



*State of New Jersey*  
*2021 OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY PARTNERSHIP*  
*Pre-Application Guidance*

**\$150 million** in 50% matching grant funding available.

Minimum grant request = \$300,000

Maximum grant request = \$5 million

**Important Dates:**

Pre-Applications due to NJDEP from applicants:	8/6/2021
Pre-Applications due to NPS from NJDEP:	9/24/2021
Pre-Application Selection Decisions Expected from NPS:	4/1/2022
FY 2021 ORLP Grant Award/Project Start Date:	10/1/2022 (tentative)

**Community Eligibility-** OLRP grants are available for land acquisition and development of parkland for outdoor recreation. Development projects include sports fields, community parks, picnic areas, water based outdoor recreation, and necessary support facilities like restrooms. Projects must be in an urban area with a population greater than 50,000 as defined by prevailing Census data or located in/ accessible to an economically distressed community or neighborhood that is lacking in adequate park and recreational resources. Applicants must be able to justify OLRP eligibility as prescribed by NPS.

**ORLP Project Evaluation Criteria Overview-** The local government must define its eligibility for OLRP funding, emphasize the project's role in addressing environmental injustice, explain how the project may create jobs (short- or long-term), describe how the project will contribute to economic development at the local level, identify how the project engages and empowers the local community that it serves, describe how the project demonstrates public-private partnerships and engages multiple levels of government, and how the project aligns with New Jersey's current State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Projects should emphasize recreational inclusiveness, climate change mitigation benefits (if appropriate) and consistency with an array of local planning goals and initiatives.

In order for NJDEP to request NPS preliminary review, all OLRP pre-applications must have a project narrative, budget narrative, project timeline, aerial/project reference maps/site plans, pre-application inspection, photos and letters of support.

**PROJECT NARRATIVE** (maximum length: 10 pages)

The narrative provides the applicant the opportunity to describe the purpose of their project and how it meets the objectives of the competition; intended outcomes of the project; and expected benefits

(short- and long- term) and other impacts in terms of improving recreation opportunities that meet an identified recreational deficiency or need for a neighborhood or community. Applicants are encouraged to review the evaluation criteria outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity to understand how projects will be evaluated and scored. We recommend that the narrative touch on all the criteria noted in below to ensure that the project (and budget) narratives directly address each criterion.

**Project Overview:** Provide a brief overview of the project proposal describing the general location and community(ies) to benefit from project activities, type of project (acquisition, development, and/or renovation), overall scope of work, and any other useful information to summarize the proposal.

For acquisition projects: provide a street address sufficient to provide at least a general location for the property, a description of the property, and an explanation of the need for its acquisition. Explain whether the acquisition would create a new public park or recreation area or expands an existing site. Describe and quantify the types of resources and features on the property (e.g., 50 acres of forested area, 2,000 feet of waterfront, scenic views, unique or special features, recreation amenities, historic/cultural resources) as well as any constraints (e.g., existing development; hazardous materials/contamination history; and restrictions such as institutional controls, easements, rights-of-way, reversionary interests, above ground/underground utilities; etc.). Describe the plans for developing the property for recreation purposes after acquisition and the timeframe, including when the site is expected to be open and accessible for public use. Describe the current status of the acquisition, including negotiations with the landowner and development of due diligence materials such as title work and appraisal.

For development projects: provide a street address sufficient to provide at least a general location for the property, a description of the planned physical improvements and/or facilities, and the reason(s) such development is needed. Explain whether the work involves new development or rehabilitation or replacement of existing recreation facilities. Describe and quantify the types of resources and features available on the site as well as any constraints. Describe the current status of planning for the development and the timeframe for completing the project, including when the site will be open (or reopened) and accessible for public use.

For “combination” projects comprising both acquisition and development (including projects where the land acquisition is being used as in-kind match): provide an overview that combines the acquisition and development elements above.

## **2021 OLRP Competitive Funding Objectives and Criteria**

### **1) Improving physical and recreational access and addressing recreational deficiencies:**

Describe how the proposed project will create or significantly improve access to close-to-home park and recreation opportunities by expanding the quantity or quality of parks or other outdoor recreation areas. This can be through either: creating a new park/outdoor recreational area or significantly enhancing the quality of an existing park/outdoor recreation area by replacing or upgrading infrastructure to be able to provide high priority recreation services. Describe the new or expanded types of outdoor recreation opportunities and/or capacities that will be created as a result of the acquisition and/or development. Describe how the project meets an identified recreational need or deficiency. Describe the activities and uses planned for the project site after acquisition and/or development. Last, describe the anticipated increase in the number of people recreating as a result of the project and how this impact was

determined.

