



US Department of Transportation

"Interested in Applying?" Reconnecting Communities Grant Program Overview *Encore*

July 28, 2022



Webinar Information

Audio

- To listen via computer:
Select "Computer Audio"
- To listen via phone:
 - Call: 669-254-5252
 - Webinar ID: 161 610 3501
 - Passcode: 613949
- All participants automatically join on mute, with cameras off
- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the RCP website at www.transportation.gov/reconnecting

Technical Support

- Email Webconference@dot.gov

Questions for Presenters

- Please type your questions in the Q&A box
- Chat will not be monitored

Instrucciones para la traducción al español:

- Haga clic en el botón "Interpretation," en la parte inferior derecha de la pantalla.
- No "mute original audio"





Informal Poll Questions

What type of organization do you represent?

- State
- Local government
- Federally recognized Tribal government
- Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Nonprofit organization
- Transit Agency
- Transportation Facility Owner
- Federal government
- Consultant
- Other (insert in chat)

Have you accessed Reconnecting materials in another language?

- Yes, in Spanish
- Yes, in Mandarin
- No

Will you access live, Spanish-language translation during this webinar?

- Yes
- No



Agenda

- Welcome
- Reconnecting Communities Announcement Video and Opening Remarks
- NOFO Overview and Eligibility Information
- Evaluation and Selection
- How to Apply
- Technical Assistance and Resources
- Q&A



Presenter Introductions



Charlene Wang

Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation



Faith Hall

Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation



Jordan Wainer Katz

Volpe Center
U.S. Department of Transportation



Hey everyone, it's Secretary Pete.



Reconnecting Communities = Thriving Communities



Jason Cameron/Getty Images

Hands On Atlanta



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Jstock - stock.adobe.com



Past Projects



Lynx – Orlando. Source: Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority

Railroad Park in Birmingham, AL. Source: Tom Leader Studio



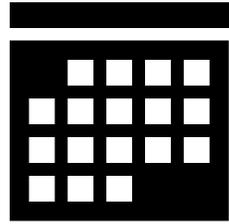
Long Street Bridge in Columbus, OH
Source: FHWA

Riverfront Parkway in Chattanooga, TN. Source: CNU.org

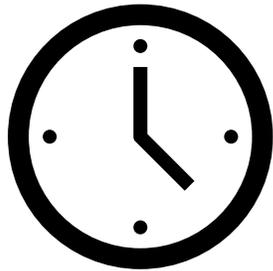




RCP NOFO Is Now Open!



Notice of Funding Opportunity is now **OPEN**
Grants.gov Opportunity Number: DOT-RCP-FY22-01
Assistance Listing: 20.940 – Reconnecting Communities



APPLY by Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 11:59 pm EDT
(no late applications accepted)
Submit on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)



Additional resources
at www.transportation.gov/reconnecting
[Subscribe](#) for email updates!



Upcoming Webinars – Registration is OPEN!

Tribal/Rural/Nonprofit Focus: Reconnecting Communities Grant Program Overview

Thursday, August 4 at 3:00 PM EST

Capital Construction Focus

Monday, August 22 at 2:00 PM EST

Benefit Cost Analysis

Tuesday, August 30 at 3:00 PM EST

Webinar dates and registration

available at <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities/reconnecting-communities-webinars> and announced via the listserv



RCP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Overview and Eligibility



RCP Program Overview

A total of **\$1 billion** in grant funding is available through the RCP Program for FY 2022-26 for planning, technical assistance, and construction to reconnect communities harmed by transportation infrastructure.

RCP Program's goal is to advance community-supported projects, with a priority on economically disadvantaged communities, to improve access to daily destinations such as jobs, schools, healthcare, grocery stores, and recreation, and to foster equitable development and restoration.



Brocreative - stock.adobe.com



Informal Poll Questions

Geographic area

- Northeast
- Southeast
- Midwest
- West

Community type

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Tribal
- Frontier
- Multiple community types

What is the approximate population of your community?

- <10,000
- 10,000-199,999
- 200,000-500,000
- >500,000



Funding Availability and Award Amounts

Fiscal Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL
Planning	\$50M	\$50M	\$50M	\$50M	\$50M	\$250M
Capital	\$145M	\$148M	\$150M	\$152M	\$155M	\$750M
Total	\$195M	\$198M	\$200M	\$202M	\$205M	\$1000M

Award Amounts:

- Planning Grants: No more than **\$2M**
- Capital Construction Grants: No less than **\$5M**



Eligible Lead Applicants

The lead applicant is the entity that submits the application.

Planning Grants

- States
- Units of local government
- Federally recognized Tribal governments
- MPOs
- Nonprofit organizations

Transit agencies and universities can be eligible to submit the application according to above criteria.

