

GRANT ROUND 2 PRE-APPLICATION INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

The purpose of the information shown below is to inform potential grantees about Delco Green Ways Grant Round 2, its goals, project types to be funded, and the application with criteria requirements that will be used to evaluate and rank the applications for the purposes of determining grant awards.

All municipalities and non-profit organizations in existence for at least three years and have a municipal partner for the project are eligible to apply. Applications can be submitted from August 27 through September 13, 2021. Additional information about how to submit the application will be available in August. In the meantime, interested applicants can use the information below to see what they will need to submit in the actual application. For assistance, email the Delaware County Planning Department at Planning_Department@co.delaware.pa.us or call 610-891-5200.

GRANT ROUND 2 TIMELINE

- **June 16, 2021.** Delaware County Council announces the opening of Grant Round 2.
- **June 17 – September 13, 2021.** Application materials available on Delaware County’s website.
- **July 13, 2021.** 6:30 – 7:30 P.M. and July 14, 2021, 2:00 – 3:00 P.M. Zoom meetings for Questions and Answers about the grant round. Visit the [Delco Green Ways webpage](#) to register via Zoom.
- **August 2021.** Information about how to submit an application will be on the County website.
- **August 27, 2021 - September 13, 2021.** Municipalities and non-profit organizations in partnership with a municipality submit their applications.
- **September 13 – October 12, 2021.** Delaware County Greenways Team evaluates and ranks applications.
- **October 2021.** Delaware County Council reviews Green Ways Teams recommendations and determines and announces grant awards.
- **October – December 2021.** Delaware County Planning Department assists grantees with grant finalization.
- **January – April 2022.** Grantees can pursue DCNR funding with their Green Ways grant as a match.
- **January – May 2022.** Grantees can pursue DCEd funding with their Green Ways grant as a match

ABOUT GREEN WAYS GRANT ROUND 2

Delaware County Council announced the second round of its popular municipal grant program for open space, trails, and parks at its council meeting on June 16. The grant program, Delco Green Ways makes funds available to municipalities for projects that advance the County’s [2035 Open Space, Recreation and Greenway Plan goals](#): *Conserve, Enhance, Connect*. Delco Green Ways has been lauded for its ease, propelling communities to get wish-list projects funded and completed. Good news: this easy grant program just got easier than Grant Round 1!

Building upon the success of the first grant round, Grant Round 2 has been further tailored to meet the unique needs of Delaware County's people and places. Enhancements made were guided by the Delco Green Space Task Force (GSTF), which was convened in 2021 by County Council. The Task Force is comprised of thought-leader volunteers who represent the fabric of Delco and share expertise in the fields of green space preservation, natural lands conservation, parks and recreation management, fundraising, economics, business, real estate, law, health, communications, and community organizing. This group has been tasked with guiding the County's vision and policy direction for green space and trails.

GUIDELINES

Background

County Council adopted its Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan in April 2015. The plan serves as a guide and resource for countywide, multi-municipal, and municipal open space planning efforts and is a component of the County's Comprehensive Plan, [Delaware County 2035](#). The plan identifies three goals:

- CONSERVE open space and natural features
- ENHANCE their environmental and recreational uses
- CONNECT communities, cultural/historic resources, and natural features

Delaware County Council convened the Open Space Task Force in October 2016 to study and make recommendations to Council about: open space preservation opportunities; investment strategies and funding; as well as parameters for the County's participation in open space preservation and recreation projects.

The Task Force researched opportunities and obstacles to implementing the [Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan](#), reviewed programs from other counties in the region, and discussed the benefits of different approaches. With an understanding of the impacts of these programs, the Task Force was able to propose an implementation strategy for Delaware County. To effectively address the opportunities identified, the Task Force recommended a three-pronged approach to implementation of the Open Space Plan: 1) providing grants to local municipalities; 2) an infusion of capital investment in County parks; and 3) funding for professional services support for open space and recreation projects.

Delaware County accepted the recommendations of the Task Force, via Council Resolution in September 2018 and subsequently authorized an initial borrowing of \$10 million to initiate the program.