2) Improving recreation service to economically disadvantaged neighborhoods/ communities and creating jobs and/or spurring economic development:

Describe how the group targeted by this competition (low to moderate-income individuals or families for whom serious recreation deficiencies exist), will directly benefit from this project. Communities are encouraged to include available data/statistics about the local population to be served by the park/recreation area.

Describe the anticipated economic benefits that could be produced by the project, such as short- and long-term employment opportunities, or how the new or revitalized park could stimulate other improvements in the target neighborhood. For example, development projects would be expected to support short-term construction jobs, as well as potentially permanent additional recreation-based jobs due to new or expanded programming that can be supported as a result of the project. Outside of the park, local businesses could benefit due to new or increased numbers of users.

3) Project Engagement and Participation:

Describe the process that led to the development of this proposal. In particular, focus on efforts to engage the public, especially the local community that will be served by the park, and their participation in the project as well as that of other interested/affected entities. Describe any partnerships or other collaborative efforts, such as with neighborhood groups, community organizations, or private entities that have helped or will help facilitate the project. Also, describe or provide evidence of local support for the project, particularly from local residents.

Supporting details could include how the public was notified of and provided opportunity to be involved in planning for and development of the project; who has been involved (including local, state, and federal agency professionals; subject matter experts; and private organizations) and how were they able to help develop or review the proposal; and formal public participation processes such as meetings, hearings, and comment periods, including dates and length of time provided for the public to participate in the planning process and/or to provide comments.

4) Innovation and Transformative Attributes:

Describe the extent to which the project encompasses or exhibits innovation, especially in ways that can be transformative for the neighborhood(s) and community in terms of revitalization. These qualities could be related to aspects such as: redevelopment of a blighted or distressed properties; involvement of new or non-traditional partners; unusual features in the project design; employment of novel solutions to issues in/challenges to addressing the community's recreation needs; the ability to affect or advance other complementary and intrinsic benefits beyond providing new or enhancing park or other outdoor recreation spaces; and other similar characteristics.

5) Project's Alignment with SCORP and other applicable plans:

Describe how the project will advance, implement, or meet a priority recreation need and/or goal of the state's SCORP and if applicable, other relevant park and recreation planning documents. Projects can also receive credit for aligning with or advancing priorities of other comprehensive or master plans at the city, regional, and/or state level such as community revitalization plans, economic development plans, open space plans, etc.; and/or benefitting other initiatives and programs.

6) Project Readiness:

Describe the status of the planning for the grant project and its readiness to be implemented, including any site assessment or reviews and clearances initiated or completed. Provide a narrative description of the timeline for the planned scope of work and a proposed period of performance, including providing dates for discrete benchmarks of significant work elements that will support the grant project's implementation to completion. Describe the current use (if any) or disposition of the property targeted for the project if uses will need to be discontinued or the site rehabilitated. If there are any existing non-outdoor recreation or other non-public uses that are intended to continue on the property on an interim or permanent basis and/or proposed in the future, these should be explained.

7) Applicant and Partner Capacity:

Describe the Community's experience in completing other similar park and recreation projects. If partners are or will be involved in the grant project's implementation, their role(s) should also be described. Describe who holds or will hold title to the property and how the park or recreation area will be managed and maintained to assure permanent use for public outdoor recreation. Describe the funding resources available to support the operation and maintenance. If partners will be involved with long-term management of the property, this should be described. If applicable, the Community's past experience with managing grant funds, particularly from the LWCF or other federal awards, should be characterized.

8) Partner Support and Leveraging:

Describe the how project is or will be supported by partnerships with the public, private, and/or non-profit sectors specifically through contributions of money, land, supplies, services, etc.

In addition to the types of contributions and amounts, be sure to describe the source(s) of the contributions proposed for the match, particularly if they are from non-public partners in the project, and whether they are already available or still being secured.

If applicable, describe how and to what extent the LWCF ORLP grant will play a role in leveraging funding for the project from non-federal public, private, and/or non-profit resources, and if they allow the project budget to exceed the 50% match requirement. Projects that leverage the LWCF ORLP grant funds beyond the 50% match will be favored by the Federal Review Panel, but more points will be awarded when the leverage is comprised of LWCF-eligible costs directly related to the acquisition or construction work versus other kinds of costs that support the project in a larger sense but are not necessarily needed to directly support the acquisition or development.

