

APRIL 2014

FUNDING TRAILS



A GUIDE TO FUNDING
MULTI-USE TRAILS IN NEW JERSEY



SECURING FUNDING FOR MULTI-USE TRAIL PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IS AN ESSENTIAL STEP IN THE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. THERE ARE MULTIPLE SOURCES OF FUNDING, EACH WITH THEIR OWN REQUIREMENTS, CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS, AND CYCLES OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY. SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS ARE OFTEN ABLE TO LEVERAGE FUNDING FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES BY USING ONE GRANT TO MATCH ANOTHER. THE FOLLOWING GUIDE DESCRIBES FUNDING AVAILABLE TO TRAIL PROJECTS IN NEW JERSEY.

FUNDING SOURCES

Sources of funding for trails can include federal, state, county, and local governments; private companies and foundations; and other sources. State and federal funding in New Jersey is typically accessible from two agencies:

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (DVRPC)

maintains the region's transportation improvement program (TIP) and administers several grant programs, for which trail planning, design, and construction are eligible:

- **TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)**

sets aside federal transportation funds for community-based "non-traditional" projects that build infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians. Planning, design, and construction of on-road and off-road facilities including sidewalks, trails, cycle tracks, bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and pedestrian and bicycle signals are all eligible.

For more information: www.dvrpc.org/tap.

- **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS)** aims to make bicycling and walking to school safe and appealing to children of all ages. The program provides grants to local governments and school districts for construction of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including bike lanes, multi-use trails, and traffic calming measures, within two miles of K-8 schools.

For more information: www.dvrpc.org/saferoutes.

- **CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY (CMAQ)**

funds transportation-related projects that help reduce emissions from mobile sources and meet the National Clean Air Act Standards. Design and construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities are eligible.

For more information: www.dvrpc.org/cmaq.

- **TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (TCDI)**

provides funding to undertake early stage planning, analysis, or design initiatives for projects or programs which enhance smart development or revitalization and also improve the efficiency of the regional transportation system. **For more information:** www.dvrpc.org/tcdi

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (NJ DEP) GREEN ACRES PROGRAM

provides loans and grants to municipal and county governments to acquire open space and develop outdoor recreation facilities, including trails. Green Acres also provides matching grants to nonprofit organizations to acquire land for public recreation and conservation purposes.

The Green Acres Program also administers the **RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM**, a source of federally-funded grants for trail development and maintenance by local governments and nonprofit organizations.

For more information:

www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/

www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/trail_grants.htm



THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) IS THE REGIONALLY AGREED UPON LIST OF PRIORITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL LAW. ADMINISTERED BY DVRPC, THE TIP LISTS ALL CAPITAL PROJECTS THAT INTEND TO USE FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDS. THE TIP IS A MULTIMODAL PROGRAM AND INCLUDES MULTI-USE TRAIL PROJECTS. PLACEMENT ON THE TIP IS OFTEN A CRUCIAL STEP IN SECURING TRANSPORTATION FUNDS FOR A PROJECT. WORKING COLLABORATIVELY, DVRPC'S MEMBER GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES DEVELOP THE TIP AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FORMALLY SUBMITTING CANDIDATE PROJECTS. THEREFORE, PROJECT SPONSORS AND ADVOCATES SHOULD COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH ONE OR MORE OF THESE ENTITIES TO PREPARE A PROJECT FOR INCLUSION IN THE TIP.



THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING, THE TIMING OF APPLICATION PROCESSES, AND MATCH AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS VARY AMONG THESE PROGRAMS, SO IT IS ADVISABLE TO CONTACT PROGRAM STAFF AND MONITOR THE ABOVE WEBSITES FOR PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS.

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS AND PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENTS administer county and local capital and open space funds. These funds may be available for trail planning, design, and construction. For more information:

- **BURLINGTON COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

www.co.burlington.nj.us/Pages/ViewDepartment.aspx?did=57

- **CAMDEN COUNTY OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION TRUST FUND**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE www.camdencounty.com/parks/going-green/open-space-farmland-preservation

- **GLOUCESTER COUNTY OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

www.co.gloucester.nj.us/depts/landpre/ospp.asp

- **MERCER COUNTY OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

www.nj.gov/counties/mercer/about/community/openspace/

In-kind contributions of labor or equipment and assistance with right-of-way acquisition may also be available from county or municipal sources.

Contact county and municipal staff for more information on what is available in your area.

FOUNDATIONS AND PRIVATE SOURCES CAN ALSO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR TRAIL PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION.

- **THE WILLIAM PENN FOUNDATION**

directed \$10 million to a program administered by DVRPC to fund trail design and construction projects, planning and feasibility studies, and technical assistance. The Foundation also provides direct grants to support trail planning and advocacy.

- **NATIONAL TRAIL ADVOCACY GROUPS**, such as the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and People for Bikes, offer periodic grants.

- **DEVELOPERS** of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings can construct or pay for trails. Developers should be encouraged to view trails as an amenity.

