

2025 Recreation Trails Program Grants

Project Development and Pre-Application Guidance

Introduction	2
RTP is a Reimbursement Program	2
Applicant Eligibility	3
2025 RTP Timeline	3
Grant Awards and Funding Approval.....	3
How to Apply	5
Application Support.....	6
Additional Technical Support.....	6
RTP Project Planning.....	8
Eligible Projects.....	8
Ineligible Projects	8
Project Readiness	9
New for 2025: Flood Recovery Track	11
Review and Selection.....	13
Pre-Application Criteria	13
Application Criteria	13
40-30-30 Allocation Rule	14
Final Selection.....	14
Pre-Application Content	15
Project Information Form	15
Project Workplan	17
Project Budget	19
Climate Resilience Risk Form	23
Permit Reports.....	24
Additional Permitting Information.....	24
Additional RTP Planning Information	27
Trails and Equity.....	27
Universally Accessible Trails and Accessible Design Standards	27
UEI Required	27
Example Materials	28
Workplan Example.....	28
Budget Example	29

Introduction

Welcome to the Pre-Application Guidance for the 2025 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grants. The RTP is a Federal-aid assistance program to help the States provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail use. The program provides funds for all kinds of recreational trail uses, such as pedestrian uses (hiking, running, wheelchair use), bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.

RTP grants are federally funded on an annual basis through the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and are administered at the State level in Vermont through the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR). FPR makes RTP funds available to Vermont communities for the development and maintenance of public recreational trails, for both motorized and non-motorized recreation. In the 2025 grant round, we anticipate awarding approximately \$500,000 to maintain and build trails across the state of Vermont.

RTP grants to local communities and non-profit organizations throughout Vermont are awarded for recreational trail projects for their contribution to livability and connection of people to place. Project proposals are solicited through a competitive application process.

All projects funded are to help achieve the program's goals to:

- Strengthen the quality, extent, and resilience of existing outdoor recreation resources.
- Create and support trails that welcome all who live and visit Vermont and allow them to heal, learn, grow, and live their lives fully.
- Promote stewardship of outdoor recreation resources and enhance both trail user experiences and environmental quality.
- Encourage all trail enthusiasts to work together to provide a wide variety of recreational trail opportunities that fulfill community needs.

These goals support [Vermont's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#). Federal legislation mandates that RTP funds are allocated across three categories: 30% for non-motorized trail uses, 30% for motorized trail uses, and 40% for multi-use/diversified trail uses.

New for 2025! There will be a [Flood Recovery Track](#) in addition to the Standard RTP Track.

This document is intended to provide guidance for the pre-application phase only. A full application guidance document with additional information will be released later.

RTP is a Reimbursement Program

This means that the applicant must be capable of financing the project and (after a grant agreement is fully executed) first pay for expenditures and then submit a request to the State for reimbursement using the required documentation. The program will reimburse up to 80% of eligible project costs. Recipients are responsible for providing a minimum of 20% of the total project cost (required match).

Applicant Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply for RTP grants:

- Municipalities (cities, towns, counties, etc.)
- Nonprofit organizations
- State or Federal government agencies, other governmental entities (district or local authorities), or tribal governments

2025 RTP Timeline

- Pre-application submissions: October 14 - December 6, 2024
- Full application submissions: mid-December – January 31, 2025
- Grant application review and selection: February - March 2025
 - This process requires multiple steps, including scoring and review by the Ranking Committee, FPR agency approval, and Federal Highway Administration authorization.
- Compliance checks and grant agreement development: April - July 2025
 - This process includes compliance reviews (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, state risk assessment, etc.), drafting, state contracting, legal reviews, and applicant review.
 - Depending on the complexity of the project, how responsive applicants are to requests for additional information, and the results of any compliance reviews, grant agreements may be executed later than this timeframe.
- Grant implementation: grant agreement execution date through December 31, 2026.
 - Applicants should plan for projects to begin no earlier than July 14, 2025.

Grant Awards and Funding Approval

The amount of funding available in the 2025 grant round is pending funding notification from the Federal Highway Administration. Grant amounts are dependent on each project's merits and needs, with a maximum grant award of \$50,000. FPR's Commissioner has lifted the cap for motorized projects to meet federal allocation requirements (see the 40-30-30 paragraph for an explanation). After projects are selected by a ranking committee, FPR must then get federal funding approval before FPR can fully execute grant agreements.

Once grant agreements are executed, awarded applicants become "project sponsors" or "grantees."

All project sponsors MUST wait for a fully executed grant agreement before beginning their project.

The only exception to this is for [Flood Recovery projects](#).

The grant agreement will include grant details of the funding amount, match requirements, scope of work, payment provisions, and other project requirements of the project. It will include both State and Federal provisions, which will be included in the full application guidance. Projects must demonstrate compliance with State and Federal regulations including but not limited to:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Endangered Species Act
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

- Executive Orders and Federal Legislation (which include but are not limited to Floodplain Management, Wetlands Protection, Build America/Buy America, Civil Rights Act)
- The State's Permitting Processes

Each project sponsor is responsible for completing environmental reviews prior to construction and maintenance in accordance with federal and state regulations. In addition, there are fiscal compliance requirements, including Act 154 Certificates of Good Standing, state risk assessment, W-9s, and Certificate of Insurance requirements. Additional information about compliance related to each of these will be described in the full application guidance.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) operates its programs, services, and activities without discriminating on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or breastfeeding (mother and child).

Free Language Services | SERVICES LINGUISTIQUES GRATUITS | भाषासम्बन्धी निःशुल्क सेवाहरू | SERVICIOS GRATUITOS DE IDIOMAS | 免費語言服務 | BESPLATNE JEZIČKE USLUGE | БЕСПЛАТНЫЕ УСЛУГИ ПЕРЕВОДА | DỊCH VỤ NGÔN NGỮ MIỄN PHÍ | 無料通訳サービス | ነጻ የቋንቋ አገልግሎቶች | HUDUMA ZA MSAADA WA LUGHA BILA MALIPO | BESPLATNE JEZIČKE USLUGE | အခမဲ့ ဘာသာစကား ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ | ADEEGYO LUUQADA AH OO BILAASH AH | خدمات لغة مجانية: anr.civilrights@vermont.gov or 802-636-7827

How to Apply

This year, there is a two-step application process that begins with a short pre-application submission. Pre-application submissions will be reviewed for compliance with the RTP program. Selected applicants will then be invited to submit a proposal for full review.

