

**Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Grant
Program APPLICATION FORM – FY 2024**

Instructions:

- An application must be submitted through [this online form](#). The Applicant will be asked to enter all of the information below directly into the form.
- The application **can** be saved while working on it. Click “Save and Resume Later” at the bottom of the form and then click on “Save and Get Link.” A link to the application will be provided which must be copied and saved in order to return to the application. A good way to avoid losing the link is to email it to yourself.
- Please note that attachments can **not** be saved with the application until it is ready to submit. The files should be uploaded just prior to submitting the application. If documents are uploaded to the application and the user navigates away from the site without submitting, the files will need to be uploaded again.
- Total size of all documents attached to the online form cannot exceed 25 MB.
- Please upload files as PDFs to the extent possible unless otherwise specified.
- **Please label all files as follows: [Municipality]_[Shorthand of project title]_[Name of attachment]_LAND.**

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project name: _____

Municipality: _____

(Applications with land in more than one municipality should average demographic metrics. Project quality will be based on the whole project).

Municipal project manager:

This is the person who will be the day-to-day contact for the project and who will represent the municipality in communication with DCS. **Attach authorization from the Chief Executive Officer identifying the individual named below.**

Name: _____

Affiliation with Municipality: _____

Address at City or Town Hall: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

2. PROJECT DETAILS

Municipality:

Population 2020: _____ Population 2010: _____

Seasonal population (including student population): _____ Source of data: _____

Describe seasonal population: _____

Housing Choice Initiative

Has your community been designated a Housing Choice Community? For more information please visit <https://www.mass.gov/housingchoice>.

Yes

No

Property: (Provide this information directly from the appraisal report)

Acres: _____ Number of parcels: _____

Upland Acreage: _____

Interest municipality will acquire:

Fee

Conservation Restriction (CR)

Both fee and CR

If both, explain: _____

Parcel information:

County: _____

Assessor's map/lot number: _____

Current owner(s) _____

Access:

Does property have frontage on a street?

Yes

No

If yes, list street(s): _____

_____ If no,
If no, describe how the public can access the property through adjacent landholdings. Grant funds are for purchase of land for conservation and public passive recreational use. Properties that do not have suitable public access will not be funded.

Zoning: _____

Past use(s): _____

Present use(s): _____

Proposed use(s): _____

Enhanced Outreach to Environmental Justice Populations:

Describe how Environmental Justice populations in your community (or neighboring communities) were able to participate in the project selection. Please include any flyers, mailings, etc. that were distributed to the community and describe here how and where they were distributed.

Is the acquisition consistent with any nearby State Priority Development or Preservation Areas as shown on the South Coast Rail Corridor Plan or the 495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan, or any other regional plan? *If yes, please name the plan and describe its relevance.*
 Yes No

Are there buildings or structures on the property? Yes No
If yes, list each and indicate current and planned use. The LAND Grant Program is intended to preserve undeveloped land, not to purchase buildings. Buildings are ineligible for funding. Any buildings proposed to be kept must serve a legitimate conservation, outdoor education, or public passive recreational use.

Will this project involve the removal of structures? Yes No

3. ACQUISITION AND FUNDING DETAILS

<u>Appraisal Report #1</u>	<u>Appraisal Report #2 (if needed)</u>
Valuation: \$ _____	Valuation: \$ _____
Appraiser: _____	Appraiser: _____
Valuation _____	Valuation _____
Date: _____	Date: _____

Acquisition details:
Do you have a Purchase & Sales Agreement? Yes No

If yes, amount of negotiated sale: \$ _____
Has a title search been conducted? Yes No
Is an eminent domain taking anticipated? Yes No
If yes, proposed pro tanto award amount: \$ _____

*A certificate of clear title is required for reimbursement. If clear title is not available, the applicant may decide to acquire the property by a friendly taking (eminent domain) process to clear title. Please notify DCS of any title problems as soon as possible since this can complicate the acquisition process.

