

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**  
**Revised: 12/16/11 9:00 A.M.**

***Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)***  
***Administrative Policy/Grant Guidelines***

**SUBJECT:** Small Community Program Policy

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 12/30/09

**REVISED:** 12/16/11

**BACKGROUND:** DCNR has the authority to provide funding and other assistance to small communities in the Commonwealth using rules that are different than those that apply to other types of grantees. This policy details the eligibility requirements for small community program funding and the rules that apply.

The typical Small Community Development project is not as complex as the larger and more involved Park Rehabilitation and Development project. Please note that an eligible community/municipality is not required to apply under the Small Community Program and can apply for any of the other funding types for which they are eligible.

**POLICY:**

The majority of funding sources used by DCNR for funding community conservation and recreation projects require a 50% match. However, communities with populations of less than 5,000 are eligible to receive funding under the small community development program under which municipal applicants can receive a \$20,000 grant with no match requirement and an additional \$20,000 grant with a \$20,000 local match requirement. The total costs for small community projects cannot exceed \$60,000 total. The local match may be cash, eligible non-cash or a land donation value.

The initial \$20,000 in grant funding must be used only to purchase eligible materials and approved professional design fees of up to \$3,000. Additional grant funds of up to \$20,000 may be provided, and this additional grant money must be matched by the municipality on a dollar for dollar basis by cash or non-cash match. The additional grant money and the municipal match may be used to cover all other eligible costs, such as labor and/or equipment and approved professional fees. The maximum grant a municipal applicant can receive under this funding type is \$40,000, and the maximum total project cost is \$60,000.

Priority under the small community program will be given to projects that primarily focus on playground rehabilitation designed to bring them in compliance with current safety and ADA accessibility standards. Site amenities, such as site furniture, trash cans, picnic grills, landscaping, etc., are eligible for funding and will enhance the park experience and complement

the required ADA improvements (access routes, parking, etc). Other projects unrelated directly to playground safety may also be considered.

**Special Requirements and Conditions:**

- If a municipality applies for a Small Community Development grant, the applicant may not apply for a Park Rehabilitation and Development grant in the same funding cycle.
- The maximum total cost is \$60,000 (\$40,000 grant plus \$20,000 match). If the total project costs will exceed \$60,000, a municipality must apply under the Park Rehabilitation and Development category which requires a dollar for dollar match.
- With a signed and completed partial payment form, Small Community development projects are eligible for up to a 50% partial payment. All payments are subject to the provisions of the grant agreement and the availability of Commonwealth funds.
- When preparing the cost estimate in consultation with a qualified design professional, please include on the grant application cost estimate form the material costs for the playground equipment, safety surfacing, at grade play borders, concrete, drainage materials, ADA access, labor costs, signage, etc. to meet currently accepted standards for playgrounds.

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.