How to Submit a Pre-Application

To submit your pre-application, email the following documents to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@vermont.gov by **11:59 PM ET on December 6, 2024**.

1. [2025 Pre-Application Form](#)
2. [2025 RTP Workplan](#)
3. [2025 RTP Budget](#)
4. Completed [Climate Resilience Risk Form](#)
5. Completed [Permit Navigator](#) results or a [Project Review Sheet](#) (for any project that includes construction)

Incomplete proposals will not be considered after December 6, 2024, so be sure to complete all required documents before that time.

Review the appropriate “Application Content” sections in this document for more information about all pre-application materials.

Application Tip: Any work you perform filling out a form or drafting in the provided templates will not be accessible by grant staff until you submit the form and send your email. At the time of submission, it will be transmitted to grant staff and it will become part of the public record, accessible per the Vermont Public Records Act.

Submitting a Full Proposal

If you are invited to submit a full proposal, the grant application will be offered through the ANROnline portal. A separate guidance document will be provided with instructions and support to complete the full application.

Please check out the [RTP website](#) for more information about the grant program, including additional resources, templates, and opportunities to sign up for or view information sessions on the grant program. Questions regarding the application can be directed to ANR.FPRRecreationGrants@Vermont.gov with the subject line “RTP Grant Application Question.”

Application Support

We are offering multiple opportunities for applicants to ask questions about the 2025 RTP Grant Program.

RTP Grant Program Webinar: Project Planning

Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 1:00-2:00 PM

The webinar will include a presentation explaining the goals of the grant program, an overview of the process, and eligible activities to help inform project planning. There will be time at the end of the session for questions from attendees related to project planning and design. [Register for the webinar](#) and find the recording afterward on the [RTP webpage](#).

RTP Grant Program Webinar: Pre-Application Materials

Thursday, November 7, 2024, 3:00-4:00 PM

The webinar will provide technical and content guidance about how to complete the specific materials required for the pre-application phase, including the workplan, budget, climate resilience risk form, and permitting tools. There will be time at the end of the session for questions from attendees related to the templates and resources. [Register for the webinar](#) and find the recording afterward on the [RTP webpage](#).

Open Office Hours

Staff at FPR will host a virtual open office session for prospective applicants to learn more details about the grant program and ask questions. Open office hours will be recorded and posted on the [RTP webpage](#). To access the open office hours, visit the webpage and click the links below the Open Office Hour times.

- *Thursday, November 21, 2024, 2:00-3:00 PM* – [Register for this session](#).
 - The first half-hour of the session will be open for questions specific to the [Flood Recovery Track](#). The second half-hour of the session will be open for questions on any topic related to the grant program.
- *Tuesday, December 3, 11:00 AM-Noon* – [Register for this session](#).
 - This entire session is open for any questions related to the program.

Our goal is to give everyone an equal opportunity to connect with us. We are unable to meet 1:1 with every prospective applicant during the pre-application phase. If the webinars and open office hours don't work for you, please email your questions to us at ANR.FPRrecreationgrants@vermont.gov. We will only meet 1:1 with applicants if we are unable to fully address questions via email.

Additional Technical Support

Municipal Technical Assistance Program

Towns that need help with grant development, management, or administration, can get support from the State of Vermont's [Municipal Technical Assistance Program](#). The program is intended to assist communities that have a limited capacity for accessing and applying for state and federal grants. To be eligible for this program, towns must be pre-approved by the Vermont Agency of Administration. Here is the current list of [pre-approved of towns](#). If you have further questions about how this program can help, please email the Vermont Agency of Administration at.ADM.ARPAMuniAssist@vermont.gov.

Rural Economic Development Initiative

Applicants may be eligible for grant review/editing assistance during **full application stage** through the [Rural Economic Development Initiative](#) (REDI), a program of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). To qualify for assistance through REDI, the project must be located in or primarily serving a community with a population of less than 5,000 people. If you qualify and are interested in application review assistance from the REDI program, please complete the [REDI Inquiry Form](#) by December 31st.

Additional Resources

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns offers a list of strategies and resources for increasing municipal capacity for grants on their [website](#).

For trail projects that aren't quite "shovel-ready," we strongly recommend prospective applicants explore other opportunities first to finalize a design before applying to RTP in a future year.

Better Connections Program

The [Better Connections Program](#) provides technical assistance and funds to local communities to help them achieve their goals and plan for smart growth. The program funds municipal planning efforts to increase multi-modal transportation options and to improve land use, water quality, public health, and economic vitality in Vermont communities. This biennial competitive grant program funds broader community-level planning, which can include trail networks. This program is a partnership between the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans), the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD), and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Municipal Planning Grants

The [Municipal Planning Grant \(MPG\)](#) program encourages and supports planning and revitalization for local municipalities in Vermont. Awarded annually and administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development, the MPG program works to strengthen Vermont by funding local planning initiatives that support statewide planning goals. Along with other eligible activities, municipalities or regional planning commissions can apply to this program for recreational trail planning or design, including stakeholder outreach, mapping, and facility improvements and management plans.

RTP Project Planning

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects for RTP grants include:

- 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 (i.e., signage, kiosks, composting toilets, recycling receptacles, or trail structures along the trail, directly associated with the trail)
- Land Acquisitions: Acquisition of trail easements or fee simple title to property with trails or recreational trail corridors in conformance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, P.L. 91-646.
- Educational projects: States have the flexibility to use up to 5% of a State's annual apportionment for educational projects that provide trail-related information to the public (i.e., educational information about trail safety, appropriate trail use, managed and allowable use(s), accessibility, and environmental protection)

Recreational trails are defined in the RTP regulations as a thoroughfare or track across land or snow used for recreational purposes. Funds can be awarded for a wide range of activities and opportunities such as hiking, 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, all-terrain vehicular or other off-road recreational uses (such as dirt-biking). Multiple recreational trail uses are encouraged. Free-standing recreation resources, such as skateparks or pump tracks, are only eligible if they are connected to other trails or trail systems.

See the "[Project Budget](#)" section of this document for additional guidance about allowable expenses.

All eligible project types below must be performed in accordance with the recommended standards for outdoor recreation assets. See FPR's [Recommended Trail Standards](#). In addition, trails should be designed to Accessible Design Standards, unless they meet one or more of the exceptions (see "[Universally Accessible Trails and Accessible Design Standards](#)" at the end of this document for additional information).