Can this project be completed next Fiscal Year, FY 2025? (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)
 Yes, if necessary Yes, FY 25 Preferred No

Funding request:
Recipients of LAND grant funding are reimbursed *after* they have expended the total project cost and submitted proof of payment. Only costs incurred during a grant recipient’s contract period will be reimbursed. The reimbursement rate is 52-70%, based upon a municipality’s Equalized Valuation Per

Capita. The rate for joint applications will be the average of the municipalities' reimbursement rates. See the DCS website for a list of rates.

List your anticipated expenditures and requested grant amount below.

Reimbursement rate: _____%

Item	Cost	Grant request
Property acquisition*	\$	\$
Recording fees	\$	\$
Title certification	\$	\$
Survey / Other:	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

*Grant award amount is based upon the appraised value or agreed upon purchase price, whichever is less.

Will funds from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) be used? Yes No

Will funds from the Cape Cod Land Bank be used? Yes No

Use of CPA or Land Bank funds require the conveyance of a permanent Conservation Restriction (CR), within the meaning of Ch. 184, to an eligible non-profit organization.

Have you identified an organization willing to hold the CR?

If the CR will be co-held between a Conservation Commission and another party, the Conservation Commission must be designated as the primary CR holder.

Yes No

Name of organization: _____

Are you using or seeking funds from other sources or partners? Please list:

Are you using or seeking funds from the Conservation Land Tax Credit program? Please describe:

4. PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please include a 1-2 page narrative that describes the following as applicable:

- The property characteristics including habitat, recreational, historical, educational, forestry or agricultural values.
- The development threat to the property.
- Purpose of acquisition and proposed uses; how acquisition of the property will protect or enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, promote existing forestry or agricultural management, conserve natural resources and open space, or address climate change.
- Plans for property stewardship and demonstrated capacity to achieve stewardship; does the applicant presently manage similar existing properties or have existing stewardship arrangements with partners?
- If footpaths, bridges, signage or other infrastructure are proposed for the property, whether local wood will be used.
- How the proposed project enhances other protected open space and/or whether the proposed project will catalyze the conservation of additional acreage through landowner or other agreements (provide evidence such as ownership information and/or agreements with landowner).
- How the project furthers the goals identified in the community Open Space & Recreation Plan,

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and/or those of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan.

- Whether the property provides flood and stormwater risk mitigation, or protection for drinking water supply.

An outline of the project schedule; please address any existing agreements with project partners.

5. PROJECT QUALITY

Landscape preservation

How much permanently protected conservation land does this project abut? _____ acres

Does protection of this land catalyze the conservation of additional, adjacent lands through any existing agreements? Yes (___acres) No

Describe the risk of potential development (e.g. developable land?) and allowable uses (e.g. zoning_ or scale of development if known:

Recreational opportunities:

Municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP):

To apply for this grant, the municipality must have an approved OSRP or have submitted a draft OSRP by the grant application deadline and have completed the public participation process.

List the goals, objectives, or action plan items in your current or draft OSRP this project serves. Attach the relevant pages (**not the whole plan**).

	Goal, objective, or action plan item from current OSRP	Page no.
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

What public recreational opportunities will the project provide?
(Recreational opportunities will be verified by DCS staff during the site visit.)

- Wilderness-based activities (e.g. camping, hunting)
- Trail-based activities (e.g. hiking, Nordic skiing, biking, horseback riding)
- Water-based activities (e.g. canoeing, swimming, fishing, skating)
- Historic, cultural, or environmental education
- Community gardening or other community agriculture

Additional description (as needed): _____

Biodiversity and resource protection:

How much of the project area is designated 'Core Habitat' or Critical Natural Landscape' as defined by the MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program BioMap designated areas (Include a map showing designated areas as applicable):

Core Habitat: _____ acres

Critical Natural Landscape: _____ acres

Does the project protect a landscape, wetland or aquatic habitat or contain vernal pools or rare species designated as Local or Regional Significance in BioMap? (If yes, include a map showing designated areas.)

