

Erie County Greenways Program

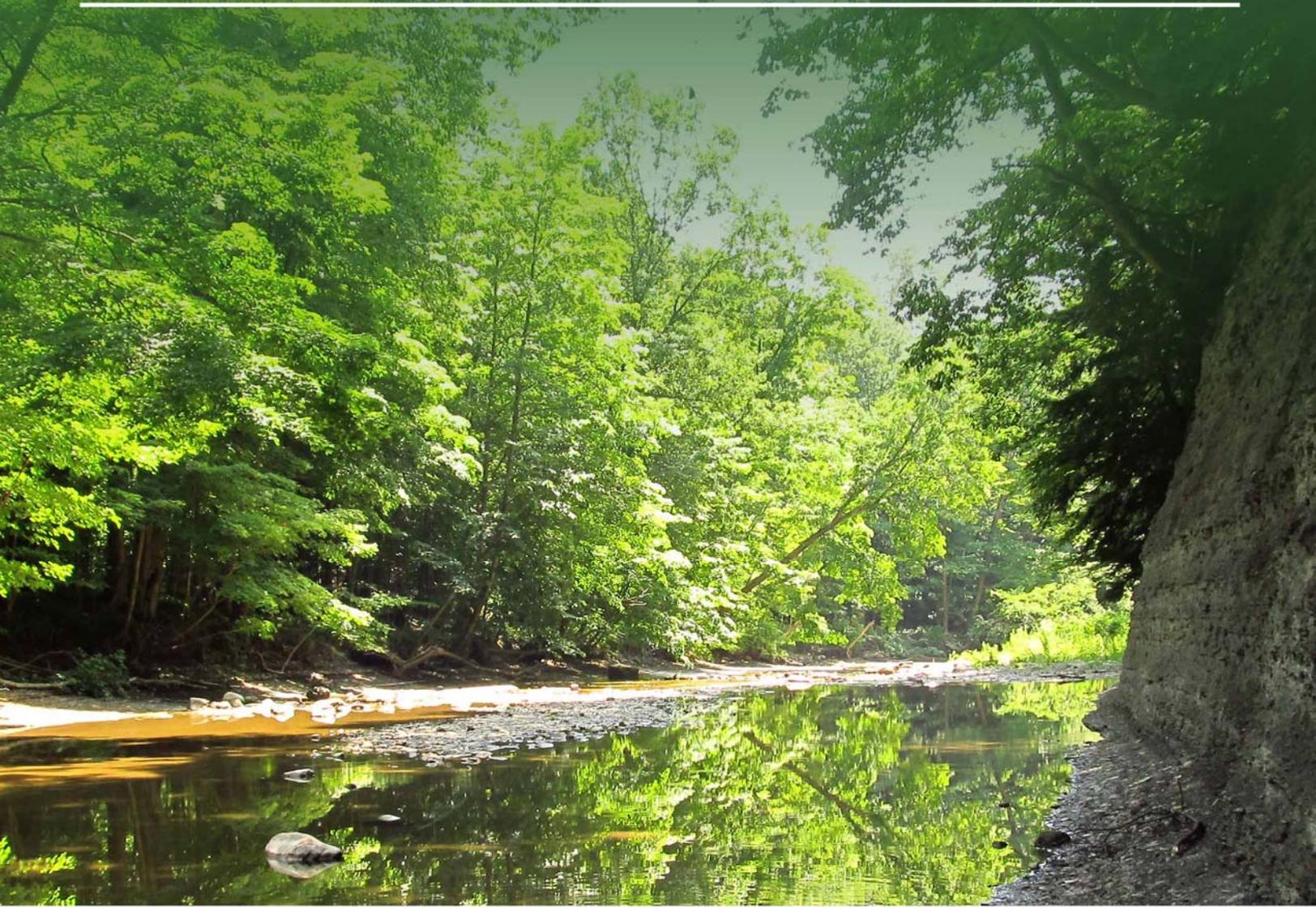


TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. About the Program	2
Overview	
II. Eligibility	3
Who is eligible?	
Where can projects be located?	
What types of projects are eligible?	
What types of projects/activities are ineligible?	
III. Project Requirements	5
Are there any project and application requirements?	
Construction requirements	
Acquisition requirements	
IV. Project Funding and Match	6
Is there a minimum or maximum amount on funding requests?	
What are forms of reimbursable expenses?	
Expenses not reimbursed by the program	
What level of matching funds are required?	
What are forms of project related match?	
V. Application Information	8
When does the application period open and close?	
Application submission	
Application process timeline	
VI. Project Selection and Implementation	10
When can work begin and when must it be completed?	
How will funds be made available?	
VII. Contacts and Resources	11

APPENDICES

A. Supplemental Information and Checklist	12
B. Budget Information	13
C. Glossary	14

APPLICATION

Erie County Greenways Program Grant Application	
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I. ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Overview

Act 13 of 2012, the Unconventional Gas Well Impact Fee, authorized the Commonwealth to impose drilling impact fees on unconventional gas well producers in Pennsylvania. The fee revenues are collected and distributed annually to state agencies, counties and municipalities based on formula allocations. There are two established funds from the impact fee distributions, with portions directly allocated to counties and/or municipalities: the Unconventional Gas Well Fund – distributed only to counties and municipalities with wells; and the Marcellus Legacy Fund – distributed to all counties with or without wells. Erie County only qualifies for Marcellus Legacy Funds at this time.

The County of Erie has developed the Erie County Greenways Program (ECGP), with the Marcellus Legacy Fund allocations, in order to fund eligible projects throughout Erie County. The goal of this program is to improve the quality of life in Erie County through the preservation and enhancement of the region's natural, scenic and recreational resources for public use and enjoyment.

Various types of greenways projects will be eligible for consideration, such as: acquisition, development and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, natural areas and community conservation. Beautification projects are also eligible.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible?

- Local governments – counties and municipalities
