



US Department of Transportation

Rural/Tribal/Nonprofit Focus: Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program Overview Webinar

August 4, 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)



Agenda

- Welcome
- Opening Remarks
- NOFO Overview and Eligibility Information
 - Illustrative project examples (reflect elements of the RCP)
- Selection and Evaluation
- How to Apply
- Technical Assistance and Resources
- Q&A



Presenter Introductions



Arlando Teller

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation



Rob Hyman

ROUTES Program Manager
Office of the Under Secretary of Transportation Policy
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Jordan Wainer Katz

Volpe Center
U.S. Department of Transportation



Reconnecting Communities = Thriving Communities

Hands On Atlanta



Jason Cameron/Getty Images



FHWA: Pueblo of Acoma, NM



About the ROUTES Initiative

The Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative aims to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure and improve safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness nationwide.



The ROUTES Office achieves this mission by:

Engaging Rural Communities through a series of events to better understand the needs and priorities of rural communities and collect essential data from stakeholders representing different communities, groups, workers, and industries to identify solutions.

Harmonizing DOT Programs to implement rural policy by establishing the ROUTES Council to lead and coordinate Departmental activities to implement BIL and better align new and existing funding, financing, and technical assistance programs with the needs of rural and Tribal communities.


Utilizing a Whole-of-Government Approach by partnering with other rural-focused federal agencies to expand DOT's presence in rural America, better promote DOT's resources to their customers, and capitalize on synergies between federal funding programs.

Visit us www.transportation.gov/rural or contact us at rural@dot.gov.









One-Stop-Shop for Rural Resources

The ROUTES website consolidates DOT's rural resources in one place.

 U.S. Department of Transportation

ABOUT DOT ▾ PRIORITIES ▾ CONNECT ▾

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ROUTES

About

Statistics

Grants ▾

Electric Vehicles ▾

Modal Administrations ▾

Contact ROUTES

Related Links

- [US DOT Grant Programs and Projects](#)
- [Grant Applicant Toolkit](#)
- [Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit](#)
- [National Center for Rural Road Safety](#)
- [Access to Intercity Transportation in Rural Areas](#)
- [Subscribe to ROUTES updates](#)

Related Documents

- [ROUTES Fact Sheet](#)

Contact Us

ROUTES Initiative

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United States

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Phone: 202-366-4544

Business Hours:

8:30am-5:00pm ET, M-F

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access

Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES)



Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) is an initiative to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure by developing user-friendly tools and information, aggregating DOT resources, and providing technical assistance. The ROUTES Initiative aims to ensure rural transportation infrastructure's unique challenges are considered in order to meet priority transportation goals of safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness.

Read our newly released [Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit](#), which was developed as part of the ROUTES Initiative to help rural communities plan and fund electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

The ROUTES Initiative is established to...

- Engage Rural Communities through a series of events to better understand their transportation needs and priorities, and to collect essential data from stakeholders representing different communities, groups, workers, and industries to identify necessary transportation solutions.
- Harmonize DOT Programs to implement rural policy by re-constituting the ROUTES Council to lead and coordinate Departmental activities to implement the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) and better align new and existing funding, financing, and technical assistance programs with the needs of rural and Tribal communities.
- Utilize a Whole-of-Government Approach by partnering with other rural-focused federal agencies and regional commissions to expand DOT's presence in rural America, better promote DOT's resources to their customers, and capitalize on synergies between federal funding programs.

The Rural Transportation Network is Critical for Our Economy

- Rural transportation networks are critically important for domestic production and export of agriculture,

www.transportation.gov/rural

Webinars

- Benefit Cost Analyses for Rural Projects
- TIFIA Rural Projects Initiative
- Transit Resources
- National Roadway Safety Strategy

Tools and Toolkits

- Rural Eligibility Map
- Point of Contact Map
- Grant Applicant Toolkit
- Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit

Funding Opportunities

- Active & Upcoming NOFOs
- Links to Past Awards

Modal Specific Landing Pages

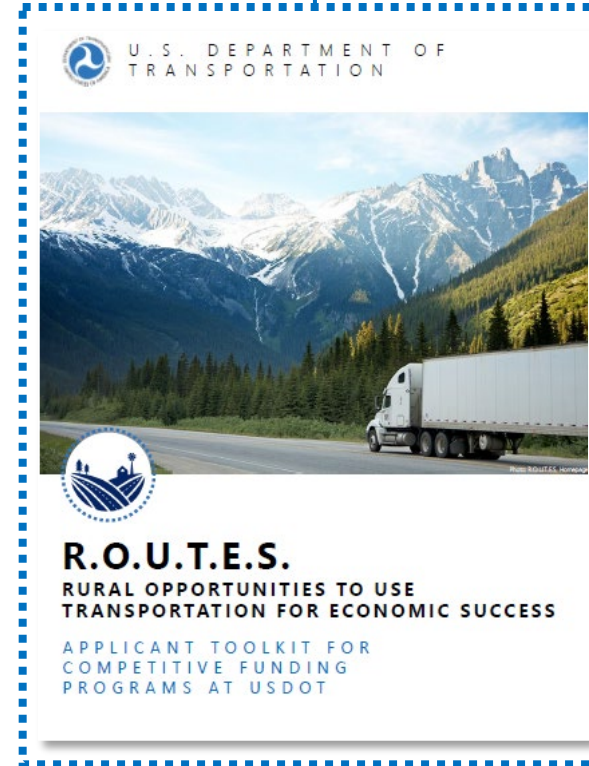
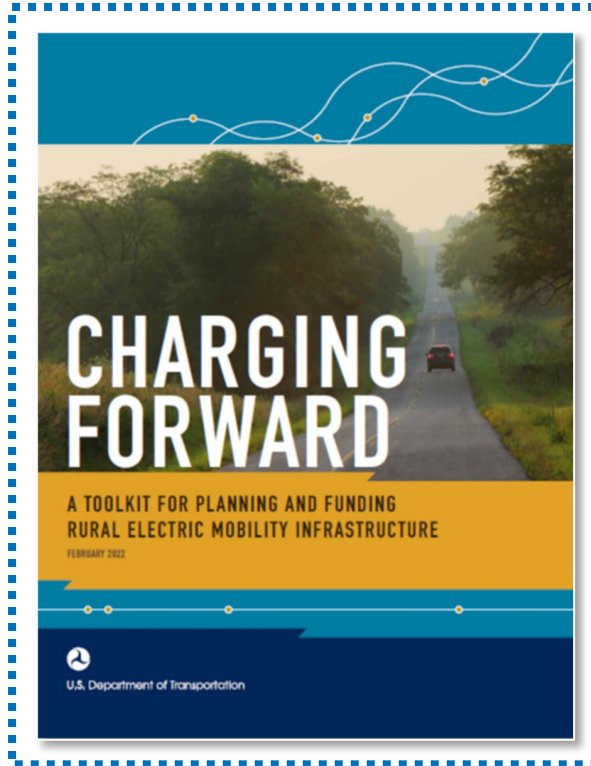
Quarterly Newsletters



