

# **Maine Trail Program Guidance Manual**



**Grants and Community Recreation Program  
Bureau of Parks and Lands  
MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
CONSERVATION, AND FORESTRY  
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# ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING LIMITATIONS

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## 1) Program Overview

H.P. 728 - L.D. 1156 established An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design, Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active Transportation, to be known as the Maine Trails Program (MTP). The purpose of this program is to leverage at least \$3,000,000 in matching contributions from public and private sources to be used for the design, development and maintenance of nonmotorized, motorized and multi-use trails statewide. Pursuant to PL 2024 Ch. 652, no more than \$7,500,000 may be expended in the first year by the BPL, and no more than \$7,500,000 may be expended by the Bureau of Parks and Lands in each of the three subsequent years, except that any unused balance may be added to the specified amount in subsequent years. The full \$30 million must be obligated by November 4, 2034.

## 2) Maine Trails Advisory Committee

To be eligible to participate in the Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) each state must maintain a State Trail Advisory Committee to provide counsel on RTP matters. The committee must represent both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users and meet at least once per fiscal year. The committee provides advice to the State Trail Administrator (STA) and BPL regarding program policies and procedures. Since the MTP is modeled on the Federal RTP, this committee will perform the same advisory services and guidance in the administration of the Maine Trail Program. In addition to general program consultation and advice, committee members will also serve as the evaluation team that reviews, scores, and recommends eligible projects for funding.

## 3) Eligible Applicants

- a) Grants may be awarded to any of the following.
  - i) Municipalities.
  - ii) Other qualified subdivisions of State Government, including executive branch departments and agencies; and
  - iii) Non-profit organizations.
- b) Beginning in the second MTP grant cycle (2026) and beyond, applicants with outstanding/incomplete RTP or MTP projects from previous years cannot apply for the current round of funding unless all previous projects are completed and closed out (final reimbursement request submitted to State Trail Administrator (STA) by the current RTP or MTP application deadline date.

## 4) Eligible Projects: *Permissible* uses of MTP grant funds include:

- a) Development and Renovation Grants
  - i) Development of new recreation trails, to include the construction of new trail bridges, boardwalks, culverts, staircases and other trail structures and/or the provision of appropriate signage along a trail as needed for the viability and sustainability of the trail.
  - ii) Renovation of existing trails, trailside and or trailhead facilities for recreational trails.
    - (1) Renovation is more than regular maintenance. It includes, but is not limited to, reconstruction of a trails base and surface, reroutes and old corridor decommissioning, replacement or reconstruction of a

majority portions of structures, reconstruction of trailhead and or trailside structures (kiosks, shelters, etc.)

- iii) Development of trailside, trailhead, and trail support facilities for recreational trails: may include development of any trailside or trailhead facility that has a direct relationship to the viability of a recreational trail. Trail support facilities such as equipment storage buildings and trail training facilities are eligible.
- iv) Improvements to trail access and use for persons with disabilities and/or special needs.
- v) Creation, expansion, or improvement of water trails may include construction/restoration of boat launch/landing infrastructure, signage, outhouses, portage trails, campsites, etc.
- vi) Construction of new trails on federal land provided the project has been approved by the managing agency(ies), and the applicant has sufficient control.
- vii) A sidewalk that connects two existing trails may be eligible.

**b) Bundled Applications – Regional trail networks**

- i) When multiple organizations have control/tenure over an interconnected trail system across multiple jurisdictions, these organizations may apply for grant funding under one application to benefit the cross jurisdictional interconnected trail network.
  - (1) One of the partner organizations needs to be the project lead, applicant and fiscal agent on behalf of all project partners.
  - (2) Application maximum award limit remains as established for any individual application.
  - (3) Participants in a bundled application may still apply for grant funding for a project that is unique to their organization and jurisdiction.