Ineligible Projects

RTP is intended for recreational trail-based projects, where recreational use is the primary purpose, rather than serving a strictly transportation function. For purposes of this program, sidewalks, and publicly maintained roads are not considered trails.

RTP funds may not be used for any of the following:

- Trail work along any recreational trail/s on land where the proposed trail use is not permitted, and where written landowner permission cannot be provided
- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property
- Upgrading, expanding, otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to trails that, prior to May 1, 1991, were predominantly used by non-motorized trail users, and on which motorized use was either prohibited or had not occurred
- Feasibility studies, stand-alone planning, permitting and/or engineering and design plans

- General land acquisition
- Law enforcement
- Picnic or park facilities
- Play equipment
- Front-country campgrounds (*backcountry campsites along trails are eligible as trailside amenities!*)
- Free-standing recreation resources, like skateparks or pump tracks, that do not connect to trails
- Sidewalks or road improvements
- Expenses related to promotion of the applicant’s organization, promotional materials, publication reprints, marketing, or advertising
- Fundraising
- Lodging and food
- Payments which are not in compliance with relevant state or federal laws or regulations

Project Readiness

RTP funds “shovel-ready” projects. When developing a plan for RTP projects, here are some general tips:

- You must have a clear plan in place prior to applying.
 - For example, for a project that repairs an eroded section of a hiking trail, you should know exactly what is needed to do to fix the problem before you submit an application. If you have multiple sections of eroded trail, you should have a clear understanding of exactly what work needs to happen in each specific section. For a project that involves building a new trail, you should have a map that depicts the exact location of the trail and any associated infrastructure that will need to be installed (like boardwalks or kiosks).
 - If your project is still in a conceptual phase (For example: “We’d like to have a trail that connects the community center to the town forest, but we’re not exactly sure where it will go,” or “We know we have a trail erosion issue but we’re not sure how to address it”), we strongly encourage you to consider other funding opportunities first to develop designs. RTP cannot fund this type of high-level planning. *See Additional Resources for [Application Support](#) in this document for potential programs that can.*
- For larger projects, consider what is potentially accomplishable within the timeframe and funding allowed in this grant and segment your project into phases.
 - Just be sure each phase can be accomplished as a standalone project! Whatever components you submit to RTP should be able to be completed and successfully opened to the public without being contingent on other work.
 - RTP does NOT guarantee phased funding, so be aware all submissions for future phases will undergo competitive review for any FPR grants.
- As soon as you have a plan in place for your project, find out if what you are proposing will need any State and local permits. Start this process by completing the [permit reports](#) outlined in this document.
 - Permit processes can take 3 - 6 months, or longer, depending on the nature of the work being proposed or if site visits are necessary – so plan ahead!
- Projects selected for funding generally require local public support.
 - Start garnering local support early in the planning process. Host a public meeting and invite community members to learn and be involved in the plans for this project. Offer ways community members can support this project. Consider partnering with local schools, businesses, local agencies, and other organizations to build capacity. Be sure the project meets local needs in the community where the trail project will occur. Create ways to offer fun future use of the trail, and future stewardship of the trail.

- Work with organizations, professional trail builders, and other organizations who can share or implement best practices in trail construction, trail maintenance, and future stewardship. We know from recent flooding that trails built to the current best standards generally need less maintenance and repair – so leaning on that expertise upfront saves you later!
 - If you don't have that expertise on your team, plan to [contract](#) it out.
- Projects funded are to be primarily recreation-oriented and must support strategies identified in the Action Plan of [Vermont's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#).
- The RTP Implementation Period spans two field seasons. We STRONGLY suggest you plan for the first field season to be used for permitting, final planning, and bid processes and plan for all construction to wait until the second field season.
 - Year 1: 2025 field season = permitting, final planning, bid processes
 - Year 2: 2026 field season = completing construction

Sub-Contracting Information

AFTER GRANT AGREEMENTS ARE SIGNED, grantees who do not already have technical trail expertise on their staff are encouraged to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with professional trail builders and qualified youth conservation or service corps to develop and provide training and to work in trail patrols.

When contracting with any vendor, be sure to solicit written price quotes for all supplies, materials, crews/workforce/laborers. Maintain records from the solicitation of at least three quotes. All reimbursement and match project activities must take place:

- in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement,
- after federal and state funding approval, and
- after a grant agreement is fully executed by both the grantee and FPR.

Review FPR's [Procurement Guidance for Grantees](#) to find more information related to contracting as it relates to grants.

New for 2025: Flood Recovery Track

Each year, \$74,000 from the Vermont Recreational Trails Fund is awarded through the RTP Community Grant Round. Historically, this state funding has been awarded to non-motorized projects that meet all the same requirements as projects submitted for federal RTP funding. We know that many trails were damaged in the flooding events of July 2024. In response, this year we are allocating this funding to support a new Flood Recovery track to help communities rebuild their trails.

FPR recognizes this limited the amount of funds would in no way address the millions of dollars in damage that have occurred in the past two years, however one of the goals for this track is to spread this opportunity to as many communities as possible.

The Outdoor Recreation Grants team anticipates funding 4-5 projects at an average award amount of \$15,000— with some proposals being higher or lower. The minimum allowed request is \$7,500. Partial funding may be considered. As with all RTP projects, the program will reimburse up to 80% of eligible project costs. Recipients are responsible for providing a minimum of 20% of the total project cost (required match).

Flood Recovery projects must meet all the same criteria for RTP project eligibility as outlined above – but the work must be completed between July 10, 2024 and January 31, 2025. Pre-award costs dating back to July 10, 2024 will be eligible. Infrastructure should be repaired or replaced in a manner that is more resilient to natural disaster.

For flood-related projects that will begin after January 31, 2025: Any future trail-related flood recovery trail work will be considered eligible and selected through the Standard RTP Track. This means no project work can begin until after grantees receive a fully executed grant agreement and all the same provisions for standard RTP projects. Be sure to follow the guidance in this document related to your project planning.

In addition, applicants must have secured all required permits and 5-year landowner permission for their work and will be required to submit these during the application. Applicants who did not need permits will need to submit documentation showing how they determined that no permits were required.

Any unallocated Vermont Recreational Trails Funds after proposals have been selected will be awarded through the Standard RTP Track, as in years past.

Selecting a Track

Applicants can submit separate proposals for different work under the Standard RTP Track and the Flood Recovery Track. These separate proposals could be for work at the same location at different times or different locations altogether. Do not submit one proposal that includes work eligible for both tracks. Selection through one track will not influence consideration under the other track.