Check out these toolkits and more at www.transportation.gov/rural.

INTERESTED IN EV INFRASTRUCTURE?

This toolkit helps rural stakeholders scope, plan, and fund electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Rural entities can use the toolkit to identify key project partners and available funding or financing to help make their project a reality.



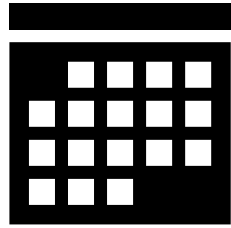
APPLYING FOR A GRANT FROM USDOT?

This toolkit provides user-friendly information and resources to support rural applicants' understanding of USDOT discretionary grant programs and the funding process.

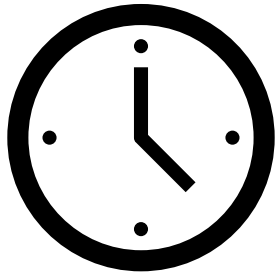
Contact us at rural@dot.gov.



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!



RCP NOFO Is Now Open!

DOT encourages prospective applicants to read the Notice of Funding Opportunity in its entirety.

Webinars highlight NOFO material.

Website material is supplemental.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary of Transportation

Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary of Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

ACTION: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Assistance Listing #20.940

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to solicit applications for Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program grants. Funds for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 RCP Program are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.

DATES: Applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM EDT on Thursday, October 13, 2022. Late applications will not be accepted.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted through <https://www.grants.gov>. Opportunity number, DOT-RCP-FY22-01.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Ongoing updates, webinar notices, FAQs: <https://www.transportation.gov/reconnecting>.

Email: reconnectingcommunities@dot.gov

Call: Faith Hall at (202) 366-9055. A Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) is available (202) 366-3993.

Contact DOT operating administration field or headquarters offices:

- Federal Highway Administration, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm>;
- Federal Transit Administration, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices/regional-offices>;
- Federal Railroad Administration, <https://railroads.dot.gov/about-fra/contact-us>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS: Each section of this notice contains information and instructions relevant to the application process for RCP Program grants. All prospective applicants should read this notice in its entirety so that they have the information they need to submit eligible and competitive applications.

A	PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
B	FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION
C	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION
D	APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION
E	APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION
F	FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION
G	FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS
H	OTHER INFORMATION



Upcoming Webinars – Registration is OPEN!

Capital Construction Focus

Monday, August 22 at 2:00 PM EST

Benefit Cost Analysis

Tuesday, August 30 at 3:00 PM EST

Registration is open!

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



RCP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Overview



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.

Fiscal Year	2022
Planning	\$50M
Capital	\$145M
Total	\$195M



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?

- <1,000
- <1,000-<10,000
- 10,000-<200,000
- 200,000-500,000
- >500,000



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.

What does a partnership look like under RCP?

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



Partnerships can increase your capacity

Benefits of partnerships:

- Better support multi-jurisdictional collaboration
- Help applicants meet federal funding requirements and lower administrative costs and delays.

Partnerships can involve multiple entities and take multiple forms. Some examples:

- A Federally recognized Tribal government and a university partner to collect and analyze data and conduct public involvement, to identify solutions for a transportation facility.
- A State DOT, city government, and local community foundation are proposing the removal of a section of aging Interstate Highway and conversion to a new use.
- A Federally recognized Tribal government and several community-based organizations are seeking planning funds to address limited transportation options due to a dividing piece of infrastructure.
- A County public works, County health department, and public transportation provider are applying for funds to install accessible pedestrian bridges to bus stops that can't be accessed without crossing a highway.
- A County public works department and several non-profits apply to reconfigure a State Highway that bifurcates a small town.
- Multiple adjacent local governments submit a single application for a series of bundled projects that address the same transportation facility to reconnect communities around a rail-line through retrofits and mitigation of the infrastructure.



Nonprofit Example – Railroad Park, Birmingham

This project converted a rail viaduct, warehouse, and yard into a public park to unify downtown Birmingham.

The \$22M project was funded with federal, city, and local foundation funding.

