

FY26 PARC and LAND Grant Workshop Questions & Answers

Who usually writes letters of support?

Project proponents and others that are supportive of the project.

Are Cape Cod communities eligible for the PARC grant maximum of \$425,000?

Yes, Cape Cod communities do not have to meet population thresholds.

Who usually submits the PARC grant application?

Typically, the planning department, but it doesn't have to come from one specific department.

For a LAND grant application to acquire land, if we don't know if an eminent domain taking will be used at the time of an application, can we submit a regular appraisal at the grant deadline followed by an eminent domain appraisal later?

That is possible. The grant award will be based upon the initial appraisal; we cannot increase that award regardless of the second appraisal. Please keep in mind that the eminent domain process can be a long one and the grantee must abide by the contract period, which could be a tight turnaround.

Is it true that PARC grant land must be dedicated to park purposes and LAND grant land must be held by the conservation commission (or agricultural commission if agricultural land)?

Yes.

Are trail design and construction projects eligible for either grant?

This may be a better fit for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. If the land is/was purchased with LAND grant funding is dedicated to conservation purposes and therefore ineligible for PARC grants, since only land dedicated for park purposes are eligible for PARC grants. LWCF grants can fund the construction of trails regardless of the dedicated purpose.

Are LAND and PARC grants state-funded? Do any of the DCS grants benefit from federal allocations?

The LAND and PARC grant are state funded. The only open space and conservation grant that DCS administers that is funded by federal appropriation is the LWCF grant program.

How refined does the site design submitted with the PARC application need to be?

The site design submitted with a PARC grant application must be refined enough to have solid cost estimates derived from them.

What types of materials are you requesting we include in the PARC grant application to demonstrate outreach conducted?

Any outreach materials that demonstrate enhanced outreach to [Environmental Justice populations](#). All outreach is great, but only enhanced outreach to EJ populations will receive points in the rating system.

Can a town meeting vote be taken after the grant submittal deadline? When do you have to receive the Town Meeting/City Council vote?

Yes. The town meeting or city council vote can take place after the deadline. However, if the project has been awarded grant funding, votes must be received by December 31, 2025.

How do I know if my municipality has an Article 97 conversion issue?

If you are unsure, you're welcome to ask Melissa or Vanessa. Most communities will know if they are in pursuing an Article 97 disposition.

What should we do if our municipality has a hard time finding a deed for the park land that we are seeking to renovate?

It is recommended you work with a title attorney for difficult deed research. If you still cannot locate a property deed, municipal counsel may be able to draw up a new deed to record at the registry.

If your community hasn't passed the Community Preservation Act, do you have to worry about CPA requirements?

No.

To qualify for a regional project under the PARC grant as a town with a population of less than 35,000 residents, how close does the public transit need to be to the park?

The public transportation access must be within a ½ mile of the park. This can be a train station, T stop, and/or bus stop.

What is the Fair Fee policy referenced in the PARC grant?

Non-residents cannot be charged more than twice what residents are charged. All fee schedules must be approved by DCS in perpetuity.

Must all LAND and PARC funded sites be open to people with disabilities?

Yes. All sites that receive state funding must comply with the American with Disabilities Act. For specific questions about what this means for your project, feel free to contact the appropriate grant manager.

What is the Open Space and Recreation Plan requirement?

The grant applicant must have a currently approved OSRP (conditional or final approval) or draft plan submitted for review by the time of the grant deadline. For your community's OSRP status, visit [this site](#). For more on OSRPs in general, visit [this site](#).

What is the total pool of funding that Small Town PARC grant applicants will compete for?

The PARC grant has set aside \$400,000 to award to Small Town applicants this year.

Can a PARC grant applicant begin construction before Fiscal Year 2027?

The FY26 PARC grant only awards funding for park acquisition or design in FY26 and reimburses construction costs incurred in FY27. If construction costs are incurred in FY26, they will be ineligible for reimbursement.

Is it possible to combine a park acquisition and construction project into one 2-year PARC grant application budget?

While such a proposal is not strictly ineligible, in our experience it can be quite challenging for grantees to successfully complete the acquisition and park construction project in that time frame. We discourage applicants from pursuing this route. A park acquired with PARC funding in FY26 remains eligible to apply for additional design and construction funding in future grant rounds.

Is there a specific type of appraisal required for LAND and PARC grants?

A certified appraisal will satisfy both grant's requirements. If the property is anticipated to be valued at <\$350,000 a restricted appraisal report is acceptable. Applicants should follow EEA specifications, which can be [found here](#).

What is the difference between the PARC and LWCF grant programs?

While they can fund similar things (parkland acquisition, park development, and park renovation), the PARC grant is funded by the state budget and the LWCF grant is funded through federal off-shore oil lease revenue and is administered by DCS in coordination with the National Park Service.

Would a soccer field renovated using a PARC grant application be required to comply with ADA?

Yes. All state funded grants must comply with the ADA.

Does DCS award partial grants?

No. We make awards based upon the grant request in the application.

What is the timeline for grants to be announced?

We expect to announce grants in mid to late fall of 2025.

Is parking required of all LAND and PARC funded projects?

Yes, but depending on the site, community, and/or location, we can be flexible on the size and requirements.

Are park projects eligible to receive the maximum \$425,000 grant award for construction costs if the design work has been completed already?

Yes.

If a park property is currently under the Selectboard's jurisdiction, may we still apply for a PARC grant to improve that property?

Yes. However, the town meeting vote will need to include language to dedicate the land to park purposes.

Do all applications require Mass Historic Commission (MHC) and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) review? Even if it's just for tennis court rehabilitation?

Yes! All LAND and PARC grant applications must have a MHC and NHESP review letter.

If my town has < 35,000 residents, but meets the criteria to seek an award for \$425,000, will the application compete with other applications applying for the full grant award? Or compete with Small Town applicants?

Small Town applicants are eligible to apply for upto \$425,000 if the project is:

1. Within a ½ mile of a public transit
2. Has a parking lot that can accomodate 100 or more cars.

If a Small Town elects to apply for a grant of over \$100,000, the application will be considered with applications submitted by larger communities. Include a Usage Report as a part of the grant application (Attachment C in the PARC grant bid).

Does designation as an MBTA community meet the criteria for a Small Town to be eligible for the larger PARC grant award?

No. The project must be within a ½ mile of a public transit stop or have a parking lot for 100+ cars.

How do we know what our community's reimbursement rate is?

It can be found on the grant website ([PARC grant](#)).

If a community applies for the LAND and the PARC grant, could both projects be awarded funding?

Applications for each grant are rated independently from those of the other grant. A community could receive funding for two projects if both applications are competitive.

Where is Environmental Justice data found?

The link is included in the applications and available here: [Massachusetts 2020 Environmental Justice Populations](#)