



**THE BERGEN COUNTY OPEN SPACE,
RECREATION, FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION,
FARMLAND & HISTORIC PRESERVATION
TRUST FUND**

INSTRUCTIONS & APPLICATION FORMS

**for
YEAR 2022
LAND ACQUISITION PROJECTS
in the
TRUST FUND COUNTY PROGRAM
by
Bergen County Municipalities
&
Qualified Nonprofit Organizations**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: **FRIDAY, MAY 6th, 2022**

Instructions for Open Space Acquisition Application of the County Program

Thank you for your interest in an a land acquisition application to the County of Bergen’s Open Space, Recreation, Floodplain Protection, Farmland & Historic Preservation Trust Fund Program for the year 2022 funding round.

Enclosed please find the application form and instructions for LAND ACQUISITION PROJECTS to be submitted by a Bergen County municipality or qualified nonprofit organization to the Trust Fund County Program 2022 funding round. **This is not the application for floodplain protection projects.**

NEW ITEMS:

- Prior to submitting an application, applicants must now file a **Declaration of Intent to Apply** form no later than **Friday, April 8th, 2022**. A copy of this form is located on the Trust Fund website. If you have not, please contact Kenneth Aloisio, at (201) 336-6454.
- To be consistent with NJ Green Acres appraisal requirements, for a parcel with an estimated land value of less than \$250,000, an applicant shall obtain at least one professionally and independently prepared appraisal. For a parcel with an estimated land value of \$250,000 or more, an applicant shall obtain two (2) professional and independently prepared appraisals.
- In addition to the legal advertisement, a display advertisement must be published at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and specify a public hearing on the Trust Fund application. The size of the display ad is at the discretion of applicant. However, it should not be smaller than “business card size” (approximately 3.22 inches wide by 2.36 inches high). The text for the legal advertisement and display advertisement should be identical.
- The application and all required attachments shall be submitted as electronic files (PDF) as email attachments, or if above 50 MB, on a mailed or delivered external USB Drive OR via a cloud storage/file sharing service. Paper copies of applications are no longer accepted.

The deadline to submit completed applications and required attachments is **FRIDAY, MAY 6th, 2022**.

The Division of Land Management and the Trust Fund Public Advisory Committee will begin its reviews and conduct site visits. It is anticipated that final funding approval via resolution by the Board of County Commissioner will occur in November 2022.

Please call your attention to some of the information being requested. For instance:

- The proposed land acquisition should be consistent with local, county, and state open space preservation or recreation plans.
- At least one (1) appraisal report is required as part of the application process. The County of Bergen does not provide 100% of the acquisition cost of the open space property. The County limits its Trust Fund award grant to not exceed (i) an appraised value or values, (ii) the Green Acres’ Certified Market Value, and/or, the purchase price should it be the lower of (i) and/or (ii). See “Section 9: Trust Fund Award Limit” in *The Open Space Partnership of Bergen County: County Program Policy and Procedures Manual*, which can be found on the Trust Fund’s website.

Application Deadline: FRIDAY, MAY 6th, 2022

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- The applicant will need to document its compliance with state Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) plans with respect to the subject acquisition property.
- The applicant will need to document whether historic structures, features, or other elements are present on or adjacent to the project site.
- Current color site photographs in a media/electronic copy (in PDF format) of the subject property are to be included. Photographs in electronic file format can be submitted via e-mail.
- Project map of the subject property is to include location and explanation of all known environmental hazards and location of any structures, natural resources, and cultural, historic and environmental characteristics.

All land acquisition applicants will be required to provide any additional material deemed necessary.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Format

Label all attachments with the name of the project and the name of the applicant. All pages of the application shall be numbered and all attachments and other supporting documentation shall be labeled and lettered or number sequentially. All letters, endorsements and other materials sent separately from the application will not be considered in the review, unless specifically requested by the Trust Fund.

The following guidance is provided to assist you in the completion of your application.