Capital Construction Grants

- Owner of the eligible transportation facility.
- Eligible applicants to Planning Grants may submit the application, **as long as the owner of the eligible transportation facility is a joint applicant**, with evidence of endorsing the application.

DOT encourages partnerships, See also Merit Criterion #3 - Community-based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships



Eligible Transportation Facilities

The proposed project must address an “eligible facility”.

Eligible facilities are defined as “**transportation facilities** that create barriers to community connectivity” due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors. This includes barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.

Examples -

Transportation Facilities include:

- Highways, arterials, parkways, collectors, local roads
- Transit lines or rail lines
- Viaducts or bridges
- Ports, gas pipelines, airports

NOT Transportation Facilities:

- Natural geographic features like rivers, lakes or mountains
- Buildings like wastewater treatment facilities or schools
- Water pipeline infrastructure

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Examples of Barriers Created by Transportation Facilities

Eligible facilities are defined as “*transportation facilities **that create barriers to community connectivity***” due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors. This includes barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.

Examples of transportation facilities *creating* barriers may include:

- The facility's volume of traffic, high speeds, or design creates unsafe conditions or impossible to cross.
- Facility reduces access to everyday destinations.
- Grade separations, i.e., the facility is a structure that is above ground or below ground, creating a physical barrier.
- Facility is missing sidewalks or pedestrian crossings, creating a barrier for some users.
- Due to poor design, i.e., lack of resilience features, facility is frequently unusable after severe weather events.

To be eligible, inadequate infrastructure must be linked to a transportation facility that creates a barrier. These issues, while very important, are examples of weak candidates for the RCP program on their own:

- Sparse road or trail network.
- Facility does not extend far enough.
- Infrequent transit service.

Application narrative should describe how the transportation facility creates a barrier. See Merit Criteria, Section E.



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

Do you have additional questions about eligible transportation facilities that create barriers?

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Examples of Reconnecting Solutions

Planning grants and Capital Construction grants will address: removing, retrofitting, mitigating, or replacing an existing, eligible facility to reconnect communities

Examples of removing, retrofitting, mitigating or replacing an existing, eligible facility may include:

- High-quality public transportation
- Infrastructure removal
- Pedestrian walkways and overpasses
- Capping and lids
- Linear parks and trails
- Roadway redesigns and complete streets conversions
- Main street revitalization
- More!

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Eligible Activities: Planning Grants

- Public engagement activities, including community visioning or other place-based strategies.
- Planning studies to assess the feasibility of removing, retrofitting, or mitigating an existing facility to reconnect communities, including assessments of:
 - Current traffic patterns.
 - Capacity of existing transportation networks to maintain mobility needs.
 - Alternative roadway designs or uses for the right-of-way.
 - Impact on mobility of freight and people.
 - Impact on safety.
 - Cost to restore community connectivity and to convert the facility to a different design, compared to expected maintenance or reconstruction costs.
 - Anticipated economic impact and development opportunities.
 - Environmental, public health, and community impacts.



Other Eligible Planning Activities

- Conceptual and preliminary engineering, or design and planning studies that support the environmental review for a construction project.
- Associated needs such as:
 - Locally-driven land use and zoning reform
 - Transit-oriented development
 - Housing supply
 - Managing gentrification and neighborhood change
 - Proposed project impact mitigation
 - Green and open space
 - Local history and culture
 - Access and mobility barriers
 - Jobs and workforce
 - Other necessary planning activities that do not result in construction



Laura Sandt - PBIC



Eligible Activities: Capital Construction Grants

Eligible construction grant activities include:

- Preliminary and detailed design activities and associated environmental studies; predevelopment / preconstruction; permitting activities including the completion of the NEPA process;
- The removal, retrofit, or mitigation of an eligible facility;
- The replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility that restores community connectivity; and
- Delivering community benefits and the mitigation of impacts identified through the NEPA process or other planning and project development for the capital construction project.

