FY17 LAND and PARC Grant Programs Workshop

Division of Conservation Services

DCS Grant Programs

- **Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND)** – acquire conservation land
- **Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC)** – acquire recreation land and/or develop public outdoor recreation facilities

Neptune Park, Lynn

Holland Glen Forest, Belchertown

DCS Grant Programs

- Grant announcement is in anticipation of funding
- Priorities for the FY17 Grant Round:
  - **Conservation Projects (LAND)**
    - Biodiversity protection (BioMap 2)
    - Projects with sizable acreage
    - Outdoor passive recreation
    - Stewardship of conservation lands
  - **Recreation Projects (PARC)**
    - Project increases access to recreation to all residents, especially those that go above and beyond to provide access to people with disabilities
    - Projects in Environmental Justice neighborhoods
    - Projects that provide for park equity
    - Projects that include environmental education

LAND and PARC Grant Information

- **Grant deadline July 13, 2016 at 3:00 pm**
- Applicants must have a current Open Space and Recreation Plan on file with DCS by grant deadline
- Applicants with outstanding conversion issues are ineligible
- **Maximum grant award of $400,000**
- Reimbursement rate between 52% and 70%

Millers River Park, Athol

LAND and PARC Grant Information

- Download an application package at www.mass.gov/eea/dcs-grants
- Fillable pdf applications
- Do not purchase land without signed contract!
- Do not begin construction without signed contract!

Elm Park, Worcester

Eligible Project Costs

- **For LAND & PARC acquisition projects:**
  - Property purchase
  - Title research & certification
  - Recording fees
  - Survey
- **For PARC renovation/development projects:**
  - Engineering
  - Design
  - Construction
  - Construction supervision (during year 2)
- This is not an inclusive list – ask if you specific questions

Ineligible Project Costs

- Appraisals
- Donations
- In-kind expenses
- Legal fees
- Staff time
- Equipment or goods
- Application preparation costs
- 21E assessment and compliance fees
- Brownfields restoration
- And everything else not listed as eligible!
- **When in doubt, ask!**

Grenville Park, Ware

Selection Process for DCS Grants

- All projects are visited by DCS staff, then rated and ranked (rating system is included in each grant's application package)
- Recommendations are approved by EEA
- ***Estimated*** grant award announcement date is November 2016
- Do not plan on closing on any properties during calendar year 2016
- Project completion dates:
  - FY17 acquisition projects: June 1, 2017
  - FY18 acquisition and construction projects: June 1, 2018

Rating Systems

- Two rating systems – one for LAND, one for PARC
- Each contain demographic information
  - Federal census data
  - Environmental Justice
  - Calculated by EEA
- Rating systems included in each grant BID package

Chapman Playground, Westfield

Municipal Votes

- All projects must have a town meeting/city council vote
- The vote must do three things:
  - Authorize submission of grant application
  - Approve appropriation of 100% of the total project cost
  - Dedicate the land to recreation or conservation purposes (specific to each grant program)
- Use sample vote language in application package
- **Send all draft vote language to Emmanuel or Melissa for approval**

Municipal Votes

- Vote can occur after application deadline or after grant decisions have been announced
- Successful grants must have vote in by end of the calendar year – plan accordingly
- May use some types of federal monies, such as CDBG, as local portion of total grant costs

Adams Station, Adams

CPA Communities, LWCF Recipients

- Any properties acquired with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds must include the conveyance of a Conservation Restriction to an eligible 3rd party
- LAND and PARC grant recipients must show compliance with this requirement prior to final reimbursement
- Grant recipients that have Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) sites in their community will have to complete an inspection form on all properties prior to final reimbursement

Post-completion Responsibilities

- All sites that receive LAND or PARC funding are protected by Article 97, which means the land must remain as conservation or recreation land in perpetuity
- Site must be open to all – this includes both non-residents and the handicapped
- Fair fee policy
- Sign requirements

Useful Tips

- No binders, folders, plastic sleeves, etc. – use binder clips to fasten applications together
- 1 original and 2 copies – clearly mark the copies
- Double-sided copies if possible, please
- Clearly mark all attachments – use the application form as an attachment checklist
- Maintain the format of the application form by using the fillable pdf – this isn't the time to use creativity
- If your community is re-submitting a previous application, be sure that you submit current attachments
- Focus on the big picture – if one thing is filled in incorrectly, the application will still be eligible (most likely)

PARC Projects

- Purchase parkland
- Develop new public outdoor recreation facilities
- Renovate existing municipal public parks
- Land must be dedicated to public park purposes and under custody of Park or Recreation Commission or Park Department (Chapter 45, Section 3 or 14)

Cambridge Common

PARC Grants

- All cities regardless of size or towns with more than 35,000 residents are eligible for maximum $400,000 grant award
- Towns with less than 35,000 residents proposing project with access to public transportation or 100 car parking lot are also eligible for maximum $400,000 grant award
- All other town projects are eligible for maximum $50,000 grant award (this is referred to as a “small town” grant)
- Small town grant applications will be competing for separate pool of funding
- Letters of support deadline – postmarked by July 20, 2016 (not required)

PARC Application Tips

- Complete answers to all questions
- Appraisal(s) must be submitted for acquisition projects
- Preliminary design (done prior to application deadline) must be firm enough to generate a solid cost estimate
- Make sure to break budget details into design and construction costs (two distinct FYs)
- Remember to include construction administration costs in year 2

DiSalvo Park, Revere

PARC Application Tips

- Answer the following questions in the project description:
  - Is this park in an EJ neighborhood?
  - Does the park design go above and beyond in providing access to people with disabilities? How so?
  - Is this a new park?
  - Will there be environmental education on site?
  - Is water-based recreation offered at the park?
  - Does the park design incorporate resiliency?
  - Did my community complete enhanced outreach in EJ neighborhoods?
  - Do I have a partner for future stewardship?
  - How does this project address my OSRP's goals, objectives or action plan items?

LAND Grant

- Land acquisition
  - Fee simple
  - Conservation Restriction
- Conservation Commission control
- For conservation & passive recreation
- Cooperative projects – many communities work closely with non-profits

Punkhorn Parklands, Brewster

LAND Grant

- Appraisals
  - Requirements are on page 5 of the BID document
  - Two appraisals recommended if the first has value over $750,000
- Budget
  - Itemize anticipated expenses
- Project narrative
- Maps
  - Natural resources and landscape context
- Natural Heritage & Historical Commission review

Most Competitive Projects

- Ecological resources
  - Habitat & biodiversity
  - Water
- Landscape level protection
  - Links to existing protected open space
  - Large
  - Climate change resiliency
- Public recreation
- Open Space and Recreation Plan goals
- Working lands
- Undevelopment
- Stewardship Capacity

Other DCS Grant Programs

- Conservation Partnership grant
  For: non-profits Max award: $85,000
  To: acquire land/CRs Application due: July 18, 2016

- Drinking Water Supply Protection grant
  For: municipal water departments/non-profit public water suppliers/water districts
  To: acquire land/CRs Max award: $350,000 (in FY16)
  Application due: TBD

- Landscape Partnership grant
  For: municipal conservation commissions, water departments, non-profits, and state and federal agencies
  To: acquire 500+ acres of land/CRs/APRs
  Max award: $2,000,000 (in FY16)
  Application due: TBD

Contact Information

Melissa Cryan
(617) 626-1171
melissa.cryan@state.ma.us

Emmanuel Owusu
(617) 626-1187
emmanuel.owusu@massmail.state.ma.us

Visit DCS online at www.mass.gov/eea/dcs-grants

Open question period ends on June 29, 2016
Have your questions answered before then