**c) Acquisition Grants**

- i) Land acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for trail purposes: may include the acquisition of any kind of interest in property from a willing landowner/seller.
- ii) Significant asset acquisition, including:
  - (1) Old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges

**5) Ineligible Projects:** The following types of projects are inconsistent with the State MTP and are not eligible for MTP funding:

- a) Trail, trailhead, trailside amenity maintenance: work that would be considered usual and ordinary ongoing and prudent care of existing trail, trailhead, trailside or trail center infrastructure.
- b) Snowmaking equipment / infrastructure
- c) Roads\*, sidewalks, gardening/landscaping, parks or park equipment, sprinklers, or campgrounds are not eligible.
  - i) \*Limited sections of unimproved roads may be eligible for funding if renovation of that road section is essential to trailhead access and trail use.

- d) Outdoor Recreation Access Routes (ORARs) are typically not eligible for funding.
  - i) ORARs are “a continuous, unobstructed path designed for pedestrian use that connects constructed features in a campground, camping unit, picnic area, trailhead, or other recreation site where modifications are provided for visitor convenience and comfort.”
  - ii) Exceptions to this may be made when the ORAR is essential to the functionality of a trail.
- e) Construction/improvements within a federal, state, county, or town road right-of-way. (e.g., bike lanes or other on-road bicycle/pedestrian amenities.
- f) Funding staff/intern positions not related to a direct MTP-funded project execution.
- g) Condemnation of Land – The MTP funds shall not be used to condemn any kind of interest in the property or use the value of condemned land. However, an MTP project may be located on land condemned with funds from other sources.
- h) Feasibility Studies.
- i) Law Enforcement.

**6) Fiscal guidelines.**

- a) In the first grant cycle,
  - i) 100% of available MTP funding will be reserved for local projects.
  - ii) The maximum award amount will be \$250,000.
- b) In subsequent grant cycles:
  - i) The proportion of trails bond funding allocated to various eligible sectors may be modified.
  - ii) The maximum award amount may be modified.
- c) Grants will not exceed ninety percent (90%) of a project’s total cost or the grant cap, whichever is less.
- d) The minimum match required is ten percent (10%) of eligible costs, or the maximum award granted, whichever is less.
- e) The MTP grant is primarily a reimbursement grant. The applicant must be able to pay project costs as they are incurred prior to submitting requests for reimbursement of the grant share.
  - i) Generally, the program will entertain three reimbursement requests during the project life cycle: one reimbursement after the first season or significant milestone, one reimbursement after the second season or significant milestone, and one smaller final reimbursement after project completion and final inspection.
  - ii) Upon execution of a project agreement, sponsors are eligible to request up to 25% of their total award amount as an advance against future reimbursements. Match for this advanced funding must be provided in the project sponsor’s first regular reimbursement request.
- f) Match limitations & types include:
  - i) Cash outlay – costs paid by the project sponsor and submitted as a match instead of for reimbursement.

ii) Value of volunteer labor, equipment, and materials

(1) Value of volunteer labor may be calculated using two methods, depending on the type of labor:

- (a) Professionals – If a person is professionally skilled in the work being donated to the project (i.e., a welder working on a steel trail bridge), the wage rate this individual is normally paid for performing this service may be charged to the project. The rate cannot exceed the prevailing wage (excluding common laborer) and/or equipment charges determined by the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT). A list of DOT labor and equipment rates can be found at: <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/csd/laborrates/>
- (b) All other volunteer (unskilled) labor – Will be valued at the current Independent Sector rate for Maine. <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>
- (c) Donated equipment value may be based on current FEMA rates, or MeDOT rates whichever is greater. <https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/tools-resources/schedule-equipment-rates>

(2) Volunteer labor, donated equipment, and materials may be used as match only and are never reimbursable.

(3) Volunteer labor must be tracked by logs that, at a minimum, include the volunteer's name, telephone number, and initials for each block of donated time. This log must also be signed by the project steward or volunteer event supervisor.

(a) Volunteer equipment and mileage log templates are available from the STA.