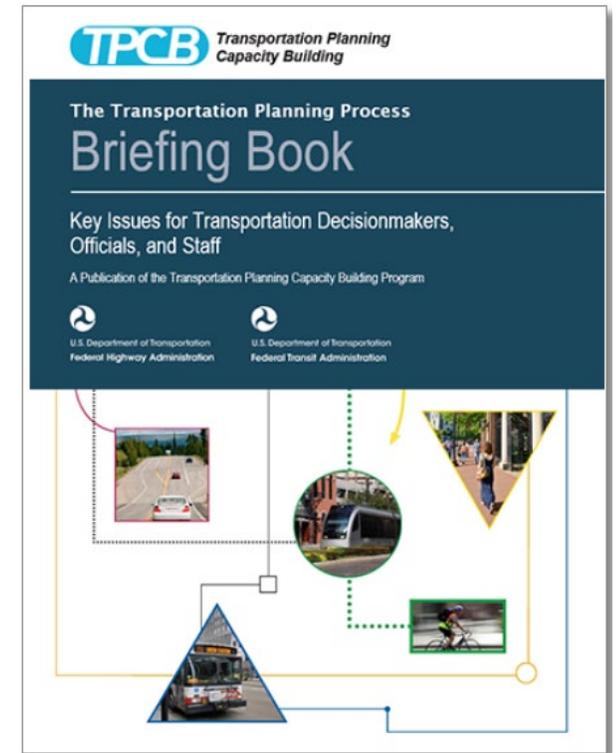


John Alphonse - stock.adobe.com



Pre-Requisite: Capital Construction Applications Only

- "... all necessary feasibility studies and other planning activities have been completed."
- By the time of award obligation, projects must be:
 - Consistent with the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan
 - Included in the Metropolitan Long-Range Plan (if applicable)
 - In the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and / or **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**, Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP) or equivalent
 - Transit projects must be included in the investment prioritization of the relevant Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan



*The FHWA / FTA
Transportation Planning
Process Briefing Book*



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

In a sentence, describe a project in your community that might be eligible for an RCP grant.

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Federal Cost Sharing and Local Match

Award Amounts:

- Planning Grants: No more than **\$2M**
- Capital Construction Grants: No less than **\$5M**

Cost Sharing: Total Federal Assistance may not exceed 80%.

• **Planning Grants:**

- Grants may not exceed 80% of the total project cost.
- Recipients contribute 20% local matching share. There are limited exceptions. FAQ in development.

• **Capital Construction Grants:**

- Grants may not exceed 50% of total project cost.
- Applicants may use other Federal assistance to partially satisfy the match up to 80%.
- Recipients contribute 20% local matching share. There is a limited exception. FAQ in development.

Local Match

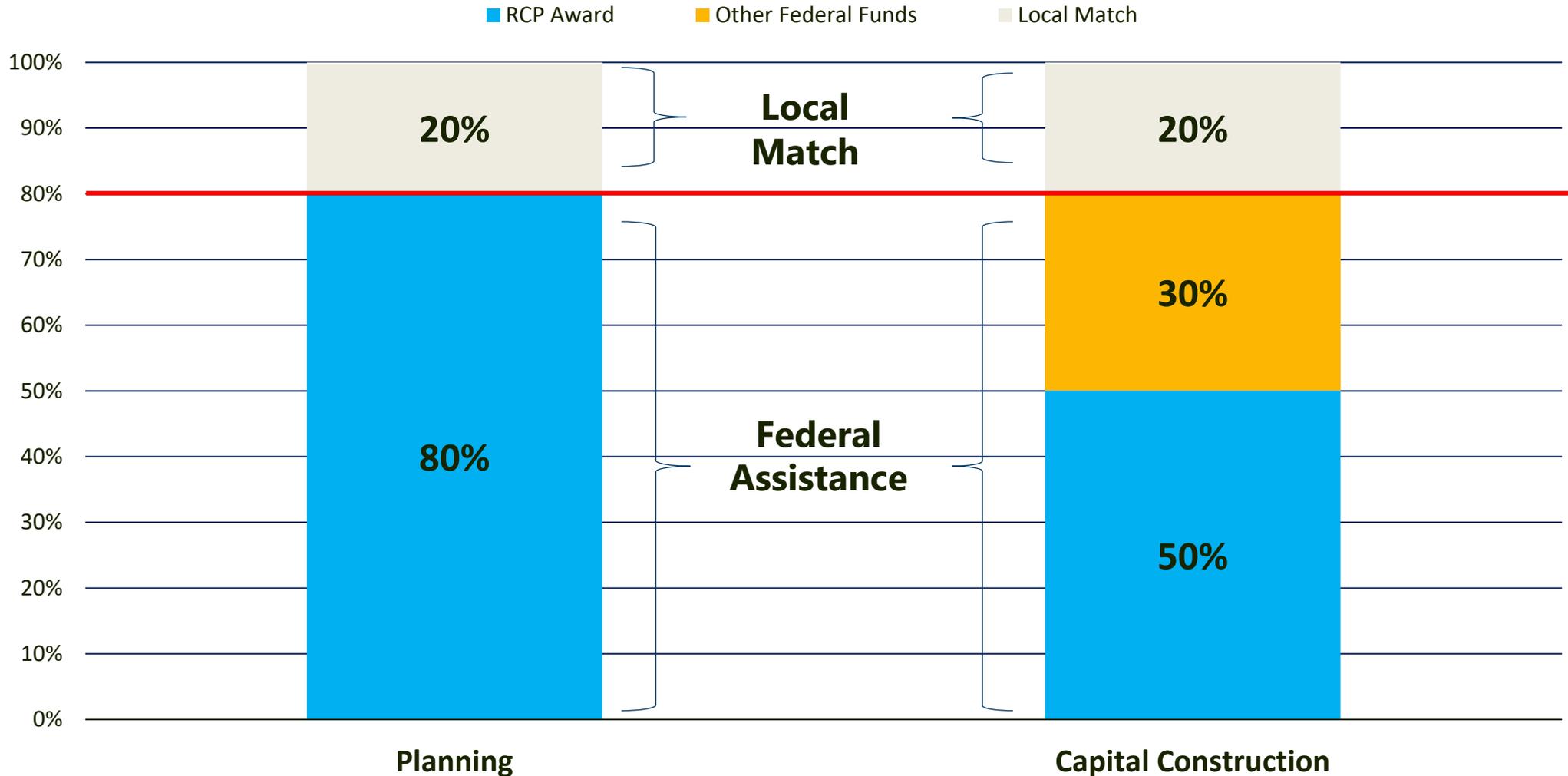
Matching funds may include non-Federal sources such as:

- State funds originating from programs funded by State revenue.
- Local funds originating from State or local revenue-funded programs.
- Philanthropic funds.
- Private funds.
- In-kind or cash contributions.

[DOT Navigator: Understanding Federal Match Requirements](#)

Federal Cost Sharing and Local Match

Max. Federal Awards and Min. Local Match as a Percentage of Total Project Cost



NOTE: Total Federal Assistance may NOT exceed 80% of total project costs *except in limited circumstances* that differ for Planning and Construction grants.

*See new FAQ



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

***New FAQ* - May Federal funds be used to satisfy the 20% local match requirement?**

Federal Programs that may be used for the 20% local match for Planning Grants:

- DOT's Tribal Transportation Program Funds, if the project will provide access to Tribal land.
- DOT's Federal Lands Transportation Funds, if the project will provide access to Federal land.
- DOT's Recreational Trails Program Funds, if the project is eligible under that program.
- HUD's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), if the CDBG-funded portion of the project is undertaken as part of CDBG-eligible activities.

U.S. Government-wide program that may be used for the 20% local match for Planning Grants OR Construction Grants:

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program. SLFRF funds available under sections 602(c)(1)(C) and 603(c)(1)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C §§ 802–803) may be used for the provision of government services up to the amount of the recipient government's reduction in revenue due to the COVID–19 public health emergency. However, if the recipient's SLFRF payment exceeded their reduction in revenue due to the emergency, the excess amounts cannot be used as non-Federal share.

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

- Other than RCP, what sources of match funds, federal and non-federal, or in-kind resources, are top of mind as being easiest to access?
- What sources of funding from other Federal agencies do you want us to explore as potentially qualifying for the 20% local match?

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Selection and Evaluation



Evaluation and Selection Process

DOT will evaluate proposals on:

- Alignment with **merit criteria**:
 - (1) Equity, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement
 - (2) Mobility and Community Connectivity
 - (3) Community-Based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships
 - (4) Equitable Development and Shared Prosperity
- **Project readiness** in terms of:
 - Technical assessment of feasibility and capacity to deliver project
 - Financial completeness
 - Environmental risk and permitting (Capital Construction only)
- **Benefit Cost** Analysis (Capital Construction only)



When selecting grants awards, DOT may consider: benefits to economically disadvantaged communities; urban, rural, and Tribal balance; geographic diversity; and, organizational diversity. Secretary makes final selections for awards.



“Reconnecting Extra” Designation (Section B)

- DOT established a “Reconnecting Extra” designation for Capital Construction grants funded below the requested amount, to encourage applicants to pursue supplemental DOT discretionary funding:
 - Eligible project resubmissions are automatically rated “Highly Recommended” subject to relevant program requirements for:
 - Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)
 - Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant programs (MPDG)
 - Loan financing programs (TIFIA, RRIF)
- DOT encourages States to use existing formula funds for projects to reconnect communities.

Jason Cameron/Getty Images





How to Apply



Application Limit and Deadline

A lead applicant may submit no more than **3** applications.

- DOT encourages joint applications from place-based partnerships.

Please be aware that you must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application, and that this process usually takes 2-4 weeks to complete. Applicants are encouraged to start the Grants.gov registration process now.

