

# 2024 Recreational Trails Program Grant Workshop

April 2, 2024

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation  
Division of Planning & Recreation Resources

Kristal McKelvey & Kellie Seaton  
DCR Recreation Grants



# Agenda

- RTP Overview & Funding
- Eligibility
- Project Administration
- Reimbursement Procedures
- Application Process
- Application Guidance

## Webinar Information:

- Webinar is being recorded and transcribed. Video will be posted to website.
- Enter questions into chat box at any time. We will stop periodically to respond. At the end of the webinar, we will activate microphones for spoken questions.
- To turn on captions: in upper right of screen, click **... More > Language and speech > Turn on live captions**

# RTP Overview



RTP 316D170 – City of Hopewell

## Purpose:

To provide, expand, and improve public recreational trail opportunities for motorized and non-motorized use.

## Funding:

U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration – IIJA

## RTP in Virginia:

Since 1993, over 350 projects awarded

# 2024 Grant Award Amounts

~\$2 million available divided among three categories:

**Diversified** - ~\$1,000,000 available (3-5 grants anticipated)

- Minimum request - \$50,000
- Maximum grant award - \$350,000

**Non-motorized single use** - ~\$435,000 available (2-3 grants anticipated)

- Minimum request - \$50,000
- Maximum grant award - \$250,000

**Motorized** - ~\$630,000 available (1-3 grants anticipated)

- Minimum request - \$50,000
- Maximum grant award - \$630,000

# Funding Basics

- Funding is competitive
  - 2021: 35 applications, 9 funded
  - 2022: 22 applications, 5 funded
  - 2023: 25 applications, 9 funded
- Payments made on reimbursement basis
  - Must be able to fund project fully with periodic reimbursements
- Share/ match requirement is minimum 20% of total project cost (or 25% of grant amount)
  - Example: \$100,000 grant requires \$25,000 match, \$125,000 total project cost





# Eligible Match

- Cash
- Force account labor
- Volunteer labor (\$32.59/hr)
- Equipment use rates
- Other grants\*
- Donations
- In-kind labor, materials, equipment
- With limitations: Pre-award environmental review and design costs

All volunteer labor, in-kind items, donations, and force account labor must be clearly outlined in **application and proposed budget** and must also be **written into the grant agreement**.

These items cannot be added after authorization.

# 2024 Schedule

- **March 12** – Grant round opened
- **May 7** – Applications due via email by 4pm
- **May-June** – Applications reviewed by DCR and Advisory Committee
- **Late June** – Applicants of projects recommended for funding are contacted
- **July-August** – Site inspections and preparing FHWA documents
- **September** – Project authorizations and grant agreements  
(do not begin work until these are released)

# Applicant Eligibility



RTP 326N190 – Shenandoah Valley  
Bicycle Coalition

- Local governments
- State agencies
- Tribal governments
- Federal government agencies
- Public recreation government entities (park authorities, etc.)
- Non-Profits (must have letter of support from local government body)

**All applicants: Letter of support from landowner required if property not owned by applicant**



# Eligible Project Types for 2024

- Construction, maintenance, rehabilitation of trails
- Development or rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and/or amenities on land and water trails
- Features that increase access for people with disabilities
- Lease or purchase of trail construction and maintenance equipment\*
- If on-the-ground work is also included:
  - Acquisition of easements and fee simple property
  - Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance



RTP 323M190 – Isle of Wight  
County

In odd years (2023, 2025) only existing trail maintenance and amenities are eligible

# Eligible Project Examples

- **New construction** – new trails, trail extensions, paddle launches or motor boat launches on water trails
- **Trail maintenance** - treadway improvements, hardening, brushing, blazing, down and hazard tree removal
- **Trail improvements** - regrading, paving, short reroutes
- **New trailhead or trailhead improvements** - parking, restrooms, signage, etc.
- Replacement of **bridges** or new bridge construction
- Addition of **amenities** along trail or at trailhead - benches, interpretive signage, tactile models, wayfinding signage, lighting
- Lease or purchase of equipment to be used for RTP-eligible project types