Applicants will be required to choose a track in the application process, either the Standard RTP Track or the Flood Recovery Track. In some cases, this will be easy to distinguish, while others may be more nuanced. Review the following criteria to determine which track is most appropriate for your project.

Flood Recovery Track	Standard RTP Track
Projects completed July 10, 2024- January 31, 2025	Projects planned after January 31, 2025. Work can begin no earlier than July 14, 2025.
All proposals in this track must be construction projects directly related to addressing trail-related damage from the 2024 flooding.	Proposals in this track can focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repairing trail-related damage caused by flooding from any year • addressing trail-related maintenance issues of any cause • building new trails and trail-related infrastructure • land acquisitions for trails • trail-related educational projects
Pre-award expenses dating back to July 10, 2024 will be eligible for reimbursement.	No pre-award expenses will be eligible for reimbursement. See the Budget section for pre-award matching requirements.

Review and Selection

Pre-Application Criteria

Pre-Applications will be reviewed by the FPR Outdoor Recreation Grants Staff team, who will be checking for:

- Project eligibility
 - Does the applying entity, project intent, scope of work, timeline, and budget meet the requirements outlined in this document?
- Project feasibility
 - Are the timeline, budget expectations, and permitting needs realistic, clear, appropriate to the scope of work, and suggest a high opportunity for successful completion with the permitted time and grant award amounts?
 - Is the project permissible? Does the outdoor recreation benefit outweigh any potential environmental impacts?
- Project readiness
 - Is the work plan complete, and does it include all relevant steps needed to accomplish the project?
 - Does the work plan include a sufficient level of detail to indicate an in-depth planning process?
 - Does the applicant have the majority of match funding already committed?
 - Does the applicant have the landowner permissions required for the project? If not, how many permissions need to be secured and does the applicant have a clear and realistic plan for securing those before the application deadline?
 - Is the applicant aware of all relevant permits?
 - Does the project design appropriately address site-specific climate risks?
- Compliance with any applicable federal RTP requirements
 - Based on the information submitted, does this project appear to comply with federal RTP requirements?

Applicants whose pre-applications demonstrate all the above characteristics will be invited to submit a full proposal. If you are invited to submit a full proposal, FPR staff will share feedback and any questions that come up about your proposal. We strongly recommend you plan to adjust your project and/or materials in your full application to address any questions or comments from the pre-application review.

Application Criteria

Full applications will be reviewed by a committee of experts from across the outdoor recreation economy and diverse and equity communities and will use the following criteria as a guide for making recommendations for project selection:

- Project Identification/Plans in Place & Project Readiness – 10 points
- Resilience: Minimizing Environmental Impact, well-designed –30 points
- Sustainability: Stewardship and maintenance plan and design – 30 points
- Public Recreation Benefits: Equitable Trail Access and Connectivity – 30 points
- Local (Municipal) Support, Community Partnerships and Citizen Involvement – 20 points

The review committee will consider both the quantitative scores as described above, as well as qualitative assessments about the following grant priorities during the selection process:

- Organizations that did not receive a 2024 RTP grant will be given preference over the most recent round of grantees, except in special circumstances. (+10 points for applicants that did not receive a 2024 RTP grant)
 - Coalition members working on a shared project will all be counted as previous recipients and thus will not be eligible for these preference points.
 - Organizations that function as fiscal sponsors for separate chapters working on separate projects will be eligible for these preference points.
 - This criteria will only be applied for Standard RTP Track projects. For Flood Recovery Track proposals, there will be no preference applied based on grant award history.
- Projects that include remedying deferred maintenance/rehabilitation will be given preference over new trail creation or improvements. (+10 points for projects that are 100% maintenance/rehabilitation projects, +5 points for projects that are at least 50% maintenance/rehabilitation)
- RTP projects will be intentionally selected to support both geographic diversity across the state and a diversity of trail uses.

40-30-30 Allocation Rule

Federal legislation (23 USC Section 206) requires funding be allocated by the State to projects as follows:

- 40 percent of this program's funds must be used for recreational trail or related projects that facilitate diverse recreational trail use in recreational trail corridors, trail sides, or trailheads. Diverse means more than one trail activity, such as more than one nonmotorized trail activity, or more than one motorized trail activity, or a combination of compatible nonmotorized and motorized trail activities.
- 30 percent of this program's funds must be used for motorized recreation, either multiple or single use.
- 30 percent of this program's funds must be used for nonmotorized recreation, either multiple or single use. FPR applies the 40-30-30 formula to the money it receives from the federal government. It then applies the formula to the amount of money awarded in the General and Education Categories. These percentage requirements may not be waived, and the money must be carried over to the next grant cycle if there are insufficient applications to meet the 40-30-30 minimums.

Note: It is possible to exceed the minimum percentage requirements. For example, a diverse motorized project, such as snowmobile and motorcycle trails, may satisfy the 40 percent diverse use requirement and the 30 percent motorized use requirement simultaneously. The same applies for nonmotorized use.

By federal rule, no more than 5 percent of the State's annual apportionment of RTP funds may be allocated to education projects.

Final Selection

Projects recommended for funding will be ranked based on the above scoring, priority ranking, and allocation rules. FPR will seek funding authorization from FHWA for the recommended grant projects. FHWA authorization may take anywhere from 45 days to 6 months. Once FHWA approves the funding, FPR's business office must then process the final grant agreement between FPR and each grantee.

Pre-Application Content

Project Information Form

In this form, you will share all required information about the applicant and the project. It will include municipality or non-profit organization contact information, contact information for the application, and pertinent information about the project.

Applying Entity Information

Provide information for the municipal, nonprofit, or other governmental entity applying for this grant. This should be the organization that will sign the grant agreement and who will be responsible for submitting reports and reimbursement requests. If you are submitting a grant with a fiscal sponsor, you should enter your fiscal sponsor organization's information.

For the address, please include the information for your main office; you will have space later in this form to share project locations.

Application Contact information

Provide the contact information for the person we should contact with any questions about your pre-application; this is also the person we will contact when we have decided whether or not you will be invited to submit a full proposal. This may be the person submitting the form, or someone else at your organization.

Project Title

Please choose a project title that concisely describes the project.

Example Project Title: "ABC Trail: Reroute and Maintenance" or "XYZ Trail Spur Construction."

Project Location

Project locations should be as specific as possible and identify city/town(s) where the project takes place. If you are proposing a regional or statewide project, please describe.

