

## The Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program Guidelines

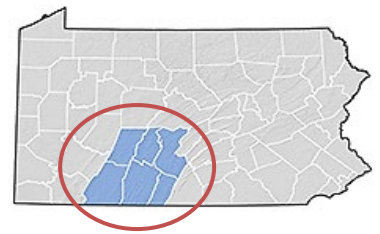
The Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program is a reimbursement program funded by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and administered by the Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAP&DC). The information below provides important guidance for the successful completion of your grant application. Please read and follow the instructions carefully.

**Section 1 – Purpose:** The Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program is intended to provide funding for projects that support the implementation of the overall goals that have been identified in the [2007 Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan](#) and the [Southern Alleghenies Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#).

**For Round 10, projects that support the SAP&DC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan will be given priority.**

2007 Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan	2022 Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>#1: Conserve important natural resources</i></li> <li><i>#2: Expand recreation opportunities</i></li> <li><i>#3: Celebrate cultural heritage</i></li> <li><i>#4: Bolster economic development</i></li> <li><i>#5: Increase pedestrian and bicycle mobility</i></li> <li><i>#6: Promote healthy lifestyles</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>#1: Bolster the region’s bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure so that it is safe to use and enjoy.</i></li> <li><i>#2: Ensure our region’s bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is well maintained.</i></li> <li><i>#3: Continue planning for bicycle and pedestrian initiatives.</i></li> <li><i>#4: Educate our region’s stakeholders, elected officials, and public at-large of key regional initiatives involving bicycle and pedestrian transportation.</i></li> <li><i>#5: Maximize the benefits of transportation investments in the region.</i></li> </ul>

**Section 2 – Eligibility:** Projects eligible for funding must fall within the Southern Alleghenies Region of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties. **Any Applicant that currently has a project open with the SAP&DC Greenway Mini-Grant Program IS NOT-ELIGIBLE to apply for Round 10 funding.** For the tenth round of the Southern Alleghenies Regional Mini-Grant Program, SAP&DC will be awarding projects using the **Environmental Stewardship Fund** and the **Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund** from DCNR.







***Eligible Applicants for Environmental Stewardship Fund***



Funding Sources/Applicant	Environmental Stewardship (GG1) Fund
Municipality	Yes
COG	Yes
Conservation District	Yes
Land Trust	Yes
Non-Profit Organizations	Yes
For-Profit Entities	<b>No</b>
Housing/Redevelopment Authority	Yes
Designated Heritage Areas	Yes

***Eligible Applicants for Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund***

Funding Sources/Applicant	Environmental Stewardship (GG1) Fund
Municipality	Yes
COG	Yes
Conservation District	<b>No</b>
Land Trust	<b>No</b>
Non-Profit Organizations	<b>No</b>
For-Profit Entities	<b>No</b>
Housing/Redevelopment Authority	Yes
Designated Heritage Areas	<b>No</b>

**Eligible Project Types:**

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	
Project Type	Example Projects
<p><b>Development</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bicycle and pedestrian sandwich board signs in downtown areas, as well as areas with heavy biking and foot traffic</li> <li>• New or existing trail development</li> <li>• Installation of bike racks in downtowns, trail heads, and heavily traveled areas</li> <li>• Bicycle signage for on and off-road trails</li> </ul> <p><b>(Please note, for all development projects, applicant must submit design and engineering cost estimates along with the budget)</b></p>
<p><b>Planning</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On and off-road trail feasibility studies</li> <li>• Develop municipal/county bicycle and pedestrian plans</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical Assistance</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian promotion flyers at trail heads</li> <li>• chambers of commerce, visitors' bureaus, etc.</li> <li>• Educational workshops: Educate drivers about bicyclists and the rules of the road</li> <li>• Walking and bicycling maps for trail users in the area</li> <li>• Community walking/biking programs</li> </ul>
Greenways and Open Space Network Plan	
<p><b>Development</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection or improvement of existing natural areas, primarily for ecological health and preservation of wildlife</li> <li>• Creation of recreational opportunities for residents through preservation and connection of existing trails and open spaces</li> <li>• Development of recreational trails or facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>(Please note, for all development projects, applicant must submit design and engineering cost estimates along with the budget)</b></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Planning</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land-based and water trail feasibility studies</li> <li>• Trail town master planning</li> <li>• Pedestrian and bicycle feasibility studies</li> <li>• Greenway planning</li> <li>• Master site plans</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Technical Assistance</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach and marketing for a specific recreation/conservation event/project</li> <li>• Initiatives to educate residents/stakeholders on the value of recreation, trail, park, and heritage/cultural resources and facilities</li> </ul>

***\*Ineligible project items include land acquisition, pavilion construction, and playground construction.*** The list of example projects in the above table is *not* comprehensive. The selection committee will score and recommend projects; however, DCNR will make the final approvals and awards.