# Ineligible Project Examples

- Boat launches on lakes or other waters without water trail designation
- Fishing piers
- Recreational facilities not directly supporting trail use (playgrounds, sports fields, campgrounds accessed by vehicle)
- Multi-use facilities near recreational trails (visitor centers, community centers)
- Purchase of equipment for general grounds maintenance
- Purchase of property for future trail development (eligible if development occurring with RTP project)

# Eligible Costs



RTP 324M190 – Town of South Boston

- Preliminary engineering (design, engineering, NEPA environmental review, public comment period, permitting, bid advertisement)
- Grant administration
- Force account labor for project – related work
- Contractor or consultant services for design, environmental review, and construction
- Construction materials
- Equipment (with limitations discussed)
- Amenities (signs, interpretative aids, lighting, benches, etc)



# Ineligible Costs

## Not eligible for grant reimbursement or as match:

- Feasibility studies
- Food
- Gifts
- Rental equipment for trail users (kayaks, etc.)
- Most legal fees
- Late payment fees
- Items that were not initially agreed or outside of scope of work





# Project Administration

# Project Administration

- Grant Terms
- Preliminary Engineering Phase
- Environmental Review
- Construction Phase
- Procurement
- Reimbursements
- Project Closeout



# Project Kick-off



RTP 334D210 – Town of Purcellville

- Contact will be notified of Committee results
- DCR staff will perform an on-site pre-inspection and go over the project details in person
- Finalize Scope of Work statement
- DCR will submit the project information to FHWA for authorization
- Do NOT begin billable work until Agreement is signed



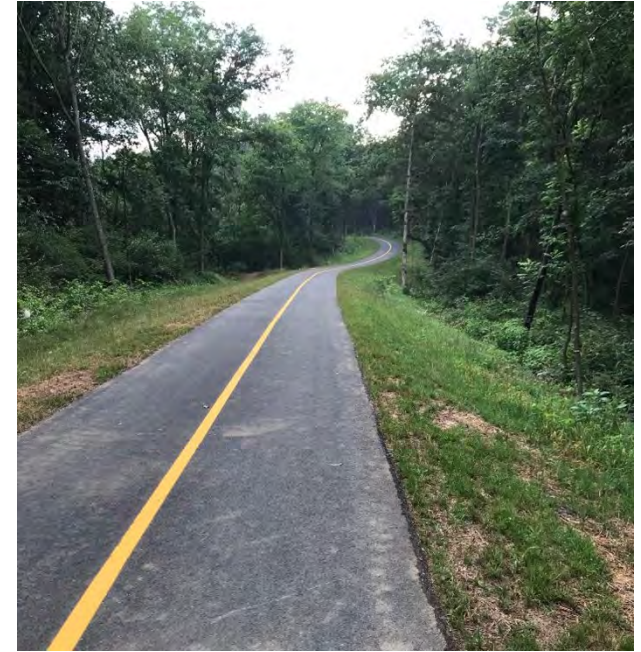
# Grant Terms: Two Phases

- 18 months **Preliminary Engineering**

- NEPA/Enviro Review & acquire permits
- Completion of design plans

- 18 months **Construction**

- DCR will review bid documents prior to posting
- Do not begin on-the-ground work or bid for construction without FHWA approval of NEPA documentation and final PE reimbursement submitted



RTP 314D170 – Harrisonburg

# Preliminary Engineering (PE) Phase – Environmental Analysis

- NEPA and Section 106 Review
- Process: contact state and federal agencies with project details, save all correspondence, fill out forms
  - See **Environmental Review Guidance** document for agency contact info.
  - Most projects qualify for a Categorical Exclusion (CE)
  - Project reviewed by agencies including US Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Historic Resources, US Army Corps (Joint Permit Application)
- Public Comment/ Input
- Must be completed, reviewed, and approved by FHWA prior to bidding for Construction and any on-the-ground work



# PE Phase cont. – Scoping, Design, etc.

- When applying, make sure to include what needs to be completed in the PE scope of work
- Permits if applicable
- Engineering if needed
- If contracted, Bid documents and final reports/billing from engineer will be needed