Applications are due by **11:59 PM EDT on Thursday, October 13, 2022**, on **grants.gov**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.



Unique Entity Identifiers

All applicants **must** obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through SAM.gov to apply for grant opportunities in grants.gov.

On April 4, the federal government stopped using Dun & Bradstreet's proprietary Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to identify contractors and grantees and began exclusively using the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

The process of obtaining a UEI can take up to a month, so applicants are encouraged to apply for the UEI now. If you previously had a DUNS number, your UEI has already been created and is available to view in SAM.gov.

For more information, see <https://sam.gov>.



Application Submission Structure (Section D)

For Planning and Capital Construction Applications:

- **Standard Forms**
 - SF-424
 - Planning Grants: SF-424A, SF-424B
 - Capital Construction Grants: SF-424C, SF-424D
- **Key Information Table (12 questions)**
- **Narrative (address Merit Criteria)**
- **Budget**

For Capital Construction Applications Only:

- **Supplemental Information (Environmental Risk, Benefit Cost Analysis)**



Suggested Narrative Structure (Section D)

For Planning and Capital Construction Applications:

- **Overview:** Introduction, describe barriers, history and character of the community, and any other background information
- **Location & Map:** Location of the facility and a description of the surrounding community
- **Response to Merit Criteria**

For Capital Construction Applications:

- **Environmental Risk Summary**
- **Benefit Cost Analysis Summary**

- Page Limits:**
Single Spaced
- Planning:
max. **10 pages**
 - Capital Construction:
max. **20 pages**



Merit Criteria: Planning and Capital Construction (Section E)

- #1 Equity, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement
- #2 Mobility and Community Connectivity
- #3 Community-Based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships
- #4 Equitable Development and Shared Prosperity



Merit Criteria: Planning and Capital Construction (Section E)

#1 Equity, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement

Planning and Construction applications should address:

- Analysis of harmful policies, burdens, disparities, and how solutions ensure equitable distribution of benefits and mitigation.
- Inclusive community participation plan, including culturally-appropriate and innovative practices for meaningful engagement, for hard-to-access community members.

Construction applications should also address:

- Construction-related displacement and a robust mitigation plan.
- Other negative construction impacts and mitigation measures.



Merit Criteria: Planning and Capital Construction (Section E)

#2 Mobility and Community Connectivity

Planning and Construction applications should address:

- How the existing facility presents significant barriers to access, mobility, and economic development.
- Existing feasibility studies.
- New or improved, affordable transportation options to increase safe mobility and connectivity for all.
- Safe accommodation for all users and integration with the surrounding land use and community context including climate, health, economy.
- Facility replacement or significant reconstruction is anticipated.

Construction applications should also address:

- Goods movement.



Merit Criteria: Planning and Capital Construction (Section E)

#3 Community-Based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships

Planning and Construction applications should address:

- Community-centered approach.
- Formal partnerships that reflect ties to adjacent community.
- Representative place-based management: community advisory group or advisory board, community land trust, community benefits agreements.

Construction applications should also address:

- Funding and financing from partners and (non-) Federal sources.



Merit Criteria: Planning and Capital Construction (Section E)

#4 Equitable Development and Shared Prosperity

Planning and Construction applications should address:

- Plan for equitable and resilient thriving communities.
- Community restoration, stabilization, and anti-displacement strategies.
- Creative place-making that celebrates local history and culture.
- Local inclusive economic development, including the utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).

Construction applications should also address:

- Good-paying jobs, including local hire preferences.
- High-quality workforce development programs.



Capital Construction Only (Section E)

Project Readiness

- A project schedule, address required approvals and permits, NEPA class of action and status, public involvement, right-of-way acquisition plans, risk and mitigation strategies.

Benefit Cost Analysis

- Summary of the BCA and the technical basis of the BCA
- Many benefits of RCP Program projects may be difficult to quantify but should be explained as well as possible, whether such benefits are quantified or unquantified.

See Reconnecting Communities – [Additional Guidance](#) page



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

What part of the application seems the most challenging to respond to?

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Informal Poll Questions

Do you plan to submit an application for this round?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, what type of application will you submit?

- Planning Grant
- Capital Construction Grant
- Both



Technical Assistance and Resources



Technical Assistance

- Visit www.transportation.gov/reconnecting for resources, FAQs, webinars, and case studies. [Subscribe](#) for email updates!
- Grant recipients, with a priority for those serving economically disadvantaged communities, will have access to further technical assistance coordinated through DOT's new [Thriving Communities Program](#), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to implement their projects.
- Starting in 2023, a learning academy will be stood up for prospective applicants to grants.

