



DIVISION OF CONSERVATION SERVICES

**FY27 LAND and PARC
Grant Programs
Workshop**

LAND and PARC 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



Gray's Beach, Kingston



Holland Glen Forest, Belchertown

LAND and PARC Grant Programs

Grant Priorities:

▶ **LAND: Conservation Projects**

- Biodiversity protection
- Landscape conservation
- Outdoor passive recreation
- Drinking water protection
- Stewardship of conservation & working lands

▶ **PARC: Recreation Projects**

- Environmentally Burdened Areas
- Development of new parks
- Designs that incorporate climate resilience
- Access to recreation for all residents, especially those that go above and beyond to provide access to people with disabilities

LAND and PARC Grant Information

- Applicants must have an Open Space and Recreation Plan on file with DCS by grant deadline & be in compliance with MBTA Communities Act
- Applicants with outstanding conversion issues are ineligible
- Reimbursement rate between 52% and 70%
- Maximum grant award of \$425,000
- Grant funding pending FY27 capital budget approval



Downtown Common, Leominster

LAND and PARC Grant Information

- **Grant deadline: July 9, 2026 at 11:59 pm**
- **Submit the application via EEA's Grant Management System**
- Appraisal requirements
- MHC and NHESP review letters
- Do not purchase land without signed contract!
- Do not begin construction without signed contract!



Medford, Gillis Field

Eligible Project Costs

For PARC renovation/ development projects:

- ▶ Engineering
 - ▶ Design
 - ▶ Construction
 - ▶ Construction supervision (during year 2)
- This is not an inclusive list – ask if you have specific questions



Market Landing Park, Newburyport

Eligible Project Costs for Land Acquisition

For LAND/PARC acquisitions:

- Cost to purchase (appraised value or negotiated price, whichever is lower)
- Property survey
- Title search and certification
- Legal fees associated with the acquisition (pending EEA approval)
- Recording fees
- Baseline Documentation Report
- Up to 10% of grant request, with EEA approval, can be for other contractual services, such as consultants to conduct other services for the project (include detail in project budget)

Ineligible Project Costs

- Design only (for PARC grants)
- Appraisals
- Reimbursement for in-kind contributions or donations
- Municipal staff time
- Equipment or goods
- Application preparation costs
- 21E compliance fees
- Brownfields restoration
- **When in doubt, ask!**



VanDyke Park, Sutton

Selection Process for DCS Grants

- DCS staff schedule site visits
- Projects are scored and ranked (rating system is included in the grant bid package)
- Recommendations are reviewed and approved by EEA's Secretary and the Governor's office
- ***Estimated*** grant award announcement date:
November 2026

Rating Systems

- Individual rating systems – one for LAND, one for PARC
- Demographic data is considered (Census, Burdened Areas)
- Rating systems provided in the grant bid document



Buckland Pool

Funding Award & Project Timeline

- Votes must be secured prior to executing contracts
- Plan for a closing after December 31, 2026 – if there is a need to close earlier, discuss with grant manager
- Project completion deadlines:
 - FY27 acquisition projects: June 1, 2027
 - FY28 acquisition and construction projects: June 1, 2028

Municipal Votes

- All projects must have a town meeting/city council vote
- The vote must do three things:
 - ▶ Authorize submission of grant application
 - ▶ Appropriate 100% of the total project cost
 - ▶ Dedicate the land to recreation or conservation purposes (depending upon the grant program)
- Sample vote language provided in the application package
- **Send LAND grant draft vote to Vanessa for approval**
- **Send PARC grant draft vote to Melissa for approval**

Municipal Votes

- Vote can occur after application deadline or after grant decisions have been announced, **but...**
- Projects awarded funding **must have vote 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
- CPA funds can be used as local share
- Other state grants cannot be used as local share



CPA Communities

- Community Preservation Act (CPA) requires that land purchased with CPA funds must have a Conservation Restriction recorded on the property
- We ask LAND & PARC grant recipients to make all efforts to comply with CPA requirements prior to grant reimbursement regardless of whether CPA funds are used for the project

Please ensure all CRs on all CPA funded open space acquisitions are recorded prior to seeking grant reimbursement under PARC/LAND Grants

Other Reimbursement Requirements

- Land purchased with grant funding must have a recorded survey referenced in the deed
- A signed Project Agreement will be required to acknowledge receipt of grant funds and Article 97 protection
- Grant recipients that have Land and Water Conservation Fund sites in their community will need to complete an inspection form on all LWCF funded properties prior to final reimbursement