Building upon the success of the first grant round, Grant Round 2 has been further tailored to meet the unique needs of Delaware County's people and places. Enhancements made were driven by the guidance of the Delco Green Space Task Force (GSTF). Based on the recommendation of the GSTF, the County made the following changes to the grant guidelines:

- No match required — use your Green Ways funds to be the match for other grant opportunities
- Non-profits can apply with a municipal partner
- New Mini-Plan grant opportunity to expand and support planning efforts
- Conserve projects for conservation easements now require public benefit, not public access
- Enhance projects now allow 15% of the total project cost to be used for planning and design
- Connect projects for trail engineering to allow up to \$250,000 cap
- Inclusion of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Indicators of Potential Disadvantage (IDP) scores to support communities in need

Green Ways Grant Program Purpose

The goal of Delco's Green Ways program is to help municipalities and non-profit organizations advance the County's goals of conserving green spaces, connect the County with safe places to bicycle and walk, and enhance public parks for people of all ages, interests, and abilities. The theme of the grant round this year is **Unity**. To increase unity-oriented projects and boost capacity building, the County is incentivizing partnerships and planning. We encourage you to partner with neighboring municipalities or non-profits and explore innovative ways to show that your project demonstrates unity. [See sample Comprehensive Park, Recreation, & Open Space Plans and/or Conserve, Enhance, Connect Projects application.](#)

Additionally, a foundational program feature for Grant Round 2 includes an innovative Mini Parks, Recreation, & Open Space (PROS) Plan grant opportunity for communities with a population under 8,000, or with an area of 1.5 square miles or less. [See Mini-PROS Plan specific sample application.](#) The Mini-Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plans grant application will be non-competitive and awarded to any municipality with an acceptable application.

Several existing grant programs offered at the state and federal levels provide funds for community open space and recreation projects. These programs require a local match ranging from 15% to 50% of total project costs. This can act as an unintentional barrier. Securing the funds to meet match requirements is often impossible for some communities. The Delco Green Ways municipal grant program can help municipalities obtain state and federal funds by serving as the match for those grants.

Mini-Municipal PROS Plan

As another opportunity for small municipalities, the program will fully fund a Mini-Municipal Parks, Recreation, & Open Space (PROS) Plan for up to \$50,000. If two or more municipalities partner on a multi-municipal plan, up to a \$100,000 grant may be awarded. The plan will focus on municipal strategy with identification of items that fit into the County's [2035 Open Space, Recreation and Greenway Plan Goals](#). These include open space conservation, identification of important trail connections, and maintenance.

Communities ineligible for a Mini-Municipal PROS Plan grant (municipalities with populations over 8,000 or more than 1.5 square miles are encouraged to submit applications for full-scope plans. The County is committed to providing funds for planning to fuel future project concepts grounded in the planning process and strategic goal setting. Likewise, the County has identified the theme of Unity to incentivize partnerships and multi-municipal plans to help build capacity and create a culture of celebrating the County's green space, trails, and parks as a unified system.

General Requirements for Mini-Pros Plan

1. Funds must be expended within three (3) years of date awarded. Due to the emphasis on land conservation, trail connections, and park enhancements in Mini PROS Plans, Delaware County expects plans to be completed by six months after the municipality(ies) award a contract to a qualified firm to assist in the development of the plan. The County will provide more information to municipalities undertaking a Mini-PROS Plan about the process for requesting proposals from qualified firms after grants are awarded.
2. The municipality shall receive approval from the County Planning Department staff on their consultant Request for Proposals (RFP) prior to its release. (Samples will be forthcoming when the grant application period opens, August 27, 2021.)
3. The municipality will share the proposals received with the recommendation of the firm they select with County Planning Department staff. The municipality shall not proceed to contract negotiations before receiving approval from the County on consultant selection.
4. The resulting plan must be formally adopted by the municipality(ies).

Eligibility for ALL Green Ways Projects

We encourage all municipalities and multi-municipal partners within Delaware County to apply with projects that meet the criteria listed in [Appendix A](#) that contains *Project Evaluation Criteria* for Conserve, Enhance, Connect, and Planning & Design.

Non-profit (501(c)(3) organizations in existence for at least three years are eligible to apply in partnership with a municipality or municipalities where the project is sited. This support shall be expressed by an official municipal governing body resolution by the municipal lead, and any other participating municipalities.

Under the Green Ways grant program, **each municipality may apply for two grants: one project grant that advances a County Goal: Conserve, Enhance, or Connect and/or one Planning & Design grant**, which includes the opportunity to apply for a Mini-PROS Plan grant if eligible. Project applications will fall into one of the following categories aligned with County's [2035 Open Space, Recreation and Greenway Plan Goals](#):

GREEN WAYS



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1. CONSERVE
(open space land preservation)
2. ENHANCE
(capital improvement in parks and open spaces)
3. CONNECT
(trail development and planning & engineering)
4. PLANNING & DESIGN
(Comprehensive Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plans, maintenance plans, feasibility studies, natural resource management plans, title research, appraisals, and other types of plans related to County goals)

Mini-PROS Plan Grants: Municipalities in Delaware County may apply for a Mini-Municipal PROS Plan grant if they meet one of the following:

- A) Have a population under 8,000, and are not facing a significant growth rate
OR
- B) Have an area of 1.5 square miles or less.

