

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

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

SUBJECT: Development Project Management Process - TRAILS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/5/09

REVISED DATE: 12/17/13

Background:

The following is an overview of the Bureau's grant process for implementing trail development projects. The term "Grantee" refers to an applicant that has been awarded a grant. The Local Project Coordinator designated on the grant application will be the Bureau's primary contact and the person to whom Bureau correspondence will be sent. We rely on the Local Project Coordinator to keep the appropriate local parties informed and involved in the process on behalf of the Grantee. If the Local Project Coordinator changes, the Bureau must be notified immediately in writing with the name and contact information for the new Local Project Coordinator.

It is the Bureau's intent to provide each Grantee with as much assistance as needed, on a step-by-step basis, to ensure successful project completion. At several points during the grant management process the Bureau must review and approve documents before the Grantee may proceed to the next stage. The standard process for implementing a trail development grant is as follows:

1. DCNR Contracting Stage

- DCNR sends a "notice-of-selection" letter to the Grantee (Chief Elected Official) signifying the beginning of the project management process.
- DCNR sends a copy of the fully executed Grant Agreement to the Grantee.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- The Bureau Project Manager works with the Grantee to secure PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) and appropriate environmental clearances for approval by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- FHWA approves project funding and establishes the beginning date of the Grant Agreement.

2. Bureau Project Review and Comment Stage

- The Bureau Project Manager sends an introductory letter to the Grantee providing important contact information and outlining the grant management process. Enclosed with the letter are important design submission instructions and required forms.
- Upon review of the introductory letter, the Grantee contacts the Bureau Project Manager to discuss the grant management process, policies, and *Instructions, Forms, & Submission Checklist* for the design submission. The Grantee should review these documents with their Design Consultant and/or Solicitor/Attorney prior to the initial discussion with the Bureau Project Manager.
- The Bureau encourages the Grantee to submit a *Partial Payment Request* form for 50% of the grant amount.
- The Grantee submits a completed Bureau *Trail Project Progress Report* form to the Bureau Project Manager in January and July throughout the Grant Agreement period.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- The Bureau Project Manager discusses the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) procedures, requirements, and project specific DBE participation goal with the Grantee.
- The Grantee is required to make a good faith effort to ensure that DBEs have the opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts and subcontracts. Based on the total project cost and anticipated work items, a specific DBE participation goal is assigned to the project.

3. Bureau Design Submission Review and Approval Stage

- The Grantee submits a complete design submission as outlined in the *Instructions, Forms, & Submission Checklist* for review and approval by the Bureau Project Manager.
- Upon approval of the design submission, the Bureau Project Manager provides written authorization for the Grantee to advertise and bid the project.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- The bid package must include the following DBE documents:
 - *Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Requirements Policy*
 - *Appendix A to Part 26 – Guidance Concerning Good Faith Efforts of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 26*
 - *PennDOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Supportive Services Program Brochure*
 - *DBE Participation for Federal Projects (EO-380) Form*
 - *DCNR Monthly DBE Status Report Form & Instructions*

4. Advertising and Bidding Stage

- The Grantee advertises and bids the project after receiving written authorization to proceed from the Bureau Project Manager.
- If the Grantee is a political subdivision or other entity for which open and competitive bidding procedures have been established by law, the Grantee shall comply with those procedures if they are applicable to the project being funded.
- If the Grantee is a non-profit, for-profit, or any organization not covered by bidding laws, the Grantee must use open and competitive purchasing procedures in awarding all grants, sub-grants, contracts, subcontracts or other agreements for construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration and/or repair, or acquisition of machinery and equipment. The Grantee shall make purchases in accordance with the organization's individual, established, competitive purchasing policies and procedures for making those purchases. The Bureau may request a copy of the organization's established competitive policies and procedures for review.
- If the organization does not have established open and competitive purchasing policies and procedures relating to the use of public funds, the organization has the option to establish competitive purchasing policies and procedures for Bureau review and approval or use the municipal bidding base amounts established by law.
- If other state or federal funds are being used by the organization as a match for the project and competitive purchasing procedures are to be used, please provide this documentation to the Bureau Project Manager.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- For any project assigned a specific DBE Goal, potential bidders are required to attend a pre-bid meeting with the Grantee to review all bidding and DBE requirements and procedures.

5. Awarding of Construction/Materials Contracts Stage

- The Grantee, Design Consultant, and Solicitor/Attorney review the bid results.
- The Grantee forwards the bid tabulation and bid submission of the lowest qualified responsible bidder to the Bureau Project Manager for review.
- Upon approval, the Bureau Project Manager provides written authorization to award contract(s) and requests a copy of each contract for review and approval of eligible costs. Approval to award contract(s) is not approval to begin construction.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- For any project assigned a specific DBE Goal, upon opening of bids, the Grantee sends the following information to the Bureau Project Manager:
 - Bid tabulation
 - Bid submission of the lowest qualified responsible bidder
 - Completed *DBE Participation for Federal Projects* form (EO-380)
 - Documentation of efforts to actively and aggressively obtain sufficient DBE participation
- The Bureau Project Manager submits the bid package and DBE information to PennDOT's Bureau of Project Delivery for review and approval of DBE participation by the Contract Awards Section.

- Upon approval, the Bureau Project Manager provides written authorization to award contracts and requests a copy of each contract for review and approval of eligible costs.

6. **Bureau Approval of Costs Stage**

- The Grantee sends a copy of each executed construction/materials contract to the Bureau Project Manager.
- The Bureau Project Manager provides written approval of costs and authorization to proceed with construction to the Grantee.
- The Bureau encourages the Grantee to submit the *Partial Payment Request* form provided with the approval of costs letter. The Grantee may be eligible to receive up to 90% of the awarded grant amount. A minimum of 10% of the awarded grant amount will be retained for final payment.

7. **Construction Stage**

- The Grantee begins construction on the project.
- The Grantee must seek prior written approval from the Bureau Project Manager for any changes to the approved project scope of work, budget, and/or timeline.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- The Grantee must submit the *DCNR Monthly DBE Status Report* each month throughout the construction contract period.
- The Grantee must seek prior written approval from the Bureau Project Manager for any changes to the contractor's approved DBE commitment.
- The Grantee must monitor DBE participation in the project.
- The Grantee must complete and submit the *DBE Commercially Useful Function Report (E0-354)* form to verify DBE participation in the project.

8. **Project Close Out Stage**

- Concurrently or shortly after the completion of the project, the Grantee contacts the appropriate Bureau Regional Adviser to schedule an on-site inspection of the completed project.
- The Grantee submits a letter from the Consultant certifying that the final construction was completed in accordance with the plans and specifications approved by the Bureau.
- After all contractors/invoices have been paid in full, the Grantee submits a completed *Final Payment Request* form and requested close out documents within 60 days of project completion.
- Bureau Project Manager reviews the *Final Payment Request* form, requested close out documents, and on-site inspection report.
- Upon approval of the close out submission, the Bureau Project Manager provides written approval of the final payment to the Bureau Fiscal Unit and the Grantee. Once the final payment is issued, the project is closed.

PA Recreational Trails (PRT) Project:

- The Grantee submits a concurrence letter from each DBE firm verifying that all payments have been received. Each letter should include the total dollar amount paid to the DBE and acknowledgement that payment in full was received. Each letter must be signed by an authorized official from the DBE firm.

This policy remains in effect until revised or rescinded.