(b) Time for each value item is time in use, not time on site.

iii) Other state and local grants, unless specifically excluded.

g) No costs incurred prior to the date of grant approval and receipt of a fully executed project agreement with the state will be eligible for reimbursement. \*\*

i) \*\*Design & Engineering costs incurred within 2 years of the project agreement are eligible as use for the project match

(1) D&E costs may include planning and environmental assessment (including cultural assessment)

ii) Costs are incurred when work is performed, or goods are received.

iii) A final request for reimbursement may be submitted after the project ending date provided the costs for which reimbursement is being sought were incurred within the established project period as found on the project agreement.

h) Local administrative costs, indirect costs, and facility overhead are not eligible for match or reimbursement.

i) Administrative costs in the form of in-the-field / on the ground project management, supervision and direction are eligible for match or reimbursement.

ii) Multi-jurisdictional and multi-partner projects of a regional scale may support a project manager to directly oversee and implement the project across these partners and jurisdictions.

iii) If unsure about an item, contact the STA or other trail program staff.

## 7) Eligible Project Costs

- a) Project design & engineering.
- b) Direct project administration/supervision/direction of work in the field. Employee salary for project work in the field.
- c) Consultant/contractor services.
- d) Supplies and materials for grant assisted project work.
- e) Signs and trail-related interpretive aids.
- f) Construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance work on trails.
- g) Construction of bridges, railings, ramps, fences, and trail-related structures.
- h) Bank stabilization, re-vegetation (excluding ornamental landscaping), and erosion control.
- i) Trailhead - trailside development, including parking, restrooms, and related facilities.
- j) Acquisition of land or permanent easements essential to trail access and/or trail development.
- k) Equipment rental and or acquisition.

## 8) Ineligible Project and Match Costs

- a) Office work, grant reimbursement processing, other administrative support work, or general overhead.
- b) Concept plans, feasibility studies, use assessments, etc.
- c) Food.
- d) Expenses related to the promotion of the organization.
- e) Advertising.
- f) Fundraising.
- g) Features that are ornamental and or otherwise do not have a direct relation to the functionality of the trail or benefit to the user experience.
- h) Lodging.
- i) Clothing
- j) General overhead/indirect costs (office rent, utilities, office supplies, postage, administrative time managing the grant, general organizational needs, etc.).

## 9) Control and Tenure

- a) General Guidance: The applicant must *have demonstrated control over any land (public or private) to be improved/developed* with MTP grant funds. For the purposes of this program Control and Tenure is defined as follows:

- i) Control = Applicant does not have tenure but does have a use agreement or similar instrument on the affected parcel allowing the proposed work and ongoing stewardship of trail improvements by the applicant. See below for further guidance related to duration of public access.
  - ii) Tenure = Applicant is either the fee owner or has a conservation / recreational easement on the property affected, allowing the proposed work and ongoing stewardship of trail improvements by the applicant.
- b) There are no perpetual stewardship obligations for any trails or trail related amenities funded by this program. Nonetheless, it is in the interest of all in the trail community to have MTP investments benefit the public for as long as possible. The public should have access to grant funded investments for as long as possible, but at a minimum for:
- i) at least five (5) years from the time of project completion for regular development grants
  - ii) at least ten (10) years from the time of project completion for any project that involves the construction of bridges or other significant trailhead, trailside, or trail structures.

In both i) and ii) above, note that applications will be awarded additional points for increased periods of secured public access.

There are times when a 5-10-year control is not possible (e.g., generally, snowmobile trail use agreements are limited to one-year increments, which would be an eligible timeline unless major structures, such as bridges, are part of the proposed work.)

Please contact the program staff for review on a case-by-case basis prior to the application deadline.

- c) Acquisition projects:
- i) Applicant / recipient must retain ownership of the property rights and allow public use in perpetuity, or assure via deed restriction, that any subsequent owner also is bound to manage the land for public trails or trail related uses. If this condition is not met, the project sponsor must reimburse BPL for the full amount of MTP acquisition funds for reinvestment in another local MTP project.
  - ii) For acquisition projects, the applicant must obtain fee and/or easement interests (leases are not eligible for MTP funding) in the property being acquired without any restrictions, reservations, exceptions, third-party interests, etc., that would adversely affect the development, management, or use of public trails on the property.

## 10) 50-25-25 Funding Distribution Goals

- a) The MTP legislation set funding allocation targets at 50 percent of funds available in a fiscal year awarded to multi-use recreational trails, 25 percent awarded to motorized trails, and 25 percent awarded to non-motorized trails.
- b) The multi-use, motorized, and non-motorized percentage targets may be exceeded in any one area if there are insufficient qualifying applications to meet the target in any other area.
  - i) A project for multi-use motorized recreation (such as snowmobile and ATV use) may satisfy the 50 percent diverse use target and the 25 percent motorized use target simultaneously.
  - ii) A project for multi-use non-motorized trails (such as hiking and mountain biking) may satisfy the 50 percent multi-use use target and the 25 percent non-motorized use target simultaneously.

