

PLANNING Projects

This section provides more detailed information and guidance on projects involving planning. Planning projects "lay the groundwork" for future land acquisition, development and/or management of parks, recreational facilities, critical habitat, open space, natural areas, greenways, motorized and non-motorized trails and river/watershed corridors.

Ready-To-Go Checklist

This Checklist is to be used by the applicant to determine if their Planning Project is "Ready-To-Go". The items below need to be addressed, included or uploaded in the application. If you have questions regarding this Checklist, please contact your DCNR Regional Advisor.

Yes	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contacted Regional Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible project
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Master Site Development Plan and facility rehabilitation Feasibility Study - applicant owns project site or controls through a lease (minimum 25 years)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Match secured
<input type="checkbox"/>	Letters of commitment from entities providing match uploaded (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed list of eligible cash and non-cash match included
<input type="checkbox"/>	Realistic, accurate and detailed cost estimate/budget included
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear, concise and detailed scope of work included
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Master Site Development Plans and new facility Feasibility Studies – Conservation Planning Report or PNDI receipt uploaded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accurate project site location map(s) uploaded (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	County/Municipal Notification Letter(s) uploaded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reviewed the sample planning project timeline at the following link http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_009417.pdf and agree that the project can be completed within 3 years from date of grant award (draft and final plan approved by DCNR)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of lease or easement uploaded (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	If a River Conservation Plan (RCP) – letters of support are uploaded from more than 50% of municipalities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Properly completed Resolution Page uploaded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Properly completed Grant Agreement Signature Page uploaded

General Information and Funding Conditions

1. All projects must serve a public purpose and help advance [DCNR goals](#) and [priorities](#).
2. All facilities/sites must be open for use by the general public.
3. A separate application must be submitted for each project unless the projects are substantially related to qualify as a Combination Project.
4. If your project is selected for funding, the Bureau reserves the right to review the proposed cash and non-cash values and work items with the grantee, to determine eligibility. Where warranted, adjustments to the proposed cash and non-cash values, provided in the application, will be required.
5. Match is required for all projects and is usually equal to the grant funds awarded. The local match may be eligible cash, non-cash or a land donation value.
6. Cash contributions being provided by other organizations to be used as apportion of the local matching funds should be transferred to the applicant/grantee to expend. In such cases, where an outside organization/agency wishes to expend funds on behalf of the applicant/grantee, a formalized Agreement to define the roles and responsibilities must be entered into by both parties.
7. The Bureau requires that planning project consultants must be selected using a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. For more information and guidance, refer to the enclosed Grant Administration & Planning Process document.
8. Consideration of green/sustainable practices and energy saving technologies and are encouraged in all planning projects.

General Information

Planning projects generally entail the use of specialized consultants and expert professionals to work with local citizens and organizations to develop a community or regional-based plan and planning study report.

The Bureau requires that the planning project or process includes substantial public participation, that project consultants are selected using a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process and that at least two public meetings are held.

Municipalities and non-profit organizations are encouraged to work together to form partnerships to develop regional plans. The Bureau places a greater priority for funding on regional projects than on a planning project for one municipality. For regional, multi-municipal conservation, watershed, greenways or trails plans, applicants need to work with county government planning organizations to integrate new plan findings and recommendations into existing comprehensive plans and existing planning policy documents. County and local planning entities must be invited to participate in the planning process through, for example, work on study committees.

Combination Projects

The Bureau will accept and fund projects that are a combination of compatible planning project types for which the applicant is eligible for funding. Common examples are: Swimming Pool Feasibility Study combined with a Master Site Development Plan for the same site; Trail Feasibility Study and/or a Master Site Development Plan combined with a Comprehensive Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan.