The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Transportation website. The header includes the DOT logo, the text "U.S. Department of Transportation", and navigation links for "ABOUT DOT", "PRIORITIES", and "CONNECT". There are also social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. The main content area is titled "Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program - Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants". On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with links for "Grants", "Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program", "Announcement", "Notice of Funding Opportunity", "How to Apply", "Additional Guidance", "Webinars", "FAQs", "Resources", and "Fact Sheet". The main content area contains a list of bullet points in Spanish and Mandarin, followed by a paragraph about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and a bolded announcement: "FY22 Notice of Funding Opportunity is open now through Thursday, October 13, 2022".



RCP Program Key Information Table

New: Fillable Key information table for applicants

Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program FY2022

ii. Key Information Table

Lead applicant name and organization type. (Please select one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Unit of local government <input type="checkbox"/> Federally recognized Tribal government <input type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan Planning Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit organization <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Owner
If a joint application, please provide organizational names of sub-recipients that will receive funds and other key partners.	
Indicate the annual budget and staffing of lead applicant organization and partner organization(s), if applicable. For non-profits, also indicate how long your organization has been in operation.	
Does the lead applicant have experience delivering Federally funded projects? If yes, please indicate granting Federal agency.	
Application type: (Please select one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Construction Grant
If interested in receiving DOT technical assistance, which of the following topics are of most interest for your organization? (Please select all that apply.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Community Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Compliance and Permit Approvals <input type="checkbox"/> Equitable Economic Revitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Place-Making and Urban Design <input type="checkbox"/> Community Stabilization <input type="checkbox"/> Data, Performance, and Mapping <input type="checkbox"/> Location-efficient Affordable Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Eligible Facility Type. (Please select all that apply.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Interstate highway <input type="checkbox"/> State highway <input type="checkbox"/> Arterial roadway <input type="checkbox"/> Other street or road <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge or viaduct <input type="checkbox"/> Transit <input type="checkbox"/> Rail <input type="checkbox"/> Airport <input type="checkbox"/> Port <input type="checkbox"/> Gas pipeline <input type="checkbox"/> Other infrastructure – <i>please describe</i>
Location of eligible facility and project area: State and County, place name of the city, town, or jurisdiction.	
Provide Census FIPS codes or other geographic code identifiers for the facility location and project area.	
Provide geographic coordinates for the facility (bounding box comprised of four pairs of coordinates that create a rectangle around the facility).	
Are the eligible facility and project area located in an economically disadvantaged community? See Section H - Definitions. (Please select one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the project located in a rural area? See Section H - Definitions. (Please select one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
For Capital Construction Grant applicants: Is the lead applicant the Facility Owner? (Please select one.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pre-requisite for Capital Construction Grant applicants: Is the proposed project already included in the STIP, TIP, or equivalent? For transit projects, is the project in the TAM Plan? (Please select one and provide a link or include as a supplemental document.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (Please provide additional details in the Project Readiness portion of the application describing how the project will be in such plan by the time of obligation of the award.)



Technical Assistance – Who Should I Contact?

FHWA Division Offices

- <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm>

FTA Regional Offices

- <https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices/regional-offices>

FRA Offices

- <https://railroads.dot.gov/about-fra/contact-us>

Contact the program

ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov



Aleksandr Matveev - stock.adobe.com

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



Discussion Question – Respond in Chat Pod

Which parts of the application should DOT address in further detail on the RCP website or a future webinar?

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.

