
SITE DEVELOPMENT COSTS POLICY

Subject: Limitation on Site Development Costs
Approval: Executive Staff
Code Section/Reference: ORC 3318.08(S)
Owner: Projects

Policy Number: PR-02
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APPLIES TO

CFAP, ENP, ELPP, VFAP, VFAP-ELPP, and Accelerated Urban Programs

I. Definition of Site

As co-owners and funding partners, both the Commission and school districts have a responsibility to select a “buildable site” that meets the educational delivery needs of the district without requiring an unreasonable amount of site preparation or development work. A site is defined as the area upon which the building is held or “building footprint,” in addition to land that is germane to the educational purposes of the district. The Ohio School Design Manual provides recommendations for site acreage to accommodate the size of classroom facilities to be constructed with variations for urban areas due to size constraints. State funds shall not be provided for site development costs that are outside of the purview of the definition provided herein of school site. Site development costs outside the development limits will not be co-funded.

II. Proper Due Diligence Requirement

Districts are required to complete and return the Site Evaluation Submittal Form, along with any necessary attachments and proper signatures from experts and authorities prior to signing the Project Agreement. Should a site not be under consideration at the time that the Project Agreement is signed, the district agrees to provide this information as soon as a site is selected prior to the Program of Requirements phase of the project. This clause shall be written into the Project Agreement. The Commission will not approve a Program of Requirements Phase submission until the district has acquired such property. The Commission will consider that the district has acquired a property if there is a legitimate and present expectation of legal possession of the property. The Commission may request evidence to this fact.

III. Rejection of Unreasonable Sites

As stipulated in ORC 3318.08(S), the Commission reserves the right to reject a site that has been selected by the district should the estimated amount of site work be deemed unreasonable based on information obtained in the site evaluation. Recommendations from the architectural firm, and local planning authorities will be used to make this determination. Unless the district can show that no other more suitable site exists or that acquiring another site would pose an unnecessary hardship to the district, the Commission will reject the site. If a district desires, it may locally fund these excess costs of the site.

IV. Co-Funded vs. Locally Funded Items

State matching funds may be used to provide for a reasonable amount of site work for items that have been identified through the site evaluation submittal process. Funds will be provided in the site budget and may be bid separately or as a site package. All efforts should be made to identify expected site expenditures prior to finalizing the budget. Certain items will not be co-funded under any circumstance. These items may be funded through local funds.

ITEMS ELIGIBLE FOR CO-FUNDING INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Site investigation services including, but not limited to: Phase I and II Environmental Assessment, Traffic Impact Studies, Soil Borings, and Land Surveys for sites where a school is constructed. Upon review by experts of the Phase I Assessment, the Commission may recommend that a Phase II Assessment be performed.
- Demolition of classroom facilities abandoned by the school district as identified in the Master Facilities Plan
- Grading and seeding for multi-purpose and softball fields
- On-site utilities and transportation pathways including roads, driveways, sidewalks, paving, parking lots, water, sewer, electricity, gas and lighting
- Site furniture and playground equipment
- On-site earthwork
- On-site landscaping for plantings and seeding
- On-site storm drainage systems
- Removal of underground fuel tanks used to serve an existing school, excluding soil remediation
- On-site utility tap-in fees

ITEMS TO BE LOCALLY FUNDED (ITEMS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR CO-FUNDING) INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Excessive tree removal
- Remediation or abatement of hazardous materials, soils or other contaminants
- Removal of existing structures or remnants of historical or current uses
- Purchase of property and consulting services to support property acquisition
- Preparation such as grading and seeding for athletic fields other than that which is afforded in the Ohio School Design Manual
- Site work such as seeding, soil removal, and grading for purposes that are not germane to educational delivery purposes
- Local code requirements exceeding Ohio School Design Manual requirements for items such as signage, streetlights, fencing, irrigation systems for plantings, etc.
- New rights-of-way or easements for off-site areas
- Pass-through utility relocations within easements on the property
- Plat consolidations costs
- Wetland relocation or banking