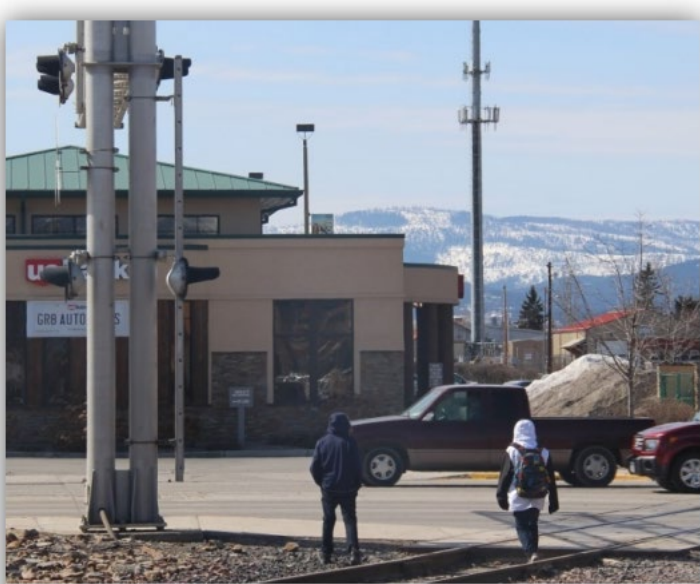
It began as a grassroots effort by a non-profit.



Sources (clockwise from top): Tom Leader Studio, Jesse Kunerth, digidreamgrafix)



Rural Example – Kalispell, MT



Children Crossing 7 Lanes of Traffic (US 93) on Rail Tracks



Mother assists child over tracks

- \$10 million TIGER grant 2015
- Downtown revitalization of a rural community
- Remove and relocate freight rail
- New trail and park



Kalispell Core Area and Trail with Glacier Rail Park

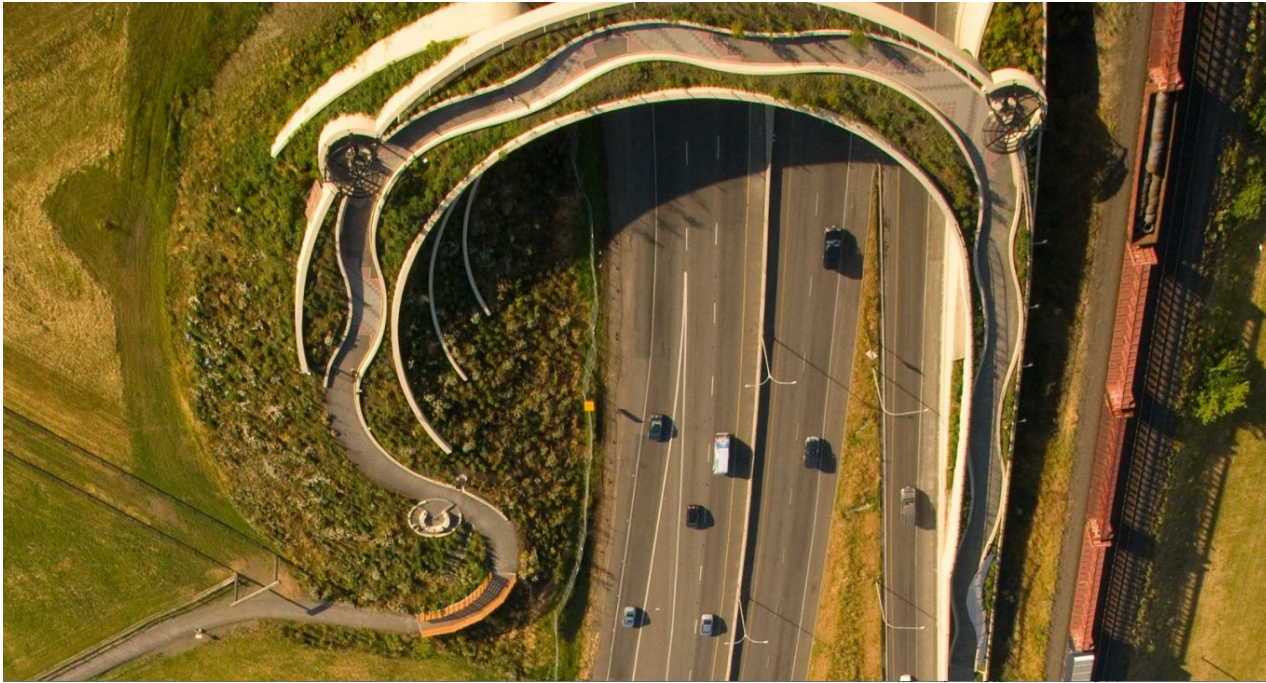


Sign Located at Flathead Industries Vocational Rehabilitation Campus for Disabled Clients



Going shopping at the Kalispell Center Mall

Tribal Example – Vancouver Land Bridge



<https://www.confluenceproject.org/river-site/vancouver-land-bridge/>

\$12.25M project reestablishes historic Tribal crossroads.

Demonstrates cultural, artistic landscape architectural design elements that celebrate and reconnect significant indigenous and historic resources.

Partners: Confluence Project members (Chinook Indian Nation, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), and Warm Springs; Cowlitz Indian Tribe; Nez Perce Tribe; Yakama Nation and Cultural Center; The Wanapum); the National Park Service, the City of Vancouver, and the Washington State Department of Commerce



RCP Program FAQs

Are Rural Transportation Planning Organizations eligible to apply? Is a Council of Government (not a city or an MPO) eligible?

- Yes, COGs and RTPOs would be eligible as units of local government. See also FAQ - "Who is eligible to apply for RCP program grants?"



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.



RCP Program FAQs

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.**



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:

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

What is main street revitalization?

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



What is main street revitalization?

An effort to renew downtown areas and restore them to their former prominence as a center of community activity through preservation-based economic development.