- c) MTP selection flexibility: The MTP established three categories to account for the 50-25-25 requirements. The STA will determine which projects fall under each category, based on trail design and management in relation to funding availability, to best position the applicant for funding while also satisfying the desired allocation of funds across trail use types.
  - i) Non-motorized project: A project intended to benefit only non-motorized recreational trail use, such as pedestrian, biking, paddling, or equestrian use.
  - ii) Multi-use project: A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of use. This could be motorized or non-motorized use of a trail, which are two different types of motorized use (i.e., ATV in summer, snowmobile in winter, or any combination of uses). There could also be two types of non-motorized use on the same trail (bikes, hikers, horses, etc.). Winter use (skiing, snowshoeing) as opposed to summer use (hiking) on the same trail is not considered multi-use.
  - iii) Motorized use project: A trail project primarily intended to benefit motorized recreational use, such as snowmobiling and/or ATVs. A project may be classified in this category if the project also benefits some non-motorized use if the primary intent is motorized use.

## 11) Environmental Requirements

- a) The MTP requires documentation of compliance with state environmental and historic preservation laws. In most cases, this means a simple certification of compliance by the applicant and not an environmental assessment.
- b) Each MTP project must be reviewed by designated state agencies to ensure that it does not have an unmitigated negative impact on the environment.

Applicants are required to obtain clearance letters from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine Natural Areas Program, and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife-Endangered Species Program early in the application process. Contact information for each agency is listed within the application itself.

- (1) The applicant must address any concerns raised by these agencies in their application, indicating how these concerns will be addressed to minimize or eliminate any potential adverse impacts.
- (2) Projects on federal land are required to certify and document compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (and any other federal regulatory requirements as determined by the Land Manager).
- (3) Projects on Federal Lands require a record of decision to be submitted with the application.

## 12) Special Instructions

- a) Non-profit Applicants
  - i) A non-profit organization must provide documentation of its non-profit status and its federal tax identification number as part of the application package.
- b) Structural Development Projects
  - i) Projects that include weight / vehicle bearing structural development components are required to have plans and specifications prepared or approved by a professional engineer. Plans for these structures must be

submitted to and approved by the trails program staff prior to construction. Please see Appendix for detailed guidance.

c) Acquisition Projects

- i) Applicants can apply for MTP funds to acquire property interests for trails on the property being acquired; however, the total MTP request cannot exceed \$250,000.00. The property so assisted must serve or support trails as its primary focus and or must be critical to the existence and ongoing usefulness of trails / trail networks that connect on or traverse the property. If public recreational trails do not exist on the target parcel for acquisition at the time of application, the applicant must provide actionable plans to develop public trails on the MTP-funded property within three (3) years of receipt of MTP funds. If the proposed trails are not developed or are not developed to the extent assured at the time of award, the applicant must reimburse BPL for the full amount of MTP acquisition funds.
- ii) Applicants intending to acquire property are required to obtain an appraisal of the property conducted according to the terms of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP).
- iii) Acquisition costs are considered incurred when:
  - (1) A property deed or other conveyance is accepted by the project sponsor; or
  - (2) First payment is made to an escrow account/agency for the subject property.
- iv) MTP funding for local projects will not exceed 90% of the fair market value as established by an appraisal in conformance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) or the grant cap, whichever is the lesser amount. Applicant's match must be the costs and/or value of the direct property acquisition. Pre-acquisition costs, including but not limited to survey, appraisal, appraisal review, and administration, are not reimbursable and cannot be used as a match.
- v) Donations or partial donations of the property interests being acquired may be used as a match, but only in instances where the property interests are being conveyed at less than fair market value as established by an appraisal in conformance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP)
- vi) Property rights for the land acquired using MTP funds must be retained for public use in perpetuity.

d) Combination: Acquisition/Development Projects

- i) Applicants can apply for MTP funds to acquire property interests and develop trails on the property being acquired; however, the total MTP request cannot exceed \$250,000.00.