- Area-wide agencies – county and regional planning agencies
- Educational institutions – school districts, colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning
- Conservation districts, port and public port authorities
- Nonprofit organizations that are legally constituted as 501(c)(3) organizations

Where can projects be located?

Projects must be located within Erie County.

What Types of Projects Are Eligible?

Project proposals must fall into one of the following categories:

- Planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of:
 - Greenways
 - Recreational Trails
 - Open Spaces
 - Natural Areas
 - Community Conservation and Beautification
 - Community and Heritage Parks

What Types of Projects/Activities Are Ineligible?

The following types of projects/activities are not considered eligible:

- Fundraising activities
- Communications
- Lobbying
- Interest on borrowed funds
- Public Relations
- Outreach not directly related to project implementation
- Litigation
- Fees for securing other financing

**Note: Other ineligible costs may apply and while many of these items cannot be reimbursed by the County, they may still be used as match.*

III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Are There Any Project and Application Requirements?

Yes. All projects must:

- Be environmentally sound and consistent with current state, regional, county and local ordinances and plans
- Obtain *applicable* federal, state and local permits for all construction projects before any construction may commence
- Obtain concurrence of any municipal government whose approval is required for project implementation; via letter of support or resolution, if the applicant is a non-governmental agency
- Benefit the public at large and may not be for the purpose of private gain, benefit or profit
- Be accessible to disabled persons in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if applicable
- Provide a detailed cost estimate, which should be prepared by a qualified professional and accompanied (where appropriate) by copies of signed bids/quotes, contractor estimates, or other documentation that verifies project costs
- Provide a map detailing the location of the proposed project
- Provide proof of ownership/control of the project site for planning, design/engineering and construction projects, at the time of application submission. Ownership is defined as 'fee-simple' and control is defined as a 'long-term lease or easement' (20-year minimum term). Note: If the site is leased, provide a copy of the executed lease.

Construction Requirements

Grants for construction are considered any 'implementation' project that involves 'disturbing the earth'.