Source: USDA

Resources:

USDA Downtown Revitalization

<https://www.nal.usda.gov/legacy/ric/downtown-revitalization#dr>

EPA Smart Growth in Small Towns and Rural Communities

<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-small-towns-and-rural-communities>



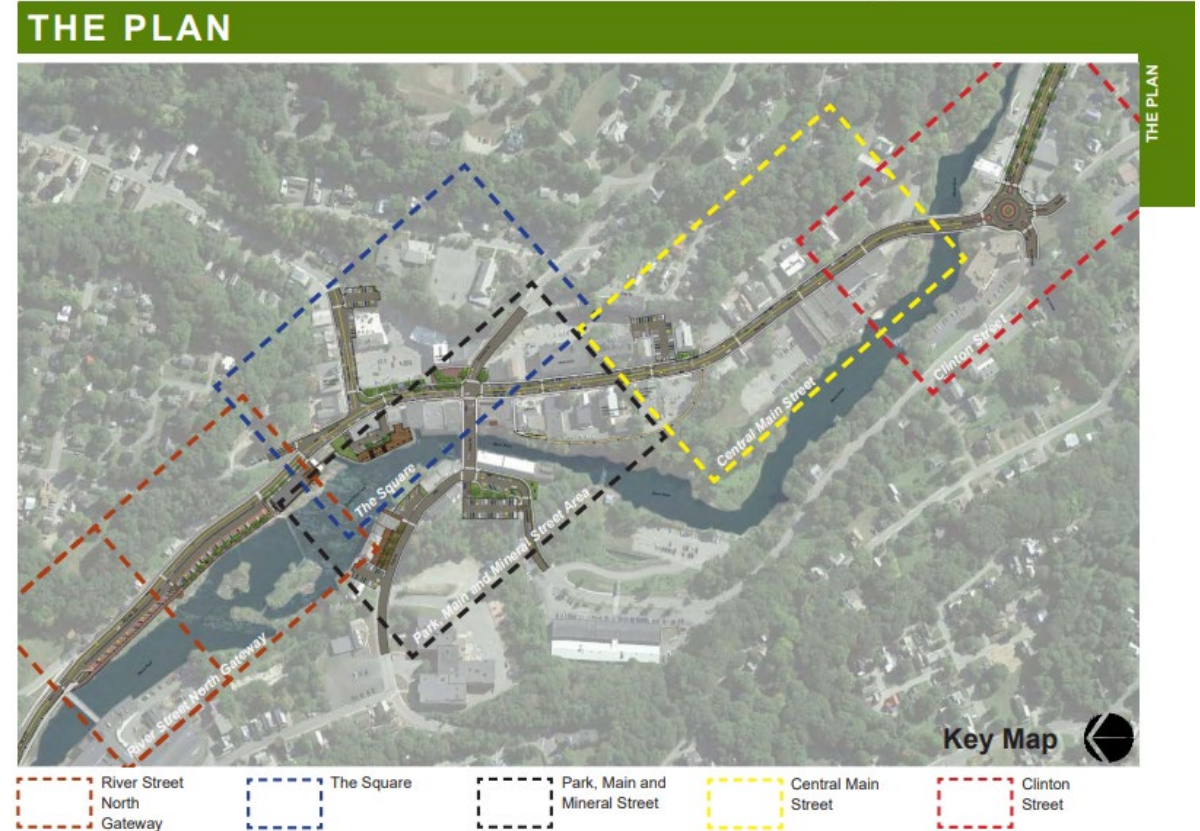
Complete Streets: Springfield, VT Community Connections

In 2017, the Town of Springfield (population under 10 thousand) received a grant for the "Main Street Streetscape Master Plan."



Note: For RCP, this project would need to address an identifiable “transportation facility that creates a barrier.”

Springfield Main Street Master Plan 23



See the case study at

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/community_connections/case_studies/vermont/. View the plan at https://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/planning/documents/scbc/Springfield_MP_Final-web.pdf

RCP Eligibility



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.

What is a place-based strategy or placemaking?



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



What are placemaking and place-based strategies?

Placemaking is the process of investing in quality places of lasting value - where people want to live, work, and play.

Place-based strategies take a comprehensive approach to assess community needs and establish shared goals for the future.

Transportation planning, decision-making, and capital investment can play a vital role in advancing community goals beyond the right of way.



Brocreative - stock.adobe.com



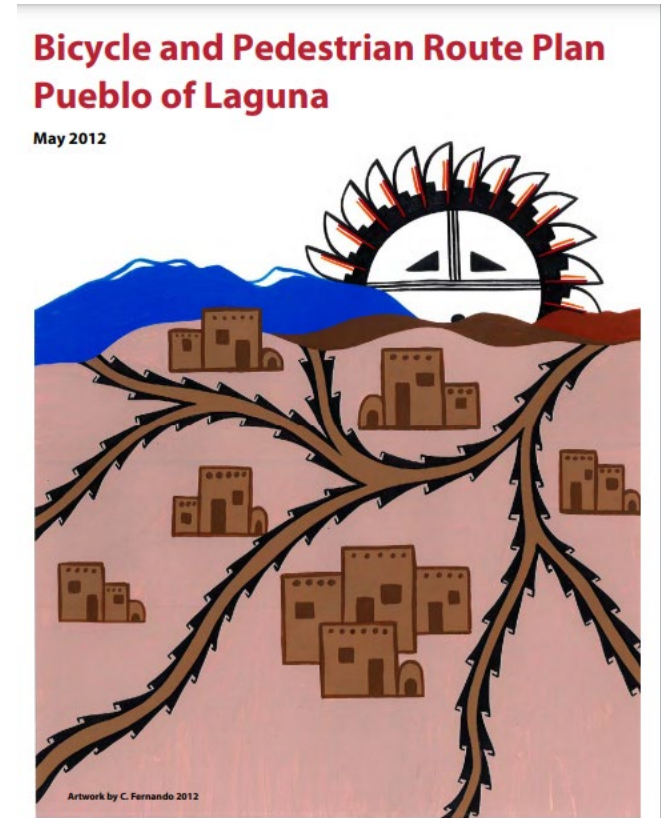
Example – Pueblo of Laguna Bike/Ped Trail Design

\$1.47M TIGER Grant

Planning and design of ~40 miles of trails on the Pueblo of Laguna Native American reservation to **connect six distinct communities** with a focus on traditional village cores.

