

Working with Lots 2019 Request For Proposals

Frequently Asked Questions

What items should I bring with me to the DFC Office Hours?

Office Hours are designed to assist applicants by answering questions and providing technical assistance. Please bring photos of your lot from at least two angles, along with site drawings. There are four exercises in the [Field Guide Workbook](#) (Getting Organized pgs. 15-32) that we recommend completing before submitting your proposal. If you'd like help on any portion of these activities, bring your questions to our office hours or reach out to a DFC Field Guide team member for assistance. Doing the additional exercise is recommended, it will inform your project, create a stronger proposal, and make the installation process easier!

I'm unaffiliated with an organization or business, am I eligible to apply for the grant?

Yes, you are eligible to apply if you have a fiduciary. However, a proposal that is connected to a community group or neighborhood vision is preferable.

Do I need a fiduciary to apply for the grant?

You do not need a fiduciary if you are applying as a 501©3 non-profit organization; you do need a fiduciary if you are not a 501©3 organization.

If I have multiple lots I want to improve, can I get a grant for each lot?

No, you are only eligible for one grant. You may use the grant on multiple contiguous lots if it is appropriate for the design you choose and if the budget allows.

What if I want to repurpose the lot?

If you plan to or think you may repurpose your lot in the near term (five to seven years), this opportunity may not be a good fit.

Are the requirements for each lot design firm?

The Requirements are listed separately from the Ideal Fit because we view them as necessary components for a successful lot design. If you are interested in applying for a specific lot design but don't meet all the requirements reach out to a DFC Field Guide team member; an exception to a requirement may be possible, dependent on site characteristics.

Why do you require two or three lots for some of the lot designs?

When a site description lists an Ideal Fit or Requirement for a minimum number of lots, we are referring to the average Detroit lot of 30' x 100', or 3,000 sqft (30' of street frontage and a lot of depth of 100') for residential lots and 20' x 120' or 2,400 sqft for commercial lots. If you have a single lot that is significantly larger, you may refer to the frontage minimum and disregard the multiple lot preference.

Can I modify the lot design?

Modifications are not permitted unless they are previously discussed and approved by your DFC project manager. We expect that some lot designs will need to be modified based on unique site conditions and characteristics.

Why do the installation seasons of the lot designs vary?

The installation dates for the lot designs vary for different reasons. The lot designs with a planned fall 2019 installation typically require more planning, permitting, and site prep before the design can be installed. The spring 2019 installations require less planning and little to no permitting. Two of the lot designs work in tandem with each other: the soil excavated from the Organic Bowl can be used to help build Mounds of Fun, if timed to work together. The installation seasons are not final, depending on the needs of each lot design, some spring installations could be planted in the fall if desired. Note: if tree removal is required as part of your site prep, it must take place in the spring, even if the lot design won't be installed until the fall.

What costs does the grant cover?

All costs need to first be approved by your DFC project manager (assigned at the first grantee convening). Approved costs often include the items listed on the Shopping List page in your Field Guide lot design, machine rentals from Home Depot, an allotted amount for volunteers (stipends, food, water, etc.), light site prep and labor costs, contractor fees if your lot design requires that you hire a professional, and maintenance and programming costs. The majority of the garden tools listed on the Shopping List page can be borrowed through Keep Growing Detroit's [Garden Resource Program](#).

What costs are NOT covered by the grant?

While all costs must be approved on a case-by-case basis by your DFC project manager, an example of costs that are often not approved include plants that are annuals (lot designs feature perennials), on-going landscape services for maintenance, stipends and food and drink that exceed the allotted amount, unsustainable watering practices, and tree removal exceeding 10% of the grant (tree removal exception for Forest Patcher).

Additionally, for most lot designs the grant does not cover intensive site preparation costs. Structure demolitions, elective grading, and other large-scale site preparation costs are your responsibility to cover. However, basic site preparation like soil testing, grass removal, or resources and tools for clearing debris, are permitted. Contact a DFC Field Guide team member for specific questions regarding your lot.

Why are you holding 10-20% of the awarded grant until program completion?

Each of these lot designs require maintenance to survive. For example, three years of routine and proper watering is necessary until the plants become "established" and can survive on their own, excepting droughts. Many resources go into the installation of the lot design and DFC wants to make sure they are successful; that means allocating a percentage of the grant to the on-going maintenance and additional costs that arise in the two years after the installation year.

What are the costs associated with the three-year maintenance plan?

Maintenance costs may include any supplies you will need to care for your installation for years to come. Items such as lawn mowers and trimmers, loppers, spades, gloves, water catchment systems, gator bags, and rain

barrels are some items that may be included. Keep in mind that it is typical to budget for replacement of 10% of plants installed. We prefer to support expenses that are part of a sustainable maintenance plan (ex: a lawn mower and programming to train volunteers), rather than funding paid services (ex: hiring lawn and garden maintenance services).

What are the costs associated with the educational programming requirement?

Educational programming costs may include flyers, signage, printed material, and costs associated with the development of trainings to help others learn and engage with your project and Field Guide to Working with Lots. Creativity is encouraged!

What are the watering needs for my lot design?

Plant material must be watered regularly for at least the first two years after the installation year before the plants established. A good rule of thumb for watering is, each tree needs ten gallons/week, and each flowering plant or shrub needs five gallons/week. DFC will be hosting a Water Systems + Strategies workshop in May to address watering issues and needs and to discuss proper watering practices. Be mindful of your water situation as you think about which lot design suits your capacity best.

Who is responsible for maintenance of the lot design after it is installed?

You are! Once you or your community organization has purchased the lots or received permission to use them, you assume full responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the property. This is why we place importance on applicants selecting a lot design that they are well-suited for and developing a sustainable maintenance plan.

Do I have to complete a Site Assessment with DWSD?

You only need to complete a site assessment if you are applying for the Organic Bowl or Storm Soaker lot designs, and if you intend to seek a DWSD drainage fee credit.

Are there any permits required for this project?

Yes, if you are applying for the Organic Bowl or Storm Soaker lot designs AND plan on applying for a DWSD drainage fee credit. If you are applying for the Mounds of Fun Lot Design you may need a permit depending on your lot's zoning. If you are applying for the Hedge Fund or Perennial Propagator lot designs AND plan to operate a business on the lot, you will need to confirm that you are in compliance of the zoning code before moving forward.

Can I save the proposal and return to it later in Submittable, the software that assists applicants with their submissions?

Yes. Once you create an account with Submittable and save the document while editing, you may return to it anytime. You will only submit it once you have completed the proposal in its entirety. You may also upload your supporting files to Submittable, save, and safely return later.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION/DETROIT LAND BANK QUESTIONS

Can I install the lot design project on property that I don't own?

You must own the lot or have written permission to use the property. If you do not own the lot, the owner must express written support of their long-term commitment to this project. If the property is owned by the DLBA [visit their website](#) to learn more about acquiring the lot that you are interested in. If the property is owned by the City of Detroit's DPP, contact them (313-244-4514) to inquire about purchasing the lot.

Where can I get more information on purchasing property through the Detroit Land Bank Community Partnership program?

<http://www.buildingdetroit.org/community-partnership/>

If there is dumping on a parcel of land being purchased from the Detroit Land Bank who is responsible for removing these items?

If there is dumping on a DLBA-owned lot that you are proposing to do a project on you can contact the Detroit Landbank through the web or through our general number, 313.974.6468, to report debris that is causing a nuisance to the community, and that will fall to the DLBA property maintenance team.