- **Project Title**
- **Applicant** – Provide the name, title, address, telephone and Fax numbers and e-mail address of the local government submitting the application.
- **Type of Application** – Indicate whether the acquisition is in fee simple or only an easement. Will it be for active or passive recreation or a combination? Have you previously submitted this application to the Trust Fund and, if so, then when and what is its status?
- **Project Location, Size, and Current Ownership** – Indicate the project's street address, tax block(s) and lot(s), municipality, the total area in acres and the acres to be acquired if different, and the existing use(s) of the site. Provide the current property owner(s) name(s) and mailing address(es). Indicate if the owner(s) know you are interested in acquiring the property and whether the property is owned by a developer or in an estate. Complete the Property Owner Consent Form.
- **Development Status on the Site** – Indicate the current zoning designation of the site and describe its uses. Do not provide copies of the local zoning code. Indicate the level of any development activity and if plans have been filed with the municipality and/or the County. Indicate the dates of any filed plans.
- **Structures** – Are there any existing structures on the property? Are there any **historic** or **potentially historic** structures on or adjacent to the property? List them. You must contact Bergen County's Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs at 201-336-7274 to review historic structures with

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them. On the application, you will need to indicate the date and results of contacting the Bergen County Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs. Attach relevant documentation/communications.

- **Encroachments** – Are there encroachments from neighboring property owners on the subject site? If so, then identify them and locate them on the property site map.
- **Infrastructure** – What infrastructure exists to service the site?
- **Consistency with Other Plans** – Please indicate whether the proposed land acquisition property is consistent with all municipal plans, including COAH, County Open Space Plan, and the State Development & Redevelopment Plan. If the municipality does NOT have appropriate COAH certification, then explain the status of its affordable housing compliance in relation to the subject property.
- **Initial Project Finance Sheet** – State the amount of funding being requested in this application from the Bergen County Trust Fund for only the proposed land acquisition cost. Include supplemental funding and amounts and whether these amounts exist or are pending. State the estimated total cost of the land **DO NOT INCLUDE ANY “SOFT” COSTS**, i.e., appraisals, survey, legal, environmental, grants-writing fees, etc. **Bergen County does NOT provide Trust Fund awards totaling 100% of the land acquisition cost.**
- **Appraisal Questionnaire** – Complete the application pages. Provide a copy of the application and its Appraisal Questionnaire to your appraiser(s). To be consistent with NJ Green Acres appraisal requirements, for a parcel with an estimated land value of less than \$250,000, an applicant shall obtain at least one professionally and independently prepared appraisal. For a parcel with an estimated land value of \$250,000 or more, an applicant shall obtain two professionally and independently prepared appraisals. See Trust Fund Open Space Policy & Procedures Manual adopted by County Commissioner Resolution No. 558 on April 15th, 2009. Appraisals must be conducted in accordance with the Bergen County Division of Land Management Scope of Work for Appraisal Services. Documents can be found at the Trust Fund website. Appraisal report(s) must be submitted to the Division of Land Management by **4:30 p.m. on Monday, June 10th, 2022**. (This deadline is NOT the same as the application deadline.)
- **As of Appraisal Valuation Date: May 6th of current year.**
- **Post Appraisal Project Finance Sheet** – This form is to be submitted AFTER your appraisal has been completed by its deadline submission deadline of **Monday, June 10th, 2022**.
- **MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS** – Provide annual or most recent copies of the following documents: Supplemental Debt Statement AND Capital Year Programs Forecast.
- **Environmental & Natural Resource Characteristics and Site Features** – Provide the site’s specific environmental information as indicated.

A source of natural resource information may be using a Natural Heritage Data search (available from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection Office of Natural Lands Management at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/> or by calling (609) 984-1339.

From NJDEP: The Natural Heritage Database is a continuously updated inventory of rare plants and animal species and representative ecological communities in New Jersey. It is the state's most comprehensive, centralized source of information on rare plants, animals, and natural communities. The Database is a compilation of information from a broad range of sources including museum and

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herbarium collection records, publications, knowledgeable experts, and fieldwork. It contains information collected by the Office of Natural Lands Management on rare plants, animals, and ecological communities as well as data on rare animals provided by the Endangered and Nongame Species Program. The Database is continuously updated and improved as new data is obtained. Information from this database is available to assist individuals in the preservation of habitat for rare species and ecological communities.

As New Jersey continues to experience industrial and economic growth, it is imperative that we take steps to ensure that remaining areas of natural significance be preserved for their resource potential, their educational and research use, and their aesthetic and cultural values for present and future generations. As we become more aware of our dependence on our natural environment for our well-being and ultimate survival, we must answer one question: how can we best preserve our irreplaceable natural heritage?

The protection of New Jersey's natural heritage can be accomplished in harmony with older human concerns as long as planning accompanies growth. Information from the Database facilitates the sound evaluation of lands by ecological resources in the state and focusing on the most threatened significant natural areas.

- **Project Description and Benefits Analysis** – Describe, in as much detail as possible, the exact location and size of the project, the purpose, the full scope of the project including short and long-term uses of the site, any physical linkages to other existing public open space it provides, the tasks or project phases completed or that will be completed. Explain why this project is a high priority for you. This is an opportunity for you to make a case for your project and to address special features/factors of the site, which may not be adequately conveyed elsewhere in the application.
- **Detriment Analysis Narrative** – Explain in detail any views, opinions, or arguments that reflect opposition to the proposed project. These include, but may not be limited to, the following: incompatible land uses, zoning, traffic, noise, lighting, affordable housing requirements, and environmental permits. Also, discuss any possible detriments or adverse impacts resulting from the proposed project.
- **Management Plan** – State who will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the project. This entity will be responsible for the satisfactory care, maintenance, preservation, and operation of the project. Describe, in as much detail as possible, the exact activities to be allowed on the property. Please address these items, as necessary: pedestrian access to active, passive, and sensitive or dangerous areas of the property, ADA compliancy (Americans with Disabilities Act), vehicular access and parking, signage for prohibited activities, educational and information signage, restrooms, trash management, security, lighting, etc.
- **Appropriate Endorsement and Public Hearing Comment** – The applicant is required to hold a **Public Hearing** in this calendar year on its proposed project **before** it submits its application in order to gauge public support. The applicant shall publish two (2) notices of the public hearing in the official newspaper of the municipality. One public notice must publicize the public hearing in a paid display advertisement at least ten (10) days before the hearing. The size of the display advertisement is at the discretion of applicant. However, the size should not be smaller than a “business card size” (approximately 3.22 inches wide by 2.36 inches high). The second public notice is to be published in the Legal Notice section of the newspaper at least ten (10) days before the hearing. The hearing notice must specifically reference the proposed Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund application. The public hearing must be held in the evening, and may be held as part of a

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regular public meeting, as long as the hearing is properly advertised. A sample Public Notice announcement is provided at the end of this application. The text for the legal advertisement and display advertisement should be identical.

- **Letters** - Any letters of project endorsement from all interested parties may also be attached to the application.
 - **Project Map** – Attach copies of a legible maps outlining the boundaries of the proposed site which identifies landowners, adjacent land uses, existing preserved lands in the vicinity, all known easements and environmental hazards, natural resources and environmental features, and the zoning designation of the site.
 - **Land Acquisition Application Checklist** – Use the checklist to review all of the application’s requirements.
 - **Certification and Signature of Applicant** – The application must be signed and properly certified.
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Appraisal Questionnaire
(To be given by Applicant to its Appraiser(s))

In order to establish an accurate value for a parcel of land, it is important to have all pertinent information *before* it is appraised. The following questions will allow the Bergen County Trust Fund and the appraiser(s) to be hired by the applicant to have a better understanding of the project. It will streamline the appraisal process, as well as the appraisal review. This fact sheet must be submitted with your open space acquisition application. If the appraisal scenario changes from what is described below, corrected information must be submitted immediately to Bergen County's Division of Land Management.

1. Please describe the physical characteristics of the property, including legal access to it and any special features.

2. Present use of the property:

3. Are there any existing easements or rights-of-way on the property? Yes No Describe:

4. Are there any leases or rentals on or of the property? Yes No Describe:

5. Are there any wetlands, streams, ponds or **Category 1 Streams** on the site? Yes No
Stream Name:

- If it includes wetlands, do you have a Letter of Interpretation for the property? Yes No
 Attach copy.

Note: Stream classifications are listed in the Surface Water Quality Standards (SWQS) at N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.15 (found at www.state.nj.us/dep/rules/). The NJDEP's interactive mapping tool (accessible through www.nj.gov/dep/gis/) is also helpful in identifying stream classifications. Directions on how to use the interactive mapping tool can be found at: http://www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bears/gis_coverages.htm.

