

## **PARKLAND ACQUISITIONS AND RENOVATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES (PARC) GRANT PROGRAM SELECTION SYSTEM**

In order to distribute limited grant funds among an overwhelming number of applicants, a project selection system has been developed for outdoor recreation projects. The rating system considers demographic and project quality factors in order to identify those projects that best protect natural resources in communities that have the greatest need for financial assistance and that have made efforts to implement their open space and recreation plans in coordination with local planning for sustainable growth.

In reviewing applications and developing their recommendations to the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, the review team considers:

### **1. Demographics**

Four categories are evaluated by DCS to calculate a community's demographic score. Communities with higher population density, lower median income, higher percentage of households below poverty level, and lower percentage of educational attainment receive higher demographic scores. **(Scores are calculated by DCS; therefore, there is no need to submit any statistics or narrative on your community's behalf.)**

### **2. Community Profile Score**

- Environmental Justice Community – calculated by EEA
- Open space availability – calculated by EEA

### **3. Project Quality**

- Consistency with EEA policies, including increasing access to recreational amenities for all, most specifically, increasing access for people with disabilities, and environmental education.
- Addition of new parkland by acquisition, rededication, or renovation of unusable parkland, except in cases of new parks that include significant tree removal.
- Climate resilience.
- Water-based recreation.
- Enhanced outreach in Environmental Justice neighborhoods.
- Partnerships – Projects that involve financial contribution from more than one municipality, or from a nonprofit or for-profit organization, will be given higher consideration. These include projects that obtain a commitment from an organization for help with paying for or performing future maintenance.
- Consistency with state and municipal plans, including Executive Order 525.

### **4. Bonus Points**

- Applicant has signed a Community Compact

## **SELECTION NOTES:**

### **Preservation of Agricultural Land**

Executive Order #193 discourages the irreversible conversion of the Commonwealth's productive agricultural land base. State grants shall not be used to encourage the irreversible conversion of agricultural land to other uses when feasible alternatives are available. In the event that all feasible alternatives have been explored, and the conversion of suitable agricultural lands to non-agricultural use remains the only feasible alternative to protection of open space, a mitigation plan must be developed to be eligible for reimbursement under a state grant. Project that would convert any prime agricultural lands should consult with the Department Agricultural Resources at (617) 626-1700 prior to submitting an application.

## RATING SYSTEM for PARC Projects

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SUB-CATEGORY</b>	<i>Description</i>	<b>Partial Points</b>	<b>Max</b>
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	Population Density	Figures are obtained from MassGIS and put into rank order by DCS	1-7	8
	Median Income	Figures are obtained from MISER and put into rank order by DCS	1-4	5
	Percentage of Households below Poverty Level	Figures are obtained from MISER and put into rank order by DCS	1-4	5
	Educational Attainment	Percentage of the city or town's population having attained a bachelor's degree compared to the state's average	1-5	6
<b>COMMUNITY PROFILE SCORE</b>	Environmental Justice Community	Calculated by DCS	1-7	8
	Open Space Availability	Percent of protected open space by Census tract (points awarded by how project ranks against other applications)	1-7	8
<b>PROJECT QUALITY</b>	Consistency with current EEA policies	Project located in an area inhabited by Environmental Justice populations	1-5	6
		Project increases access to recreation to all residents, especially those that go above and beyond to provide access to people with disabilities	1-9	10
		Project that increases access to recreational amenities to community's residents through acquisition/parkland dedication and/or development of a new park or renovation of currently unusable park (points will not be awarded to new parks that include a significant amount of tree removal)	2	8
		Site offers environmental education and/or interpretive services	2	4
	Climate Resiliency	Acquisition, development, or renovation project that protects or enhances water-based recreation	3	5
		Project design incorporates resiliency, such as adding significantly to the park's tree cover, pervious surface, stormwater retention, solar trash cans, etc.	1-7	8
	Stewardship	Cooperative project between applicant and other municipality or non-profit organization for construction funding and/or commitment for future park maintenance	2	4
	Public Meeting	Municipality has conducted a public meeting on project with demonstrated enhanced outreach in Environmental Justice neighborhoods	1-2	3
	Consistency with plan	Points awarded based on how many goals, objectives, or action plan items from community's Open Space and Recreation Plan are advanced	1-2	3
	Distribution of state resources	Applicant has not received a PARC grant in the past five grant rounds		3
Overall project quality	Overall ability of project to meet Secretary's priorities	1-5	6	
<b>TOTAL</b>				100
<b>BONUS POINTS</b>	Community Compact	Applicant has signed a Community Compact		2