**13) Record Retention**

- a) All program and financial records shall be retained by the applicant for state audit purposes following completion of the project. At a minimum, the following records will be retained and made available for audit:
  - i) Invoices for purchased materials (including donated materials).
  - ii) Invoices for all design and construction costs (including donated services).
  - iii) Copies of signed time sheets for all donated labor.
  - iv) Cancelled checks, copies, credit card statements, EFT documentation of payments, and/or other appropriate proof of payment.

#### 14) Requests for Change in Approved Scope of Project

- a) Requests for changes to project scope must be submitted in writing to the STA.
- b) Changes in project scope may be approved by the STA if justified and in alignment with the original vision for the project. Justification and a revised project budget should be forwarded to the STA.
- c) Requests for an extension of time for the completion of a project are possible but strongly discouraged. Awards are made based on the applicant's assurances that their project is poised for action (shovel-ready, as the saying goes) and can be completed within the allowed two-year construction window. Extensions will only be granted in the case of significant, unforeseen, and documented circumstances that prevent the timely completion of a project.
- d) Requests for additional funding may be considered with sufficient justification but only in support of the original project scope as detailed in the applicant's original application.
- e) If a project modification is approved, an Amendment to the Project Agreement will be prepared and forwarded to the sponsor for signature. Work after the original project period may not begin until this amendment has been processed.

#### 15) Project Completion

- a) MTP projects must be completed, and final reimbursement must be requested within the project period identified in the Project Agreement.

This project period typically accommodates at least two full construction seasons.

- b) Projects may be extended beyond this period, given compelling circumstances and justifications.
- c) All acquisition and or development projects, once completed, must submit GIS data for inclusion into the BP&L GIS data layer for public information.
- d) All projects will require a post-completion inspection to ensure that the goals of the project have been met.

The STA may, at their discretion, accept a project summary with associated photos supplied by the project sponsor in lieu of a site visit.

#### 16) Signage / Acknowledgement

- a) The MTP requires that the Recipient shall post in a prominent place on the Facilities and shall maintain in good condition a sign approved by the STA, giving public acknowledgment of assistance from the MTP. The sign should be constructed of permanent, sturdy material large enough to be clearly visible and located at a prominent access point or access point to the funded trail sections.
- b) The suggested language identifies the site as a cooperative venture, ex:

This "Project name here" (ex. Great Dark Forest Trail Project)  
Developed with assistance provided by the citizens of Maine through  
The Maine Trails Program  
Administered by  
The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands

- c) Any printed materials such as trail brochures, celebration announcements or website information must also identify the financial partnership of MTP that helped to make the project a reality.

- d) Tools/equipment purchased with MTP funds must be permanently marked to acknowledge MTP funding assistance.
- e) Any balance of MTP funds remaining after the project period has closed and or after the project is completed will be re-obligated to future MTP projects.  
In the case of projects receiving advanced award funding, any balance must be returned to BPL within ninety days of project closeout.

## **17) Compliance and Construction Report**

- a) Project progress inspections may be conducted by state representatives at any time. This may include on-the-ground project inspection and/or review of the sponsor's MTP records and files.
- b) Upon notification of project completion, BP&L will inspect the project.
  - i) Recommendations for corrective action will be made if appropriate.
  - ii) Deficiencies, if any, must be corrected and reported in writing to BPL within four (4) weeks of the applicant's receipt of the inspection report.
  - iii) A portion of the final reimbursement payment may be withheld pending the final inspection and completion of any corrective measures, if deemed necessary, by the STA, BPL, and/or any entity having regulatory jurisdiction over the project.

## **18) Application – Award – Appeal**

### **a) Application**

BPL will strive to hold at least one annual MTP grant cycle during which applications for funding will be received, reviewed, and scored. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be announced in advance of each funding round with sufficient time to allow for project sponsors to respond to the NOFO with viable project applications.

