Recreational Trails Program
Grant Application Guidance

PREFACE

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a federal assistance program to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized use. It provides funds for a variety of trails including those for hikers, bikers, in-line skating, water trails, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicles, four-wheel driving, and other off-road vehicle use.

For more detailed information about this program please follow this link:
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/overview/

Administered at the federal level by the Federal Highway Administration and at the state level by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry; Bureau of Parks and Lands, with assistance from the Maine Trails Advisory Committee, RTP grants can provide up to $120,000 for certain motorized bridge work or up to $50,000 of allowable costs for all other construction projects. (Subject to change depending on funding levels)

This guidance document is intended to provide perspective on the elements within the application on a point-by-point basis to increase the ability of the applicant to highlight the merits of their proposed initiative and therefor to increase the likelihood of project funding.

Qualified sponsors that are interested in submitting a proposal should contact the Grants and Community Recreation Division of the Bureau of Parks and Lands at the phone number or email address below for assistance and guidance in the application process.

Doug Beck, State Trail Administrator
Phone: (207) 624-6090
E-mail address: doug.beck@maine.gov

COMPLETE APPLICATION MUST BE SUMITTED BY 5:00pm on the

LAST FRIDAY IN SEPTEMBER

LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Refer to application checklist (appendix) for what is needed in a complete application.

Table of Contents

OVERVIEW

1) **Structure**

    a) This application is divided into three sections

        i) Applicant information

        ii) Applicant eligibility / authority

        iii) Project information

            (1) Required information must be entered directly into the application form where spaces are made available for this purpose.

    b) This application is a simple Word document for your convenience. You must download the application and save it to your drive before you begin to fill it out. Use this saved copy while you proceed with the process. The project budget is a simple Excel worksheet which will calculate your totals for your convenience.

    c) Supplemental Information

        i) At various points within the application additional supplemental and supporting documentation is requested. These documents must be saved according to defined file naming protocol and included with your completed application.

2) **Application Submission**

All applications must be submitted digitally. Please follow this guidance precisely in order to complete and submit your application successfully.

    a) Application Process

        i) Download, store and compile all of your documents electronically on your local hard drive, agency server or other site as appropriate

    b) Application Submission

        i) Create a cloud based folder on any of the various available storage services such as DropBox, Google Drive, iCloud, One Drive, etc. We don't care which one as long as we will be able to access the completed documents.

            (1) Most of these provide free accounts with more than enough storage space for your complete suite of application documents.

        ii) Create a folder within this cloud based drive titled as follows: "agency/sponsor name" "grant year" RTP Application

            (1) ex: Town of E.Gish_2020_RTP_Application

        iii) Within this folder save your application files according to the naming protocol below. Depending on the applicant not all files below will be necessary. Applicant may also include additional supporting documents if desired (photos, press, letters of support, etc) and should follow the same naming protocol:

            (1) Sponsor name_2020RTP_application

            (2) Sponsor name_2020RTP_resolution

            (3) Sponsor name_2020RTP_lease

            (4) Sponsor name_2020RTP_permit

            (5) Sponsor name_2020RTP_MHPC_clearance

            (6) Sponsor name_2020RTP_MIFW_clearance

            (7) Sponsor name_2020RTP_MNAP_clearance

            (8) Sponsor name_2020RTP_map_vicinity

> It is recommended that you abbreviate your agency / org name in order to keep file names as short as possible. This improves transferability. E.g.,
>
> - spnsrnm_2020RTP_ap
> - spnsrnm_2020RTP_res
>
> and so on

    (9)   Sponsor name_2020RTP_map_site

    (10) Sponsor name_2020RTP_map_linkages

    (11) Sponsor name_2020RTP_map_data

    (12) Sponsor name_2020RTP_fee_schedule

    (13) Sponsor name_2020RTP_planing_evidence

    (14) Sponsor name_2020RTP_proximity_docs

    (15) Sponsor name_2020RTP_project_budget

    Optional additional information

    (16) Sponsor name_2020RTP_project_photos

    (17) Sponsor name_2020RTP_project_press

    (18) Sponsor name_2020RTP_project_los

    Etc.,

iv) When all your documents are completed and compiled in your local drive, copy all of your application files into your shared drive application folder.

    (1) Do not cut and paste, just copy and paste, so you are sure to maintain your files.

v) When you are certain that you have all the required documents in the shared folder do the following:

    (1) Send an email with a link to the shared folder to doug.beck@maine.gov.

        (a) Copy the text of your transmittal letter (appendix) into the body of your email.