- All construction work associated with the proposed project *may* be subject to the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act, as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry
- Final design and engineering drawings for construction projects must be completed and permits must be secured before construction can begin

Acquisition Requirements

- An Option-to-Purchase or Sales agreement must be provided
- A completed appraisal conducted by a state-certified general real estate appraiser, within one (1) year from the date of the application submission

IV. PROJECT FUNDING AND MATCH

Funding recommendations and final grant approval rests with the County of Erie. **Note:* Due to funding levels, the County retains the authority to reduce the amount of any grant awarded at its discretion.

Is There a Minimum or Maximum Amount on Funding Requests?

A minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$50,000 may be requested for any single project. Applicants with proposals requesting more or less than this funding limits will not be disqualified but should discuss funding alternatives with Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP) staff before submitting an application.

What Are Forms of Reimbursable Expenses?

Reimbursable expenses are items directly related to the project. Types of allowable expenditures include:

- Direct labor costs
- Materials and Supplies
- Purchase or use of equipment
- Use of a consultant or contractor
- Other project related expenses

Expenses Not Reimbursed

It is difficult to list all items not reimbursable, but some can be categorized into the following general groups:

- Project-related costs incurred prior to full execution or expiration of the grant agreement
- Costs not directly related to performing the approved project scope of work
- Administrative grant costs
- General operating costs (e.g. – rent, utilities)
- Permitting fees
- Costs associated with hospitality such as food and beverages

**Note:* There may be other expenses not reimbursable but may still be used as match.

What Level of Matching Funds Are Required?

ECGP money may not be the sole source of funding for the project. Matching funds are required on a 1:2 matching basis; this means that each dollar (\$1.00) of ECGP funds must be matched by at least fifty cents (\$0.50) from cash or acceptable non-cash sources, although match provided in excess of the 1:2 ratio is encouraged.

In rare situations, the County may permit required match to be applied to project costs incurred before the date of the grant award. This is referred to a 'Waiver of Retroactivity', which must be completed and submitted with the grant application. A waiver does not guarantee or in any way affect the chances of a project being selected for funding. It merely gives the applicant a project start date to which matching funds would be applied retroactively if the project is ultimately selected for funding. An applicant who wishes to request a waiver must contact the Planning Department for the required materials.

What Are Forms of Project Related Match?

Eligible match includes both cash match and non-cash match, which includes those services that are directly tied to the project's development and implementation, can be properly documented and expended during the project's grant term. If selected for funding, the County reserves the right to negotiate the values submitted for the non-cash match.

Cash Match/Direct Costs: Actual cash contributed to the project by your organization or another form of grant funding; e.g. – equipment purchased by your organization for project activities.

In-Kind Services: Services and labor provided by paid staff to perform all or part of the approved project scope of work. The allowable value of in-kind services provided as match for a grant may include personal fringe benefits such as employee insurance, vacation and holiday and sick leave time as expressed in an hourly rate.

Donated Services and Materials: Services or materials that will be provided at no-cost to the applicant to perform or complete part of the approved project scope of work and requires specialized or expert skills and knowledge. The allowable value of the service or material must be the organizations or individual's customary billing rate multiplied by the number of hours of service (or material quantities) provided. Examples include a registered landscape architect donating time to develop a site plan, an attorney donating time to conduct a real estate title search or a local quarry donating stone for a construction project.

Volunteer Services: Unpaid services or labor that will be provided by individuals not employed by the applicant to perform part of the approved project scope of work. Volunteer services (non-skilled labor) and work performed by individuals under the age of 18 will be valued at the Commonwealth's minimum wage rate. (\$7.25)

**Note: An applicant's match is important and the source of matching funds must be identified in the grant application. Care should be exercised when estimating non-cash match because Erie County requires complete documentation when submitting subsequent requests for reimbursement.*

V. APPLICATION INFORMATION

When Does the Application Period Open and Close?

The grant application period will open January 17, 2014 and close February 24, 2014.

**Note: These dates are subject to change and are provided only as a rough guidance for applicants.*

Application Submission

All ECGP grant applications must be submitted to the Erie County Department of Planning by 4:00PM, February 24, 2014. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered. Applications may be submitted via hard copy *or* by email; those submitted via fax will not be accepted.