Supports revitalization through the development of a comprehensive bike/pedestrian route plan for Pueblo of Laguna villages and complete engineering designs, including related surveys, studies, and environmental (NEPA) and archaeological clearances, to prepare priority routes ready for construction.

Note: For RCP, this project would need to address an identifiable “transportation facility that creates a barrier.”



View the plan at: <https://www.lagunapueblo-nsn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Pueblo-of-Laguna-Bike-and-Pedestrian-Route-Plan-2012.pdf>



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.

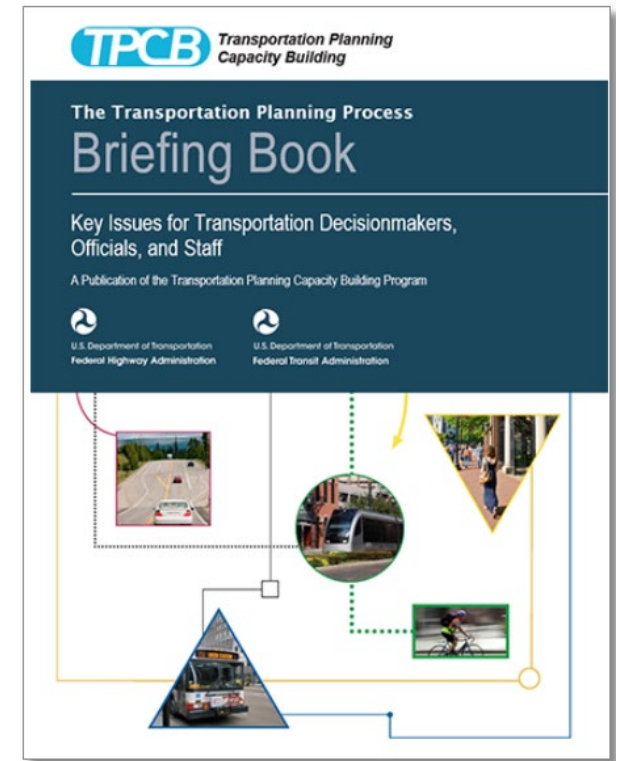


John Alphonse - stock.adobe.com



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 **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP),** Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), 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*



- Planning Grants: No more than **\$2M**
- Capital Construction Grants: No less than **\$5M**
 - Total project cost should be no less than **\$10M**
(includes match)

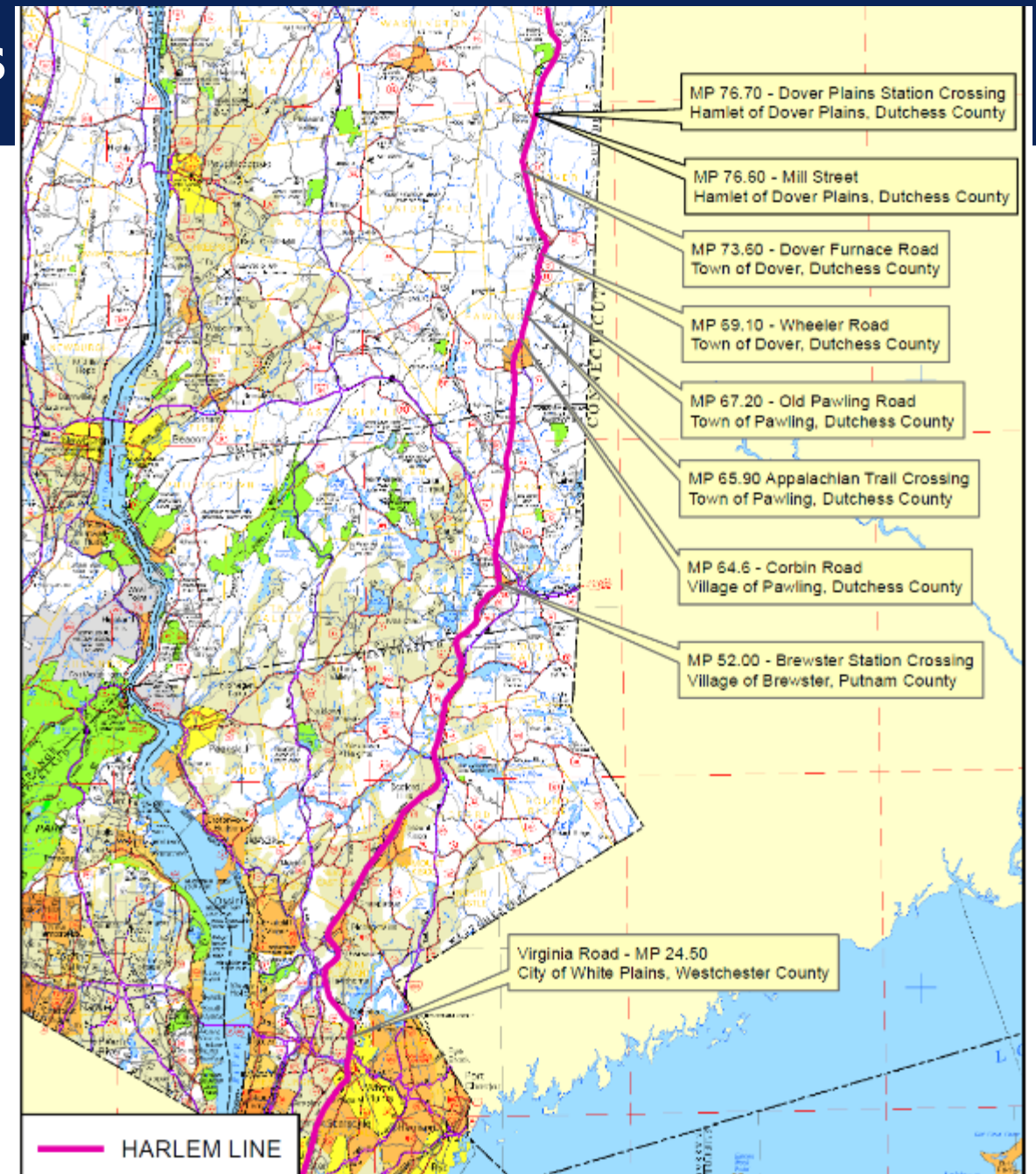
Ex: Multiple project components

Commuter Authority Rail Safety
Improvement Grants Program (CARSI)

\$19.7M Award in 2021

This project demonstrates multi-jurisdictional bundling of a series of railroad crossing safety improvements along a single commuter rail facility serving rural and suburban counties.

Partners: NY State DOT, Metropolitan
Transportation Authority, and Metro
North Railroad





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](#)

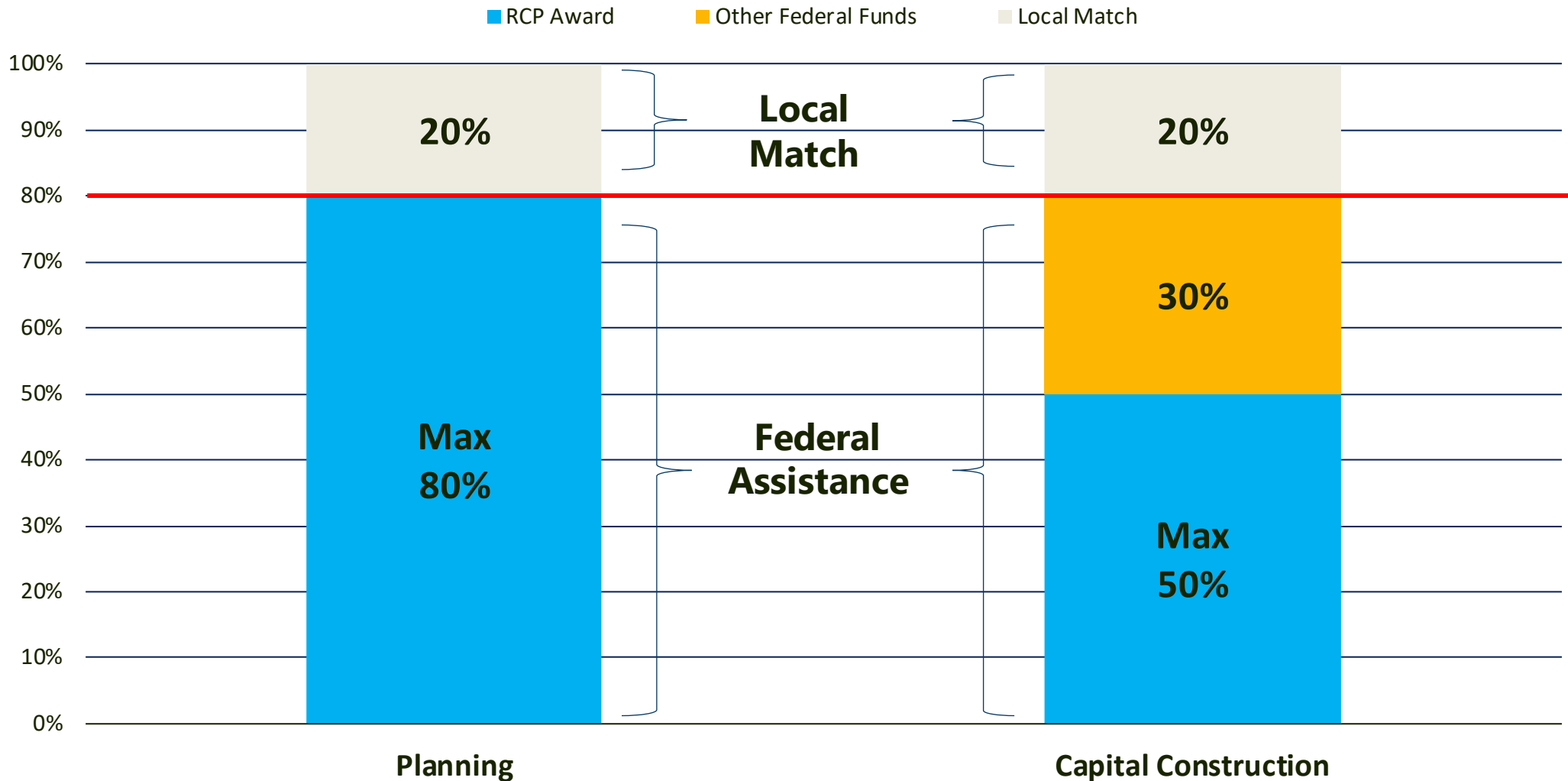
Federal Cost Sharing and Local Match

NOTE:

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

We have an FAQ that we are continually updating.

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





RCP Program FAQs

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?"

Examples of federal funds, formula and discretionary, that may be paired with RCP grant funds, such as:

- DOT's Metropolitan Planning and Statewide Planning & Research funds (FHWA and FTA)
- DOT's Surface Transportation Block Grants, including Transportation Alternatives
- DOT's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program
- DOT's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants
- DOT's Multimodal Project Discretionary grants
- DOT's Safe Streets and Roads for All grants
- HUD's Community Development Block grants
- HHS's Community Services Block grants

The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) Federal Fund Braiding Guide examines whether Federal fund braiding is allowable for 61 programs across federal agencies that 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>



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

May be used for the 20% local match for Planning Grants:

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

May be used for the 20% local match for Planning Grants OR Construction Grants:

1. 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.



Discussion Question – Respond in the Chat pod

- 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 complete project
 - Financial completeness
 - Environmental risk and permitting (Capital Construction only)
- **Benefit Cost** Analysis (Capital Construction only)

How can I determine if
my community is
economically
disadvantaged?