Project Overview

Provide a summary of your project, up to 150 words. Be sure to clearly summarize what you plan to do, where you plan to do it, and a high-level overview of why this project is important.

Example Project Overview: "The Town of Anywhere plans to build a new 6-foot-wide engineered metal bridge over the Smith Creek on the Fun Times Trail in the Anywhere Municipal Forest. This new bridge will replace a 2-foot-wide wooden bridge that is rotting with a larger one that is more resilient to high-water events and safer for trail users."

Select the appropriate check boxes for your project type and trail use type. Select all that apply.

Landowner Permission

To protect investments of public funds and to ensure public access to those investments, sponsors of all RTP-funded projects must have adequate landowner permission to perform the work to be done, and for future public use, for the term required by the grant program and grant agreement. Getting permission as soon as possible in your project planning process is critical.

Written landowner permission for public trail access and to permit the trail work in this application is required for all projects. Permission is to be given to assure continued public access after a project is completed, for the minimum timeframes shown below. A permission form is not required if the entity that is proposing the project and applying for this grant also owns the property in full. Landowner permissions must be secured for:

- 1 year for projects solely to groom snow
- 5 years for general maintenance activities such as removing fallen trees from the trail corridor, cleaning out and improving drainages, clipping vegetation to create a passable corridor, and adding kiosks, signage, or other minor assets; for minor trail drainage and treadway improvements such as adding water bars, small (3-5 stone) stone staircases or short sections of step stones or puncheon; reroutes less than 50 feet; and for all previously completed flood recovery projects.
- 10 years for new trail construction; construction of major trail infrastructure like parking lots or boardwalks; large-scale trail reconstruction and treadway improvement such as significant stone or lumber staircases and long stretches of turnpike or step stones; and for reroutes longer than 50 feet
- 25 years for permanent facilities or structures (engineered bridges, pavilions, bathrooms, etc.)

If you select a response indicating that you need permission forms, you will be directed to an additional question(s) that asks you whether you have permission, need to secure signed permission, or do not need permission based on land type (federal, state, local, private, easement, class IV road) and to identify your plans to secure those permission forms before the application deadline (if you do not already have signed forms).

Application Tip: For the full application, you will need to upload signed landowner permission forms (templates are available on the [RTP website](#)) - so if you don't already have those, start securing them now! Failure to provide written landowner permission where needed will result in an incomplete application that is not eligible for consideration in this grant round.

Project Workplan

The applicant should fill out the “RTP Workplan Template” with the tasks, activities, and performance measures for the project. A work plan outlines all the components of your project and should provide enough of a description to understand what work will be done where and how it will get done. DO NOT GENERALIZE. Your work plan will be used to develop the grant agreement if your project is awarded a grant.

New for 2025: The workplan template has two sections!

Use the top section to outline all the work that is part of your proposed RTP Project; this includes both work funded by RTP and eligible activities funded match.

From past experience, we know some grantees are doing complementary work outside of their RTP project that they want the ranking committee to be aware of – but it’s not actually a part of their RTP request. For example, applicants might want to share information about a community-informed planning process that just wrapped up or future plans for additional phases of work to demonstrate how their RTP project is part of a bigger effort. To make it easy for reviewers to understand exactly what you’re planning to do with your RTP project, please separate these types of activities in the second chart.

Application Tip: You should write your workplan so that someone who doesn’t have specialized trail-building expertise or who isn’t familiar with your site can understand what you’re planning to do. Be sure to spell out custom acronyms the first time they are used.

Your workplan must include:

- The name of the trail and the location where work will be performed
- Activity: What you plan to accomplish and where along the trail that work will happen

Potential activities may include but are not limited to surveying, design, engineering, permitting, public outreach, bids/quotes/final budgeting, various construction phases or components, site visits, events, etc.

- If your project has multiple locations or multiple distinct construction components at the same location (for example, if you’re resurfacing a parking lot, installing portable toilets, and replacing a kiosk all at the same trailhead), please be sure to list those each as separate activities.
- Separate work components that will require different people, materials/equipment, or timelines as different activities (ex: separate tree trimming with an arborist, from stair construction with a staff leading a volunteer crew, from bridge construction with a contractor).
- A brief description of each activity (can be **bulleted**). Descriptions should be clear and concise for someone outside your organization/who does not have your same level of expertise to understand and describe:
 - What tasks are included?
 - Be specific about the key parts of each major activity.
 - **List ALL the steps in timeline order!**
 - In general terms, who do you plan on doing the work?
 - **Do NOT name specific contractors/vendors!!** Instead, you should refer to the

contractor/vendor in more general language that describes their role.

Example budget role descriptions: contracted trail builder, environmental consultant, construction company, gravel company, youth trail crew, volunteers, staff, etc.

- What general types of equipment or tools will be used?

Example tool/equipment budget descriptions: hand tools, power tools, chainsaws, heavy machinery, etc.

- What materials will be used?
- A list of the anticipated results for each activity. Be as specific and realistic as possible with these because they will be used as performance measures if your project is selected.
 - Use specific numbers as much as possible. Describe dimensions (length/width). If you aren't sure of the exact numbers, describe "at least" or "a minimum of" estimates.

Example anticipated results:

- X Number of miles or feet of new trails constructed
- X Number of miles or feet of existing trails to be maintained
- X Number of waterbars installed
- X Number of new culverts at least Y inches in diameter to be installed
- X Number of new trailhead parking spaces added
- X Number of trash cans/benches/portable restrooms installed
- X Number of new trail signs to be installed
- X Number of miles of snow trails to be groomed
- X Number of people reached via education programs
- X Number of maps printed
- X-foot-long bridges or boardwalks to be constructed or restored
- 100% of required permits secured
- Final trail design completed

Application Tip: we do NOT expect all proposals to include all these metrics, nor is this an exhaustive list– rather use this as a starting point to think about the results that are most relevant to your specific project.

- Anticipated start and end dates (month and year) for each activity. Please put together an estimated planned timeline to share main parts of how/when you will implement this project and complete it by 12/31/2026.

See "[Example Materials](#)" at the end of this document for a completed example workplan.

Submitted files need to be clearly titled using the following format:

- 2025 RTP Workplan – [Name of Applicant Organization]

Example Workplan File Name: 2025 RTP Workplan – ABC Town

Project Budget

Grant applicants will need to itemize project costs shown on the provided budget form template. The template is already configured to automatically calculate subtotals and percentages – so please only enter text in the outlined cells with a white background in the appropriate categories that are relevant to your project.