Hard Copy Applications

If you choose to submit a hard copy of the application, please include one (1) digital copy and send to:

Erie County Courthouse
Department of Planning
140 West 6th Street, Room 111
Erie, PA 16501
Attn: Julia Donahue

OR

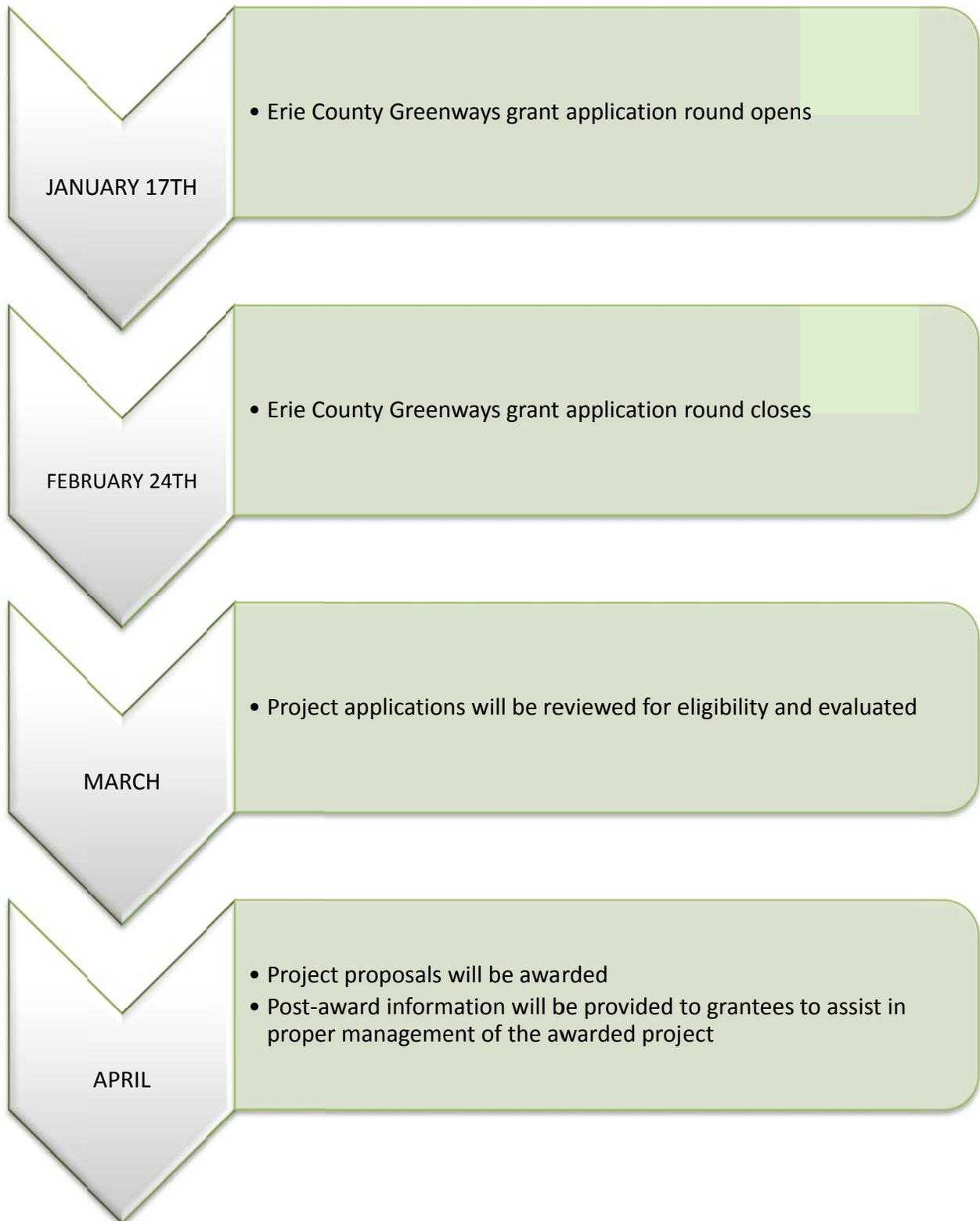
Emailed Applications

Applications may be submitted via email to: jedonahue@eriecountygov.org

Please contact Julia Donahue, at the Erie County Department of Planning, for any questions concerning this Program by phone at 814-451-6018 or by email.