Applicants must review combination projects with the appropriate DCNR Regional Advisor prior to submitting a grant application.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

For the purposes of the grant application you are required to provide a brief project description. Applicants should review the following brief project descriptions to assure that the proposed project will address the elements required for the respective project type. The brief project description is a summary of the scope of work that will be developed if selected for funding. We suggest you review the document links provided at the end of this document to obtain a realistic cost estimate for your project type. The brief project description must be limited to no more than 500 characters.

Planning Project Types:

1. Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan and/or Greenways Plan

A municipal, county or regional-based plan that identifies the methods, resources, organizational capacity and capital investment needed to accomplish both short-term and long-term recreation, open space and/or greenways goals of the community. The planning process must include substantial citizen involvement, inventory of existing conditions and facilities, analysis of issues and community needs, and specific recommendations that set forth actions, priorities and costs.

Special Requirements and Conditions:

- Funding of multi-municipal plans is a higher priority for the Department than such plans for a single municipality.
- For single municipal plans, neighboring municipalities must be included in the public participation process.
- **For plans that address community parks and recreation**, at least one member of the consultant team must be a recreation & parks practitioner, preferably holding CPRP (Certified Recreation and Park Professional) certification with a minimum of three (3) years' experience in the administration, planning, and development of facilities/areas, programming, finance, personnel, and maintenance of a comprehensive park and recreation system or related entity.
- **For plans that address greenways**, County Greenway Plans will serve as a foundation for developing local greenways.

The following documents should be reviewed via hyperlink and are located at the end of this section for assistance in understanding this project type and developing your project

description: Consultant Qualifications – Planning Grant Projects; Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan – General Info & Scope of Work Guidelines; Greenways Plans – General Information and Scope of Work Guidelines; Municipal Greenways and Open Space Network Plans – General Information and Scope of Work Guidelines; and Public Participation Guide.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prepare a Multi-municipal Comprehensive Recreation, Park, Open Space and Greenways Plan for Nether Providence Township and Rose Valley, Rutledge and Swarthmore boroughs, Delaware County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Comprehensive Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan Update for Cumberland County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare an update to the Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan for Monroe County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan for Easton City, Northampton County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Greenways and Open Space Plan for Concord Township, Delaware County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Plan for the Central Perkiomen Valley, Upper Perkiomen Valley, Indian Valley and Pottstown Metropolitan regions in western Montgomery County. Work to include a written, bound report.

\ Complete a multi-municipal strategic action plan (Phase 2) for the Brandywine Creek Greenway Plan in Chester and Delaware counties. Work to include a written, bound report.

2. Land Conservation and Stewardship Plan

Inventory, analysis and recommendations to establish acquisition priorities and/or a long-term management plan for the preservation and environmental protection of specific natural areas or important environmental aspects of specific regions. These studies usually entail substantial research conducted by experts in critical habitat identification and assessment and substantial mapping of sensitive environmental areas and important habitat areas.

Conservation plans include projects that develop plans for the conservation of open space, natural resources and agricultural land utilizing aggressive land use control and land development techniques. This may include the development of these plans or, for example, the development of zoning and subdivision regulations that truly integrate conservation and sound land use concepts into these regulations and foster the implementation of existing plans.

For plans that include a site development drawing, proof of ownership or control of the site to be master planned will be required. If the property is leased, the lease must be for a minimum of 25 years and will be reviewed by DCNR.

The following documents should be reviewed via hyperlink and are located at the end of this section for assistance in understanding this project type and developing your project description: Consultant Qualifications – Land Conservation, River and Watershed Plans; and Public Participation Guide.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prepare a Land Conservation and Stewardship Plan for the 1,058-acre Camp Kresge in Dennison Township, Luzerne County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Conservation and Landscape Management Plan for the 48-acre Curtis Arboretum in Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Comprehensive Green Infrastructure Plan for Lancaster City, Lancaster County. Work to include a written, bound report.

3. Feasibility Study (FS)

Swimming Pool Complex Feasibility Studies are professionally prepared studies to determine community support, market characteristics, physical/structural assessment and the legal and financial capability to acquire, develop or rehabilitate, manage and sustain a swimming pool complex. A swimming pool complex includes the pool, bath house, concession, parking, and other site amenities.