### **b) Award**

Complete applications that satisfy eligibility requirements will be reviewed and scored by members of the Maine Trails Advisory Committee. Numeric scores make up a portion of the overall recommendation for funding. In addition to the numeric score, the concept, viability and perceived beneficial outcome of the project will inform the decision-making process. This process is closed to applicants and to the general public.

Successful applicants will receive a "Preliminary Notice of Award" letter expressing the intent to fund the project and requesting any additional information required, if any. The applicant will not have an active award however unless and until the subsequent Project Agreement between the State of Maine, and the applicant has been fully executed. No work should begin until the applicant has received the fully executed project agreement.

Complete applications not selected for funding will receive a declination letter.. This letter will identify any deficiencies in the application and will include an offer to meet with program staff to review the proposed project with the aim of elevating it to fundable status in a future application cycle.

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. The applicant will receive notice of incompleteness identifying what was missing from their application.

### **c) Appeal**

## Maine Trails Program Guidance

An applicant may request an appeal hearing on a grant award decision by submitting a written request for an appeal to the Commissioner, no later than fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of the award decision.

Appeals are governed by 01-001 CMR c. 8 [Hyperlink to <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/01/chaps01.htm>]

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# ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

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## 1) General

- a) A separate project ledger or account must be established for each project. This account must be cross-referenced to the MTP project number noted on your project agreement.
  - i) The MTP number must be used on all correspondence, contract documents, invoices, payroll or time sheets, equipment use sheets, and other project documents.
  - ii) When issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations, and other documents describing projects or programs, all grantees receiving MTP funds shall clearly state that a portion of the project has been funded with Maine MTP assistance.
- b) The local official records of project expenditures must be retained for three (3) years after final payment or until approval of state audit, whichever is longer.

## 2) Acquisition Projects

- a) **MTP will fund up to 90% of the appraised value of the parcel(s).**
- b) **All purchase and sale agreements and documentation must be provided to the state at the time they are generated and or at the time of the first reimbursement request.**

## 3) Development Projects

- a) Procurement Requirements
  - i) Assuring Lowest Qualified Costs: Project sponsors must work to obtain the lowest project costs for the work performed based on the following thresholds.
    - (1) **Costs under \$10,000** may be negotiated directly with a qualified vendor
    - (2) **Costs anticipated to be \$10,000 - \$19,999** must have three quotes from qualified vendors; the contract awarded to the vendor providing the lowest quote.
      - (a) Requests for quotes must include notification of the MTP award number.
      - (b) Quotes and intent to award must be submitted to the Grants & Community Recreation office for review and approval prior to awarding a contract.
    - (3) **Costs at or above \$20,000** must go out to competitive bid. The contract must be awarded to the vendor with the lowest qualified bid price.
      - (a) Bid documents must be publicly advertised and indicate that a portion of the project is funded via a MTP grant administered by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, Grants & Community Recreation Program.
      - (b) Bid documents must be submitted to the Grants & Community Recreation office for review and approval before public announcement.

## Maine Trails Program Guidance

- (c) Bid tabulations and intent to award must be submitted to the Grants & Community Recreation office for review and approval prior to awarding a contract.
- (4) Requests for reimbursement submitted without complete documentation of this process will not be processed.
- ii) Sole Source Contract
  - (1) \*In cases of procurement of services or materials costing over \$10,000, non-competitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is not feasible under options “i)” and one of the following circumstances applies:
    - (a) The item is available only from a single source.
    - (b) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from public competition.
    - (c) After solicitation from several sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.
  - (2) In all cases of single-source procurement, the Grants & Community Recreation program must issue approval prior to contract award.
- iii) Procurements may not be artificially “split” to avoid competitive requirements.
- iv) Project Sponsors must avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest when soliciting or awarding work on MTP projects.
- v) Fair Market Value

As amended in the NHS Act, 23 USC 323 allows a “person” (private individuals, entities, organizations, or corporations) to donate funds, right-of-way, materials, or services (including donated labor) toward the local share of a project. The project sponsor must document the fair market value of newly donated private rights-of-way, materials, or services.

