



## 2019 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### Purpose

Recognizing that open space in our communities is crucial to the quality of our lives, PECO has committed to supporting municipalities, recreational authorities and nonprofits in Southeastern Pennsylvania with their ongoing efforts to preserve, protect and improve public spaces. PECO designed the PECO Green Region program to assist local communities in these efforts by providing funding for some expenses not otherwise covered by state or county programs. *Underlying the program is PECO's endorsement of deliberate planning for open space protection as a means to encourage the wisest use of scarce resources.*

**Application Postmark Deadline: October 31, 2019**

### Eligible Applicants

- Any township, borough, city or regional recreational authority *within PECO's service territory* in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and York counties (eligible applicants must receive gas and/or electric service from PECO).
- Within the City of Philadelphia, including all incorporated nonprofit neighborhood organizations (such as a "Friends of" group).
- PECO does not make grants to individuals or to religious organizations (unless programs are non-denominational).

### Eligible Activities

- Developing or updating open space plans. Expenses may include consultant fees, costs associated with obtaining public input (hall rental, advertising, etc.) and publication costs.
- Improving municipal, organizational or authority-owned open spaces, including planning costs. Funds may be used for habitat improvements such as installing or improving meadows, woodlands and riparian buffers. The plans also may include the installation of capital improvements for passive recreation such as trails, boardwalks, kiosks and observation platforms, but not parking lots. Such expenses may include consultant fees for landscape architects, park designers, botanists, engineers, etc. **NEW IN 2019: Projects utilizing LED and energy efficient lighting are now eligible!**

- Acquisition (by purchase or donation) of parcels of land to be used for open space. Expenses may include purchase costs, legal or consultant fees, surveying, environmental assessments, appraisals, etc.
- Acquisition (by purchase or donation) of conservation easements (also known as “development rights”). Eligible expenses include purchase costs, legal or consultant fees, surveying, environmental assessments, appraisals, etc.

### **Ineligible Expenses**

- Staff time for municipal, organizational or authority employees for any aspect of the project.
- Relocation of owner/tenant, condemnation or building repair/demolition.
- Expenses not directly related to the use of land for open space and/or passive recreation. (For example, construction of a public works garage on municipal parkland would not be considered an eligible expense.)

### **Grant Amounts and Timing**

- Grants will be for amounts up to \$10,000 and may be used to pay for **up to 50%** of eligible activities.
- The municipality, organization or authority must have a source of funds (or have submitted an application for funds) to match the PECO Green Region grant. Those matching funds must be in cash, not in-kind services.
- Grants will be awarded once a year. Applications (10 complete copies, including one unbound in any way, except to be clipped together) must be postmarked no later than October 31, 2019.
- Any recipient will be expected to fully expend the grant within 18 months of receipt of the funds.
- Retroactive reimbursement for costs accrued between the application deadline and the grant award may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. All requests for such reimbursement should be made in writing to the program administrator.
- Recipients may apply for an additional grant once the previous grant is fully expended and all completed close-out documentation is submitted, but no earlier than two years from the application date of the previous grant.

### **Grant Conditions**

- The facility/property must be open to the general public.
- If grant funds are used for acquisition of an interest in land, the recipient must demonstrate that a restrictive covenant, deed restriction or similar instrument will be recorded against the property, which states that the property must be held in perpetuity for open space purposes. If the property is diverted from open space use, the grant recipient shall return all PECO

Green Region funds received to PECO or replace the property with land of no less or greater utility, acreage and value.

- Within two months of the final expenditure of grant funds, the recipient will submit the Final Report form summarizing the work accomplished with the grant. Accompanying the Final Report will be an explanation justifying the use of the grant funds, backed by documentation of invoices, cancelled checks, recorded deeds, settlement sheets, etc., as necessary for the particular project. Recipient will not be eligible to apply for an additional grant until a complete Final Report form is submitted
- During the grant period, award recipients will agree to participate in press conferences or events, to be quoted in PECO literature describing the program and to identify PECO as a funder in any materials produced to explain or promote the funded project. Draft versions of all promotional materials (press releases, articles, brochures, etc.) must be submitted to the program administrator for approval before use.
- Recipients will agree to acknowledge the use of PECO Green Region funds for the project, either through signage for capital projects or written acknowledgement in documents. Wording will be supplied by PECO, and 7.5" x 5.75" aluminum signs can be provided if needed.

### **Applications**

The PECO Green Region Program online application and guidelines are available on the Natural Lands website ([natlands.org/green-region/](http://natlands.org/green-region/)) and PECO website: (<https://www.peco.com/SafetyCommunity/Community/Pages/Environment.aspx>).

### **Review Committee**

Completed and eligible applications will be reviewed and prioritized by a committee composed of county government officials, members of the region's nonprofit land conservation community and PECO representatives. Final decisions on recipients and amounts will remain at the discretion of PECO.

### **Administrator**

Natural Lands, a private nonprofit land conservancy with a more than 60-year history of protecting open space in Eastern Pennsylvania, is the administrator of the PECO Green Region Open Space Program. Applications and questions about eligibility, timing, documentation, etc. should be addressed to:

Patrick Gardner  
PECO Green Region Program Administrator  
c/o Natural Lands  
1031 Palmers Mill Road  
Media, PA 19063  
610-353-5587 x 211  
[pgardner@natlands.org](mailto:pgardner@natlands.org)