        (b) This email will serve as the time stamp for the date / time of submission

    (2) Upon receipt of the email your shared folder will be accessed, and the contents will be copied and pasted into a separate location.

        (a) This will complete your application and files present at the time will determine the validity of your application.

Part 1 – Applicant Information

Executive Officer Name – please list the name and title of the person authorized to enter into contracts for your agency / organization.

Primary contact information – please list the person who will be directly involved in managing this grant, if awarded, and therefore who will serve as the point person for all communications between the applicant and the State.

Applicant Type

All Non-Government Organizations (NGO) must provide documentation of their status to assure program eligibility.

Past RTP Grant Awards

Has your agency received previous RTP grants? If so, when was the most recent grant awarded?

- **Current Grantee**: Applicants with active RTP grants are ineligible from applying for new funding until their existing active grant is closed out (work completed and reimbursements submitted).

If applicant had a previous project it was completed in:

If the project was not completed you must submit a letter detailing the reasons the previous funded project was not completed.

Part 2 – Applicant Eligibility / Project Viability

1) **Authorization to Apply**
   - Municipalities and School units must show evidence that their governing body has formally granted authorization for the municipality's application. This is typically in the form of a resolution, but may take other forms. See appendix for examples
   - Many other organizations empower their chief executive to apply for grants without board approval. If the applicant's organization does require approval however, please include this documentation with the application. Provide supporting documentation of any board votes approving the application.

2) **Ownership**
   - Provide copies of leases, easements, permits, etc..

3) **Control**
   - If your project will rely on use permits we encourage applicants to strive for permits lasting for at least 5 years. However, we understand that most landowners are reluctant to give more than one (1) year access. Your application will be stronger if you provide evidence of a history of renewed use permits. See appendix for examples of use permits.
   - If you answer "No" to this question you must describe how you will gain the necessary control over the property before the project can be considered for funding.

For permitted use projects, (where the trail corridor is not owned but instead access is permitted) when project requests are more than $50,000 of RTP funds; will public access to and use of the project for at least a ten (10) year period be enabled? Less than 10 years access will raise questions with reviewers about the wisdom of investing significant funds in projects that will not have enduring public value. Use this text box to briefly describe the nature of the control you will have over the project site and for what duration. If you operate by renewed 1year use agreements, this would be the place to describe the duration of the existing relationships, the number of times these agreements have been renewed, as an example of likely duration of control

- **If Acquisition** – How will interest in project land be acquired? (check all that apply)
- A short description to clarify any of your selections here would be helpful.

4) **If Acquisition**

Detail how your acquisition will proceed and incorporate into your response how you will follow prescribed "Yellow Book" appraisal standards. Also, include a statement acknowledging the parcel acquired will be identified by a 6(f)(3) boundary and must be maintained for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity.

5) **What permits are required for the project?**
- The applicant must demonstrate diligence in contacting all agencies who might be involved in permitting for this project. Typically, the first step in this process is to contact your local code enforcement officer or equivalent official for the project location. Include the reply from this official as part of your response to this question.
- If permits are required list them in the text box and include anticipated permit application date(s)

6) **Project Environmental / Historic Clearance**
- Request letters must be sent to and received from these agencies well before the application deadline.
  - It is recommended that these requests be submitted as soon as you have the project description and appropriate map files acquired, at least two months prior to application deadline.
  - You must include the respective responses.
  - The value of receiving these clearance letters well in advance of the application due date is that the information proved in the responses will inform your response to the following question #7 Environmental Impacts.
- All applicants must submit a copy of their project description and paper maps to:
  - **The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC)** - (paper preferred)
      Megan Hopkin
      Maine Historic Preservation Commission
      65 State House Station
      Augusta, ME 04333

      Provide by US mail:
      - A cover letter indicating that RTP funds might be used on the project,
      - A USGS top map (we prefer 7.5' scale and the layer that shows the black squares for buildings – MDOT's free map service includes this layer) that clearly indicates the boundaries of the project,
      - A scope of work
        - Include information that explains the extent of any proposed ground disturbance.
  Submit shape files (GIS data of project area) electronically to:
  - **Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP)** - (E-copies & shape files preferred)
      Lisa St. Hilaire
      Email to: maine.nap@maine.gov
  - **Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) Endangered Species Program**
      (E-copies & shape files preferred)
      John Perry
      Email to: IFWEnvironmentalreview@maine.gov

For both MNAP & MDIFW provide electronically by email:
- Overview statement in body of email (cover letter) requesting review for proposed RTP project
- Map of the project area identifying project location, include gis coordinates.
- Shape files indicating scale of the project.