# Construction Phase



- PE Phase must be closed out prior to beginning
- Permits obtained
- DCR to review plans and bid documents prior to construction beginning

RTP 338N210 – James River National Wildlife Refuge

# Procurement

- All project goods and services must be competitively procured following federal and state procedures
- Bid/RFP documentation **MUST** contain notice that: *partial funding is provided by FHWA – VA DCR – RTP and 2, 23, 49 CFR...*
- Procurement procedures – FHWA 1273, 2 CFR 200, & VPPA standards
  - See **Procurement Procedures** document on website
  - New: Waiver of Buy America requirements for iron, steel, construction materials, and manufactured products if grant <\$500,000
  - DBE & SWaM outreach
- *Qualified* youth corps can be non-competitively hired



# Reimbursement Documentation

- Expenses (truly spent – cleared checks & full invoices) – specific to the project
- Matching fund proof (20%) if not cash
- Certification form and other templates from RTP website
- If grant \$500,000 or greater: iron, steel, and construction materials – Buy America certification form or signed statement (\$2500 strict threshold for iron and steel)



# Grant Forms and Templates

Available on website: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfund>

## Documents and Forms for grant recipients

### General Administrative Documents and Forms

1. 2024 RTP [Application Manual](#) (PDF) Version March 2024.
2. RTP [Procurement Procedures](#) (PDF) Version March 2024.
3. RTP [Quarterly Report Template](#) (PDF) Version March 2024.

### Reimbursement Documents and Forms



### Environmental Review Documents and Forms





# Reimbursements

- Recommended once every 3 months to keep project active with FHWA
- Will be reviewed internally and through FHWA
- Funds will pass from FHWA, to DCR, to subgrantee (typically 4-8 weeks)
- W9 and remittance information; register on SAM.gov

# Project Closeout

- Once all deliverables completed and final request reimbursement submitted
- Report of final accomplishments
  - Percent and dollar value of volunteer, donated, and cash contributions
  - Photographs
  - DBE & SWaM involvement if applicable
- Site inspection



RTP 355N230 – Pinnacle Natural Area Preserve



RTP 338N210 – James River National Wildlife Refuge

# Project Administration In Summary...

- Must be completed to Federal standards
- Any delays or amendments – please keep us informed
- Extensions are possible if justifiable (at least 90 days prior to agreement expiration)

*Open communication is KEY!  
We are here to help make your project successful!*

**Project Administration Questions?**

# Grant Application





# Application File

- Application is a MS Word document + PDF certification form
- Create PDF of completed application and insert attachments between each section
- Minimum 10pt font, maximum 35 pages including attachments (but no word limit), 25MB
- Contact us to obtain an alternative format if you are unable to access or use the fillable document
- Please reference Appendix A: Application Guidance in Manual

# Application Certification Form

- Applicant Name = Grant Recipient if selected
- Please list contact person who will be the main coordinator for the project, can insert additional emails to be notified of award status
- District numbers, FIPS code, and Tax parcel are required for our internal databases.
- Signatory authority is up to the applicant

 <span style="float: right;">2024 Virginia Recreational Trails Program Application Certification</span> 											
This form must be completed, signed, and submitted with your complete application package											
Applicant Name											
Contact Person Name & Title											
Applicant Street Address											
Mailing Address (if different from street address)											
Telephone Number											
Contact E-mail Address											
<b>Applicant Type (select one)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> State, <input type="checkbox"/> Local, <input type="checkbox"/> Tribe, <input type="checkbox"/> Federal, or <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit (if non-profit, please also list locality) <input type="text"/>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>US Congressional District</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Virginia State Senate District</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>House District</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>County/Independent City &amp; FIPS Code</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tax Parcel ID Number</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	US Congressional District	<input type="text"/>	Virginia State Senate District	<input type="text"/>	House District	<input type="text"/>	County/Independent City & FIPS Code	<input type="text"/>	Tax Parcel ID Number	<input type="text"/>
US Congressional District	<input type="text"/>										
Virginia State Senate District	<input type="text"/>										
House District	<input type="text"/>										
County/Independent City & FIPS Code	<input type="text"/>										
Tax Parcel ID Number	<input type="text"/>										
Project Title <input type="text"/>											
Total Project Cost (100%) \$ <input type="text"/>	Award Request Amount (up to 80% of total cost but not more than category maximum request) \$ <input type="text"/>										
<b>Certification Statement</b> By submitting this application package for consideration for funding through the Recreational Trails Program, I hereby certify the information contained in this application is true and correct. I understand this application will be rated on the basis of the information submitted and the submission of incorrect or inaccurate data or an incomplete application can result in this application becoming ineligible for funding.  I hereby certify that if awarded, the applicant will comply with all Federal, Commonwealth of Virginia and local laws and regulations. I hereby certify that the applicant understands the Recreational Trails Program is an 80-20 matching reimbursement program requiring verification of expenditures in order to receive reimbursement. Further, in signing and submitting this application, I hereby certify that the applicant is capable of providing the matching contribution and of financing the project while seeking periodic reimbursement.											
Name of Official with Signatory Rights <input type="text"/>											
Title <input type="text"/>											
Signature <input type="text"/>											
Date <input type="text"/>											

# Section I: Project Details



RTP 328D190 – Fairfax County Park Authority

- **Project title:** Descriptive but not long, 4-8 words
- **Project category:** review manual, contact DCR if unsure
- **Scope:** RTP project scope only
- **Attachments:**
  - Two location maps (county and zoom)
  - Trail map with project location
  - Photos (up to five, can fit multiple per page)
  - Proof of Right of Way (if not owner) – easement, use agreement, letter from property owner, etc.
  - Locality letter (non-profit applicants) – letter of support from locality project is located in

***\*New Section II: Fill out either A or B...***

## **Section II.A: Project Need**

***Complete A for new trail or trail segment or construction of a new water trail access point***

- **Nature-based Recreation Access Model** and **ConserveVirginia**: Online access steps outlined in Appendix A.
- **Virginia Outdoor Plan**: State-wide and state connecting trails can be found in trails chapter of 2018 VOP. Regional featured projects can be found at the end of each region's section. VOP mapper can be accessed from link on VOP main webpage.
- No attachments



# Section II.B: Project Need

*Complete B for maintenance and amenities projects on existing trails*

- Respond to each sub-question and bulleted item in your response as they may correspond to a scored item
- No attachments

**If unsure on whether to complete Section II.A or II.B, contact us or fill out both and review committee will determine at time of scoring**



RTP 354N230 – Rapidan River Water Access  
(before improvements)

# Section III: Public Involvement and Impact

*All projects complete this section and remainder of application*



- **Youth Corps:** Can be non-competitively hired
- **Access for people with disabilities:** Accessibility resources are provided in Appendix B.
- **Attachments:**
  - Local and regional plans (up to 4 pages, can include links)

# Section IV: Project Implementation

- **Schedule:** Be as detailed as possible and include both project milestones and grant administrative milestones
- **Budget:** Be sure to attach *and* explain how it was estimated in the application document
- **Grant match:** how will you cover matching share? Include estimated values for each source
- **Procurement:** Review the Procurement Procedures guidance document and outline all anticipated goods, services, and materials.
- **Attachments:**
  - Schedule if not included in box for question 28
  - One-page budget
  - Proof of match availability



RTP 317N170 – Town of Altavista


# Section V: Design and Environmental Impact

- **Design and engineering:** Grant can fund this, but please let us know the level of completion so far
- **Environmental review:** Even maintenance-only projects must complete a NEPA-level review
  - See **Environmental Review Guidance** document posted on website for requirements and outline your plan and schedule to complete these in the application.
- **Attachments:**
  - Up to 4 pages of construction or preliminary design plans




# Evaluation and Scoring

- Revised this year, posted on website
- All applications are reviewed by DCR Recreation Grants staff for eligibility and completeness
- All eligible and complete applications are sent to the RTP Advisory Committee for scoring
- Advisory Committee meets to review the compiled scores and recommend projects for funding
- Selected project applicants contacted in late June/ early July



2024 RTP Scoring Criteria



Application Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Question	Point Range	Points	Total
<b>Seq. II A Project Need A (New trail and water trail access construction projects only - skip for existing trail maintenance and amenities) 20 possible</b>			
14. Degree of Need (select from range)	0-3		
Severity of need			
<i>Max. points</i>			3
15. Nature-based Recreation Access Model/ParkServe or Water-based Recreation Access Model need (select from list)	0-3		
Project area has demonstrated need for new recreation based on the DCR Nature-based Recreation Access Model or Trust for Public Land ParkServe Model (land trails) OR Water-based Recreation Access Model (water trails)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High or Very High (3 pts)</li> <li>• Moderate (2 pts)</li> <li>• Low (1 pt)</li> <li>• Very Low or None (0 pts)</li> </ul>			
<i>Max. points</i>			3
16. New Public Access and ConserveVirginia (select one)	0-3		
Project will provide public access to a property that was not previously open to the public			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, and project area intersects at least one ConserveVirginia layer (3 pts)</li> <li>• Yes, but project area not within ConserveVirginia (2 pts)</li> <li>• No (property previously open to the public), but project provides new public access to a significant feature (1 pts)</li> <li>• No (property previously open to the public), and project does not provide new public access to significant features (0 pts)</li> </ul>			
<i>Max. points</i>			3
17. Virginia Outdoors Plan (SCORP) needs (add all that apply)	0-2		
Project creates a community linkage (for example: between neighborhoods, to/from community features, between parks)			
Project is listed as (2 pts) or connected to (1 pt) a regional feature project in the VOP (2016)			
Trail networks (select one or none)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project is part of a proposed state-wide trail or state connecting trail identified in the Trails chapter of the most recent VOP/ VOP Mapper (land trails) or along blueway or scenic river identified in the VOP Mapper (water trails) (3 pts)</li> <li>• Project not a state-wide or state connecting trail but completes a critical gap in a trail system (2 pts) or lengthens an existing trail (1 pts)</li> </ul>			
<i>Max. points</i>			7
18. Close to home trails (select from range)	0-4		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project will create a new close to home trail for a community within a city, urban area, or tribal land that does not currently have access to public trails within a 10 minute (1/2 mile) walk (up to 4 pts)</li> <li>• Project will create a new close to home trail for a non-city or rural community that does not currently have access to public trails within an 10 mile drive (up to 4 pts)</li> <li>• Project doesn't meet either condition above but is still underserved by public trail opportunities; applicant has provided sufficient detail to justify the need (1-2 pts)</li> <li>• Project area is already served by public trail opportunities (0 pts)</li> </ul>			
<i>Max. points</i>			4

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# Application and Evaluation Questions?



RTP 319N180 – Mendota Trail Conservancy

# Other Grant Opportunities

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**
  - Acquisition and development of outdoor recreation sites/amenities
  - 2024 applications due April 18<sup>th</sup>
  - <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/lwcf>
- **Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF)**
  - Fund protection of open spaces and parklands, lands of historic or cultural significance, farmlands and forests, and natural areas
  - 2024 grant round to be announced, expected summer 2024
  - <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/land-conservation/vlcf>
- **VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**
  - Funds pedestrian and bicycle facilities and cultural, historical, and environmental enhancements to transportation infrastructure
  - Next grant round in 2025, applications currently accepting for Ready, Set, Go! Technical assistance program
  - <https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/doing-business/for-localities/local-assistance/transportation-alternatives/>
- **FHWA Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)**
  - Planning and design or construction of active transportation networks
  - 2024 applications due June 17<sup>th</sup>
  - [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/atiip/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/atiip/)

**Other Federal: US Department of Transportation Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities Table**

- [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/funding/funding\\_opportunities.pdf](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.pdf)

# Contact Information for RTP Grants

**Email:** [recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov)

**Phone:** (804) 786-1119 - Kellie Seaton, Recreation Grants Coordinator

**Website:** <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/trailfnd>