

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
Green Acres Program

**REQUEST FOR GREEN ACRES FUNDING  
FOR FACILITIES ON BOARD OF EDUCATION PROPERTY**

Green Acres occasionally provides funding to develop or rehabilitate recreational facilities located on school property to accommodate communities that have limited parkland and must meet the recreation needs of significant populations. If this situation applies to your community and you would like to request Green Acres funding for such a facility, please review the information provided below, answer the questions that follow, and sign the acknowledgement at the bottom of the form. Please reach out to your Green Acres contact with any questions.

**Information About Green Acres Funding**

1. Public Access – Green Acres regulations require that all funded properties are open to the general public to the fullest extent possible. Green Acres recognizes, however, that public access to facilities on school property during school hours is not appropriate. Green Acres will fund facilities on school property only when there is the clear understanding and agreement among all parties that the funded project will serve as a public park facility that is open to the general public outside of school hours.
2. Sports Facilities – Team sports facilities on school property, such as a football field or tennis courts, most often are not a good fit for Green Acres funding, particularly when school teams have extensive periods of exclusive use outside of school hours – e.g., for practices and games. These situations do not allow for meaningful access by the general public, which is a central requirement of Green Acres funding.
3. Signage – Prior to Green Acres funding being released, a metal sign must be posted at the facility explicitly stating that the facility is open to the general public during the listed hours.
4. Applicant – School boards are not eligible applicants for Green Acres funding. To request funding from Green Acres, an application must be submitted by a county or local government or, under certain circumstances, by a qualifying nonprofit organization (more information is available in our application package). Please note that, beyond satisfying the requirements to receive Green Acres funding, the local government or nonprofit applicant is responsible for compliance with Green Acres post funding rules (N.J.A.C. 7:26-25) for the life of the lease (see #5 below).
5. Lease – A qualifying applicant must own the land to be developed or hold a long-term irrevocable lease (pre-approved by Green Acres) for a term of at least 25 years starting from the beginning of the project. If no such lease exists, the signature of the Superintendent of Schools at the end of this document indicates that the Board of Education is willing to enter into such an agreement if the project is approved.

6. Parkland Maintenance and Operation – Green Acres rules (N.J.A.C. 7:36-25) set out specific requirements regarding maintenance and operation of funded parkland. The requirements related to maintenance and operation of Green Acres encumbered parkland are administered and enforced by the Department’s [Office of Transactions and Public Land Administration, Public Land Compliance Section](#) (“OTPLA”). These requirements include, but are not limited to:
- a. Upon completion, Green Acres funded parkland must be open to the public without discrimination or exclusion based on residency.
  - b. Scheduling the use of facilities funded by Green Acres is allowable, provided that adequate time is allotted for use by the general public and programmed uses are not exclusive or discriminatory. Scheduling the facilities will be addressed in the lease between the applicant and the Board of Education, as reviewed and approved by Green Acres.
  - c. Fees for use of funded sites are allowable. Differential fees for use by non-residents or different categories of users may also be charged but must be discussed with OTPLA to ensure they are equitable. All revenues derived from use or operation of a funded site must be used by the local government for the operation, maintenance, or capital expenses of either that park facility or their funded parkland or recreation system as a whole. A nonprofit must use any revenues derived from the use or operation of a funded site for either that park facility or other permanently preserved recreation and conservation land owned by the nonprofit.
  - d. Compliance inspections of funded parkland are conducted by OTPLA every three years. If noncompliance is identified and not corrected in a timely fashion, Green Acres, in consultation with OTPLA, may suspend payments on active projects and the local government or nonprofit will not be eligible for future Green Acres funding. Additional information about post-funding responsibilities can be found at [what-to-expect-when-we-re-inspecting-otpla.pdf \(nj.gov\)](#).
  - e. During the term of the lease, parkland must not be sold, leased, exchanged, or donated except to the State, or local government unit, a qualifying tax-exempt nonprofit organization, or the Federal government for recreation and conservation purposes, and only then with DEP approval.

### **Questions About Proposed Project**

1. Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Proposed Park Information:
    - Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_
    - Block(s) and Lot(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- School District: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Description of Proposed Facility(ies): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Community Information:  
Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Population (2020 Census figure): \_\_\_\_\_  
Population Density (2020 Census figure): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Comparable Facility Information:  
Name of Nearest Park: \_\_\_\_\_  
Distance from Subject Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Nearest Park that Contains a Comparable Facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Distance from Subject Property: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Acknowledgement and Certification**

We have reviewed and we acknowledge the information and Green Acres requirements provided above, and we certify that the questions have been answered completely and accurately.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Chief Executive Officer*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1/12/2024