Application Process Timeline

**Note: These dates are subject to change and are provided only as a rough guidance for applicants.*



VI. PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Once applications are determined to be eligible by the ECDP, all projects will then be evaluated and ranked by a review committee. A reviewer will assign a score to each question answered on the grant application. If a question is not answered, zero (0) points will be given. Therefore, address each question listed on the application to be most competitive.

After all applications have been evaluated, the review committee will develop a recommendation list to be sent to the Erie County Executive for approval. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the project-selection process.

Final review and approval of all projects is made by the County of Erie, which may place additional requirements on a particular project or request additional documentation. If this occurs, ECDP staff will work with the applicant to resolve any outstanding issues.

When Can Work Begin and When Must It Be Completed?

After the project selection process, the County of Erie will make an official announcement outlining which project applications have been awarded grant funding. ECDP will then execute grant agreements with each awarded agency.

Projects are anticipated to commence in the spring, after a grant agreement has been fully executed. This is a two-year grant program and all project deliverables must be completed and funds spent by the expiration date of the grant agreement.

How Will Funds Be Made Available?

The County of Erie will pay project expenditures on a reimbursement basis. Thus, the project sponsor is required to pay the initial project costs and then submit a reimbursement request to the ECDP. Payments will be linked to project performance and payment will be withheld if project schedules and deliverables are not met. Also, reimbursement will be based on the funds identified in the executed grant agreement.

VII. CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with Erie County Department of Planning staff in advance of submitting a grant application. However, favorable staff comments on preliminary discussions of prospective projects are not to be interpreted as guarantees of funding.

For all questions, comments or concerns, please contact Julia Donahue at:

Erie County Courthouse
Department of Planning
140 West 6th Street, Room 111
Erie, PA 16501
Ph: 814.451.6018
Em: jedonahue@eriecountygov.org

Additional information related to Act 13 and the Erie County Greenways Program can be found at the following websites:

PA Public Utility Commission (PUC)
PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
County of Erie

www.puc.state.pa.us
www.depweb.state.pa.us
www.eriecountygov.org

APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND CHECKLIST

In addition to completing the Erie County Greenways Program grant application, please use this checklist to make sure that you have provided all of the necessary information, including any required supplemental materials.

1. Grant Application

Fill out the entire grant application including: applicant information, type of project, project location, a brief description, funding information and signature of certification, all project related questions and budget.

If additional space is required to answer questions fully, do not answer with "See Attached". Fill out what you can on the application and then attach additional pages if necessary.

2. Supplemental Information

All grant applications *must* submit the following basic attachments to the grant application to be considered most competitive. Additional supplemental information may be required and vary depending on the nature of the grant application.

All Applications

- Location Map
- Detailed Cost Estimate

Planning/Design/Engineering/Construction

- Proof of Ownership/Control (Title Certification, Deed, Assessment Record)

Acquisition

- Completed Appraisal
- Option-to-Purchase OR Sales Agreement

Optional

- Letters of Funding Commitment
- Letters of Support

APPENDIX B: BUDGET INFORMATION

Funding Sources

Erie County Greenways Program Grant Request

- Identify the amount of grant funding being requested for the proposed project

Cash or Non-Cash Match

- List the amount of cash and/or non-cash match being provided by the applicant and/or any other grants received or anticipated, include the source of funding

Project Work Activities

Work activities are project tasks identified in the project Information portion of the grant application. When completing this section, estimate the cost related to each project work activity.

Matching Funds

Describe the source of matching funds, whether they are secured or pending. List the name of the organization/source providing the funds. If the funds have been committed, please provide proof of the award by attaching a commitment letter, even if it is the applicant's organization providing the match.

