

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)



This is a reimbursement grant program that provides up to-80 percent project funding. This grant program is federally funded and is administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) in cooperation with the FHWA. http://www.ohiodnr.com/portals/0/trails/pdf/RTP_Application0907.pdf

ELIGIBILITY

- New recreational trail construction (non-motorized, motorized, and water trails)
- Trail maintenance/restoration
- Trailside and trailhead facilities (for example parking, restrooms, potable water, etc.)
- Purchase/lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Acquisition of easements and property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors
- Educational programs, publications and patrols promoting trail safety and environmental protection (These projects cannot exceed 5 percent of Ohio's annual RTP apportionment.)
- Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.

APPLICATION PROCESS

February 1st – SUBMISSION – The project applicant submits the application to the ODNR. Receipt of the application is acknowledged. ODNR staff reviews the proposal to determine the applicant's and the project's eligibility. The application is also checked for completeness. If it is found to be incomplete or unacceptable, the applicant will be notified.

SITE VISITS AND REVIEW – March 1 through October 31 (approximately) –All eligible proposals are reviewed by ODNR staff. Unscheduled site visits are conducted to all proposed projects. Project sponsors are contacted if ODNR staff members have questions. Projects are then scored by the review team. When this process is complete, the Director of ODNR reviews and approves ODNR staff funding recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVAL – Project sponsors are notified in writing of the status of the application(s). Project sponsor may not begin the project until a project agreement is executed between ODNR and the project sponsor. If the proposal(s) is not selected, the applicant may re-apply for the next year's funding cycle (if available), by sending a letter of

(cont. on back)

Contact

Mary Fitch, ODNR
Division of Real Estate and Land Mgmt.
614-265-6477

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) (cont.)

request. Applicants may contact the Grants Manager to discuss their non-awarded project.

AGREEMENT – A contract is signed to assure that the applicant will complete the project within 30 months and be eligible to receive up to 80 percent reimbursement. The contract is between the state (ODNR) and the project sponsor. After the signing of the agreement, a copy will be sent to the project sponsor.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – The project sponsor may proceed with project construction after completing several additional required steps (see Information for Awarded Sponsors). Reimbursement requests may be made after funds have been expended.

PROJECT COMPLETION – The project should be completed within 30 months. Extensions may be granted under certain extenuating circumstances. A site inspection will be made after the project is complete; ODNR staff may also visit the project at any time during construction. A small RTP acknowledgement sign must be posted in a conspicuous location when the project is complete. This sign will be provided to project sponsor, free of charge, at time of project agreement.

FUNDING

Average annual funding is \$1.25 million thru 2009.

Use of Recreational Trails Program Funds to match other Federal Program Funds.--Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, funds made available under this section may be used toward the non-Federal matching share for other Federal program funds that are--

- A. expended in accordance with the requirements of the Federal program relating to activities funded and populations served; and
- B. expended on a project that is eligible for assistance under this section.

Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS)



The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program provides Federal Highway Administration funds to eligible applicants (state, local, and regional agencies, including nonprofit organizations) for projects that enable or encourage children, including those with disabilities, in grades K-8 to walk or ride their bikes to school.

ELIGIBILITY

Infrastructure Project: An engineering project incorporating the planning, design, and construction of features such as: traffic calming, sidewalk improvements and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on or off-street bicycle facilities, secure bicycle parking facilities, and traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools.

Non-infrastructure Project: A project designed to encourage, educate, enforce traffic laws or evaluate conditions. These projects may include: public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders, traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools, student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and funding for training, and management of safe routes to school programs.

Proposed project must meet the criteria for at least one of the 5 E's: engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement, and evaluation.

Applicant for infrastructure projects must be, or partner with, a local governmental entity capable of administering federal funds.

Proposed project must be located within two miles of a school that includes children in grades K-8.

Proposed project must address a perceived or actual safety benefit.

Proposed infrastructure projects must advance a safe walking or bicycle route within 2 miles of schools that include children in grades K-8.

Proposed work must be on existing public right-of-way, owned by the local government having jurisdiction over the transportation facility involved. For acquisition activities, there must be a letter(s) from the landowner(s) indicating a willingness to sell.

Local government having jurisdiction over the transportation facility involved must demonstrate a commitment to maintain the project after construction is complete.

Applicant must not have maintenance issues with previous projects funded by ODOT concerning liability, negligence or safety. The qualifying activities, the 5 E's, which are grouped into five main categories, are listed below:

- **Engineering** – Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure within 2 miles of schools which serve children in grades K-8, improvements that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways.

Contact

**Craig Eley, SRTS Coordinator, ODOT
District 7, (937) 497-6832**
**William Vorst, SRTS Coordinator, ODOT
District 8, (513) 933-6591**

Safe Routes to School Program (*cont.*)

- Education – Teaching children and care givers about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
- Enforcement – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are enforced in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.
- Encouragement – Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.
- Evaluation – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s). The SRTS clearinghouse recommends evaluation tools located on this webpage:

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/index.cfm>

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application (due April 27, 2007) must include a comprehensive SRTS plan which will address all 5 E's; engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement, and evaluation (unless the proposed project is to create a comprehensive SRTS plan).

Projects must first be determined eligible before an invitation is made to apply to the program. Eligibility is determined through a Letter of Interest (LOI). If the project does not meet the eligibility criteria or the LOI is incomplete, the project will be deemed ineligible, and the LOI null and void.

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/SafeRoutes/PDF/LOI%20SRTS%202006%20January.pdf>

Complete the Letter of Interest. Once completed, mail to the respective ODOT District. The LOI must be received by the ODOT district no later than January.

If your project meets all eligibility requirements, ODOT will request a completed application submitted to the appropriate District Office by April.

The ODOT district will contact the applicant to conduct a field review of the project.

Applications will be scored and reviewed for selection.

Once the projects are officially announced, letters will be sent out to both award recipients and to those applicants who are not provided funding with an explanation. Letters will be sent no later than fall 2007.

FUNDING

All projects will be 100% funded. There is no local match required.

Average Annual Allocation: \$6.3 million.

Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC)



The TRAC was established to make decisions for major statewide and regional transportation investments for major new capacity projects.

The Major New Capacity project selection process operates under the purview of the TRAC. The council was established by Ohio Revised Code in 1997 at ODOT's request. It is a permanent body of predominantly non-ODOT personnel which develops and modifies a project selection process and which approves major new projects for funding.

The TRAC has nine members and is chaired by the Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation. Six additional members are appointed by the Governor and one each by the speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and the president of the Ohio Senate. Members have overlapping terms. In accordance with the law, the director of Transportation each year provides the TRAC with a report on the money available for new construction for the following four-year period. The Director provides funds for new construction only after assuring that system preservation needs have been met. The use of the new construction funds is the responsibility of the TRAC, but the TRAC does not have authority over other aspects of the Department of Transportation.

ELIGIBILITY

The TRAC defines a major new capacity project as:
Definition: Major New Capacity projects cost ODOT more than \$5 million and which do one or more of the following: increase mobility, provide connectivity, increase the accessibility of a region for economic development, increase the capacity of a transportation facility, or reduce congestion. This definition includes all new interchanges proposed for economic development or local access, any significant interchange modifications, bypasses, general purpose land additions, inter-modal facilities, major transit facilities, passenger rail facilities, or Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

The TRAC may choose to participate in the funding of non-traditional projects that cannot be scored. Examples of non-traditional projects include ITS, shared ride facilities, modal hubs, freight rail infrastructure and other facilities that improve the operation of the state's transportation system.

APPLICATION PROCESS

ODOT Central - Project applications are submitted through the MPO in May of each year. Hearings are held August through October, and a draft list is released in December. The public comment period is January through April; in May, the final six-year program is published.

Applicants include political subdivisions, metropolitan planning organizations, transit boards and port authorities.

www.dot.state.oh.us/trac/pdf/traffiles/tracfundingapp2006.doc

(cont. on back)

Contact

Ryan Larzelere
Public Information Officer
617-644-7101

Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) (*cont.*)

FUNDING

Historically, The TRAC has had \$300 million a year to pay for projects including design, right of way, and construction.

Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF)



The Clean Ohio Trails Fund, is one component of the Clean Ohio Fund, which is administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) an integral part of the state’s vision to create a statewide network of interconnected recreational trails. Trail-related activities have increased in popularity in recent years, and the state’s ultimate goal is to have easy access to recreational trails within 10 minutes of all Ohioans.

ELIGIBILITY

- Construction/development of recreational trails;
- Purchase of land or interests in land for recreational trails;
- Construction /development of trailhead facilities such as parking, shelters associated with a trail, and water, sanitary and access facilities associated with trails;
- Planning, support or certain non-construction ancillary costs associated with a specific recreational trail project may be eligible for COTF assistance. These include, but are not limited to, appraisals, title work, surveys, design/engineering costs, environmental assessments, and archaeological surveys. Planning costs must reflect actual grant work that was performed. Planning costs are not eligible as a stand alone project. Costs related to preparing a grant application are not eligible.

APPLICATION PROCESS

SUBMISSION – The project applicant submits the application to the ODNR. Receipt of the application is acknowledged so the applicant knows processing has started. The ODNR staff reviews the proposal to determine the applicant’s and the project’s eligibility. The application is checked for completeness. If it is found to be incomplete or unacceptable, the applicant will be notified.

REVIEW AND STATE QUALIFICATIONS

– All eligible proposals are reviewed by the ODNR for qualification and priority ratings. The project sponsor will be notified in writing of the status of its application. If the proposal is not selected, the applicant may re-apply for the next year’s funding cycle, if available.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVAL –

Selected projects are prepared for funding. When the project is approved, a signed agreement is returned to the project sponsor.

AGREEMENT – A contract is signed to assure that the applicant will complete the project within 18-24 months and be eligible to receive up to 75 percent reimbursement.

The contract is between the state (ODNR) and the project sponsor. After the signing of the agreement, a copy will be sent to the project sponsor. The project sponsor may then proceed with the project. Because these projects are funded by General Obligation bonds, the project must be completed within 18-24 months.

<http://www.dnr.ohio.gov/realm/grants/cotf.pdf>

(cont. on back)

Contact

Mary Fitch, ODNR
Division of Real Estate & Land Management
(614)265-6477

Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) (cont.)

FUNDING

The ODNR will administer the \$25 million Clean Ohio Trail Fund (COTF) between 2004-2007 to acquire property for land acquisition and the construction of recreational trails. Approximately \$6.25 million will be available in each year / NO FUNDING THIS YEAR 2008.

Transportation Enhancements (TE) Rural Areas Outside MPO's



This Federal Highway Administration program provides funds for projects that enhance surface transportation by improving cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects.

ELIGIBILITY

- Have a direct relationship to surface transportation.
- Demonstrate a public benefit.
- Be accessible to the general public or targeted to a broad segment of the general public, and be available for public use throughout its reasonable life. Meet criteria for at least one of the three eligible categories (Historic & Archaeological; Scenic & Environmental; Bicycle & Pedestrian).
- If categorized as Historic, must be listed on or been determined by the State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- If not categorized as an acquisition project, must be on existing public right-of-way.
- Local cash match must be committed and identified.
- Applicant must demonstrate a commitment to maintain the project after construction is complete.
- Applicant must have no maintenance issues with past performance concerning liability, negligence or safety.
- Applicant must be a local government.

APPLICATION PROCESS

ODOT Central - The project solicitation process begins January 1st of each year with a Letter of Interest to determine a project's eligibility. Sponsors of eligible projects are then invited to complete an application. Applicants are notified of funding by that fall.

www.dot.state.oh.us/bike/transenhance00.pdf

FUNDING

Estimated Annual Allocation: \$11 million

Contact

ODOT District Planning & Program Admin
Randy Lane, Program Mgr, Local Projects,
(614) 644-8211