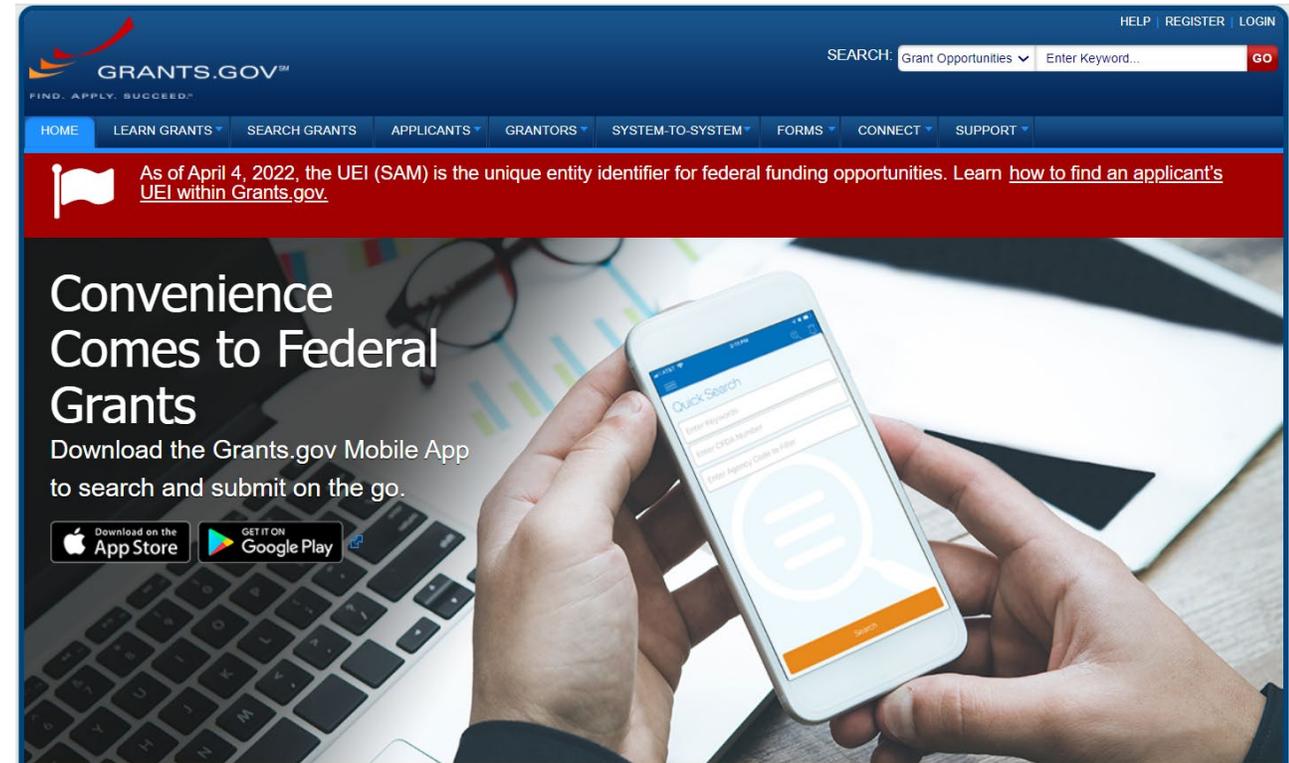


Getting Ready to Apply: Grants.gov

Prospective applicants **MUST** be registered in SAM.gov.

www.grants.gov provides resources for applicants, including:

- Grants 101 related materials on the overall discretionary funding process.
- Applicant training for using the Grants.gov application process.



Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



- Check our new DOT Navigator!
- The website contains basic 101 information and specific tips on applying as a smaller applicant entity across all our DOT grant programs.

<https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>

Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?



Apply for DOT Grants
Resources to help understand the federal grant-making process and key federal requirements

Find Technical Assistance Resources
Resources available to public agencies and other transportation stakeholders

Learn About the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
Information to help access BIL funding programs



Q & A



Q & A

Please type your questions in the **Q&A box**

Technical support: Webconference@dot.gov

Email us at ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov

~ **200 emails** received to date

FAQs - <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities/reconnecting-communities-faqs>

FAQs in development address: ADA Transition Plans; eligibility of Territories; applicability of State sliding scale for match; toll credits; supplemental materials; working with pre-selected contractors and NEPA.



Grant Awards, Funding, and Match

1. *Can other Federal grant funds be used in addition to the RCP grant funds?*

- Yes, other Federal funds in addition to an RCP grant may be used to pay for project costs up to 80% of total project costs. In general, other Federal funds cannot be used to exceed that 80% threshold. For limited exceptions, see FAQ – “May Federal funds be used to satisfy the 20% local match requirement?”
- Note: The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) Federal Fund Braiding Guide is a catalog of other Federal assistance and provides information about when that Federal assistance can be combined with other Federal funding. The guide defines Federal fund braiding for local match and examines whether Federal fund braiding is allowable for 61 programs across CCAM agencies that may fund transportation. These programs may be helpful for applicants to consider in meeting the Federal funds maximum. See - <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-federal-fund>



Grant Awards, Funding, and Match (continued)

2. *Is there a local match requirement for Reconnecting Communities grants?*

- Yes, both Planning and Capital Construction grants require a minimum 20% local match. In addition, a Capital Construction grant cannot exceed 50% of the project's total cost, and DOT may award Reconnecting Communities grants for amounts less than the maximum permissible share. Therefore, depending on the size of the Reconnecting Communities grant and the recipient's ability to use other Federal funds on the project, a local match greater than 20% may be necessary to complete the project. See "May Federal funds be used to satisfy the 20% Local Match requirement?" for additional details.

3. *May Federal funds be used to satisfy the 20% local match requirement?*

- Federal Programs that may be used for the 20% local match for Planning Grants:
 - DOT's Tribal Transportation Program Funds, if the project will provide access to Tribal land.
 - DOT's Federal Lands Transportation Funds, if the project will provide access to Federal land.
 - DOT's Recreational Trails Program Funds, if the project is eligible under that program.
 - HUD's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), if the CDBG-funded portion of the project is undertaken as part of CDBG-eligible activities.