**Section 3 – Applicant Responsibilities:**

For any additional questions regarding their project, applicants are encouraged to contact the DCNR agency representatives to ensure that their potential project is eligible for funding. Information for the SAP&DC’s regional contact is below:

**Lindsay Baer**  
 DCNR  
 Recreation and Conservation Advisor 2  
 (717) 858-1185  
[libaer@pa.gov](mailto:libaer@pa.gov)

***Applicants are responsible for submitting all required documents with their application, as well as ensuring that their project and all project costs conform to all PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program guidelines.***

**Section 4 – Grant Guidelines:**

**A) Minimum/Maximum Requests:**

- **Keystone Recreation/Environmental Stewardship Fund:** Grant requests shall be a minimum of \$3,000 and cannot exceed \$30,000.

**B) Applicant Match Requirements:**

- **Keystone Recreation/Environmental Stewardship Fund:** All grantees must be able to provide a cash/eligible non-cash (in-kind) contribution of at least **50 percent** of the total project cost. **A cash match commitment will receive favorable consideration during project evaluations.**

**Grant request (50%) + Local Match (50%) = Total Project Cost (100%)**

- **\*Match can be in the form of cash or in-kind, however, in-kind match can make up no more than 50% of the applicant’s total match requirement\***

- \*Important Note: This funding may **not** be used to fulfill match requirements for other DCNR funded grant projects, nor can other DCNR funding be used as a match for the Southern Alleghenies Regional Mini-Grant Program.
- C) **Cost Reimbursement:** The project sponsor **does not** receive a check upon the approval of their project.
- Once a sub-contract is executed, the applicant can request an advance payment of up to 50% of the awarded amount to cover the project's initial costs. Once the initial 50% of the awarded amount is expended and/or professional or construction contracts are executed, SAP&DC may approve a second partial payment up to an additional 40% of the awarded amount.
  - For development projects only, up to 15% of the total construction cost is allowable for the preparation of design, construction drawings, specifications, and professional fees.
  - SAP&DC will retain 10% of the grant award amount until the project has been completed and all final paperwork has been reviewed and approved. A final site inspection of development projects will be conducted before the final 10% is released. Project applicants will incur this cost until site inspection is complete and all work is approved.
- D) **Project Schedule:** All projects must be **completed** no later than August 31, 2026. Final documentation, inspections, and closeout will be completed no later than September 30, 2026.
- E) **Land Ownership:** For Development projects or for plans that include a Site Development Drawing, proof of ownership or control of the site to be master planned is required. If the property is leased, the lease must be for a minimum of 25 years and will be reviewed by SAP&DC. Property must be under control of a municipality, council of government, conservation district, non-profit, or redevelopment authority. If the applicant is not the property owner, an agreement between both entities must be included with the application.
- F) **Additional Guidelines:** All projects and project related costs must conform to the guidelines outlined in the PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program at: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/>.

### **Section 5 – Application Process:**

- A) **Application Form:** The Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program application and application guidelines are available on SAP&DC's Greenways web page at: <https://sapdc.org/greenways/>.
- B) **Required Application Attachments:**
1. **Map of the project area**
  2. **Letters documenting match commitment**
  3. **Detailed, itemized budget** for all project components. The project budget should be prepared in consultation with a professional who has experience with similar types of projects, or applicants should demonstrate that inquiries were made to companies for cost estimates. \*For development projects, the project budget should consider the potential for additional costs when constructing to current ADA Standards. Applicants may refer to DCNR's ADA Resources page for

additional information and assistance:

[http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_20030559.pdf](http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_20030559.pdf).