### **4) Reimbursement Documentation / Cost & Match Verification**

- a) All programs and financial records shall be retained by the grant recipient until an audit (acceptable to the state government) is completed or for a period of three years after the project is closed out, whichever occurs last.
  - i) Typically, all or most of the documentation below must be submitted with each reimbursement request as proof of the expenses and match value generated during that project period being reimbursed. Capturing these documents as they are generated during the project is strongly advised. Payroll registers by pay period, showing names, hours worked, hourly rate, benefits, deductions, gross pay, and net pay.
  - ii) Timesheets for all volunteer laborers, signed by both volunteer and supervisor.
  - iii) Invoices for purchased or donated materials.
  - iv) Invoices for all design and construction costs.
  - v) Indicate the check number and date paid for each invoice (or credit card receipt)
  - vi) Copies (front & back) of canceled checks or copies of electronic payments confirming vendor receipt of payment.

## Maine Trails Program Guidance

Note: copies of the sponsor's accounting software registers/statements do not qualify as evidence of payment

- vii) Copies of all contracts associated with the project.
- b) At a minimum, the following records shall also be maintained and made available for audit.
  - i) Payroll registers by pay period showing names, hours worked, hourly rate, benefits, deductions, gross pay and net pay.
  - ii) Time sheets for all volunteer workers, signed by both volunteer and supervisor.
  - iii) Invoices for purchased or donated materials.
  - iv) Invoices for all design and construction costs.
  - v) Indicate check number and date paid of each invoice (or credit card receipt)
  - vi) Copies (front & back) of cancelled checks, or copies of electronic payments confirming vendor receipt of payment.
    - (1) Note: copies of sponsor's accounting software registers / statements do not qualify as evidence of payment; copies of bank statements may.
- vii) Copies of all contracts associated with the project.

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# BILLING PROCEDURES

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## 1) GENERAL

- a) All requests for reimbursement should be emailed (project number in subject line) to the Grants and Community Recreation Program. Complete requests include the reimbursement transmittal form, the reimbursement worksheet summarizing all eligible costs and match items, and documentation of every item listed on the worksheet. Please be sure to include an Excel file format version of your worksheet in addition to a signed PDF version.
- b) Requests for reimbursement should be limited to a maximum of three (3: 2 progress, one final) over the duration of your project.

Exceptions may be permitted due to need. Contact the grant administrator to discuss options.

- c) The reimbursement request from the project sponsor shall be submitted by email to the Grants and Community Recreation Program. Include the project number in the subject line of the email.
  - i) It shall consist of the Work Sheet in the original Excel file format, which will accompany this document. If you have not received this file, please contact this office before you process your first reimbursement.
    - (1) The worksheet shall be itemized to agree with the project ledger in the order of postings.
      - (a) The top of the sheet is for all costs for which the project sponsor wants reimbursement.
      - (b) The bottom of the sheet is for all costs and in-kind expenses submitted as a match.
        - (i) Splitting cash outlay expenses between reimbursement and match is permitted.
      - (c) The value of the eligible match will determine the maximum allowable reimbursement.
- d) Sponsors will normally receive reimbursement by state check within 4-6 weeks of the date of submission of a completely documented reimbursement request.

Submitting your work form in the original Excel format will expedite reimbursement processing.

- e) Advance payment protocols

When projects receive grant awards in advance of project initiation, the above process will be replicated as a means of documenting and reporting eligible expenses using the advanced funds. This will become a record of drawing down funds advanced.

- ## 2) DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:
- A development project consists of the sponsor constructing recreation facilities as described in the Project Agreement. One copy of each of the following items must be submitted to the state as part of the reimbursement request:

- a) Contracts
  - i) Proof of advertising (when the formal public process is used).
  - ii) Bid tabulation (or quotes received for contracts under \$10,000).