Grant Amounts

CONSERVE

The County may contribute up to \$500,000 for the protection of undeveloped land in perpetuity. Eligible projects may include fee simple acquisition, conservation or trail easements on private land, and other similar conservation methods.

ENHANCE

The County may contribute up to \$250,000 for capital improvements to park and/or recreational facilities. Eligible projects may include capital improvements to existing park facilities and greening efforts (e.g., street tree plantings, green stormwater infrastructure, etc.).

CONNECT

The County may contribute up to \$500,000 for the development of trails included on the countywide Primary Trail Network (PTN). Additionally, the County may contribute up to \$250,000 for the development of local trails that are not in the PTN (see map at the end of this document). Eligible projects may include construction of multi-use segments of the countywide Primary Trail Network and construction of local multi-use trails. Also eligible in the Connect category are final design and engineering documents for trails up to \$250,000.

PLANNING & DESIGN

Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan or Municipal Trail Network Plan (MTNP) Grants

Other types of plans and studies eligible under this category include PROS Plans, MTNP Plans, feasibility studies, or the planning, study, and design of park and/or recreational facilities. The County may contribute up to \$100,000 for these project types. Eligible projects include park master plans; feasibility studies; title searches; appraisals; design; engineering and permitting.

Mini-Municipal PROS Plan Grants for single municipalities will be up to \$50,000. Grants for multi-municipal projects will be funded at up to \$100,000 due to economy of scale.

The difference between Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plans and Mini-Municipal PROS Plans is that the comprehensive plans include organization and management, maintenance, programming, financing and other operational elements in addition to physical park, open space, trail connections, and green space conservation. Mini-Municipal Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plans will focus on green space conservation, trail connections and parks and recreation facility development and improvement only.

General Requirements

1. Funds must be expended within three (3) years of date awarded. Mini-Municipal PROS Plans must be completed within one year of grant award including completion within six months of contracting a qualified firm to undertake the project.
2. Conservation projects must include a deed restriction to guarantee the property remains undeveloped in perpetuity.
3. Projects must have direct public benefit. The criteria include environmental, economic, social and health benefit categories that you can use to guide your narrative about how your project benefits the public.
4. Capital projects include new facilities or a major improvement to, or rehabilitation of, an existing facility, and must have a useful life expectancy of at least seven (7) years.
5. Multi-use trail projects must be ADA-accessible.
6. Planning projects must be formally adopted by the local municipal Council.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

General Process

1. County staff will review all applications for completeness, eligibility, project readiness and for their strength in supporting County and municipal planning goals.
2. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
3. The number of grants awarded may depend on the amount and strength of applications and funds available in the current grant round.
4. If the County is considering awarding a project less than the amount that was requested, the applicant will be notified and given the opportunity to accept or reject the offer amount so long as the project would still produce a viable, useful project and proceed in a timely manner.
5. County Council determines grant awards. All funding awards will be made official via County Council Resolution.
6. Post award, the County will enter into a Grant Agreement with the awardee only after all supporting documentation is submitted.
7. The awardee will begin work on the Mini-PROS Plan by appointing and meeting with a study committee and completing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a project consultant. The RFP will include a detailed project scope of work.
8. The municipality can request up to 50% of the grant award up front and must create a separate bank account to hold the funds. Upon submission of invoices of work accomplished, municipalities can request the next 40% of the grant award. The last 10% of the grant award will be held until final approval by the Delaware County Planning Department.
9. The amount of the award will be based on the actual cost of the project, not estimates.
10. Grant award payments for land acquisition projects or conservation easements commence with municipal requests based on property or easement sale settlement or project work invoices for enhancement or trail projects.

