



DVRPC Regional Trails Program – Phase VIII Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

Introduction

Greater Philadelphia is currently working to build the Circuit Trails, an 800-plus-mile network of multi-use trails spanning the metropolitan region. Currently, about 340 miles of this network are complete, 80 miles are in progress, and 400 miles are in some stage of planning.

To continue progress towards completion of the network as called for in *Connections 2045: Plan for Greater Philadelphia* and to meet the Circuit Trails Coalition's interim goal of completing 500 miles of trail by 2025, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Regional Trails Program (RTP) is releasing this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to advance all phases of trail development.

This funding opportunity will provide up to approximately \$2.5 million for projects in the 10-county Regional Trails Program (RTP) territory (the 9-county DVRPC region plus Berks County). The program is capitalized with funding from the William Penn Foundation.

Responses are due by 5:00 PM on Friday, November 13, 2020.

What is DVRPC?

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a diverse nine-county region in two states: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC works to build a prosperous, innovative, equitable, resilient, and sustainable Greater Philadelphia by convening the widest array of partners to inform and facilitate data-driven decision-making. Through its programs, funding, analysis and coordination DVRPC strives to promote best practices in transportation and comprehensive planning across the region.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (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 whenever possible. Translation, interpretation, and other auxiliary services can be provided to individuals who submit a request at least seven days prior to a public meeting. Translation and interpretation services for DVRPC's projects, products, and planning processes are available, generally free of charge, by calling (215) 592-1800. 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 visit www.dvrpc.org/GetInvolved/TitleVI, call (215) 592-1800 or email public_affairs@dvrpc.org.



Who May Apply?

Phase VIII RTP Grants are intended to support the efforts of local governments, state agencies, development corporations and nonprofit organizations to plan, design, and construct multi-use trails. Applicants may include state, county, municipal and city agencies and departments, nonprofit organizations and development corporations. Applicants who will not be the long-term owner, manager and maintainer of a trail must show support from the entity that will perform these functions and demonstrate that this entity has the capacity to perform these functions.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities under Phase VIII include trail planning and feasibility studies, design and engineering, and construction. Limited funding for right-of-way acquisition is also available, though these projects will need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Geographic Areas of Eligibility

Projects that contribute to the completion of the Circuit Trails within the 10-county RTP territory (DVRPC 9-county region plus Berks County) are the priority focus of this grant program. A secondary priority is trails that connect to or provide access to Circuit Trails. Trails that do not link directly to the Circuit are a third-tier priority. To be considered for funding, applications for trails in this third category must demonstrate how they will eventually connect (via future trails or bike facilities) to larger trail networks. A detailed [interactive map](#) of the Circuit Trails can be found on the DVRPC website.

Available Funds

Up to \$2.5 million in private funding is available for Phase VIII grants. Individual RTP awards may not exceed \$300,000.

Project Types and Match Requirements

Acquisition

For acquisition, a minimum match equivalent to at least 20 percent (1 dollar in match for every four dollars of grant funding) of the total acquisition cost is required. In-kind services, not including administrative functions (e.g., invoice preparation and submission), are an eligible form of match for acquisition grants. Eligible in-kind match includes services directly related to tasks and activities related to the proposed scope of work and deliverables.



Planning and Feasibility Studies

For planning and feasibility studies, a minimum match equivalent to at least 20 percent of the total planning and feasibility study costs is required. In-kind services, not including administrative functions (e.g., invoice preparation and submission), are an eligible form of match for planning and feasibility grants. Eligible in-kind match includes services directly related to tasks and activities related to the proposed scope of work and deliverables.

Design and Engineering

For design and engineering, a minimum match equivalent to at least 20 percent of the total design and engineering costs is required. In-kind services, not including administrative functions (e.g., invoice preparation and submission), are an eligible form of match for design and engineering projects. All applicants should indicate their proposed strategy for obtaining future construction dollars. The strategy for securing future construction dollars will be considered as a form of leverage (though it does not count toward the 20 percent match) and will be a factor in prioritizing grants. Eligible in-kind match includes services directly related to tasks and activities related to the proposed scope of work and deliverables.

Construction

For construction, a minimum match equivalent to at least 20 percent of the total construction costs is required. In-kind services are not an eligible form of match for construction projects.

Match Minimums and Other Requirements

The match requirements listed above are minimum requirements. Greater consideration will be given to projects with higher match amounts all other factors being equal. Any currently secured match must be available for use following award of Regional Trails Program funds in March 2021 and until completion of the proposed project. Failure to secure a needed match by June 30, 2022 may result in a forfeiture of the grant.