RTP is a reimbursement program, so you need to secure funds in advance to pay for all project expenses when they occur. You will be able to seek reimbursement on a quarterly basis at maximum, and reimbursement can take 4-8 weeks to complete, so plan accordingly.

Budget Development

Allowable project activities include engineering and design, environmental permitting, archeology site assessment, project oversight/project administration, construction costs, labor, tools, materials, equipment rentals, equipment operators, education, publication research and design fees.

Here's an overview of permissible uses of funds for eligible project categories listed above:

- Reconstruction, restoration, and maintenance work on existing trails
- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails may be interpreted broadly to include any kind of trail maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation, including maintenance or restoration of trail bridges, or providing appropriate signage along a trail
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities. 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 recreation trail.
- Grooming snow
- Features that facilitate the access to and use of trails by persons with disabilities
- Bank stabilization, revegetation, and erosion control
- Restoration of areas damaged by use of trails
- Contractors or other costs/salaries for “on-the-ground” project field work;
- Cost of youth conservation crews when contracted to do the work
- New trail construction
- Consultant services for trail-related work such as trail design & construction engineering costs, including allowable costs for environmental evaluation and documentation, permits or approvals
- Trail bridges, railings, ramps, fences, and retaining structures if/when necessary
- Purchase of hand tools, hand-held power tools and rental of equipment for trail construction and maintenance to the extent it is used primarily to construct and maintain the recreation trail/s. It does not provide for the purchase or rental of equipment to be used for purposes unrelated to the trail/s project itself.

Planning & permitting costs of a project: The cost of professional plans, environmental permits, engineering design plans, and archeological resource assessments involved in projects are eligible within the allowable terms of the grant.

Costs for ARAs and Permits: For projects involving new trail construction or any new permanent trail facilities (ex: new parking lot or bathroom), please budget \$3,500 for an archeology resource assessment (ARA) as it is likely that an ARA is needed for these types of projects to meet federal requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Other state permits may have fees associated with them, if known at this time, include them.

Other general budget guidance:

- Be sure the budget includes all eligible project costs you anticipate. If it's not included in the budget, RTP can't pay for it!
- Be thorough, detailed, and accurate. Your budget should be your best estimate of the costs for the project **to the nearest whole dollar**. If you provide detailed, concise, and clear information, the ranking committee will be better able to understand and assess your project.
 - It is best practice to get a few price quotes from qualified businesses to support your estimates.
 - If referencing a formal estimate provided by a vendor, be ready to submit a copy of the estimate in the full application. **Do not enter into a contract arrangement with a vendor prior to receiving a fully executed grant agreement**, as it may disqualify you from receiving a grant.
 - Budgets should take into account the likelihood of reasonable increases in project services and materials between now and project implementation starting July 14, 2025.
 - RTP will NOT fund distinct "contingency" lines – so plan for inflation within the individual budget lines.
- **Provide a brief description of each line item, explaining how you arrived at the estimates.**
 - Do not list budget line items by named contractors. Instead, use more general language (ex: contracted trail builder, environmental consultant, construction company, gravel company) to describe your budget lines.
 - You are permitted to reference estimates provided by contractors in the description.

Example budget descriptions: "Based on quote from ABC Company" or "Estimated based on ## tons at \$## per ton + delivery based on online pricing from XYZ gravel company"
 - The budget should still be distributed across the designated categories. Do not include "flat rate" or "all-in-one" line items that cover for labor, materials, equipment, etc. If you received that from a contractor, we suggest you seek an itemized estimate or additional clarification to help you properly complete the budget form.
 - For staff and contractor time: Show the number of hours or weeks used to arrive at estimated labor rates, and indicate the hourly, weekly, or other rates used for your estimated cost.
 - Volunteer labor can be used for match only. **Rates for volunteer services must be consistent with those paid for similar work by the applying entity**. If your organization does not have an established value of volunteer time, to calculate volunteer rates:
 - For unskilled labor, you can use the [Independent Sector's estimated volunteer rate](#) for Vermont (currently \$32.73).
 - For skilled labor (e.g., donated time from licensed professionals), you can claim the current fair market rate. *If awarded, backup documentation must be provided showing the rate of pay (usually paystub from current employer) or hours will be counted at the current unskilled volunteer labor rate.*
 - For construction equipment:
 - If you will be renting or contracting construction equipment, your calculations can be based on information from rental companies or contractors.
 - If the applying organization owns its equipment, you can use [FEMA's Schedule of Equipment Rates](#) to establish value for your RTP request or match.

Budget Instructions for projects that include an acquisition: Applicants will need to itemize acquisition costs in the project budget form. Eligible acquisition costs can include purchase price, closing and filing fees, title search, title insurance, survey cost, appraisal fee, appraisal reviewer fee, stewardship funding, and administration costs. Please list the itemized acquisition costs on any line for “Labor” or “Other” sections of the budget form.

Matching Funds

RTP grants require a minimum 20% match of the **total project cost** (RTP request + your matching funds = total project cost).

The budget spreadsheet will calculate this automatically, but here are some examples of what 20% of the total project cost looks like:

If your RTP Request is:	Then your minimum match amount must be at least:	Thus, your total project cost would be at least:
\$10,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$12,500.00
\$15,000.00	\$3,750.00	\$18,750.00
\$25,000.00	\$6,250.00	\$31,250.00
\$50,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$62,500.00

Alternatively, to calculate the percentage of match, divide the value of your match by the total project cost and multiply by 100. Round your answer to the nearest tenth.

$$(\text{Total Match Value}) / (\text{Total Project Cost}) \times 100$$

Example match calculation: A project requesting \$50,000 in funding from RTP that provides a \$20,000 match has a total project cost of \$70,000, so:

$$(\$20,000 \text{ Match}) / (\$70,000 \text{ Total Project Cost}) \times 100 = 28.6\% \text{ match}$$

Your match may include:

- In-kind or non-monetary donations:
 - Donations of labor, materials, tools, equipment/supplies needed for the project.
 - In-kind contributions can come from federal, state, local/municipal, or private sources (nonprofits, businesses, individuals, etc.).
- Cash contributions:
 - State funds: other state grants/funds
 - Local cash contributions: Municipality’s direct monetary contribution; (e.g., cash from fund-raising efforts, organizational or municipal funds, local tax revenues, set-aside project funds, force-fund accounts of town/organizational labor forces, local business, private or public contributions etc.) or cash contributions from other local government entities.
 - Private cash contributions (e.g. nonprofit organization cash, donations from individuals, cash support from businesses) and other non-governmental grants (e.g., foundation grants, local non-profit organizational grants, awards)
 - [Other Federal Funds](#): other federal grants, funds, federal aid, etc. so long as the project is eligible under the other program(s).

