

Mercer County Open Space Preservation Assistance Program Policy

The Mercer County Open Space Preservation Assistance Program was established to supplement state and local funding by providing grants to municipal and non-profit preservation partners for projects of local importance.

The 2024 funding level will be as follows:

- The percent of the grants will be up to 40% of the CMV*
- Urban projects will receive grants of up to 50% of CMV*
- There can be multiple grants per project which together are not to exceed 40% of the CMV* and 50% for urban projects
- The project cap is not to exceed \$1,600,000
- Every project, with the exception of urban projects, needs to have at least 10% funding from a source other than the County and the State Green Acres program, which can include municipal funds (not the municipality's Green Acres funds), other grant funds, private donations and/or bargain sale (landowner donation)
- The County encourages applicants to pursue bargain sales. In the event that the CMV exceeds the purchase price, the County will fund 40% of the CMV. In no event can total public funds, including State, County and local funding, exceed the purchase price.

(*The Certified Market Value, CMV refers to the State Green Acres appraisal process. If the applicant is not obtaining a Green Acres CMV, the County may consider accepting another certified appraisal or satisfactory value.)

“Urban projects” are those physically located in the City of Trenton and in portions of other municipalities which are highly urbanized and under-served and which have many urban characteristics, such as high population density, lack of access to open space within walking distance, low income, and other characteristics of urban distress.

This policy will be in effect until December 31, 2024 and will be re-evaluated at the first 2025 meeting of the County's Open Space Board.