Yes Type of Resource: _____ No

What is the project location's average climate resilience score as defined by The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Land map - <http://maps.tnc.org/resilientland/> ? Include documentation.

SD: _____ Category: _____ (e.g. "above average", "slightly below average")

Working lands:

Is the property currently managed for active forestry or agriculture? Yes No

Is active forest management or agriculture proposed for the property after the acquisition?
 (Note: agriculture and forestry activities must be compatible with conservation and public use of the property.)

If yes, describe planned forestry or farming: Yes No

Water resources:

What portion of the property is within an existing public drinking water supply area (Zone I/II or A/B), OR over a medium- or high-yield aquifer:

- None
- 1-24%
- 25-50%
- >51%

Bonus Points:

Community Compact

Has your community signed a Community Compact?

- Yes No

If “yes”, please list the Sustainable Development and Land Protection Best Practices included in it.

Municipal Vulnerability Program

Is your community an MVP Community?

- Yes No

If “yes”, please list the priority implementation project(s) relevant to land conservation, such as tree planting or land acquisitions in floodplains.

6. MUNICIPAL AUTHORIZATION:

Does this project have town meeting/city council approval? Yes No

If not, what is the scheduled date for the vote? _____

Attach a certified copy of the Town Meeting or City Council vote, or draft language. Vote must conform to sample vote language criteria, available as Attachment D to this application and be submitted to DCS for review.

If selected for LAND funding, the Applicant will be required to execute the following forms in order to complete a contract:

- LAND Grant Program Project Agreement
- Commonwealth Standard Contract
- Commonwealth Standard Terms & Conditions
- Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing

7. Local Approvals

Attach municipality's legal authority to apply for the grant, and the Chief Executive Officer's legal authorization to execute contracts. This is a resolution, motion or similar action that has been duly adopted or passed as an official act of the community's governing body that authorizes the filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein. Please submit with a letter affirming authorization for the Application.

Authorization for Application

The undersigned hereby certifies that they are authorized, by the bylaws or charter of _____ or otherwise by law, acting in their official capacity as the _____ of said municipality and on behalf of said municipality, to submit the foregoing application for a grant from the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs, and hereby authorizes the person designated below as project manager to collaborate with the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs on matters pertaining to the grant application.

_____ Date: _____
Chief Executive Officer Printed Name

Authorized project manager:

Name: _____

Position: _____

The undersigned, chair of the Conservation Commission of _____, hereby certifies that at a meeting on _____, 2023, the Conservation Commission voted to approve the foregoing application.

_____ Date: _____
Chair, Conservation Commission Printed Name

APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS – use this as a checklist.

1. Municipal CEO's Authorization of Project Manager
2. Project narrative
3. Map(s) showing protected resource values, proximity to other conservation lands
4. Letter from MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program commenting on presence of rare species
5. Letter from MA Historical Commission commenting on historic resources
6. Appraisal report(s) – *please send via email or file share platform*
7. Draft Conservation Restriction (if applicable)
8. Certified Town Meeting Vote (or draft language, if vote is pending)
9. Statement and supporting evidence of how Environmental Justice populations in your community were able to participate in the project selection. Please compile any flyers, mailings, etc.

that were sent. The statement should describe where they were distributed and how they were relevant to the population. (For more information see EEA's Environmental Justice Policy online at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/environmental-justice-policy>)

10. Compiled documentation of good land stewardship on past DCS grant or municipal conservation land. Supporting documentation may be compiled for one or more past LAND/Self-Help grants or municipally-owned conservation properties. You may include examples from up to three different activities from the following list: stewardship monitoring report on municipal land, invasive species control, trail building, educational kiosks, recent surveys outlining the conditions of trails or land boundaries, recent baseline documentation reports, and/or forest or land management plans. Applicants can submit documentation of other land stewardship activities. Photos of land stewardship activities are encouraged. If your community does not currently own any conservation land, please describe how your community will steward land subject to this application in the project narrative.