Only expenses for RTP-eligible activities can be counted as match. For example, marketing is [ineligible](#) for RTP and therefore any marketing costs should not be included in your budget as part of your match calculation.

Pre-Award Matching Planning and Permitting Costs Limited by Federal Rule: FHWA limits the allowable pre-agreement permit and planning costs incurred back to within 18 months of a project’s federal approval for planning, permitting, and engineering pre-agreement costs, and those costs can only be counted toward match (they are not reimbursable). Include these costs in the budget as both part of the total project cost, and in the match summary section of the budget form.

Recording Match on the Budget Template

Describe your match in Column D of the spreadsheet, separating the match into distinct line items by expense categories. Use the cells in column B to describe the expenses the match will cover (ex: staff time, volunteer time, specific materials or tools) and what the type of match is (ex: cash, in-kind labor, grant, donated material, etc.). Be sure to describe how you arrived at value estimates for your match lines just like you would with any other expense.

If you have an expense that is covered partly by RTP and partly by match, you can include those together on one line (for example, you are asking for 70% of the contractor costs to be covered by RTP and your town is covering the remaining 30% of contractor costs). However, if a single expense item is only covered by RTP or only covered by match, please be sure to separate those line items (for example, RTP-requested staff time for construction labor should be separated from volunteer labor in the construction labor section).

You will be required to provide information about the specific sources of the match and the status of that match in a narrative question in the full application, so you do NOT need to include that information in the budget template.

See [Example Materials](#) at the end of this document to see an example completed budget.

Please submit the budget sheet in Excel format (.xls or .xlsx file type).

Submitted Budget Forms will need to be clearly titled using the following format:

- 2025 RTP Budget Form - [Name of Applicant]

Example Budget File Name: 2025 RTP Budget – ABC Town

Climate Resilience Risk Form

New for 2025!

The resilience of recreation projects is a critical component of the review process for FPR Outdoor Recreation grants, including RTP. For this upcoming grant round, we are piloting a Recreation Project Climate Resilience Risk Form to:

1. Provide FPR staff and the grant ranking committee with the information needed to assess the resilience of the project.
2. Help guide the grant applicant to develop more resilient projects.

The [Recreation Project Climate Resilience Risk Form](#) was designed considering the most commonly proposed recreation projects, as well as the forecasted impacts of climate change in Vermont including:

- Warmer temperatures and extreme heat
- Shorter, warmer winters
- Increased winter and spring precipitation
- More frequent heavy precipitation events
- Reduced soil moisture or drought
- Increased risk of wildfire
- Altered stream flows
- Damage from insect pests or pathogens
- Increases in nonnative plant species

Review the [Guidance Document for Recreation Project Climate Resilience Risk Form](#) for additional support related to this form.

Use for the RTP Pre-Application

The grant applicant will fill in the *Recreation Project Climate Resilience Risk Form* and submit it with their pre-application. FPR staff will then assess the form and note the areas where further information may be needed in the full application. Staff will then request that applicants provide additional information to address specific resilience risk factors in the full application if identified.

Example: If an applicant notes that there will be waterbars or culverts included in the project, FPR staff will request that the applicant describe how they will clean and maintain that infrastructure in their stewardship plan in the full application.

Responses to the form will also be used to assess project readiness. All questions on the form are required.

Example: If an applicant submits a form with multiple blank responses or writes in “unknown” for questions where that is not a provided response option (ex: trail surface, erosion prevention measures, how many water crossings), this is a sign that the project isn’t ready for RTP funding.

For the pre-application phase, we will accept “unknown” response options for all questions where it is provided as a response option (ex: are there muddy areas or areas where water puddles?) – but we strongly encourage applicants to make a plan to determine these answers before the full application deadline.

Permit Reports

All projects must have all necessary permits in place prior to construction – whether or not you own the land or are only working within the existing footprint. For state permits, the first step is to put the project through the [Permit Navigator tool](#), which is found on the Department of Environmental Conservation website. Alternatively, if your project is linear or crosses multiple parcels, you'll need to complete a [Project Review Sheet](#). Additional directions for both of these tools are found below.

For any project involving construction, you must complete the Permit Navigator or Project Review sheet for your project and submit a PDF of the results in your application. If you do not submit this by the deadline, your application will be incomplete. The only exceptions to this are:

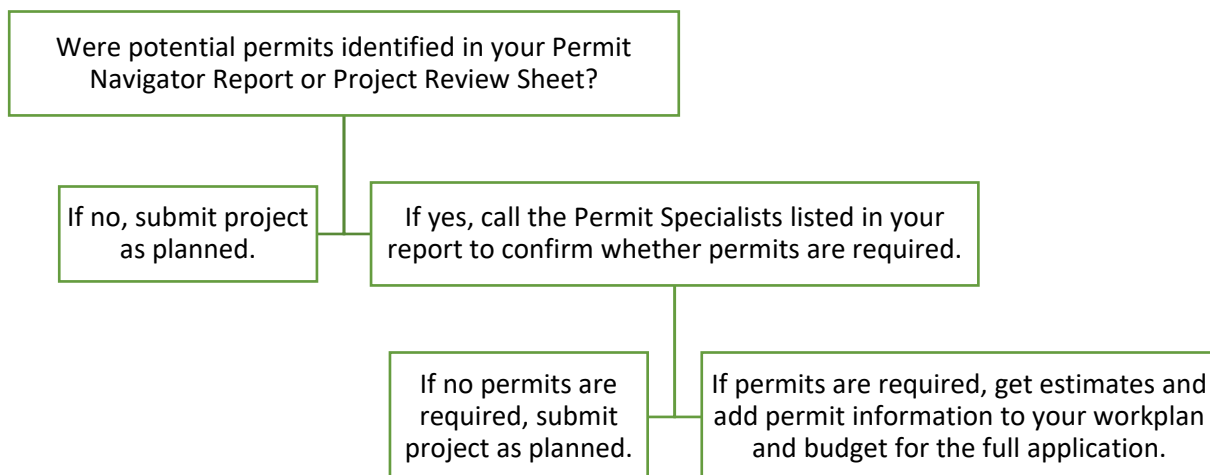
- For projects on USFS land:
 - During the full application, you will be required to submit the official USFS Environmental Decision Memo which documents the environmental assessment of the project area. Obtain USFS Environmental Decision Memo documentation from the designated authorized official at USFS who will oversee this project. Applicants will also need to share the contact person at USFS who will oversee the work described in this RTP application.
- For projects on State land:
 - During the full application, you will be required to submit a letter of support from the State employee responsible for managing recreation on the land utilized in this proposal. This could be the district recreation specialist, district stewardship forester, park manager, or other State land manager. This State contact will be responsible for overseeing environmental reviews and the permitting process and will provide notice of environmental review completion to the Applicant and FPR's grant management team.