- **CORPORATIONS** can support trail building efforts. Bristol Myers Squibb and the Educational Testing Service have played a key role in development of the Lawrence Hopewell Trail.

- **PROPERTY OWNERS** can donate trail easements or property, or sell them at a discount to make projects feasible.

IT'S ALL ABOUT PARTNERSHIPS

Robust partnerships help trail projects obtain funding, build public support, and overcome the many challenges that arise in the trail planning, design, and construction process.

HOW DO YOU FIND THOSE PARTNERS? Since trails by their nature cross political boundaries, the first places to look are the local governments of cities, townships, boroughs, and counties through which the trail runs. These governments can incorporate trails into comprehensive plans, provide the expertise of local planning and engineering staff, and support trail projects with in-kind and cash contributions. Landowners along the trail's route are also key players and will be important if land acquisition is required to complete your project. Businesses, community institutions, and others can be strong allies. If your trail connects to a transit station or route, coordinate with the transit agency to ensure users can move from the trail to transit seamlessly. **CAST A WIDE NET, WORK TOGETHER, AND BE CREATIVE!**



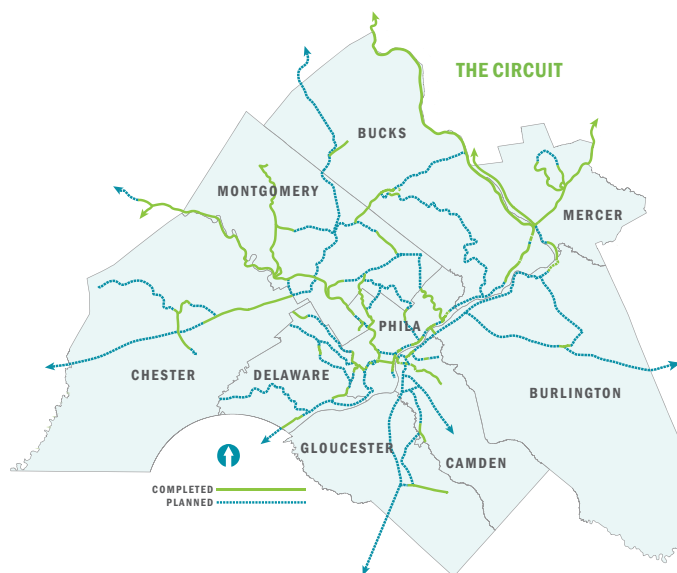
In 2012, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, New Jersey State Assemblyman Angel Fuentes, and leaders from around the region introduced the Circuit, an envisioned 750-mile network of multi-use trails connecting communities throughout Greater Philadelphia. It includes trails along creeks, canals, and old railroad beds; urban trails and rural trails; trails for commuting and trails for recreation—all connected in one regional network.

Users of the Circuit can engage in active transportation, promoting better health and providing environmental benefits. DVRPC included completion of the Circuit as a goal of its most recent long-range plan, *Connections 2040: Plan for Greater Philadelphia*.

Over 280 miles of the system are open for use, 60 more miles will come online soon, and about 410 miles remain to be built. Individual trails that comprise the Circuit are the product of the hard work and dedication of advocates and organizations at the local, county, and regional level.

These advocates and organizations move individual trails from planning to design and through construction. Many of them are partners in the Circuit Coalition, a collaboration of nonprofit organizations, foundations, and agencies working to advance completion of the Circuit.

For more information visit: www.connectthecircuit.org



DVRPC REGIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

Between 2011 and 2013, DVRPC awarded over \$9 million to 42 multi-use trail planning, design, and construction projects throughout Greater Philadelphia as part of the Regional Trails Program. The Regional Trails Program, administered by DVRPC, with funding from the William Penn Foundation, capitalized upon opportunities for trail development by providing funding for targeted, priority trail design, construction, and planning projects that promote a connected, regional network. The program also provided technical assistance to trail developers, counties, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations. In total, the Regional Trails Program will add 20 miles to the Circuit and move additional miles of trail from planning to final design.



DVRPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region. DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website, www.dvrpc.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. DVRPC public meetings are always held in ADA-accessible facilities and in transit-accessible locations when possible. Auxiliary services can be provided to individuals who submit a request at least seven days prior to a meeting. Requests made within seven days will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by DVRPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint may be in writing and filed with DVRPC's Title VI Compliance Manager and/or the appropriate state or federal agency within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information on DVRPC's Title VI program, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please call (215) 238-2871 or email public_affairs@dvrpc.org.



OTHER RESOURCES

American Trails/National Trails Training Partnership: Funding & Resources – www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/index.html

Rails to Trails Conservancy: Financing/Funding – www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/trailBuilding/toolbox/informationSummaries/funding_financing.html

Trail and Path Planning: A Guide for Municipalities (Chester County) – www.chesco.org/documentcenter/view/415

Active Transportation Summit: Building Our Regional Trail Network (Pennsylvania Environmental Council) – www.pecpa.org/southeast-pa-regional-trail-network/active-transportation-summit-building-our-regional-trail-network