Note: Completion of a Swimming Pool Complex Feasibility Study is required for submission of a Community Partnerships development grant application.

Indoor Recreation Facility Feasibility Studies are professionally prepared studies to determine community support, market characteristics, physical/structural assessment and the legal and financial capability to acquire, develop or rehabilitate, manage and sustain an indoor recreation facility. Examples include a community recreation center, vacant school building, indoor swimming pool, gym, indoor sports complex or indoor ice rink.

Note: Completion of a Recreation Facility Feasibility Study is required for submission of a Community Partnerships development grant application.

Special Requirements and Conditions:

- These studies are required before the grantee receives Bureau funding to acquire, rehabilitate or develop such facilities.
- For rehabilitation of an existing facility, applicants are required to have control of the site, either through ownership or a long-term lease agreement (minimum of 25 years) and provide evidence of this control.
- The study/report narrative must address compliance with the 1990 American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessibility and Design.
- For recreation facilities, DNCR requires that the report be under seal of a licensed professional who is authorized by Pennsylvania law to apply the seal. Depending on the project, the professional could be a landscape architect, architect, or engineer.

- For new recreation facilities, a recreation and parks practitioner*, preferably holding CPRP (Certified Recreation and Park Professional) certification with a minimum of three (3) years' experience in managing the type of facility under study must be included on the consultation team.
- The Bureau will only provide grant funds for a feasibility study of an existing or proposed facility that is or will be open to all persons on a non-discriminatory basis.

The following documents should be reviewed via hyperlink and are located at the end of this section for assistance in understanding this project type and developing your project description: Consultant Qualifications – Planning Grant Projects; Swimming Pool Complex Feasibility Study – General Info & Scope of Work Guidelines; Indoor Recreation Facility Feasibility Study – General Info & Scope of Work Guidelines and Public Participation Guide.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

New Facility:

Study the feasibility of developing a multi-municipal outdoor swimming pool for Huntingdon Borough, Oneida Township, Smithfield Township, and Walker Township, Huntingdon County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Feasibility Study for developing a Manheim Regional Community Center, Lancaster County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare a Feasibility Study for a municipal skate park in Brookville Borough. Work to include a written, bound report.

Existing Facility:

Study the feasibility of rehabilitating the Coudersport Borough Municipal Swimming Pool, Potter County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Study the feasibility of rehabilitating the WCCRA Recreation Center in Renovo Borough, Clinton County. Work to include a written, bound report.

4. Master Site Development Plan (MSDP)

A site-specific project that includes research, public input and an analysis process that leads to a size, type and location plan for the full development or redevelopment of a park or other recreational-use site. The plan must meet all current standards and provide for the identified recreation and conservation priorities of the community to the maximum extent possible.

Special Requirements and Conditions:

- Proof of ownership or control of the site to be master planned will be required. If the property is leased, the lease must be for a minimum of 25 years. A copy of the existing lease shall be included in the grant application for review by DCNR.
- The study/report narrative must address compliance with the 1990 American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessibility and Design.

- DCNR requires that the Master Site Development Plan, including the maps and report, be under seal of a licensed professional who is authorized by Pennsylvania law to apply the seal. Depending on the project, the professional could be a landscape architect, architect, or engineer.
- Construction drawings and specifications costs will not be funded as part of a Master Site Development Plan.
- DCNR will only provide grant funds for a Master Site Development Plan of an existing or proposed facility that is or will be open to all persons on a non-discriminatory basis.

The following documents should be reviewed via hyperlink and are located at the end of this section for assistance in understanding this project type and developing your project description: Consultant Qualifications – Planning Grant Projects; Master Site Development Plan - General Information and Scope of Work Guidelines; and Public Participation Guide.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prepare a Master Site Development Plan for a 71-acre expansion to Scott Park in Scott Township, Allegheny County. Work to include a written, bound report.