RCP Program FAQs

Eligibility to Apply

1. *What is an eligible facility?*

- Eligible facilities are highways or other transportation facilities that create a barrier to community connectivity. This includes barriers to mobility, access, or economic development, due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors. A bridge can be an eligible facility under the RCP program if it creates a barrier to community connectivity. Rivers, lakes, mountains and other natural geographic features are not eligible transportation facilities that create barriers under the RCP Program.

2. *May universities apply and serve as the applicant and recipient for RCP grants?*

- A public university may be eligible for a planning grant as a State or unit of local government, depending on how the university is chartered. A private, nonprofit university may be eligible for a planning grant as a nonprofit organization, depending on how the university is chartered. Any university is eligible for a capital construction grant if it is an owner of an eligible facility.

3. *What proof should a nonprofit applicant provide to establish they are a nonprofit?*

- Nonprofit applicants should provide information describing how they are legally organized and confirming their nonprofit tax status.



Eligible Activities and Projects

1. Is the cost of acquiring land for a construction project or right of way eligible under either of the grants?

- Land acquisition is not allowable under an RCP Planning Grant.
- For a Capital Construction Grant, land acquisition prior to the conclusion of the NEPA processes consideration of alternatives is not generally allowed (23 CFR 771.113(a)). Once the NEPA decision has been made (i.e., Record of Decision, Finding of No Significant Impact, or Categorical Exclusion, as appropriate) is complete, RCP grant funds may be used to acquire property. However, early acquisition of ROW may be allowable if consistent with 23 U.S.C. 108 and 23 CFR 710.501. All acquisitions of ROW must also comply with 49 CFR part 24 (regulations implementing the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act).



Summary of Key RCP Program Information

Eligible Facilities: Highways or other transportation facilities that create a barrier to community connectivity. This includes barriers to mobility, access, or economic development, due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors.

Application Deadline:
October 13, 2022,
at 11:59 EDT

Planning Grants

- **Eligible Applicants:** States, units of local governments, Federally recognized Tribal governments, MPOs, nonprofit organizations
- **Eligible Activities:** Planning studies, public engagement activities, and other transportation planning activities as determined by the USDOT.
- **Award Limits:** No more than \$2M
- **Match:** Total Federal Assistance not to exceed 80%

Capital Construction Grants

- **Eligible Applicants:** Transportation facility owners, partnerships between facility owners and organizations eligible for planning grants.
- **Eligible Projects:** Remove, retrofit, mitigate, or replace an existing eligible facility with a new facility that reconnects communities.
- **Award Limits:** No less than \$5M, no more than 50% of total project cost.
- **Match:** Total Federal Assistance not to exceed 80%
- **Prerequisite:** All necessary feasibility studies and other planning activities have been completed.



Active DOT Grant Opportunities

Bridge Investment Program (Closes August 9)

- The \$12.5 billion program will help ensure that some of the nation's most important bridges remain operational, support local economies, strengthen our supply chains, improve safety, and create good-paying jobs across the country.

Safe Streets and Roads for All Program (Closes September 15)

- \$6 billion grant program for localities to develop a comprehensive safety action plan, a plan aimed at preventing transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, commonly referred to as a "Vision Zero" or "Toward Zero Deaths" plan.

All Stations Accessibility Program (Closes September 30)

- \$1.75 billion program to fund capital projects to upgrade the accessibility of legacy rail fixed guideway public transportation systems that meet or exceed Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (Closes October 4)

- \$5.5 billion program will fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods

Upcoming DOT Opportunities

National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration (Opens Summer 2022)

- \$1 billion grant program to provide funding for projects that would improve or restore passage for anadromous fish.

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program (Opens September 2022)

- \$1 billion grant program to provide funding to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems to improve transportation efficiency and safety.

Review the broad range of upcoming [USDOT NOFOs](#) available to support reconnecting your community, as well as:

- [White House Guidebook to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Governments and Other Partners](#)
- [USDOT funding and financing opportunities](#)



Thank You

Thank you for participating.

We will post a recording and slides on the website and notify registrants next week.

RCP Program Website: <https://www.transportation.gov/reconnecting>

- Includes a link to the Notice of Funding opportunity (NOFO), Frequently Asked Questions, Additional Guidance, Resources, Webinars, and more.

Application Information

- Applications are due Thursday, October 13, 2022, via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

Contact us: ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov



Hands On Atlanta



Source: FHWA



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