇ **If there are major issues or the submission is substantially incomplete, DCNR will provide review comments and request a revised, second submission, which may include drawings, DCNR forms and additional documentation, as applicable, prior to providing an approval to proceed. *This will result in a delay in the construction on your project.***

**Timeframe:** Review completed within 4 weeks upon receipt of submission.  
Approval Letter will be written within 2 weeks of approval.

### 4. Advertising, Bidding and Awarding of Construction/Materials Contracts Stage

- After the Grantee receives written authorization from DCNR to advertise and bid the project, the Grantee and/or their Design Consultant are responsible for advertising and bidding the project. Once the bids are received, the local Project Coordinator is responsible for providing the Bureau Project Manager of the bid results via a formal Bid Tabulation Sheet.
- After the Grantee, Design Consultant and Solicitor/Attorney have reviewed the bid results for compliance with the Municipal Code, as applicable, and have discussed and addressed all issues with the Bureau Project Manager, the Grantee may award the Bid. You are reminded that it is expected that the award of the construction/materials contract(s) will be awarded to the lowest qualified responsible bidder(s).

- **If the Grantee is a political subdivision** or other entity for which open and competitive bidding procedures have been established by law, to include the Municipal Code, the Grantee shall comply with those procedures, as applicable to the project being funded.
- **If the Grantee is a Non-Profit, For-Profit or any organization not covered by bidding laws**, purchasing procedures will vary based on the value of the grant allocation. When awarding contracts, subcontracts or other agreements for construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration and/or repair, or acquisition of machinery and equipment the following requirements apply:
  - ◇ **Grantees with grant allocations between \$20,000 - \$100,000**
    1. Grantees will be required to obtain (3) formal written quotes.
    2. Quotes must be formalized and may be directly solicited, publicly advertised in a newspaper of general publication and/or by utilizing a public electronic construction bidding venue.
  - ◇ **Grantees with grant allocations over \$100,000**
    1. Grantees will be required to use open and competitive purchasing procedures related to the use of these public funds for any grants, subgrants, contracts, subcontracts and/or other agreements for construction, reconstruction or alteration work and/or purchase of machinery and equipment.
    2. Bid documents must be formalized and publicly advertised in a newspaper of general publication and/or by utilizing a public electronic construction bidding venue.

**Note:** *If other state or federal funds are being used by the Organization as a match for the DCNR project and competitive purchasing procedures are to be used, please provide this documentation to the Department.*

**Timeframe:** Review completed within 2 weeks upon receipt of this documentation.

## **5. Approval of Costs Stage**

- Upon receipt of a copy of the awarded executed construction/materials contract(s), the Bureau Project Manager will provide written approval of the costs and written authorization for the Grantee to proceed with construction on the project.
- In conjunction with DCNR's written approval of costs letter, the Grantee is strongly encouraged to submit for a Partial Payment. The Grantee will be asked to supply all actual expenditure documentation, to include construction costs, professional services costs and "actual" non-cash match values for review and approval. ***The value of the partial payment may not exceed 90% of the grant funds awarded to the Grantee. DCNR will always hold at least 10% of the grant funds until close-out of the project.***

**Note:** *The payment request must be submitted on the Partial Payment Request form, provided with the approval of costs letter from the designated Bureau Project Manager.*

**Timeframe:** Review and letter completed within 3 weeks, upon receipt of a complete submission.

## 6. Close-Out Stage

- Concurrently or shortly after the completion of the construction project, the Grantee is responsible for contacting the appropriate DCNR Regional Advisor to schedule an on-site inspection of the project. A satisfactory inspection is required before DCNR can close-out the project. The DCNR Regional Advisor will write and provide the Grantee with an Inspection Report and Letter. Should remediation work on the site be required, it will be outlined in this letter and it must be completed in a timely fashion (within 4 weeks, upon receipt of the Inspection Report and Letter). **Photographic evidence of completion of the work must be supplied to DCNR.**