Prepare Master Site Development Plans for the 17.5 acre Larnard/Hornbrook County Park in Sheshequin Township, 670-acre Mt. Pisgah County Park in Springfield Township, and 70-acre Sunfish Pond County Park in LeRoy Township, Bradford County. Work to include a written, bound report.

5. Rivers Conservation Plan

A comprehensive watershed or river corridor-based study requiring an inventory of existing natural, recreational and cultural resources, analysis of the issues, concerns and threats to river resources and values and specific recommendations that set forth priorities and actions. These studies lead to the development of a long-term watershed or river corridor management program. River Conservation studies are multi-community in scope and often undertaken in cooperation with non-profit organizations. The planning process includes substantial citizen involvement and identifies key organizations and individuals that can assist in the establishment of a watershed or river corridor plan. **More information can be found in the Rivers Project section of the grant manual.**

Special Requirements and Conditions:

- A resolution from at least one municipality and resolutions or support letters from at least 50% of the affected municipalities in the proposed study area are required.
- 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.

The following documents should be reviewed via hyperlink and are located at the end of this section for assistance in understanding this project type and developing your project description: Rivers Conservation Plan – Scope of Work Guidelines; Public Participation Guide; Consultant Qualifications Land Conservation, Rivers and Watershed Plans; PA Rivers Conservation Registry Petition; Rivers Conservation Program Guidelines.

SAMPLE PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prepare a Watershed Conservation Plan for the Saucon Creek Watershed from the headwaters to its confluence with the Lehigh River in Bucks, Lehigh and Northampton counties. Work to include a written, bound report.

Develop a Rivers Conservation Plan for the Sugar Creek and Towanda Creek Watersheds in Bradford, Tioga and Sullivan counties. Work to include a written, bound report.

Pilot Program- Small Community Planning Initiative

DCNR has developed this Pilot Program as a special Planning Initiative designated exclusively for Small Communities. The Program will have the Grantee working directly with a qualified Design Consultant to engage the community in a public participation process that produces a Park Site Development Drawing, ready to go Construction Drawings and Bid Packet, along with a realistic project budget. DCNR will remain supportive and committed to advancing the development and/or rehabilitation of your community park through both the planning and development processes. Participation in this program will be limited, so if you are interested in this new opportunity, please review the qualifications below and speak with your Regional Advisor.

- Small Communities with populations of 2,500 or less
- Size of the Park Site is between 5-8 acres
- 100% of the Planning Costs will be covered by DCNR
- Planning costs will be limited to no more than \$10,000 and will be project dependent
- Planning project will be completed in 1 – 1½ years
- Upon completion the Grantee will be expected to move directly into the development and/or rehabilitation of the park site.

Refer to the following documents which should be helpful in developing your Grant Application, they can be found at the following links:

Planning Documents:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/forms/planningforms/index.htm>

- Consultant Qualifications – Land Conservation, Rivers and Watershed Plans
- Consultant Qualifications – Planning Grant Projects
- General Information & Scope of Work Guidelines
 - Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan
 - Indoor Recreation Facility - Feasibility Study
 - Swimming Pool Complex - Feasibility Study
 - Greenway Plan
 - Master Site Development Plan
 - Municipal Greenways and Open Space Network Plan
 - Rivers Conservation Plan
- Planning Grant Administrative Instructions & Process
- Public Participation Guide

- Resolution for Listing on Pennsylvania Rivers Registry
- Rivers Conservation Program Guidelines
- Rivers Conservation Registry Petition
- Sample Estimated Planning Project Timeline

Bureau Policies:

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/grantpolicies/index.htm>

- ADA Policy
- Planning Eligible and Ineligible Grant Project Activities/Costs Policy
- Greening Policy
- Ownership and Control Policy
- PNDI Policy
- Planning Project Management Process Policy
- Waiver for Retroactivity Policy