Site Control

Proposed construction projects must show that a project area is under public control or that a clear plan and funding strategy is in place to obtain site control in a timely fashion. Proposed design and engineering projects should demonstrate a process and timeline for establishing site control in cases where the ROW is not yet under public control. If available and pertinent, documentation regarding site control should be provided. If ROW issues cannot be addressed, applicants are encouraged to resolve these issues and apply to future funding cycles and programs.

Evaluation of Applications

An RTP evaluation committee consisting of representatives from each county in the DVRPC service area, DVRPC staff, Circuit Trails Coalition representatives, and state agencies will evaluate and prioritize the applications for funding based on the program evaluation criteria outlined below.

Evaluation Criteria

The following program criteria will be used to evaluate planning and feasibility studies, design and engineering, and construction projects. The more specific the applicant's narrative, the easier it will be for evaluators to make determinations about the propose projects.

Note: Criteria in **black** are applicable to both planning, design, and construction projects; criteria in **purple** are applicable to planning and feasibility studies; criteria in **blue** are applicable to design and engineering projects; and criteria in **red** are applicable to construction projects.

1. Project Readiness

- a. Is the right-of-way (ROW) fully under public control or eased for trail use?
 - i. If not, how many additional acquisitions are necessary?
 - ii. Who does ROW need to be acquired from and what is the current status of the acquisition process?
 - iii. *Planning only:* If ROW has not been secured (likely the case for a planning project), what is the likelihood that future right-of-way can be secured and at what cost?
- b. Are there potential obstacles and barriers such as bridges, road crossings, rail crossings, utility conflicts, retaining walls, tunnels, and sensitive environmental resources?
- c. *Construction only:* Has the design been completed? If not completed, is design funded?
- d. *Construction only:* What is the schedule for completion of construction?

2. Funding

- a. What is the amount and type of match funding?
- b. Has the sponsor committed to cover cost overruns?
- c. Is the project budget right-sized for the proposed scope of work?
- d. *Design only:* What is the strategy for acquiring future construction funding? What sources of construction funding have been identified?
- e. *Construction only:* What is the accuracy of construction cost estimate? Is it based on completed design work?

3. Political and Community Support

- a. Is there community support?
- b. Is the project supported of by local elected officials and agency staff?
- c. Is the trail or trail corridor in local, county or state plans?

4. Equity

- a. What is the overall Indicators of Potential Disadvantage (IPD) score for the census tract in which the project is located (see www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/IPD/#map)? If the project is located in more than one Census Tract, what is the overall score of the tract with the highest IPD score? Of the individual indicators (e.g., racial minority, limited English proficiency), which have a score of 3 or above in any of the Census tracts in which the project is located?
- b. Will the trail provide new transportation and recreational opportunities to historically underserved populations and/or communities of color?
- c. *Planning only:* How will historically underserved populations and/or communities of color in the project area be engaged as part of the planning process for the proposed trail?
- d. *Design only:* How were historically underserved populations and/or communities of color in the project area engaged as part of the planning process for the proposed trail? How will they continue to be engaged as part of the design process?
- e. *Construction only:* How were historically underserved populations and/or communities of color in the project area engaged as part of the planning and/or design process for the proposed trail?

5. Trail Geography

- a. Is the proposed trail part of the Circuit Trails?
- b. If not part of the Circuit Trails, does the trail connect to the Circuit Trails?
- c. If the trail does not connect to the Circuit Trails, how might it connect in the future?
- d. Does the project close gaps in the Circuit Trails or connect to existing Circuit Trails?
- e. How many trail miles will be designed or constructed?
- f. Will the trail provide access to parks, water resources, natural areas or environmental education centers?
- g. Will the trail connect to a park, town center, trail hub, transit node or other destination? To what specific transit services does the trail connect?
- h. Does the trail provide access to “new” users? How many people live or work within 1/4 mile of the proposed trail? Within a 1/2 mile? Does the proposed trail remove or overcome any specific barriers to access?
- i. *Planning only:* If the answers to some of the above questions are unknown or yet to be determined, will the planning or feasibility study answer them?

6. Trail Typology and Specifications

- a. Will the proposed trail have a paved or crushed stone surface designed to accommodate bicycles and/or wheeled mobility devices?
- b. Will the trail meet AASHTO guidelines for width (i.e. at least 10ft wide with limited exceptions)?
- c. Will the trail be off-road and/or physically buffered from motorized traffic?
- d. Will the trail meet all other AASHTO and ADA guidelines where applicable?