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.



Economically Disadvantaged Community Determination

Applicants may demonstrate the “economic disadvantage” of the project area according to ONE of the following tools:

1. EPA’s [EJSCREEN](#)
 - Socio-economic indicator for low income, block groups in the 80th percentile or above, compared to the State.
2. [Areas of Persistent Poverty table](#) for the County or Census tract level.
3. DOT’s mapping tool for Historically Disadvantaged Communities
 - See Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts in [ArcGIS Dashboards](#).
4. Other Federally designated community development zones
 - For example: Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods).



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.

You must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting the final application. This can take 2-4 weeks to complete.

DOT encourages applicants 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.

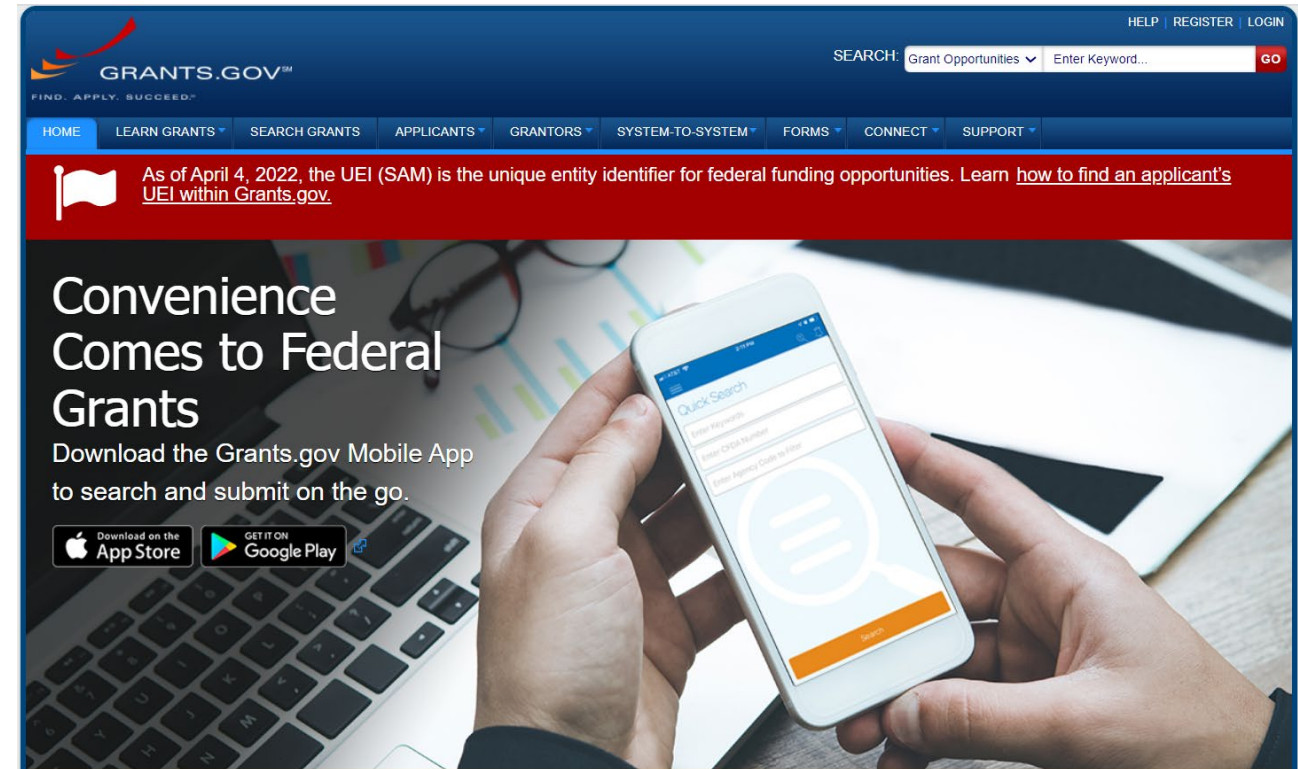


Getting Ready to Apply: Grants.gov

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.



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 (NOFO 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 (NOFO 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 (NOFO Section E)

- 1. Equity, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement:**
Robust community engagement and a plan to assess and reduce inequities, historic and current.
- 2. Mobility and Community Connectivity**
Existing community connection issues and a plan to address by meaningfully improving affordable, multi-modal access to jobs, healthcare, schools, etc.
- 3. Community-based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships**
A community-centered approach, by mechanisms such as partnerships, community advisory groups, and land trusts.
- 4. Equitable Development and Shared Prosperity**
A holistic plan to create a thriving, resilient community, through restoration and anti-displacement, place-making, affordable housing, entrepreneurship particularly for disadvantaged businesses, and good-paying local jobs.



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 – Who Should I Contact?

Visit www.transportation.gov/reconnecting for resources, FAQs, webinars, and case studies. [Subscribe](#) for email updates!

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

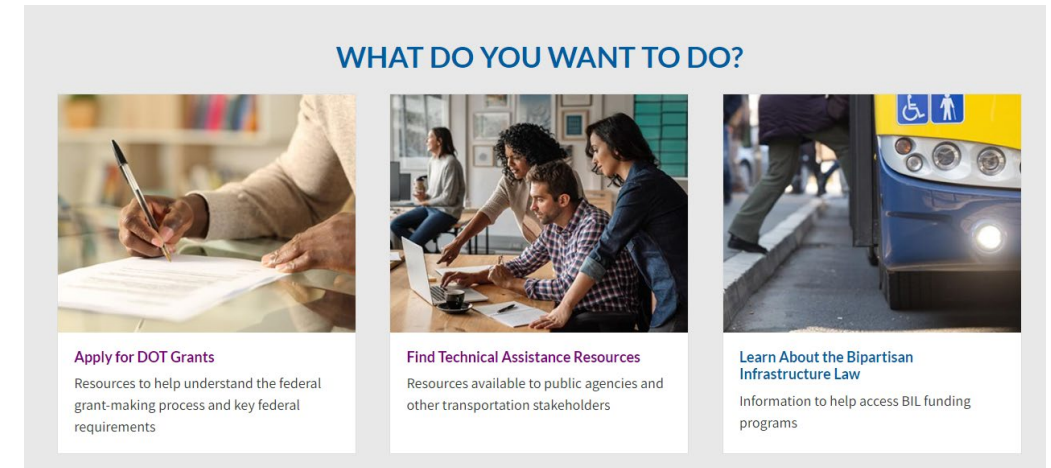
Questions? Use the Q&A box. Chat will not be monitored for questions.