7) **Environmental Impacts**

This section will help determine how the applicant has addressed compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other Federal environmental laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, and whether a more robust environmental assessment is required before any proposed work is to begin.

In order to best respond to this question, it is helpful if you have received your clearance letters from IFW & MNAP at least. You should use these as the basis for your narrative, in addition to any other supporting information you have. If you have additional sources to support this section and or if you have not received your clearance letters, please identify the individual(s) who assisted with this response and list their qualifications to do so. Without the responses from IFW & MNAP you should enlist the assistance of others knowledgeable in the assessment of the local environment and able to make a determination of how any grant funded work would impact the local environment.

Describe the effect your project will have on the project site in relation to natural and cultural resources.
- Potential negative impacts: Consider existing conditions, proximity to wetlands, rivers, streams, sensitive areas, habitats, flora/fauna populations, etc., and how you plan to minimize any impacts?
- Potential positive impacts: Extra consideration is given to projects that benefit the natural environment. Does the project mitigate existing negative environmental conditions?
- **Be sure to specifically address:**
    o Address Air Quality, Hazardous Wastes and Contaminated Properties, Historic and Archaeological Resources, Noxious Weeds, Threatened and Endangered Species, specifically.
    o Potential impacts to wetlands, rivers, streams or bodies of water. Are portions of the project within 250 of water or streams?

Part 3 – Project Information

This section focuses on the **project location**, not the sponsor agency location.

1) **Project Map(s)**

Include electronic copies of maps of the project for each type below:

a) **Vicinity Map:** Submit map identifying the location of the project within a region of the State (not to exceed 8 ½ X 14 page format). The area should be of sufficient scale to easily recognize the region of the state in which the project will be or is located – be sure to include several nearby cities / towns identified on the map.

b) **Site Location / Project Map:** Now zoom in on the specific site location within the municipality or territory, where the existing or proposed trail, or trail facility is or will be. This map must clearly depict the project location in relation to roads, trails, rivers/stream, and any other geographic features that will aid in identification of the project's precise location (not to exceed 8 ½ X 14). Balance the need to show the entire project with the need for the map to reflect legible and recognizable geographic features. (This map should clearly indicate the trail corridor being developed or rehabilitated and identify what work is proposed for each section of trail identified.)

c) **Linkages Map:** If linkages exist, submit a map showing direct links to other trail systems, greenways, conservation lands, etc. Linkages must be of compatible type use and require a direct trail connection to qualify. Adjacent trail systems that do not interconnect do not qualify as "linked"

d) **GIS/GPS Data**: Submitting tracks and/or waypoints is **highly encouraged**

- o Please make sure your GPS is set to WGS 1984 as the datum.
- o Latitude and Longitude Coordinates are preferred in Decimal Degrees.
  - For example: Latitude: 44.291519, Longitude: -69.797352
  - If you need to convert to decimal degrees, you can use the following website: http://www.rcn.montana.edu/resources/converter.aspx
- o Shape files are preferred, but GPX or KML files are acceptable as well.

2) **Project Category (per FHWA) check all that apply:**
For more specific information please visit
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/rtp9908_pt2.cfm#rtp16

Maintenance and Restoration of Existing Trails

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails may be interpreted broadly to include any kind of trail maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation. This category may include maintenance and restoration of trail bridges, or providing appropriate signage along a trail.

Development and Rehabilitation of Trailside and Trailhead Facilities

- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails, may be interpreted broadly to include development or rehabilitation of any trailside and trailhead facility. The definition of rehabilitation means extensive repair needed to bring a facility up to standards suitable for public use (not routine maintenance). Trailside and trailhead facilities should have a direct relationship with a recreational trail; a highway rest area or visitor center is not an appropriate use of RTP funds

Construction of New Recreational Trails

- Construction of new recreational trails, is self-explanatory for projects not located on Federal land. For projects on Federal land, the most important requirement is that the Federal agency land manager must approve of the project in accordance with other applicable Federal laws and regulations. This category may include construction of new trail bridges, or providing appropriate signage along a trail.

Acquisition of Easements and Fee Simple Title to Property

- Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property is self-explanatory. This category may include acquisition of old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges. However, §206(g)(1) prohibits condemnation of any kind of interest in property. Therefore, acquisition of any kind of interest in property must be from a willing landowner or seller.
- Note that acquisition projects must determine land value via "Yellow Book" standard appraisals and the land must be protected under 6(f)(3) laws protecting this parcel for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity.

3) **Grant Amount Requested**
- Maximum: $120,000 for large scale projects
  - o A *__maximum__* of one large scale project will be awarded per category (motorized, non-motorized, diverse). Unsuccessful applicants seeking LSP status will be considered for standard funding levels based on overall final score and rank. In other words if you shoot for $120K and miss, you might be offered $50K or less.
- Maximum: $50,000 for all other development or acquisition projects

4) **Project description narrative summary.**
Be informative and concise. Include current conditions and describe the work that this funding will support. In three sentences the reader should gain an understanding of what you want to do, why you want to do it, and how the funding will help to accomplish this work.
- Provide total project measurement in most appropriate unit of measure in provided area
- Be explicit about exactly what your project will achieve. What is the grant money buying?

5) **What is the scale of this project?**
If your trail corridor lies entirely within one city or town, then it is local in scale. If it is a trail that extends from Maine to Georgia, then it is has a National scale.

6) **Does this project link to parts of any other trail(s) making a larger interconnected system for compatible use?**
Be honest about linkages that either exist and will be maintained as part of your project or linkages that will be created as a result of your project. Linkages must be <u>direct connections</u>, not "in the vicinity". Linkages must connect trails serving the same user groups. If your project links with another trail system that has some of the same uses, but some that are not the same, say a hiking trail links to a multi-use trail, describe how this intersection will be managed to enable like uses, but prevent unauthorized uses. If your project does not actually touch another trail, there is no link.

7) **User Fees**
If yes is selected the following points should be considered and a fee schedule must be included with your completed application.
- The facility must be open to the public, not only to club members or municipal residents.
- The fee must be reasonable which would be determined in negotiation between the State and the project sponsor. The State Recreational Trail Advisory Committee would be a useful forum to discuss this issue. The fee should not be set so high as to restrict general public access.
- It may be appropriate for club members to receive a discount, since a portion of their membership may be counted toward use of the area, but the price differential should not be set so high as to restrict general public access.

8) **What uses is this trail designed and managed for?**
   a. **First select the *single* use your trail is designed and will be managed for. By selecting this primary use, you are determining the trail design standards appropriate for that single use.**
   b. **Second, select the *additional* uses the trail will be managed for. This information helps the committee determine the feasibility of your project, and whether your design standards will accommodate these additional allowed uses.**

By designating the primary use that your trail is intended to serve you are indicating the standard of trail construction you will be targeting. This information will help the committee determine whether your proposed project is viable. For specific trail construction guidance per use, please see **Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives**.
https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/trail-management/documents/trailfundamentals/1623-3801_TrailFdml+TMO_Sec508_11-14-16_150dpi.pdf

You are not going to get extra points for each additional use you allow, but reviewers may be stingy on points if you list multiple uses but the rest of your application reveals that the trail will be primarily of a single purpose based on management. You will get extra points for demonstrating a well thought out and justified project for the uses you do include.

9) **What features make this trail suitable for these uses?**
Describe how this trail will be designed and managed to accommodate each of the uses you selected. What features will make this suitable for all intended users including parking, access, design and location. How will multiple uses be managed on the trail? If winter use, will winter parking/access be maintained?
- American Trails has pulled together a fantastic array of trail related resources.

- o http://www.americantrails.org/resources/index.html
- o http://www.americantrails.org/resources/ManageMaintain/ActionArticGambill.html
- o http://www.americantrails.org/resources/ManageMaintain/MgmtEqJMiller.html

10) **Why is this project needed?**

Who are you building / rehabilitating the trail for and how does it benefit them? Does this project create or enhance experiences that otherwise do not exist in the area? Who decided that this trail is needed?

- Are there users already who have expressed a desire for this trail?
- Are there other trails in the vicinity that provide the same opportunity as this project, or does this create a new and unique experience?
- Does this project propose to serve a population that is underserved in the area?

11) **What process did you follow to identify this project as a priority?**

Is it part of a plan? Was there community input / demand? Provide evidence.

- Is this project part of any community plans? Is it mentioned specifically in the town's comprehensive plan?
- Have other plans been formulated that have called for this project? Who was involved in this planning process and how inclusive was it of the greater community?
- Was this project part of any external plans, not directly related to your agency or organization?

12) **How close is this project to potential users?**

The closer people are to a trail the more likely they are to use that trail. Given this, how many residences, businesses and/or schools are within a one mile radius of your trail head? How many people live, work or learn within one mile of your proposed project? Be specific, cite data sources. Provide perspective as to the proportion of this trailhead radius population to the community population as a whole. If a majority of the people in a town of 1,500 have good access to a trail, that is a good thing. What is your vision for the level of use this trail will get? – be optimistically realistic.

- Suggested resources to help you respond to this question:
  - o https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml
  - o http://www.maine.gov/megis/catalog/
- Background on relationship between proximity and increased likelihood of use
  - o http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/parks.htm
  - o http://activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_PowerofTrails_0.pdf

13) **What will compel people to visit/use your trail?**

If your trail is not within a 20 minute, walk, bike or drive to where people live, work or learn, what is it about your trail that will make them want to dedicate the extra time to get to your trail location? What makes your trail a destination?

- Will your trail provide for a unique experience not available in other destinations?
- Does it provide a similar experience to other destination hikes, but it is more accessible than others due to distance, trail head amenities, total time investment required, ability to add other activities to the user experience, etc..
- What will your agency do to promote this use?

14) **Who designed or will design your project?**

Design and engineering expenses incurred within 18 months of project award are eligible for match. Typically this means that any design and engineering expenses incurred within the calendar year in which you are completing the application will be eligible match. This enables applicants to generate specific designs for their projects and also detailed and realistic budgets, both of which improve the overall application and therefore increase the odds of grant award.

Designing safe, accessible, interesting and sustainable trails that people will want to use and return to is a science and an art. It involves more than merely cutting a corridor through the puckerbrush. Describe the qualifications and experience of the individual or team who will be responsible for designing your trail project, whether it is new construction or

rehabilitation. Just because someone has hiked a lot doesn't mean they have the skills necessary to design a trail that will stand the test of time. Please provide specific qualifications for whomever you have designated as your trail designer.

- Have they designed other trails? Where & what kinds?
- Have they received any training in trail design?
- If not specific trail work, what experience do they have that is applicable?

15) **How will the trail be accessible (ADA / ABA compliant) or follow universal / sustainable design principles?**
The default expectation for every Federally funded project is that some reasonable and useful element, if not the whole of the project, will be ADA/ABA compliant. What design elements do you propose to increase accessibility and ADA / ABA compliance? If your proposed project cannot include any ADA / ABA compliant elements describe the conditions that create this status.

- Resources
    - http://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessible/
    - https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/a-summary-of-accessibility-standards-for-federal-outdoor-developed-areas/trails
    - http://www.ada.gov/
    - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalk2/sidewalks212.cfm

16) **How is the trail designed to ensure longevity and sustainability?**
Everyone wants to build a trail, and volunteers will come out of the woods to help in this exciting stage, but when the ribbons have been cut and the trail has endured a couple of years of use, who will be there to maintain it?

- What design features will you incorporate to minimize future maintenance needs?
- Will the trail tread withstand your designed for uses?
- Will the trail discourage unintended uses?

17) **Who will manage the construction process?**
What is the relationship between your agency/organization and the project manager? What are the project manager's qualifications?

- How is this person suited to the task of managing this effort to a successful and timely completion?
- Can you provide examples of other related work?

18) **Which best management practices (BPMS) will be followed during the construction process?**

- Be specific about the challenges your project presents and what BMPs will be incorporated to deal with these challenges. List the practices you will employ.
- Resources
    - http://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessible/
    - http://www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/
    - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/manuals.cfm

19) **Who will build the trail?** (staff, volunteers, conservation corps, contractors, etc.)
Identify qualifications for the work and the reasons for selection. Federal Highway Administration includes the following guidance for RTP programs:
The FHWA Recreational Trails Program encourages to consider giving extra project evaluation credit to projects and project sponsors which incorporate qualified youth conservation or service corps. Consequently extra points will be awarded to applicants who intend to use a qualifying corps and provide a letter of commitment from that corps for their project.

- **Conservation Corps**
    - Maine Conservation Corps: The Maine Conservation Corps works with federal, state, municipal and non-profit organizations. The MCC Field Team constructs and rehabilitates recreational trails across Maine. For more information go to:
        - http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/get_involved/conservation_corps/index.shtml

- o There are a few other programs in Maine that may qualify for this preferred status, but trail construction, maintenance, rehabilitation are generally not their program strong suits. If you have another provider in mind, please contact the program administrator to discuss eligibility.
- **Professional Trail Builders**
  - o Specializing in all things trails PTB members offer options to consider for your project. For more information: http://trailbuilders.org/trail-contractors/contractor-search/northeast/
- **General Contractors**
  - o Some small general contractors and landscaping companies are well suited to trail construction and may be a viable option for your project. Be sure to check their previous trail construction work.
- Trail user interest groups
  - o Some special interest trail related organizations have capacity to assist with projects as well. You may consider:
    - ▪ http://www.nemba.org/trails/maine

20) **Describe how this trail will be managed and promoted after completion.**
Include information about who will provide oversight, perform maintenance, existence of dedicated maintenance funding, materials & equipment, and how use of the trail will be promoted. As mentioned above, building the trail is the fun part. Taking care of it for the long haul is the difficult part. Your response should touch on the following elements:
- Who is in charge of trail maintenance?
- What is your maintenance budget?
- What equipment do you have dedicated to this work?
- What other trails does your agency maintain?
- How will you promote the enjoyment of this trail?
  - o Will you list your trail on Maine Trail Finder (best for entire trail systems and or longer trails)- http://www.mainetrailfinder.com/
  - o Other?

21) **How will you define success?**
- Success of the development process
- Success of the use and enjoyment of the final product

22) **Project Budget & Match Worksheet**
- **NOTE 1 – No expenses or match items incurred prior to the receipt of a fully executed project agreement are eligible for reimbursement or match (except for design & engineering costs as noted above). Please assure that your budget includes only expenses or donations of materials, labor or services that will occur after this point in the project timeline. Project agreements should be in place by March 1 of each project year.**
- **NOTE 2 – Refer to "RTP Program Guidance" Document on purchasing policies and procedures as they will impact your budget development.**
  - o Costs under $5,000 may be negotiated directly with a qualified vendor
  - o Costs anticipated to be $5,000 - $10,000 must have three quotes from qualified vendors; the contract awarded to the vendor providing the lowest quote.
  - o Costs at or above $10,001 must go out to competitive bid. The contract must be awarded to the vendor with the lowest qualified bid price.
  - o Certainly, you may engage local contractors or other professionals in obtaining pricing guidance to help develop your budget, but you should be up front with anyone you deal with about the required quote and bid processes that will tie awards to the lowest cost qualified bidder.
- RTP grant limited to maximum of 80% of overall project out of pocket costs
- Total Applicant cash and in-kind (donated) costs must be at least 20% of total project cost
- Reimbursement for Design/Engineering is recommended not to exceed10% of the grant request.
  - o Advance of award value of D/E costs can exceed 10% of project value.

- Cost of donated materials, equipment, and/or labor must be verified.
- In-kind unskilled labor rate is tied to the Independent Sector rates for Maine. Please refer to https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2018/
- Budget Category Definitions
  - **Design/Engineering** = landscape architect, engineer
  - **Purchase of Services** = professional trades people typically to accomplish one element of the project. List type of special services required
  - **Construction Contracts** = contract with conservation corps, general contractor or other agency to perform major project work
  - **Equipment Rental** = types of equipment and associated cost, i.e., dump truck, backhoe, skid steer, stump grinder, etc.; not hand tools. Equipment in-kind rate must follow current FEMA rates as listed here: https://www.fema.gov/schedule-equipment-rates
  - **Supplies / Materials** = lumber, gravel, fill, hardware, etc.
  - **Labor** = typically labor is calculated as part of match as an "In-kind" expense
    - Volunteer labor rate cannot exceed current rate for Maine listed on the Independent Sector website.
    - Calculate staff labor rate at fully burdened rate for work directly associated with project
    - 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 prevailing wage (excluding common laborer) and/or equipment charges determined by the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT).
  - **Administration** = Fully burdened rate of project manager
  - **Acquisition** = cost of fee simple purchase
  - **Purchase of Property Rights** = cost of easement
- Match Funding Status Worksheet – complete this simple form to characterize the status of the match you have and or anticipate having in support of this project.

23) **Application Certification**
- We request that you forward a complete application in Word format to enable post award copying and pasting of key elements that need to be communicated to Federal Highway.
- Please also submit a signed and scanned copy of your application as your signed / certified final application.

Appendix

Application Checklist

Listed below is the documentation either specified as part of the application or suggested as support of elements within the application. It is helpful to organize your application by folders with groups of like files. Use this checklist to ensure you have submitted a complete application and include a copy of the checklist at the beginning of your application. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will not receive funding.

RTP Application
- Completed Application

RTP Application Part 2

Authorization
- Transmittal Letter
- Resolution/Vote of Legislative body
- NGO Documentation (if applicable)

Ownership-Control
- Copies of corridor/land leases, use permit(s)
- Letter(s) of intent to sell if acquisition

Permits-Environmental Impact
- Response from CEO regarding permits
- Copies of permits if already obtained
- IFW clearance letter
- MNAP clearance letter
- MHP clearance letter
- Previous Env., Assessments (if applicable)

RTP Application Part 3

Project Maps
- Vicinity Map
- Site Location Map
- Linkages Map
- GIS/GPS Data

User Fees
- Fee schedule (if applicable)

Project Planning
- Relevant & highlighted sections of Comp plan
- Documentation of other plans

Project Proximity-Destination
- Support docs - proximity (if applicable)
- Support docs – destination (if applicable)

Project Design/Management
- Evidence of designer qualifications
- Trail design (if available)
- Construction manager qualifications
- Evidence of dedicated maintenance

Letters of Support – Supplemental Information
- LOS from user groups / individuals
- Letters of commitment from partners
- Letter of intent from MCC (if applicable)

Transmittal

A Letter of Transmittal, or Cover Letter, on municipal or organization letterhead must accompany the RTP application. The letter must be signed and dated by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer and serves as additional assurance that the application is authorized.

The letter must contain the following statement as modified to reflect the applicant's identity:

> "The Project Applicant, (insert name of your organization here), has the capacity and intent to finance its share of costs for the proposed project, including long-term management and maintenance. No costs associated with this project will be incurred until the sponsor and the Bureau of Parks and Lands have signed a **project agreement**. The Project Applicant understands that this is a reimbursement grant. The project, if approved, will begin promptly and will be completed by the date indicated on the project agreement. If the project is approved, expenditure documentation submitted will reflect only those items listed in the project budget. The applicant understands that changes in project scope or budget must be approved by the State via a project agreement amendment."

Resolution

Sample Language: Resolution/Vote of Legislative Body of Membership:

The language below must be incorporated into your respective municipal or school unit resolution authorizing the official to apply for RTP funding on behalf of the agency. A copy of the actual document approved by the council or board and entered into the record of that body needs to be included with this application as documentation.

"The Board of (*sponsor's board)* voted on (*put in date of meeting)* in favor of applying for the Recreational Trail Development Grant from the Bureau of Parks and Lands for the construction of (trail name) trail project. The vote was (fill in vote of board) in favor of applying for the grant.

Signed: _____ (Name, Title)

*DOCUMENTATION: Submit trail use permits, to allow development/use the property the proposed project will be located on. Such agreements must indicate the length of time, types of trail use allowed, and any other conditions attached to the use of the property. **These must be in place at application deadline. If the sponsor owns the land, the trail use allowed and length of time just need to be part of the application under control and tenure. A use permit is sufficient, it is not necessary to include property deeds. Attached is a sample trail use permit:**

TRAIL USE PERMIT

This permit, is granted on this _____ day of _____, 20_ _

by _____ to _____

              Permittee(s)   Permittor(s)

The *(recorded owner)* grants this permit over and upon the following described premises situated in the County of _____, town of _____

in the State of Maine for the period of time from: _____to: _____
                                              Start Date   End Date

1. The following uses shall be allowed on the trail: (*list agreed upon uses here*)

2. This permit shall terminate upon sale of the land, or upon notification in writing to the Permittee(s) thirty days (30) prior to termination by the Permittor(s).

3. The said trail shall be open to the general public without charge for user purposes only.

4. The Permittor(s) or his/their authorized representatives shall at all times have the right to enter upon said trail for any purpose necessary to carry out his power and duties.

5. The permit is for a _____ foot width corridor over the lands to be used as depicted on the attached map.

6. It is understood that the Permittor(s) assumes NO LIABILITY for injuries and damages that may be suffered on said trail in accordance with Title 14, 159-A.

_____
Date   **Landowner Signature**

_____
Date   **Club/Town Representative Signature**

RTP Application Scoring

MTAC grant review action team members will score all submitted applications. Points listed are maximum allowable, and should be considered "up to" in all cases. Actual points awarded may be less than the maximum value per topic.

RTP Grant History (0-10 points)
Points based on when applicant received most recent RTP grant.

1-2 Years Ago	2
3-5 Years Ago	4
6+ Years Ago	7
New Applicant	10

Most Recent Grant Completed (-4-0 points)

Within 1 year	0
Within 2 years	-2
More than two years	-4

Demonstrates tenure and control of proposed project site(s):

Maximum tenure & control (public land/public access 50+ years)	15
Significant tenure & control (evidence of 10+ years T/C)	10
Minimum tenure & control (evidence of 5 year T/C)	5
Less than minimum T/C	0

Demonstrates environmental sensitivity and or benefits: *(examples – mitigates existing negative environmental conditions (not related to lack of adequate maintenance & management) / protects threatened – endangered species, draws on expert opinion in assessment, provides clear descriptions of measures to be taken to reduce and or eliminate any negative impacts)*

Mitigates existing conditions / increases protections	15
No negative impacts resulting from proposed work	10
Minimal negative impacts but addressed appropriately	5
Insufficient documentation/explanation	0

Demonstrates outstanding recreational benefits for the public: *(examples – making a trail accessible – ADA, increasing connectivity with existing trails and community resources, is close to user groups, provides services / experiences not otherwise available, responds to documented user demand, building toilets at trail heads, significantly enhances the user experience)*

Multiple benefits relating to recreation (three or more benefits)	15
Significant benefits (two benefits)	10
Partially benefits recreation (one benefit)	5
Insufficient documentation/explanation	0

Project links to other trails providing a larger interconnected system and increased opportunity:
(*examples – linking a new user group (school, business, neighborhood) to a multi-use trail, linking two or more well utilized trail systems, linking a local snowmobile trail to the ITS)*

Likely to lead to dramatic increase in corridor use (evidence to justify)	15
Likely to lead to dramatic increase in corridor use (circumstantial)	10
Links create new opportunities but use difficult to determine	5

Links do not add to probable use / increased opportunities   0

Project is well-planned to accommodate anticipated trail uses:
Features and management for all listed uses well explained and planned   15
Features and management for all listed uses partially explained   8
Features and management for all listed uses not explained   0

Project need is well explained:
(Examples: population to benefit from the trail identified; how the project provides a new or enhanced experience)
Benefits well-explained   15
Benefits partially explained   8
Benefits not explained   0

Demonstrates outstanding planning process:
(Examples – project planning occurred with community meetings, specifically identified in comprehensive plan, SCORP referenced)
Outstanding planning evident, strong community input, research cited   15
Adequate planning evident, some community input, anecdotal support   10
Minimal planning evident, partial documentation of planning process   5
Insufficient documentation of and or no planning process   0

Project reaches the population due to its proximity to a town/city *(examples – a trail connecting schools to the town center, urban trail along harbor, trail connecting or close to rural residential areas).*
Trail is within one-mile of residences, business and/or schools.   15
Trail is within five-miles of residences, business and/or schools.   10
Trail is within ten-miles of residences, business and/or schools.   5
Trail is beyond ten miles of neighborhoods, business and/or schools.   0

Project is or has potential to be a destination trail attracting the public *(examples – the Appalachian Trail, Kennebec River Rail Trail, Maine Island Trail, Orono Bog Walk, etc.)*
Trail has multiple outstanding, unique features.   15
Trail has outstanding unique features   10
Trail has, unique features.   5
Trail does not have unique/compelling features   0

Demonstrates outstanding design for sustainability:
(Examples –professional designed the project, MCC consulted, universal design incorporated, trail designed with state-of-the-art principles in mind)
Outstanding design with professional expertise and plans   15
Adequate design with professional expertise and plans   10
Partially adequate design and plans   5
Inadequate design   0

Demonstrates capacity for a successful construction project:
(Examples – organization designates a staff person as project manager, construction BMPs described, MCC builds the trail, city provides post project maintenance with identified budget-line)
Outstanding capacity for construction management and execution.   15
Adequate capacity for construction management and execution.   10
Partial capacity for construction management and execution.   5

Insufficient capacity for construction management.   0

**Bonus Points for category
- +15pts if providing letter of commitment from MCC
- +5pts if providing letter of commitment from another Youth Service Corps

Demonstrates capacity for successful management of the completed trail:
(Examples – ongoing decision-making, publicity plans, appropriate maintenance plans / budget, awareness of ongoing need for maintenance)

Outstanding capacity for ongoing management	15
Partial capacity for ongoing management	8
No evidence of plan for ongoing management	0

Applicant provides a clear vision of success for the project:

Reasonable vision for success presented	10
No vision of success presented	0

Project maximizes matching funds:

Cash in-hand is greater than 20% of total project (committed)	15
Cash is greater than 20% of total project (can be pending monies)	10
Cash and in-kind is greater than 20% of total project	5
Cash and in kinds is less than 20% of total project	0

Penalty Points (-5 per infraction):
Missing information, for example maps, permits, clearance letters, GPS data, etc.