Post-completion Responsibilities

- Projects are protected under Article 97 – land must remain in conservation or recreation in perpetuity
- Site must be open to all including non-residents and people with disabilities
- Fair fee policy
- Sign requirements
- Parking

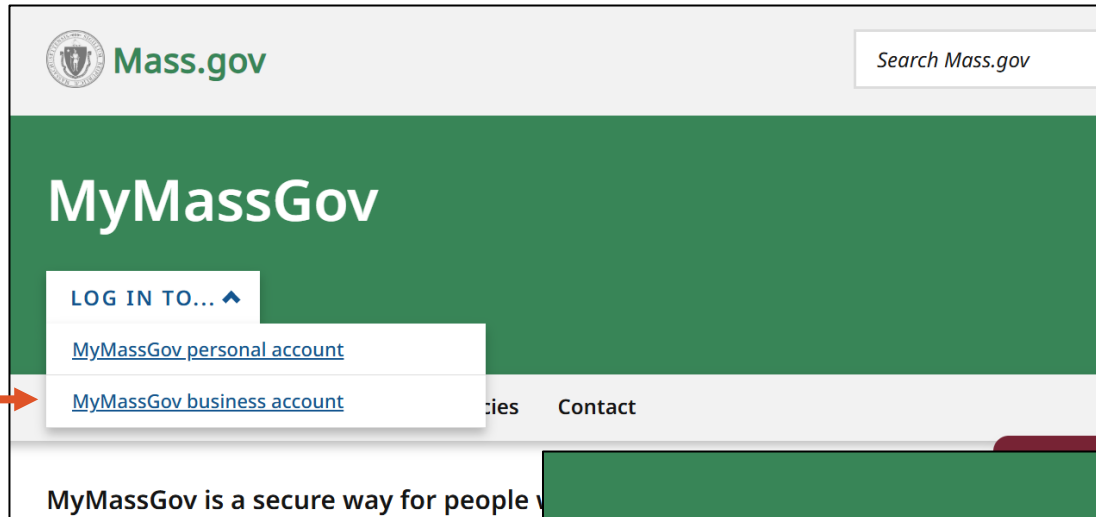


Submitting an Application

Applications **MUST** be submitted through the new
EEA Grant Management System

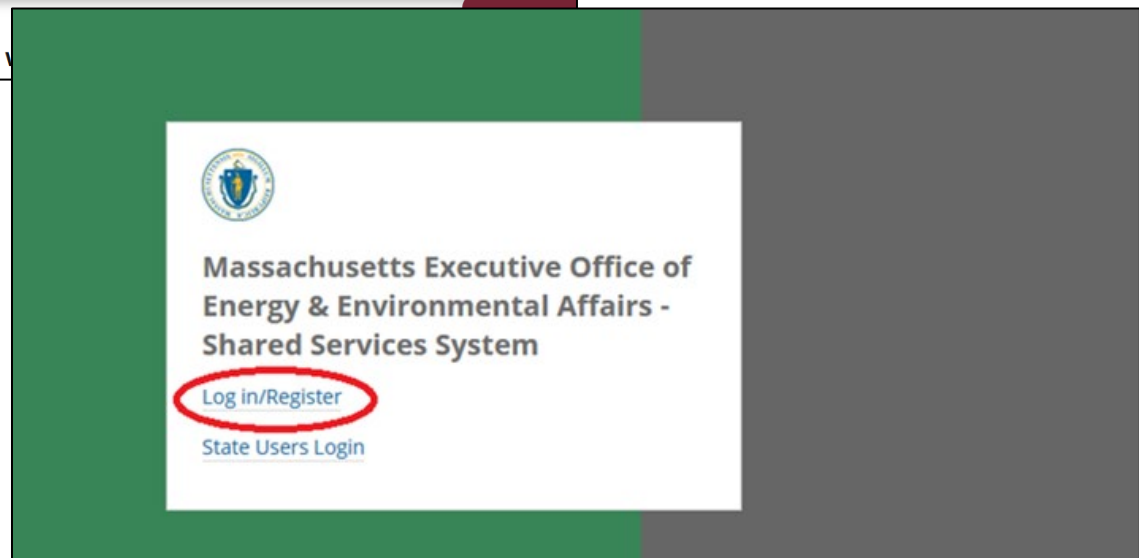
- Create a 'Business' Account (at MyMass.gov) to access the Grant Management System
- The PROJECT MANAGER should create the account in the name of the municipality applying; the email address registered with the account will receive contract materials if a grant is awarded
- All application materials are submitted via GMS, EXCEPT:
- If finalizing an OSRP, email to Melissa separately

Creating an Account / Log-In:



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Mass.gov website. On the left is the Mass.gov logo. On the right is a search box labeled "Search Mass.gov". Below the navigation bar is a green banner with the text "MyMassGov". Underneath the banner is a "LOG IN TO..." dropdown menu with two options: "MyMassGov personal account" and "MyMassGov business account". An orange arrow points to the "MyMassGov business account" option. To the right of the dropdown menu are links for "Policies" and "Contact". Below the banner, the text "MyMassGov is a secure way for people v" is partially visible.