## Maine Trails Program Guidance

- iii) Copy of signed contracts or purchase orders, including bonds, extra work orders, etc.
- iv) Copy of each paid invoice.
- v) Copies of the front and back of canceled checks, credit card receipts, and proof of electronic payment.
- b) Purchased materials:
  - i) Provide evidence of the best price (quotes, bids, etc.)
  - ii) Copies of paid invoices.
  - iii) Copies of the front and back of canceled checks, credit card receipts, and proof of electronic payment.
- c) Force Account Personnel
  - i) Copy of payroll sheets.
  - ii) Copy of timecards or attendance sheets to support payroll.
  - iii) Certification of work by supervisor.
  - iv) Method of determining hourly rate.
- d) Force Account Equipment
  - i) Detailed description of each piece of equipment (model, tonnage, bucket size, drawbar, etc.)
  - ii) Record of time used on project and rate (hours or mileage)
  - iii) Method of computing rates or charges.
- e) Materials are drawn from the Supply
  - i) Evidence of cost
  - ii) Copy of journal.
- f) Donated materials.
  - i) Itemized list of materials supplied.
  - ii) Value based on the cost to the donor or reasonable market value.
  - iii) Method of valuation.
- g) Donated services
  - i) Timesheets showing hours worked and work performed.
  - ii) Basis for rates.
  - iii) Itemized list of time and charges.

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## GUIDELINES FOR LABOR & EQUIPMENT RATES

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Equipment Rates can be pulled from either Maine DOT rental rates or FEMA rates. Generally, FEMA rates are more comprehensive in terms of the numbers and types of equipment listed.

Maine DOT labor / rental rates can be found here- <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/csd/laborrates/>

FEMA - <https://www.fema.gov/schedule-equipment-rates>

Unskilled Labor----- \$28.89 per hour\*\*\*

\*\* Per hour of “USE” means actual hours the equipment is being used/operated, not the total time it spends on site.

\*\*\*Or current rate established by Independent Sector (for Maine, not USA average) – please check with STA for the current rate before submitting any reimbursement.

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# APPENDIX

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## STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- i) Projects that include weight / vehicle bearing structural development components are required to have plans and specifications prepared or approved by a professional engineer. **Plans for these structures must be submitted to and approved by the trails program staff prior to construction.**

- ii) **General guidance:**

- (1) Sizing

- (a) Span should be based on DEP/LUPC Guidelines

- (i) Abutments should be placed 'landward' of 1.2x bankfull width at normal high water

- 1. 1.5x bankfull width is preferred.

- (ii) Final span length should be made in consultation with a qualified engineer, alternately provide narrative describing method used to size bridge.

- (2) Bridges

- (a) Engineering Required for:

- (i) For non-motorized bridge >25'

- 1. When using pre-engineered bridge designs, engineering is only required for abutments and placement.

- (ii) Multiple Spans (i.e., supporting piers)

- (iii) For structures using metal/non wood elements (trusses, trailer frames, etc)

- (iv) Motorized bridge >50'

- (v) Any structures located in floodplain.

- (b) Engineering Not Required

- (i) Minor Span <= 25' using off the shelf design (previously engineered)

- (ii) Motorized <= 50' using design from Maine's ORV handbook design

- (3) Boardwalks:

- (a) No engineering is required for boardwalks defined as a bridge with multiple spans in which no single span is more than 4' off ground and no pier or support is in a waterway (perennial or seasonal) or wetland

- (4) Railings:

## Maine Trails Program Guidance

- (a) International building codes for railings must be met for urban and high-risk trails. AASHTO requirements must be met for rural and moderate risk areas. OSHA guidelines applied for remote and low risk areas.
- (b) If a railing is required, it must be in the engineered plan (whether the plan is off the shelf or procured) - it cannot be 'added on' as there are specific load rating requirements
- (c) General Guidelines for Railings: required when-
  - (i) Drop off from structure is significantly greater than natural drop offs along trail.
  - (ii) Bridges or boardwalks with a drop-off of 30 inches or more in Urban/Suburban area
  - (iii) Bridges or boardwalks with a drop-off of 48 inches more in rural area
- (d) All trail bridges or boardwalks that do not have a railing (rail system) must have a curb
- (e) Height: 42" for pedestrians and motorized use, 54" for Mountain Bike and Equestrian
- (5) All wooden structures (shelters, bridges, boardwalks, etc.) must be constructed of naturally rot-resistant woods, pressure-treated lumber, or composite materials to assure longevity of use. Upon approval by the STA, other materials may be used if adequate treatment and/or construction techniques will result in sufficient durability.
- (6) International building codes must be met for urban and high-risk trails.
- (7) AASHTO requirements must be met for rural and moderate risk areas.
- (8) OSHA guidelines applied for remote and low risk areas.