

# CALIFORNIA RIVER PARKWAYS GRANT PROGRAM – PROPOSITION 84

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Last Updated: May 2015

**Q: How much is available in this final round for this grant program?**

A: \$7.6 million (approximate)

**Q: What are the minimum and maximum amounts that will be awarded for individual grants?**

A: Maximum capped at \$500,000; no minimum.

**Q: How many funding rounds will there be?**

A: This is the only funding round for this grant program.

**Q: When are the grant applications due?**

A: Applications must be postmarked by September 1, 2015.

**Q: When must the funds be expended?**

A: It varies by bond fund; 2019 or 2020.

**Q: Are State Agencies eligible to apply?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Are Federal Agencies or Indian tribes eligible to apply for a grant from this program?**

A: Federal agencies are not eligible applicants; however, an Indian tribe is an eligible applicant as long as they are equivalent to a 501(c)(3) organization. They can also be involved as project partners.

**Q: Does CEQA need to be completed prior to submitting a grant application and can you explain how CEQA factors into project readiness?**

A: No, CEQA does not need to be complete when you submit the grant application. However, the application must, at a minimum, include either a draft Initial Study checklist or Notice of Exemption and an explanation as to how CEQA will be completed (e.g., full EIR, Mitigated Negative Declaration, etc.). CEQA should be completed within one year from the execution of the Grant Agreement.

**Q: Are permits required to be completed prior to submitting an application? Will priority or preference points be given to projects where permits have already been obtained?**

A: No. However, all entities with jurisdiction over the property whether fee title, easement, or other must provide a letter of intent to enter into an agreement for the development, operations, and maintenance should grant funds be awarded. Project readiness as whole will be considered when evaluating the application.

**Q: My organization has several eligible projects that we feel are competitive. Should we submit one application for all projects, or individual applications for each?**

A: No. Multiple projects cannot be submitted under one application.

**Q: How will you determine whether or not you are going to schedule a site visit?**

A: Many factors impact whether a site visit will be scheduled, including a number of competitive applications versus available funding, geographic distribution, ranking, etc.

**Q: I understand this grant program usually reimburses (pays in arrears) for work already completed. Is this also true for property acquisitions?**

A: Because of the large up-front monetary demands of a property acquisition, entities may request funding prior to the actual land purchase. In such a case, the grant program will make the land purchase payment to the title company for the escrow account of the seller. Some funds will be retained until all closing documents have been received.

**Q: According to the guidelines, a project involving the acquisition of property purchased in excess of the Fair Market Value (FMV) would be considered an ineligible project. Could it be considered an eligible project if the grantee found the means to cover the amount in excess of FMV?**

A: No. The State will only participate in acquisitions purchased at the approved Fair Market Value (FMV).

**Q: The River Parkways guidelines include a definition of a River Parkway that states it needs to be "adjacent to a river or stream". Would parkways adjacent to other water bodies (e.g., lakes, wetlands, flood control channels, aqueducts, etc.) be eligible for this program?**

A: A project must be adjacent to a river or stream/creek. Applicants are required to specify the location of the river or stream/creek as part of a complete application (see item #4, Site Plan, on page 24 of the guidelines).

**Q: Are costs directly related to the grant project, but incurred prior to the project award date eligible for reimbursement?**

A: No. Costs must be incurred during the project performance period to be eligible.

**Q: What is the Project Performance Period?**

A: It refers to the beginning and end dates of the grant agreement. Eligible costs during this period can be funded from the grant.

**Q: Can we use an overhead rate (indirect rate) for personnel and/or employee services?**

A: No. Only direct costs will be paid – costs must be directly tracked to a specific purpose, project and employee with supporting documentation. Personnel and/or employee services costs reimbursed by the River Parkways grant must be based on the actual employee wage or salary plus benefits. Indirect and overhead costs cannot be reimbursed. See page 67 for a definition of overhead costs. We do not reimburse a billable rate.

**Q: Are matching funds required and how does it impact scoring?**

A: Matching funds are not required for the River Parkway program. However, up to five points can be earned by securing other sources of funds.

**Q: Must the applicant have site control/land tenure?**

A: Yes. However, there are various ways to meet the site control/tenure requirement, (e.g., fee ownership, long-term agreements and easements). Land tenure must include the right to develop, operate and maintain all lands included in the project for the period required in the guidelines.

**Q: If we meet two statutory conditions, can we get additional points if other conditions are met as well?**

A: Yes, additional points may be earned in the Additional Project Characteristics and Benefits section on page 22 for other statutory conditions met by the project.

**Q: What is meant by the statutory requirement of “Conversion to River Parkways”?**

A: “Conversion to River Parkways” refers to the current and proposed land use of the project. An Applicant may meet this requirement if the proposed project is changing the use from developed to an activity consistent with that of a river parkways such as open space, low impact recreational values, ecological restoration, etc. – (e.g. Industrial zoned lot converted to an open space lot or a low impact recreational corridor).

**Q: Will an application go forward for review without a letter from the Willing Seller?**

A: No. Applications must include a letter stating that the seller is willing to enter into negotiations to sell the real property for a purchase price not to exceed Fair Market Value or a fully executed purchase option agreement.

**Q: Can I submit an application to both acquire and develop the same piece of property?**

A: No. Projects that include both acquisition and development are not eligible for River Parkways funding. River Parkways Grant funding must be used for either an acquisition-only project or for a development-only project, not both.