**Please note that all punch list items are to be completed, the DCNR project Acknowledgement Sign must be permanently installed and all ADA accommodations must be incorporated prior to the DCNR final site inspection.**

- Your Design Consultant will be responsible to provide a letter certifying that the final construction of the project was completed in accordance with the plans and specifications approved by DCNR. ***This is referred to as the final Consultant Certification Letter.***
- Upon construction completion, payment of invoices, scheduling and completing a satisfactory DCNR final site inspection, a Final Payment Request Form must be completed. The Form will be enclosed with the approval of costs letter provided by the Bureau Project Manager. It is to be completed by the Grantee and/or the Design Consultant and after **all of the contractors and project invoices have been paid in full.**

**You are reminded that in accordance with the Grant Agreement, the Final Payment Form and close-out documents are to be supplied by the Grantee within 60 days of project completion.**

- Upon receipt and satisfactory review of these elements, Final Payment Request form, the DCNR final site inspection, the final Consultant Certification Letter and any other requested project documentation, the Bureau Project Manager will provide the Grantee with a written final close-out letter, authorizing the final payment allocation due the Grantee and the close-out of the project.

**Note:** *Incomplete submissions will delay this process.*

**Timeframe:** Completed within 2 months upon receipt of a complete submission

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Grant Payments**

***See the Payment Request Processing Policy***

### **Interest Income**

With the exception of Growing Greener Bond Fund, all grant funds must be maintained in a separate interest bearing account. **Upfront grant payments and any interest or other accumulations, earned by this grant, must be separately identifiable in the accounting of funds received under the Grant Agreement.** Grantee should invest and reinvest grant funds and any interest on other accumulations earned on such funds, to gain the maximum yield. Subject to prior written approval of the Bureau, the Grantee may use the interest or other accumulations earned on grant funds for grant activities. Income earned and expended shall be recorded as part of the closeout documentation. *Any unused interest or other income remaining at the completion of project activities shall be returned to the DCNR.*

### **Project Changes/Grant Agreement Amendments**

If there is a need to modify the, scope of work, deadlines, budget, title of grant project, amount of grant funds, grant agreement period, project scope, etc., such changes should be discussed with the Bureau Project Manager and, if applicable, the Consultant. The Bureau Project Manager will advise the grantee of the process for requesting an amendment based on the current Amendment Request- Standard Operating Procedure.

### **DCNR Acknowledgement**

In accordance with the grant agreement, once the project has been completed the Grantee must erect an appropriate sign acknowledging that it is a public site provided by the Grantee with financial assistance from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. The sign shall also acknowledge the funding source. See Appendix A of the grant agreement for the funding source of the grant. Refer to the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation's "Sign Policy" for further instructions and examples.

### **Record Keeping**

It is the Grantee's responsibility to maintain original records that support and validate the summary information certified to the Bureau. A non-cash match record keeping spreadsheet example will be provided for your use.

It is important that you maintain records of all types of approved cash and non-cash values throughout the development process. For Non-Cash Match Values: In-House Municipal Staff, Municipal Owned Equipment Use, Volunteer Services and Donation of Goods and/or Services, it is recommended that you create a spreadsheet including the following information: 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 CASH invoices and records of payment.

**Additional documentation may include:**

- Original payroll and accounting records relative to non-cash in-house labor
- Activity logs and time sheets relative to non-cash in-house labor
- Activity Logs relative to the municipal owned equipment
- Volunteer Worksheets describing the type and value (i.e. hours and rates)
- Donation Letters- Signed letters from firms, groups and/or persons providing donated goods and /or services, as well as.

All original records related to the project shall be maintained 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 disallowed as an eligible project cost.

All development forms, guidance documents, and policies may be obtained at the following links:

[http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_20033226.pdf](http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_20033226.pdf)

[http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_20033227.pdf](http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_20033227.pdf)

**This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.**