



Thriving Communities Program Fact Sheet for Interested Capacity Builders

What is the Thriving Communities Program?

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is a historic investment in America's urban, rural, and Tribal communities, creating new competitive grant programs open to local governments and non-traditional transportation organizations to apply directly for funding. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)'s new Thriving Communities Program (TCP) provides tools to ensure that under-resourced communities can access BIL funding and coordinate transportation investments with other critical community goals. Through TCP, DOT will fund organizations to provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support to enable selected recipient communities to plan and develop transportation and community revitalization activities that increase mobility, reduce pollution from transportation sources, expand affordable transportation options, facilitate efficient land use, preserve or expand jobs, improve housing conditions, enhance connections to health care, education, and food security, or improve health outcomes.

DOT is currently seeking applications for "Capacity Builders" who will provide this support starting in early 2023. DOT anticipates awarding at least three Capacity Builders through cooperative agreements, estimated at \$3.5 - \$6 million per award. For those who wish to apply, a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was published on October 6, 2022. Applications will be accepted through November 22, 2022.

Who is Eligible to Apply to be a Capacity Builder?

Organizations eligible to apply individually or as part of a team include: non-profit organizations; state or local governments and their agencies; Indian Tribes; philanthropic entities; and other technical assistance providers with a demonstrated capacity to develop and provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building.

DOT encourages interested applicants to partner with other eligible organizations to form Capacity Builder teams whose members bring technical knowledge across a diverse set of issues and skills, including meaningful public involvement in transportation decision-making processes and project delivery. DOT will view applications favorably that demonstrate clear involvement of small or disadvantaged business enterprises and/or community-based organizations.

What Kinds of Support will Capacity Builders Provide?

Capacity Builders will build out and deliver a two-year technical assistance, planning, and capacity building program that responds to three areas of support:

1. **Delivering individualized deep-dive technical assistance, planning, and capacity building** to selected communities across a set of project scoping, pre-development, and grant application activities through planning, project funding and financing, and project delivery
2. **Establishing and managing a national Community of Practice** to advance policies, practices, and projects informed by meaningful public involvement and partnership
3. **Providing targeted technical support** as part of the national TCP capacity building network

Capacity Builders will provide short-term technical assistance necessary to develop integrated plans, advance projects, conduct pre-development activities, and build longer-term organizational and community capacity through a tailored scope of work. Capacity Builders will co-design a set of equitable development outcomes with the 10-15 recipient communities they are assigned to support through TCP.

Recipients of TCP support are primarily government entities (i.e., state, local, and Tribal governments; United States Territories; and other units of local or state government such as metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies) and the community partners they have identified to participate in this program. DOT expects that a portion of funding provided to Capacity Builders will be budgeted for direct support to recipient communities.

Facilitating Communities of Practice

To build collective and sustained learning, the TCP is organizing recipients into three different Communities of Practice (or cohorts). These are:

1. **Main Streets** – Focused on Tribal and rural communities and the interconnected transportation, housing, community, and economic development issues they face.
2. **Complete Neighborhoods** – Focused on urban and suburban communities located within metropolitan areas working to better coordinate transportation with land use, housing, and economic development.
3. **Networked Communities** – Focused on those communities located near ports, airports, freight, and rail facilities to address mobility, access, environmental justice, and economic issues, including leveraging their proximity to these facilities for wealth-building and economic development opportunities.

TCP seeks to amplify impact and generate noteworthy practices that can be scaled up and replicated in other regions. These Communities of Practice provide an opportunity to deepen cross-sector collaboration between the lead recipient of technical assistance (i.e., eligible government entities), their identified community partners, and other community stakeholders that have not historically been engaged in infrastructure, economic, and community development planning and decision making or those who bear the heaviest environmental, health, mobility, housing, economic and/or social costs of infrastructure projects.

DOT is seeking Capacity Builders who demonstrate experience in delivering technical assistance, planning, and capacity building, particularly to rural, Tribal, and other disadvantaged populations and geographies and those who demonstrate a commitment to community-driven program implementation. This includes investing in local capacity through proposed intermediary models that drive innovation, advance equity outcomes, and build a national pipeline of community-driven infrastructure, housing, and economic development projects.

See the NOFO for additional details on specific areas where technical expertise is valued and for the required application and submission information.

How do I Apply?

Applications must be submitted by **11:59 PM EST on Thursday, November 22, 2022** via grants.gov. You can find the NOFO on the Thriving Communities website: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/thriving-communities/information-for-capacity-builders>. Questions can be submitted via email to ThrivingCommunities@dot.gov.

TCP is being coordinated with other Federal technical assistance programs, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), received FY2022 Thriving Communities funding and also is seeking housing-focused Capacity Builders through a separate NOFO. Find more information here:

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/nofos/thriving-communities.html>

Building Community Capacity to Take Transformative Projects from Concept to Completion