

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)

SUBJECT: Planning Project Management Process Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/25/09

REVISED DATE: 11/27/13

Background: Following is an overview of the Bureau's grant process for implementing planning grant projects. The term "grantee" refers to a grant applicant that has been awarded a grant.

Grant Administration Roles and Responsibilities

Local Project Coordinator

The grantee designates the Local Project Coordinator. The Bureau considers this coordinator to be the official contact person on all matters related to the administration of the grant project. All official correspondence will be sent to the Local Project Coordinator. If the grantee's Local Project Coordinator changes during the course of the project, the grantee must provide the assigned Bureau Project Manager with written notification on grantee's letterhead of the change, including the name, title, address, email, and daytime telephone number of the new Local Project Coordinator.

Bureau Project Manager

The Bureau assigns a staff member to serve as the Project Manager to work with the grantee to successfully complete the grant project. It is the Bureau Project Manager's responsibility to provide information and assistance to the grantee to ensure that the project is completed, that grant program requirements are met, and that the project can be successfully closed out. All correspondence and communications regarding the project should be directed to the Bureau Project Manager.

Grant Administration Process

It is BRC's intent to provide each grantee with as much assistance as needed, on a step-by-step basis, to ensure a successful project. There are steps requiring the grantee to wait for DCNR's review and approval before proceeding to the next step. The standard process for implementing a planning grant is as follows:

1. Stage 1 - DCNR Contracting

- DCNR sends a "notice-of-selection" letter to the grantee.
- A fully executed copy of the Grant Agreement is returned to the grantee by DCNR, signifying the beginning of the project management process.

2. Stage 2 - Application/Project Review and Comment

Note: This stage can be concurrent with the DCNR/Community Contracting Stage.

- Grantee receives a letter from their designated DCNR Project Manager providing application review comments and next step instructions including various attachments to assist the grantee with project implementation. Grantee is requested to submit a draft study committee list, RFP, Scope of Work (SOW) and project budget for review and approval. Grantee is also provided an Initial Payment Request form (requesting up to 50% of the total grant amount).

Time-frame: Completed 3-4 weeks following grant award announcement.

3. Stage 3 - Initial Project Meeting

- The DCNR Project Manager meets with the grantees designated Local Project Coordinator to review and discuss project scope of work and the “Initial Project Letter” contents to insure that the information provided is clearly understood and the project is ready to proceed. Meetings will be conducted by phone or face-to-face depending on complexity of projects.

Time-frame: Completed within 2 months following “Initial Project Letter” (Stage2).

4. Stage 4 - Request for Proposal (RFP) Approval (if applicable)

- The DCNR Project Manager provides a letter granting approval of RFP and next step instructions for consultant selection. “RFP Guidelines” are provided with the “Initial Project Letter”.

Timeframe: Completed 2-3 weeks following receipt of draft RFP.

5. Stage 5 - Notice to Proceed with Planning Process

- The DCNR Project Manager reviews and approves the project study committee (if applicable), selected consultant “Professional Services Agreement”, SOW, project deliverables, budget, and timeline. “Certification of Title” is required for “Master Site Development Plan” projects only. Additional project payments may be requested after this step (may request up to 90% of the total grant amount).
- The DCNR Project Manager provides a letter granting approval to proceed with the planning process including next step instructions.

Timeframe: Completed 2-3 weeks following receipt of all required submission items.

6. Stage 6 - Review Draft Plans

- The DCNR Project Manager reviews the “Final Draft Plan” to ensure that contracted scope of work is completed and to provide professional feedback as appropriate. All plans must include a summary of the public participation process and prioritized recommendations for implementation including cost estimates as appropriate.
- The DCNR Project Manager will provide written draft review comments if necessary. Upon approval of the draft plan, the DCNR Project Manager will provide a letter indicating next steps to proceed with project closeout.

Timeframe: Completed 4-6 weeks following receipt of the draft plan including maps (if applicable).

7. Stage 7 - Project Closeout

- DCNR review and approval of project closeout documentation for final payment. To close out a Grant Agreement for a Planning Project, the grantee is required to:

Submit a resolution passed by the governing body certifying that:

- a. The project was completed in accordance with the Grant Agreement;
- b. All project expenditures have been made and were in accordance with the Grant Agreement;
- c. The Plan and related materials are acceptable to the grantee, and;
- d. The Plan and related materials will be used to guide future recreation and conservation decisions.

Provide to the Bureau:

- e. Three (3) printed and bound copies of the final study report.
 - f. One (1) full-scale final Site Development Drawing (if applicable).
 - g. One (1) electronic PDF copy of the final study report (as one complete document, not broken out by chapters, etc.)
 - h. A Final Payment Request Form properly completed and signed.
 - i. A letter from consultant/partners stating that the contract/professional services agreement has been paid in full (if applicable).
- Upon receipt and satisfactory review of the “Final Payment Request” form and associated documentation, the DCNR Project Manager will provide the grantee with a written final payment letter, authorizing the final payment due the grantee. This will close-out the project.

Grant Payments

After the Grant Agreement is fully executed, all grantees are eligible and strongly encouraged to accept a partial payment of 50% of the grant amount.

Grantees can also request additional partial payments up to 90% of the grant amount. Additional partial payments can be authorized only after the grantee has received the Bureau's written approval of specific eligible costs and/or contracts and any related contingencies. The grantee must request partial payments in writing and such requests should be based upon the estimate of funds required to meet current or short-term anticipated needs.

In all cases, 10% of the grant amount must and will be held until the project is complete and the final product(s) and close-out documentation are submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Bureau. Payment forms are available online at:
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/forms/index.htm>.

Interest Income

With the exception of Growing Greener Bond Fund monies on which interest may not be earned, upfront grant payments and any interest or other income or accumulations generated by this grant must be separately identifiable in the accounting of funds received under the Grant Agreement. Grantee should invest and reinvest grant funds and any interest on other income or accumulations earned on such funds to gain the maximum yield. Subject to prior written approval of the Bureau, the grantee may use the interest or other income or accumulations earned on grant funds for grant activities. Income earned and expended shall be recorded as part of the closeout documentation. Any unused interest or other income remaining at the completion of project activities shall be returned to the DCNR.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Waiver Requests

For Planning projects, consultants must be selected using a competitive RFP process. Upon written request from the grantee, the Bureau may, at the Bureau's sole discretion, waive the required RFP process. See Competitive Bid Policy
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/grantpolicies/index.htm>.

Project Changes/Grant Agreement Amendments

If there is a need to modify the consultant contract, scope of work, deadlines, budget, title of grant project, amount of grant funds, Grant Agreement period, Project Scope, etc., such changes should be discussed with the Bureau Project Manager and, if applicable, the consultant. Normally, the grant amount **will not be increased from its original amount if there is a change in the consultant's cost**. The grantee is responsible to pay all of the increased project costs due to the change. Written or electronic documentation of any changes to the contract must be submitted to the Bureau for review and approval **prior to finalizing and executing the change**. Requests to drop a project and Local Project Coordinator changes must be submitted in writing on grantee's letterhead.

DCNR Acknowledgement

The Plan/deliverables must acknowledge Keystone or Environmental Stewardship Funding by including the following citation on the Plan's acknowledgment page: *"This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, {Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and/or Environmental Stewardship Fund}, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation."*

Record Keeping

Grant projects are routinely audited. As such, grantees must retain all project records for a minimum of three years from project closeout. Project records must be retained in accordance

with the grant agreement. Records include but are not limited to timesheets, receipts, and invoices, verification of payment, physical products and photographic evidence of project activities.

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.