OR:



The screenshot shows a login/register page for the "Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs - Shared Services System". The page features the state seal logo at the top left. The main heading is "Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs - Shared Services System". Below the heading, the text "Log in/Register" is circled in red. At the bottom, there is a link for "State Users Login".

For more guidance:

Grants Management System (GMS)

The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) is excited to announce the launch of our new, comprehensive Grants Management System (GMS), designed to streamline the grant process for our community partners.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ✓ [About GMS](#)
- ✓ [Key Features](#)
- ✓ [Secure Access with MyMassGov](#)
- ✓ [Browse Open Grant Opportunities](#)
- ✓ [Create a User Profile - Help](#)
- ✓ [To Create a MyMassGov Username and Password](#)
- ✓ [To Access the Grant Management System](#)
- ✓ [Stay Connected](#)
- ✓ [Contact](#)

Useful Tips & Troubleshooting

- Visit [Grants Management System \(GMS\)](#) on Mass.gov for instructions
- Instructional playlist on YouTube:
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzQVK6KiTOqyPW5PUOcFE42iRJgdm8LA_&si=Wm2l78OgFDZ-1nA
- [User guide](#) on the GMS Portal



PARC GRANT

Eligible 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)



DeMarco Park, Avon

PARC Grants

- All cities regardless of size or towns with more than 35,000 residents are eligible for maximum \$425,000 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 \$425,000 grant award
- All other town projects are eligible for maximum \$100,000 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 – emailed by July 16, 2026 (not required)
- Two-year grant (for renovation/development projects) – first year for design, second year for construction (can request construction funding only for FY28)

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



O'Day Playground, Boston

PARC Application Tips

- Answer the following questions in the project description:
 - ▶ Is this park in a Burdened Area?
 - ▶ 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?
 - ▶ Is the park mapped as a Statewide Land Surface Temperature Hot Spot ?
 - ▶ How does the park design incorporate resiliency?
 - ▶ How were people in Burdened Areas outreached to?
 - ▶ Do I have a partner for future stewardship?
 - ▶ How does this project address my OSRP's goals, objectives or action plan items?



LAND GRANT

Eligible LAND Grant Projects

- Land acquisition
 - ▶ Fee simple
 - ▶ Conservation Restriction
- Conservation and passive recreation
- Conservation Commission or Agricultural Commission control
- Collaborations – many communities' work closely with land trusts