Project Related Cost Description

If employee wages will be provided as in-kind match, the applicant must provide a list of the number of employees working on the project, their position, wage rates, fringe benefits rate and hours expected to be claimed.

Construction projects – If materials or other goods will be purchased, provide an itemized listing of the materials, anticipated quantities and their unit and total costs. If the items are to be donated, please indicate the value. An example of how these items should be listed:

- *4 park benches @ \$150 each*
- *150 cubic yards of stone @ \$25/cy*
- *100 hemlock samplings @ \$40/tree*

For a sample project budget and a detailed cost estimate, please refer to the next page.

Sample Project Budget

FUNDING SOURCES	
ECGP Grant Request	\$25,000.00
Cash Match (list funding sources)	
XXX Township (S)	\$11,875.00
Non-Cash Match (list funding sources)	
Volunteers (P)	\$960.00
Donation – XXX Landscape Design (S)	\$165.00
Project Total	\$38,000.00

Project Work Elements	ECGP Share	Match Share	Total
Site Preparation	\$6,300.00	\$3,150.00	\$9,450.00
Trail Construction	\$15,650.00	\$7,825.00	\$23,475.00
Bench Installation	\$1,600.00	\$800.00	\$2,400.00
Sign Installation	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$300.00
Landscaping	\$1,250.00	\$1,125.00	\$2,375.00
Project Totals	\$25,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$38,000.00

Sample Detailed Cost Estimate

COST ESTIMATE PROVIDED BY XXX Construction Company – 01/15/2014		
Excavation	\$9.45/SF @ 1,000SF	\$9,450.00
Asphalt and Installation	\$2.50/SF @ 9,390SF	\$23,475.00
Bench Installation	4 benches @ \$600/	\$2,400.00
Sign Installation	1 sign @ \$300/	\$300.00
Plants – Feather Reed Grass	\$15/plant @ 19	\$285.00
Plants – Daylilies	\$16/plant @ 17	\$272.00
Plants – Geraniums	\$6/plant @ 25	\$150.00
Trees – Snow White Crab Apple	\$177/tree @ 2	\$354.00
Shrubs – Mixed (Hydrangeas/Andromedas)	\$88.50/shrub @ 4	\$354.00
Volunteers	4 @ \$20/HR @ 12HRS	\$960.00
TOTAL		\$38,000.00

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

Below, please find a list of definitions to clarify terms specified in the Guide.

Acquisition – A fee-simple purchase of land with maximum control over the use and management of the property and its resources, for the purpose of open space preservation, protection of natural areas and community conservation

Beautification – The process making visual improvements to a town, city, or urban area by use of plantings and decorative or historic improvements such as street-lights or awnings

Community Conservation – protection of land by encouraging local stewardship and integrating environmental priorities

Community Park – A public playground, public recreational area or other public areas created, established, designated, maintained, provided or set aside by a government entity for the purpose of public rest, play, recreation or enjoyment

Construction – The process of building something; typically a structure

Design/Engineering – Preparation of final construction drawings, technical specifications, price quotation proposal documents, bidding documents, advertising for bids, awarding a contract and executing an agreement

Direct Labor Costs – the costs of a service or labor that are associated with the projects deliverables but does not include grant administration

Greenway – A corridor of land for wildlife connectivity and/or to connect people and places together. Greenways may contain trails, which enhance recreational opportunities, provide routes for alternate transportation and improve the overall quality of life in an area. Greenways can be paved or unpaved and may be designed to accommodate a variety of trail users, including: bicyclists, walkers, hikers, joggers, skates, horseback riders and those confined to wheelchairs.

Heritage Park – a public area preserved to showcase historical structures or provide information about the history of an area

Open Space – An area of protected land or water on which development is indefinitely set aside

Recreational Trails – Development of trails for both motorized and non-motorized uses including walking, hiking, bicycling, all types of skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles

Planning – Site-specific studies that include, site information and analysis, and analysis of activities, facilities, maintenance, and operations, which lead to completion of a site development drawing in conformance with current design standards and cost estimates for the full development or redevelopment of a recreational site