GREEN WAYS



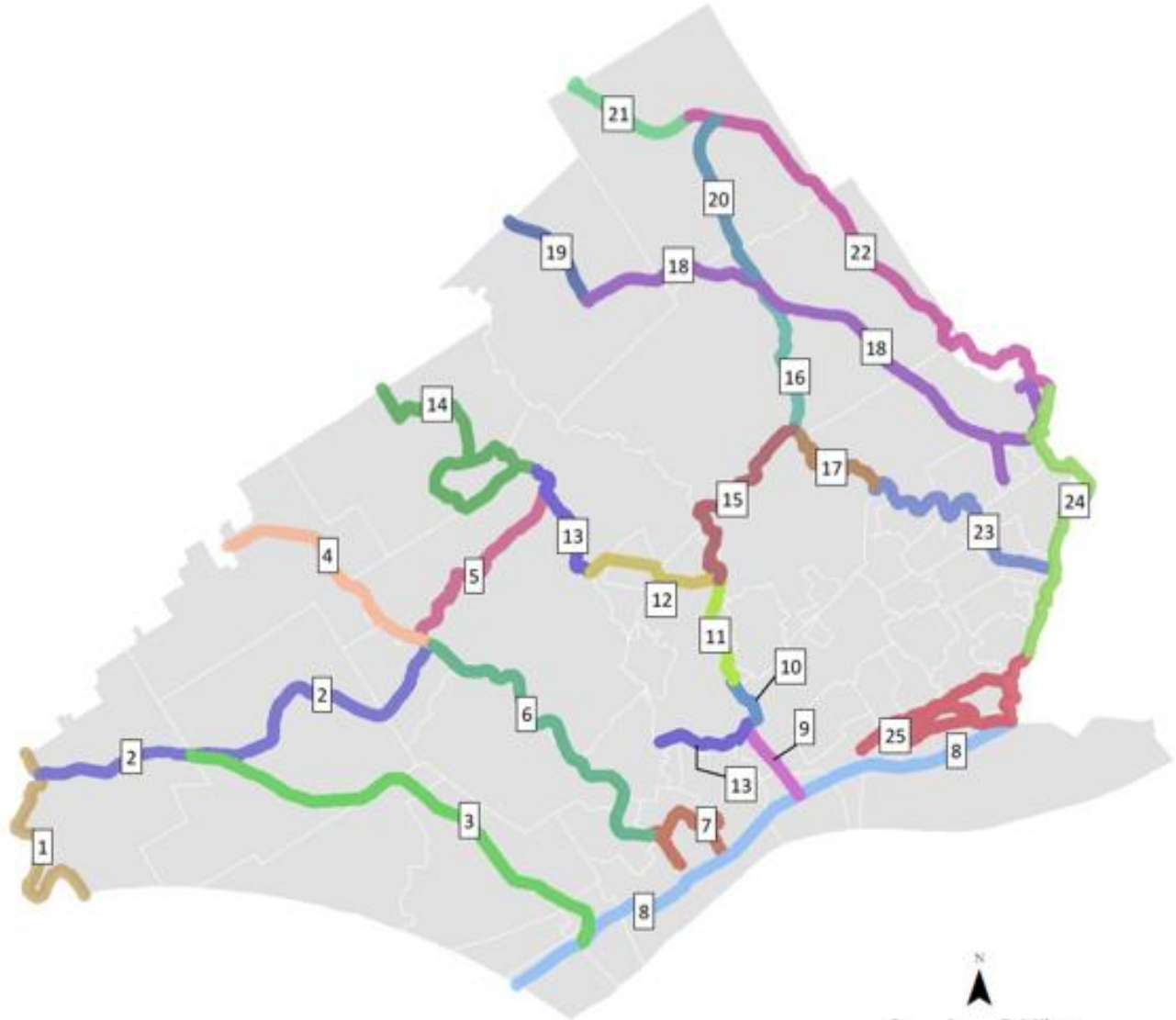
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11. If after one year the project has not commenced (i.e., began invoicing for grant award payments), the County reserves the right to renegotiate the award amount or project scope, or to rescind the award entirely.

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Delaware County's Primary Trail Network



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 - Brandywine Creek Greenway | 10 - Blue Route Bikeway - Leiper to Kinder Connector | 19 - Route 252 Bicycle Route |
| 2 - Octoraro Rail Trail | 11 - Blue Route Bikeway - Leiper-Smedley Trail | 20 - Blue Route Bikeway - Ithan-Darby Creek Valley |
| 3 - PECO Right-of-Way Trail | 12 - Media-Smedley Connector Trail | 21 - Radnor Trail |
| 4 - Chester Creek Trail - North Extension | 13 - Ridley Creek Greenway (North & South Sections) | 22 - Forge to Refuge Trail |
| 5 - Rocky Run Trail | 14 - Ridley Creek State Park Trails | 23 - Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Trail |
| 6 - Chester Creek Trail | 15 - Blue Route Bikeway - Smedley to Darby Creek | 24 - Cobbs Creek Trail |
| 7 - Chester Creek Trail - East Coast Greenway (ECG) Connector | 16 - Darby Creek Trail - Haverford Township | 25 - Heinz Refuge Trails |
| 8 - East Coast Greenway | 17 - Darby Creek Trail - Drexel Hill Connector | |
| 9 - Blue Route Bikeway - East Coast Greenway (ECG) Connector | 18 - Newtown Square Branch Rail Trail | |