4. **Letters of support** from local agencies, governments, property owners, user groups, etc. **All applicants are encouraged to obtain at least a letter of support from their respective County Commissioners and Planning Commissions.**
  5. **Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI)** – The PNDI is the Environmental Review Function of the PA National Heritage Program and is set up to identify potential impacts to threatened, endangered or rare plants, animals, natural communities, and geologic features throughout Pennsylvania. This tool can be accessed at <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/> and results are a mandatory attachment to all applications.
  6. **Landowner Agreement/Certificate of Title or Ownership** – Ownership and control of property must be guaranteed by a Landowner Agreement or Certificate of Title or Ownership. This document is a requirement for any *Development or Master Site Plan* application.
  7. **Any existing feasibility studies**, surveys, site plans, etc. relating to project.
- C) **Closing Date:** Applications MUST be signed and received by Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC's Transportation Program Manager, by close of business (4 PM EST) on **May 31, 2024**. Both electronic and hard copy versions will be accepted. Please save application and submit via email Matthew Bjorkman at [mbjorkman@sapdc.org](mailto:mbjorkman@sapdc.org).

**\*\*Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. \*\***

**Section 6 – Evaluation:**

**Review Process:** The project review committee consists of representatives from the SAP&DC, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset County Planning Commissions. Each will have one vote during the project scoring/ranking regardless of the number of representatives that sit on the committee. Below is the ranking criteria with a maximum score of 100 points:

Criteria	Score
<b>1) PROJECT DESCRIPTION (0-10)</b> Project scope is <u>well-defined</u> and includes a list of activities to be funded with program funds.	
<b>2) PROJECT COMPLETION (0-5)</b> Project is well developed and prepared to begin and finish within the timeframe required. Project timeline is well defined and realistic.	
<b>3) LOCAL SUPPORT (0-10)</b> Letters of support from local agencies, governments, property owners, user groups, etc. All applicants are encouraged to obtain a letter of support from their respective County Commissioners and Planning Commissions. There is no known opposition to the project.	
<b>4) PROJECT WILL RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY, RECREATION, AND/OR ECONOMIC BENEFITS (0-20)</b> The applicant has clearly demonstrated the project need. The project connects critical trail gaps, connects to a trail town, or connects to a “hub”. The project will enhance local or regional recreational opportunities. The project will help benefit the local economy through increased visitors. The project has good value for money spent and a high benefit to cost impact to the community.	
<b>5) PROJECT SUPPORTS GOALS OUTLINED IN THE BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PLAN AND/OR THE GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACE NETWORK PLAN (0-20)</b> Project is specifically identified as one of the priority corridors or is related to the goals identified in the Plans: Conserve important natural resources; Expand recreation opportunities; Celebrate Cultural Heritage; Bolster economic development; Increase pedestrian and bicycle mobility; and Promote healthy lifestyles, etc.	
<b>6) PROJECT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE AND GREEN PRACTICES (0-10)</b> The applicant has clearly demonstrated with specific examples how their project supports sustainable and green practices relating to water, landscaping, connecting people to nature and environmental stewardship.	
<b>7) DETAILED BUDGET (0-10)</b> A detailed budget is included with application. Project budget is realistic. The project budget was prepared in consultation with a professional who has experience with similar types of projects, or applicant demonstrated that inquiries were made to companies for cost estimates.	
<b>8) MATCHING FUNDS (15)</b> Matching funds are secured, and commitment letters are included. Preference should be given to projects with a committed cash match over in-kind match. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secured match <u>WITH</u> commitment letters included (0-10)</b></li> <li>• <b>Preference is given to projects with more cash match (0-5)</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Total Score (Maximum 100 points)</b>	

*\*Applicants may use the new interactive Greenways map to help correctly locate their project in relationship to the greenway corridors outlined in the 2007 Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan. The map can be viewed here: [Greenways \(arcgis.com\)](http://arcgis.com).*

## **Section 7 – Additional Resources/Guidance:**

- A) Contacts** – Project sponsors must ensure the eligibility of their project with the DCNR representative for the Southern Alleghenies Region (see Section 3) before applying to SAP&DC. SAP&DC will coordinate and administer the Southern Alleghenies Regional Mini-Grant Program. SAP&DC staff members are available to field any questions/concerns regarding program guidelines, procedures, timelines, etc. (See contact information for SAP&DC staff in Section 5, Part C above).
- B) Web Resources** – DCNR policies, forms, and guidance materials can be found by searching in the DCNR E-Library at:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/ELibrary/Pages/default.aspx>