**BUDGET NARRATIVE** (maximum length: 5 pages, including tables) Viability and reasonableness of the project's budget:

This section should explain how the requested LWCF assistance will be used and how the match requirement will be met, including any costs proposed for overmatch. Break down, describe, and justify the proposed costs, which should clearly correspond to the details of the work activities outlined in the project narrative. Communities are encouraged to provide budget information in both narrative and tabular forms to ensure sufficient detail so the budget can be clearly understood, particularly in terms of what costs are proposed for reimbursement by the LWCF ORLP grant and what costs will be used to satisfy the 50% match.

Communities are encouraged to review the March 2021 LWCF Manual when defining eligible costs. Land acquisition costs should be based on appraised value or other estimate of fair market value. Be sure to explain the basis for the value estimate. Acquisition-related support costs (e.g. appraisals) are not eligible LWCF expenses or as match. On the development side, some project management/ administration expenses, design/engineering fees, and contingencies may be included in the budget, but they are capped at 5% (administration) and 10% (each, design/engineering, and contingencies) of the total budget, respectively. Costs for design, architecture and engineering may be engaged prior to OLRP grant award and reimbursed upon award but these costs are assumed at an Applicant's risk.

Cost classification must be included in the proposed budget and may not be introduced for the first time at the final application stage (if applicable). If indirect costs are planned this should be reflected in the budget.

Match contributions can consist of cash, land donation, and in-kind contributions of supplies or services needed to implement the project. Describe the availability or firmness of commitments for funds to meet the 50% match and for the full amount of funds needed to complete the project, including any match commitment(s) that exceed the 50% requirement. Note that, at a minimum, sufficient funding to meet the 50% match requirement must be in hand or firmly committed at the time of application. Award letters to document match commitments are encouraged. If the project match exceeds the 50% requirement, indicate how the additional funds/in-kind contributions will be used. Overmatch costs needn't necessarily be eligible for LWCF, but more weight will be given for leveraging if they are.

Communities should also ensure costs are reasonable and that it's clear why they are being included in the project budget.

As noted in Section C.2, other federal resources may not be used as a match for the LWCF grant unless such treatment is specifically authorized by the source's enabling legislation (i.e. RTP and CDBG). Communities should be prepared to show supporting documentation if requested. Communities are not permitted to also seek LWCF formula funding to support the project (except as an alternate grant source if not selected for an OLRP grant).

If the LWCF OLRP grant-funded project is part of a larger project, please be sure the LWCF-related components of the budget can be clearly discerned. It can be difficult for reviewers to evaluate and score a budget when it's not clear how the grant funds will be used or what specific costs are being provided as match. Federal grant shares have been reduced if it appears ineligible costs are proposed to be charged to the grant or used as part of the match share. Note that the LWCF OLRP and match-funded element(s) of the project must still result in a viable recreation opportunity that is not reliant on other funding even in the context of a larger planned project.

### **MAPS/SITE PLANS**

The OLRP pre-application should include maps and site plans for park development projects as follows:

- 1) a neighborhood/community map showing the location of the project and any other existing recreation
- 2) a map or aerial photo delineating the project area to be acquired and/or developed, as well as the proposed boundary of the larger park/recreation area that would be subject to the protection provisions of 54 U.S.C. 200305(f)(3), (aka Section 6f/LWCF boundary Map) and;

3) a plan or sketch of the site that depicts the likely location of planned recreational improvements and other features such as where the public will access the site, parking, etc.

#### **ADDITIONAL PRE-APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

**Project Timeline:** Project start date must be on or after October 1, 2022. Provide clear milestones and benchmarks for timeline tasks. Timeline should align with the project narrative, project budget narrative and all associated project documentation.

**Letters of support:** These are helpful in terms of substantiating public support for the project, evidence of partnerships, and to memorialize matching funds. Letters arriving after the pre-application deadline will not be provided to the panel.

**Photos:** These should provide context such as current site conditions and to convey the surrounding environment and the projects relevance. An LWCF pre-application site inspection form should be completed to accompany photos.

**Environmental Review/Environmental Assessments:** If an Environmental Assessment, Phase 1/Preliminary Assessment or other type of technical documentation has been prepared to evaluate NEPA compliance or to evaluate environmental contamination concerns associated with, prior land uses, the soil, groundwater, etc. please provide a copy of this report with the pre-application.

The following items are not required with the initial OLRP pre-application, but if the proposal is selected for funding the following items will be required for the full and final grant submission to NPS:

- Current approved indirect cost rate agreement (if applicable)
- Partnership agreements (if applicable)
- Updated project scope & current project timeline.

\*\*Please consult the National Park Service's Notice of Funding Opportunity- P21AS00509 for the full grant application description.\*\*

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