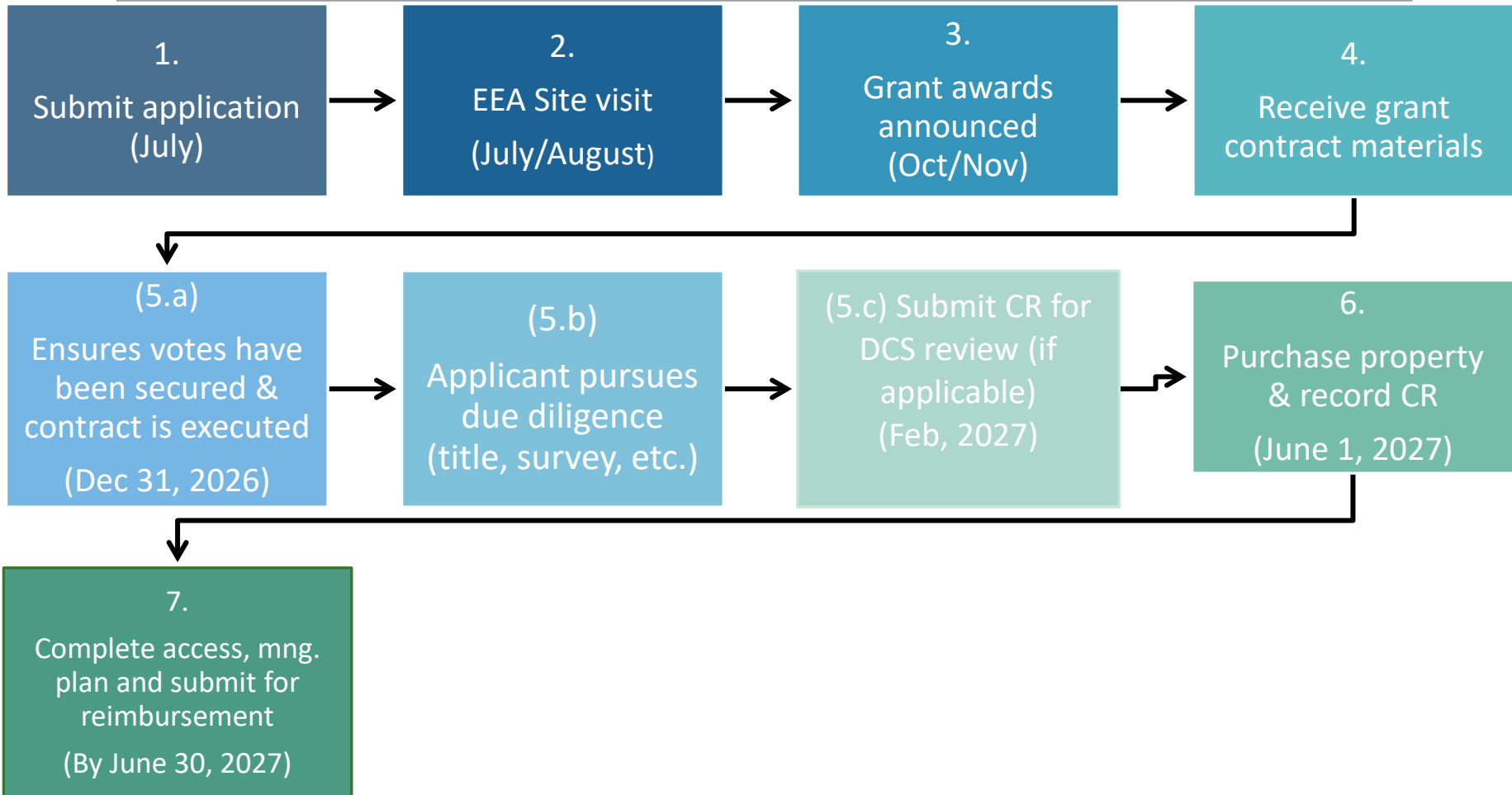
LAND Grant Application Requirements

- Appraisals
 - Requirements are on page 6 of the bid document
 - Two appraisals recommended if valuation is >\$1M
- Budget
 - Itemize anticipated expenses
- Project narrative
- Maps
 - Natural resources and landscape context
- NHESP & MHC Letters
- (Draft) Votes authorizing purchase

Joint Applications

- Multiple municipalities may apply jointly for projects spanning boundaries.
- Land must be contiguous
- A lead contact for project may be designated in a letter signed by all municipalities
- Maximum award reflects \$425,000 per municipality (e.g. \$850,000 for two municipalities)
- Reimbursement rate will be the **average** of the municipalities' rates

Grant Timeline & Project Requirements



Reimbursement Requirements

- Recorded deed and/or Conservation Restriction
- Recorded Project Agreement to confirm land is protected under Article 97
- Recorded survey with metes & bounds
- Certified clear title
- Installation of parking & signage
- Applicants with LWCF sites in their community will need to complete an inspection form on all LWCF funded properties prior to final reimbursement
- CPA required CR's recorded

Other DCS Grant Programs for Land Conservation/Park Development

- **Conservation Partnership grant** (non-profits) **App deadline: July 13, 2026** \$425,000 for purchase of land/CRs.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund grant** (municipalities, tribes, DCR, DFG) \$1,000,000 to build/renovate trails, acquire land, renovate or build parks. **App deadline: January**
- **Drinking Water Supply Protection grant** (munic. water departments/non-profit public water suppliers/water districts) \$300,000 for purchase of land/CRs. **App deadline: March**
- **Forest Reserves grant** (munic. conservation commissions & non-profits) \$425,000 for purchase of land/CRs. **App deadline: March**
- **Landscape Partnership grant** (munic. conservation commissions, water departments, non-profits, and state and federal agencies) \$1,250,000 for purchase of land/CRs/APRs. **App deadline: April**

Contact Information

Vanessa Farny
(857) 330-1978
vanessa.farny@mass.gov

Melissa Cryan
(857) 274-7173
melissa.cryan@mass.gov

Visit DCS online at:

<https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services>

Open question period ends on June 25, 2026
Have your questions answered before then