7. Economics

- a. What is the cost per mile of design or construction?
- b. What are the likely economic benefits of the trail?
 - i. Will the trail contribute to community revitalization?
 - ii. What economic development benefits (e.g., increased recreation, increased commerce) will the trail provide?
 - iii. Is the trail part of the host municipality's economic development or marketing strategy?

8. Sponsor Capacity for Project Management

- a. *Planning only:* Does the sponsor have experience managing trail planning and feasibility studies?
- b. *Design only:* Does the sponsor have experience managing trail design projects? Has the sponsor worked with qualified trail design consultants in the past?
- c. *Construction only:* Does the sponsor have experience managing trail construction projects?
- d. Are adequate staff resources dedicated to project management?

9. Sponsor Capacity for Stewardship

- a. Does the sponsor/partner have the capacity and expertise to manage and maintain the trail? Does the sponsor/partner have experience managing and maintaining trails?
- b. Is there a volunteer and/or "friends-of" group to assist with maintenance and programming?
- c. *Planning only:* If the stewardship organization is unknown, which may be the case for a trail still in the planning stage, is identifying or developing a stewardship organization with capacity and expertise a specific goal of the plan.

Response Requirements

Responses to this FOA should be in the form of a letter no more than four (4) pages in length (single spaced, 12-point type). In addition, applicants should complete and include the 1-page application form included on page 9 of this FOA. Responses should include the following information:

- A description of the proposed project area and extent (supported by a project map).
- A description of the proposed project, including how it helps to complete a segment of the Circuit or connect to a Circuit trail.
- A brief description of how the proposed project responds to the evaluation criteria relevant to your project.
- A rough narrative of the budget and timeline, including the amount and source of match (as applicable).

Applicants are also required to submit a project map(s). The map(s) should indicate general project location and connectivity to the Circuit Trails. Map(s) should be clear and easy to read.



Relevant documentation regarding site control/ownership, if available and pertinent, may also be attached to the submission. Map(s) and site control documentation do not count against the 4-page limit.

Non-profits or community development corporations submitting an application should include a letter(s) demonstrating support from the entity that will ultimately own, manage, and/or maintain the trail. Other letters of support and ancillary materials are optional and should only be included if they are directly relevant to the project under consideration and the evaluation criteria.

Schedule

All submissions pursuant to this FOA must be delivered to DVRPC no later than 5:00 PM on Friday November 13, 2020 via electronic means (see submission instructions below). Applications received after the due date and time will not be considered. Projects will be evaluated in December, January, and February and selected projects will be submitted to the DVRPC Board for approval by March of 2021. Individual applicants may be contacted during the evaluation period to provide additional information and clarifications.

Successful applicants will be notified following DVRPC Board approval, after which time contracting procedures will be initiated. All project tasks must be completed no later than 36 months after the start of the contract. Failure to meet this schedule could result in a forfeiture of grant funds.

Grant Terms and Administration

RTP grants may not be used for general operating costs, acquisition of buildings, litigation, lobbying, scholarships, or procurement and administrative functions. If selected, project costs will be reimbursed based on submittal of invoices documenting costs, including documentation of in-kind contributions where applicable.

Upon selection and approval of awards by the DVRPC Board, a contract will be issued to the sponsor organizations. Sponsors are required to comply with all provisions of the award contract. Furthermore, use of grant funds will be conditioned on submission and approval of a project scope of work and budget and proof of match.

Project Delivery and the Use of Consultants

Proposed project activities may be undertaken by organization staff, a design or engineering consultant, a construction contractor or some combination of the above as appropriate. If an outside consultant is sought, the selection process must comply with all local requirements and must also adhere to the standards of any applicable matching funding source. The project sponsor or their hired forces are responsible for ensuring that all standards and regulations are followed for any matching funding source or future construction funding source (in the case of design projects).



Submission

Responses are due by 5:00 PM on Friday, November 13, 2020. All responses must be submitted by email to regionaltrailsfoa@dvrpc.org. Please note that DVRPC cannot receive documents shared via Dropbox.

Please direct all questions to Shawn Megill Legendre at slegendre@dvrpc.org or 215-238-2934. Applicants are also invited to contact Shawn to discuss projects or go over any questions they may have prior to submitting their application.



Regional Trails Program – Phase VII Grants – Application Form

General Information

Proposed Project Title: _____

Applicant Organization: _____

Applicant Contact Name: _____

Applicant Contact Address: _____

Applicant Contact Phone: _____

Applicant Contact Email: _____

RTP Application Request

Request Amount: _____

Match Amount: _____

Location of Project

Municipality(ies): _____

County(ies): _____

Please list any connecting or adjacent trails: