



FORESTS, PARKS & RECREATION
VERMONT



AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2024 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT WEBINAR

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WELCOME

Agenda

- About the RTP program
- Timeline and Process
- Eligibility
- Pre-Application Tips and Tricks
- Compliance Requirements
- Additional Resources



About the RTP Program

- Funded by the US Federal Highway Administration
- Have awarded almost \$8.5M in the last 15 years through competitive grants!
- Approximately \$500,000 to award in 2024
- Reimbursement grant with 20% match requirement



Evolution of RTP

RTP Working Group convened
May-August 2023:

- Set a vision for the program
- Recommended changes in both the application process and implementation



*Photo Credit: North Branch
Nature Center, 2022 RTP*

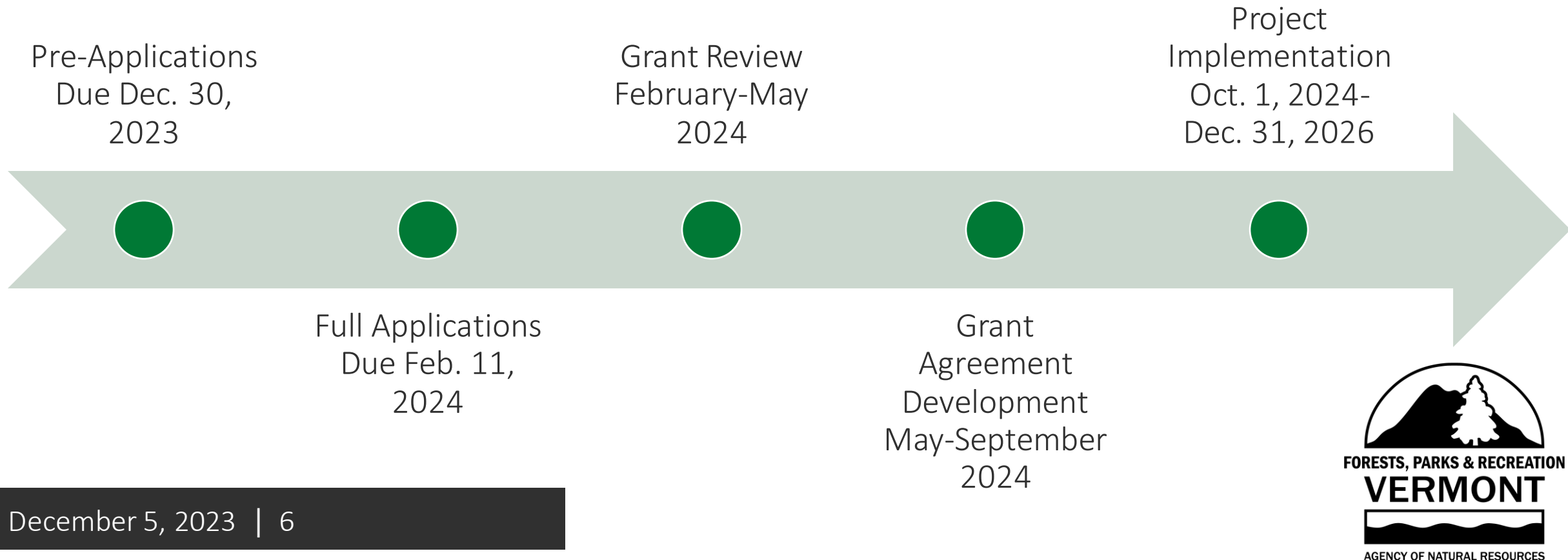


Vision for Vermont RTP

- The RTP competitive grant process is fair and equitable for all trail organizations in Vermont.
- Projects funded through RTP grants are of the highest quality, utilize the highest standards for design, construction, accessibility, and stewardship, and support the full variety of trail experiences desired in Vermont.
- FPR fulfills all obligations to the Federal Highway Administration for grants to communities and non-profit organizations while also supporting a straightforward and transparent process for applicants.
- VTGC fulfills its statutory obligation to advise the Agency of Natural Resources on all matters related to VSA 10, Chapter 20, including the allocation of State and federal funds appropriated for the purposes of public access recreational trails.



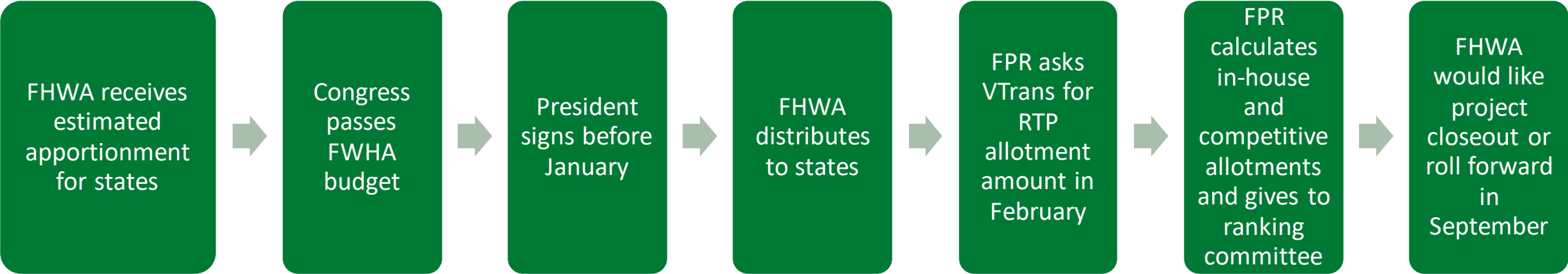
2024 RTP Timeline



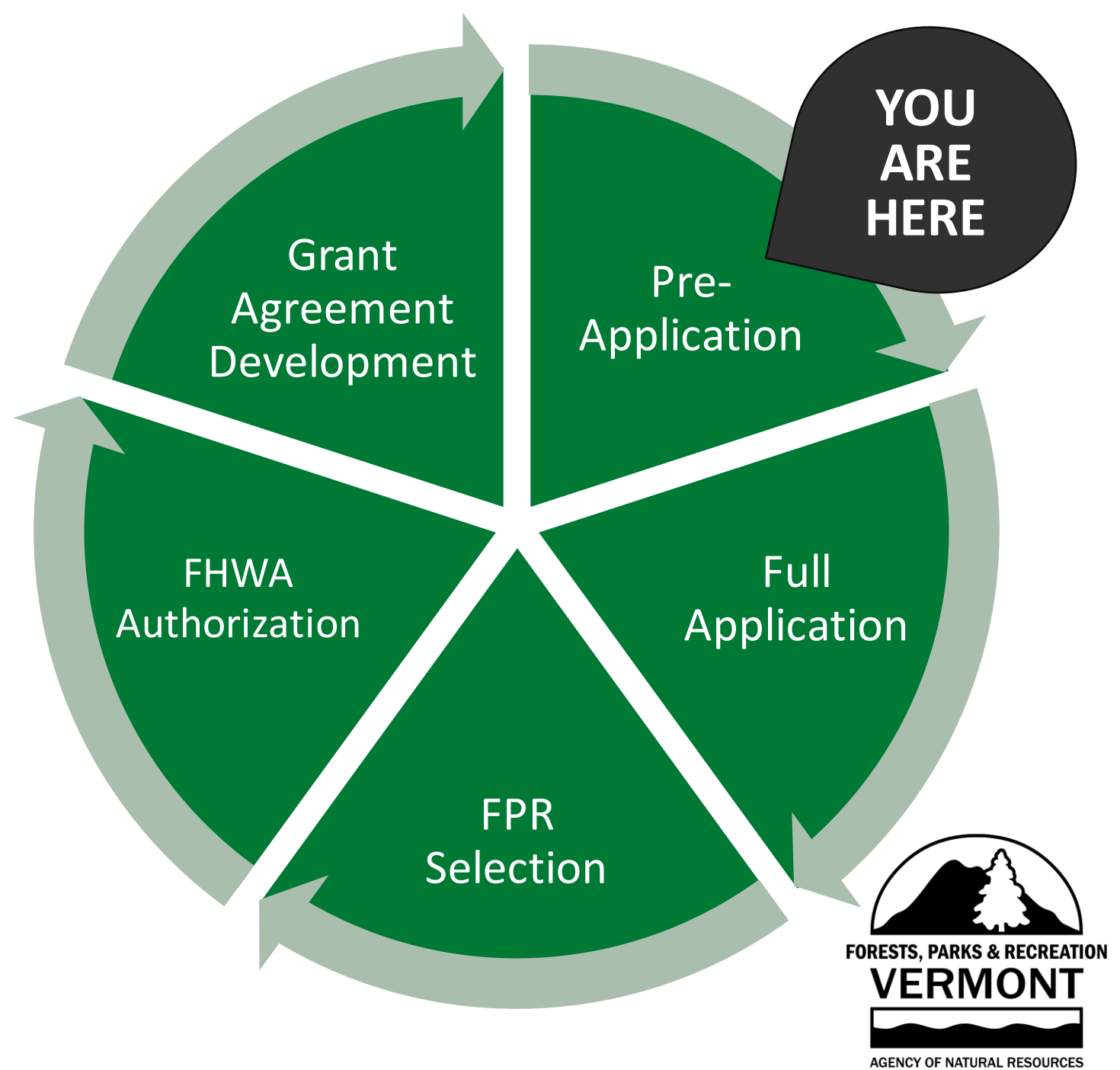
RTP Process



Meanwhile...



Application Process



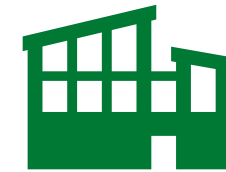
Applicant Eligibility



Municipalities



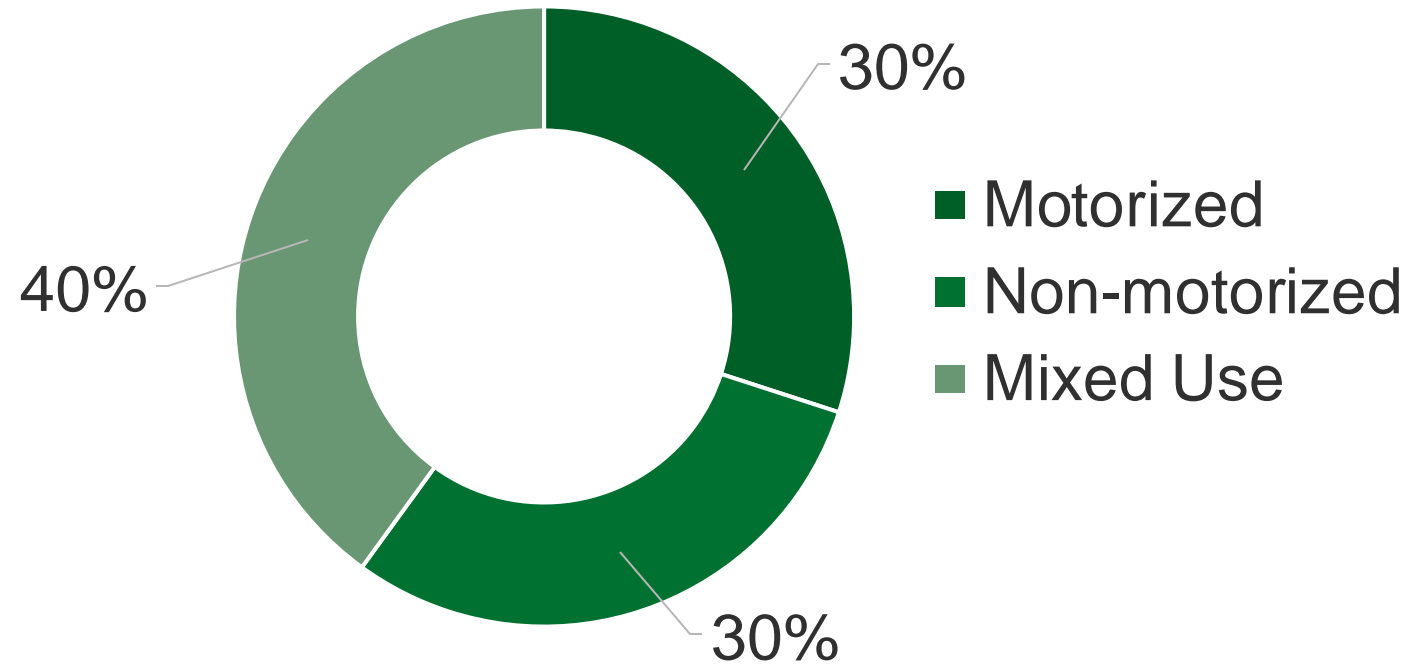
Non-Profits



Governmental
Entities

Use Eligibility

40-30-30 Allocation



The maximum allowed request is \$50,000 for non-motorized projects. There is no maximum request for motorized projects.





Photo Credit:
Town of Johnson, 2020 RTP



Photo Credit:
East Montpelier
Trails, 2021 RTP



Photo Credit:
VT Huts, 2021 RTP

Project Eligibility

- Maintenance/restoration of existing trails
- Construction of new trails, with certain limitations for projects on federal lands
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead amenities, facilities, parking areas
- Land Acquisitions: Acquisition of trail easements or fee simple title to property with trails or recreational trail corridors
- Educational projects





Photo Credit: Killington,
2022 VCGP



Photo Credit:
Newbury, 2022 RTP



Photo Credit:
Newbury, 2022 RTP

Trail Type Eligibility

- Mountain biking
- Running
- Paddling (with portage trails)
- Cross-country and back-country skiing
- Skating and skateboarding trails
- Nature-based interpretive use
- Multi-use trails
- Equestrian
- Snowmobiling
- ATV
- Other off-road recreational uses

What's NOT Eligible

- Condemnation of property
- Motorized use on non-motorized trails
- Trail construction in prohibited land or without landowner permission
- Sidewalks and road improvements
- Transportation-focused improvements (ex: bike lanes)
- Picnic tables, campgrounds, and play equipment
- Feasibility studies or stand-alone planning
- Promotion and advertising
- Law enforcement
- General land acquisition
- Fundraising

To Submit a Pre-Application

Before 11:59 pm on December 30, 2023

1. Complete the “Pre-Application: Part 1” online form.
2. Email the following three documents:
 - 2024 RTP Workplan
 - 2024 RTP Budget
 - Completed Permit Navigator results

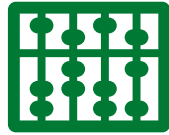
*Photo Credit: North Branch
Nature Center, 2022 RTP*

Pre-Application Review Criteria



Eligibility

Do the applicant and project meet the requirements?



Feasibility

Is the project realistic? Is there a high probability of success?



Readiness

Is the plan complete? Will permits and landowner permission be in place?



Compliance

Does it meet federal RTP requirements?

Tips and Tricks

Workplans and Performance Measures

- What are you doing? Who will do it? What will it accomplish? When will it happen?
- Separate activities that will require different people, materials/equipment, or timelines.
- Potential activities might include:
 - Surveying/design/engineering
 - Permitting
 - Bids/quotes/final budget
 - Construction phases
 - Site visits, events, etc.

Using the Workplan Template

- Make it clear and concise!
- Any major activity should have a deliverable, but if your plan includes smaller steps, it's ok to not have a deliverable for each line.
- If you have multiple trails or multiple major sections of trail, copy/paste the chart.

Example Deliverables

- Miles of new universally accessible trails
- Number of new universally accessible (UA) trailside facilities
- Miles of existing trails to be maintained
- Number of trail bridges to be constructed or restored
- Number of new culverts to be installed
- Number of new trailhead parking areas to be constructed
- Number of trailside facilities to be constructed or restored
- Number of people reached via education programs
- Number of passenger vehicle parking spaces at trailhead parking area
- Number of new trail signs
- Miles of snow trails to be groomed



Tips and Tricks

Budget

- Be thorough, detailed, and accurate. Your budget should be your best estimate of the costs for the project.
- Plan for inflation.
- Staff v. contractor considerations

Match

- 20% of total project cost required
- Can be a cash or in-kind match

Budget Expenses

Eligible

- Engineering and design, environmental permitting, archeological assessments (ARAs)
- Project administration
- Construction design, surveying, and engineering
- Labor
- Tools, materials/supplies, equipment rentals
- Publication research and design fees
- Acquisition costs

Ineligible

- Any costs related to ineligible activities
- Lodging and food
- Any expenses made prior to signing the grant agreement (except ARAs)
- Any expenses that don't meet procurement requirements
- Any expenses that go beyond the scope of work in the agreement

Tips and Tricks

Landowner Permission

- Needed for any projects where the applicant doesn't own 100% of the land in full
 - 1 year for projects solely to groom snow
 - 5 years for general maintenance activities, adding kiosks, signage, or other minor assets, minor trail drainage and treadway improvements, and for re-routes less than 50 feet
 - 10 years for new trail construction; construction of major trail infrastructure, large-scale trail reconstruction and treadway improvement, and for reroutes longer than 50 feet
 - 25 years for permanent facilities or structures (engineered bridges, pavilions, bathrooms, etc.)
- Documentation of landowner permission will be required for the full application, so get started now!



Tips and Tricks

Permitting

- You will need to submit a PDF of the Permit Navigator Results for your project.
- Detailed directions are available in the Pre-Application Guidance document.
- If you do not want an Act 250 Jurisdictional Opinion at this time, do not click that box.

Compliance Requirements



Fiscal

Certificate of Good Standing, Risk Assessment, Insurance, W-9, Procurement



Environmental

National Environmental Protection Act, State Permits, Northern Long-Eared Bat Impacts



Universal Accessibility

Required – unless you meet one of the exceptions



Historical Preservation

Section 106, ARA



Additional Support

Guidance Document

Available at <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreational-trails-program>

Office Hours

Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 3:00 PM

Email

ANR.FPRrecreationGrants@vermont.gov





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Questions and Answers