DOT Navigator

- 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.



Other Technical Assistance Resources

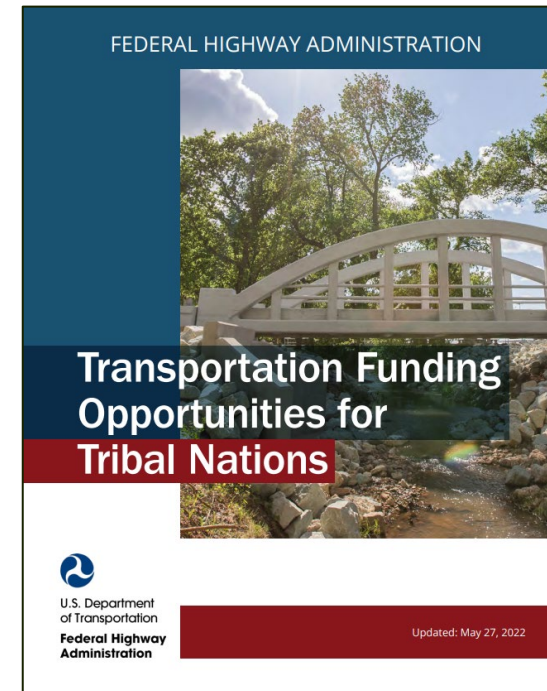
BRIEFING ROOM

White House Releases Technical Assistance Guide to Help Communities Unlock Resources From Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

MAY 18, 2022 • STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

Administration Highlights New Capacity from Philanthropic, Nonprofit & Labor Organizations to Help States and Cities Respond to Once-in-a-Generation Opportunity

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/18/white-house-releases-technical-assistance-guide-to-help-communities-unlock-resources-from-bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>



BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA

BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW RURAL PLAYBOOK

A ROADMAP FOR DELIVERING OPPORTUNITY AND INVESTMENTS IN RURAL AMERICA

Last Updated - April 2022

Rural Playbook:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/BIL-Rural-Playbook-.pdf>



White House Technical Assistance Guide:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/build/technical-assistance-guide/>



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.



Forthcoming Technical Assistance

- Up to \$30 Million over five years to build out more hands-on technical assistance for the Reconnecting Communities program.
- Starting in 2023, a learning academy will be stood up for prospective applicants to grants and 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.

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". Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube are also present. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail shows "Home" and "Grants". A left sidebar contains a list of links: "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 is titled "Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants". It features two bullet points: one for the Spanish version of the program pilot and another for the Mandarin version. Below these, a paragraph states that the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the new Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) discretionary grant program, funded with \$1 billion over the next 5 years. It further explains that the program is the first-ever to help reconnect communities previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure. At the bottom, a bold announcement states: "FY22 Notice of Funding Opportunity is open now through Thursday, October 13, 2022".

U.S. Department of Transportation

ABOUT DOT ▾ PRIORITIES ▾ CONNECT ▾

Home \ Grants

Grants

Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program

Announcement

Notice of Funding Opportunity

How to Apply

Additional Guidance

Webinars

FAQs

Resources

Fact Sheet

Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants

- Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants (Spanish): [Programa piloto “Reconnecting communities \(Reconectar comunidades\)”: subvenciones de planificación y subvenciones para construcción de obras de infraestructura](#)
- Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants (Mandarin): [重新连通社区试点计划 - 规划拨款和基本建设拨款](#)

The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#) established the new Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) discretionary grant program, funded with \$1 billion over the next 5 years.

It is the first-ever program to help reconnect communities that were previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure. Funding supports planning grants and capital construction grants, as well as technical assistance, to restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities.

FY22 Notice of Funding Opportunity is open now through Thursday, October 13, 2022



Q & A



Q & A

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

Technical support: Webconference@dot.gov

Email us at ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov

~ **350 emails** received to date

Answers to frequently asked questions will be posted on

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



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

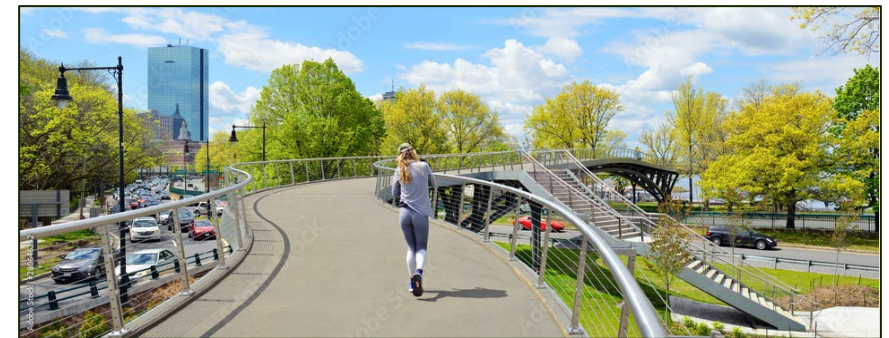
Contact us: ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov



Hands On Atlanta



Source: FHWA



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