6. What is the zoning and permitted uses for the property?

7. Utilities: Are public water and/or sewer available? Yes No Describe:

8. For properties in the Highlands Region, identify Area located:

Preservation Area Planning Area Not Applicable

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PRESERVATION TRUST FUND
2022 APPLICATION FOR OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION PROJECTS

*** Submit this form with each Appraisal ***

Post Appraisal - Project Finance Sheet - Due Friday, June 10th, 2022

Project Title: _____

Applicant (*Municipality or Charitable
Conservancy*): _____

Municipal Location of Property
Acquisition: _____

Name of Appraiser: _____ Appraisal Valuation as of **May 14th of current year**

Appraiser Provided Copy of Trust Fund Application and/or Appraisal Questionnaire Forms: Yes No

To be completed at the time of the appraisal submission:

Anticipated Total Acquisition Cost of Subject Property: _____

(Note: Do **NOT** include any ancillary costs, such as appraisals, surveys, & legal fees.)

Total cost is based on: appraised value or contract amount

(Note: Bergen County does **NOT** provide awards totaling 100% of the acquisition cost.)

Amount of Bergen County Open Space Funds Requested: _____

Remaining Balance Needed to Complete Acquisition: _____

Source(s) of Remaining Balance (check all that apply)

Green Acres Funds: _____

Amounts of Green Acres Funds Available _____ or Requested _____

Municipality has Its Own Open Space Trust Fund: Yes No

Municipal Open Space Trust Fund Contribution: _____

Other Municipal Funds: _____

Past Bergen County Trust Fund Grant Award: _____

Other Available Sources & Amounts of Grants and Donations: _____

I certify that this information reflects the accurate financing of the project.

Mayor or Non-Profit Trustee Director Date: _____

Environmental & Natural Resource Characteristics and Site Features

This site contains the following natural resource, environmental, and/or special site features: *(Check all appropriate boxes.)*

Flood plains Percentage of Site: _____

Wetlands Percentage of Site: _____

Steep Slopes Percentage of Site: _____

Bluffs & Ridge Lines Percentage of Site: _____

Aquifer Recharge Area/Aquifer

Headwaters of FW1Streams

Headwaters of FW2Streams

Stream Corridors of FW1Streams

Stream Corridors of FW2Streams

Historic & Archaeological Features (specify)

Woodlands – Specimen Trees/Mature Forests

Endangered/Threatened Wildlife Habitat (specify)

Unique or Exceptional Ecosystems (specify)

Check and specify the existence of **Special Hazards:** (Check all appropriate boxes)

Hazardous Substance Contamination: _____

Mine Holes: _____

Sink Holes: _____

Abandoned Landfills: _____

Indicate any other Environmental Information of Significance or Importance:

Project Description and Benefits Narrative – Using ONLY this page, please explain why this project is a high priority for your town. Indicate special features/factors of the site which may not be conveyed elsewhere in this application. Make your case for this project!

Detriment Analysis Narrative – Explain and identify in detail any views, opinions, or arguments that reflect opposition to the proposed project. These may include, but not be limited to, incompatible land uses, zoning, traffic, noise, lighting, affordable housing requirements, and environmental permits. Also discuss any possible detriments or adverse impacts that may result from the proposed project.

**ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION INPUT FOR
CHARITABLE CONSERVANCY APPLICANT**

Charitable Conservancy: _____

Project Title: _____

Public Input is a key element to the application process. Please document any public proceedings your conservancy has conducted to seek public input or to advise the public of this application. Attach any minutes or comments from these proceedings if available.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR MUNICIPAL REVIEW AND COMMENT FOR
CHARITABLE CONSERVANCY APPLICANT**

Municipal governments are given the opportunity to “review and comment” on an application submitted by a charitable conservancy. Please submit a copy of this application together with this page to the governing body of the town(s) in which the project is located.

Charitable Conservancy: _____

Project Title: _____

The Governing Body of the Municipality of _____, having reviewed the application submitted by _____, submits the following comments:

Signed: _____ Date: _____
 Chief Executive Officer

Note: Please return this page to the Charitable Conservancy. The Charitable Conservancy must return this page with their application.