If your project qualifies for one of the exceptions outlined above, please address that briefly when you email your other pre-application materials.

Additional Permitting Information

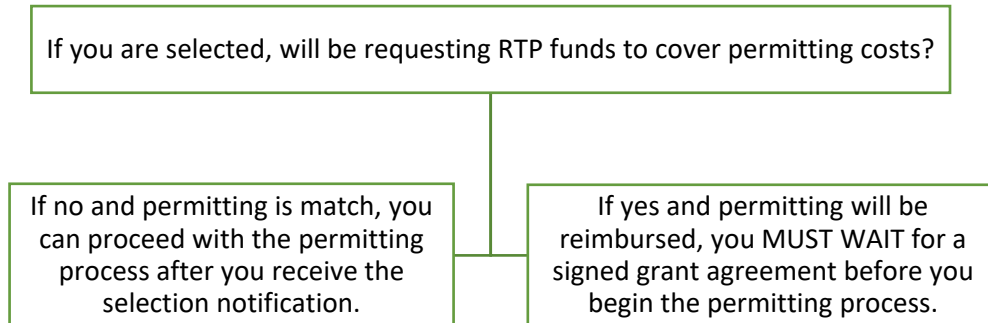
Permit Navigator Reports and Project Review Sheets identify which state permits are potentially required for a project – they are NOT actual permit applications.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to follow up with the DEC specialists identified in the reports before completing the application to determine whether or not permits will be required. In addition, Permit Navigator and Project Review Sheets only list potential state-level environmental permits. Check with your municipality to see if any other permitting is required.



Once identified, permit processes can take three to six months, or longer, depending on the nature of the work being proposed or if site visits are necessary and can cost thousands of dollars. If permits are required for your project, be sure to incorporate the permit requirements for your project into your final workplan and budget. If you do not include permit costs in your initial RTP budget request, you cannot use RTP dollars to cover them!

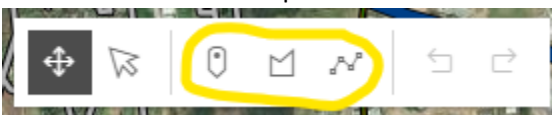
- You are allowed to begin permit processes as soon as you are ready if you will NOT be using RTP funds to support these expenses; if you plan to use RTP funds to support these expenses, you must wait until your grant agreement is executed.
- As described above, permit costs can be used as match if secured in advance of the grant agreement.



Permit Navigator: For Single-Parcel Projects

Permit Navigator is a tool that will help identify both Act 250 and various Agency of Natural Resources permit requirements. The Permit Navigator tool will provide the contact information for permit specialists who can be contacted for further information about obtaining permits for the project.

1. Go to: <https://permitnavigator.my.vermont.gov/s/> and click “Get Started.”
 - a. Follow the prompts to accept the disclaimer.
 - b. Make a choice about whether or not you would like a [jurisdictional opinion on an Act 250](#) permit.
 - i. **Please note that if you do not want to seek a jurisdictional opinion for your project at this time, do not check the boxes throughout the application asking whether a jurisdictional opinion is sought.** If you select yes, your results from the review will be sent to Act 250 staff for official determination.
2. If you would like permit staff to receive your contact information (e.g. for jurisdictional opinion), complete the contact information under the general questions. This information is NOT included in the Permit Navigator Report, so it is completely optional.
3. Complete the required questions about category and industry. Select “yes” if your project includes construction or renovation.
4. Find your project location on a map. Use the appropriate icons on the map to mark your project area: draw a point, draw a polygon, or draw a polyline – or if you already know the coordinates, enter them in the fields below the map.



- a. *Map Troubleshooting Tip:* if you get an error message (ex: your polygon selection includes a public road) and the undo button doesn’t work (pictured right), re-search the address in the search bar at the top right corner of the map to refresh the map.



5. Answer the required project questions. If directed, make a note about additional staff you are informed to contact (ex: the platform provides a link and directions to contact district floodplain specialists if your proposed project is near a floodplain, river, and/or stream).
 - a. You will answer questions related to: Act 250, fish and wildlife, indirect discharge/underground injection controls, lakes and ponds management and protection, residuals management and emerging contaminants, rivers, salvage yards, solid waste management, stormwater management, underground tanks, wastewater systems, and wetlands.
 - i. Please note that it is in your best interest to answer these questions as completely as possible. If you select “I don’t know” wherever offered, your report will include additional recommendations to reach out to permit specialists to gather that information.
 - b. For questions with multiple selection options, select one or more options from the list on the left and move them to the right using the arrows.

The screenshot shows a multi-select interface. On the left, under the heading 'Available Values', there is a list of options: 'acupuncturist, chiropractor office', 'a seat or car space for a theatre', 'a food concession to a theatre', 'I don't know', and 'none of the above'. The 'none of the above' option is highlighted in blue. In the center, there are two vertical arrows (one pointing right, one pointing left) enclosed in a yellow hand-drawn circle. On the right, under the heading 'Selected Values', there is an empty rectangular box with two vertical arrows (one pointing up, one pointing down) to its right.

6. When your results are complete, download and/or print that report. These results are based both on your answers to the prompts as well as environmental considerations based on mapped results.

Project Review Sheets: For Linear and Multi-Parcel Projects

Follow the directions on the [DEC website](#) to secure a Project Review Sheet.

Application Tip: Because Project Review Sheets require DEC staff involvement, be sure to start this process as soon as possible! At a minimum, you should begin at least one month before the deadline!

Submit Permit Navigator results or Project Review Sheet that are clearly titled using the following format:

- RTP Permit Navigator Results - [Name of Applicant]
- RTP Project Review Sheet - [Name of Applicant]

Example Permit Report File Name: RTP Permit Navigator Report – ABC Town

Additional RTP Planning Information

Trails and Equity

Recreational trails have the potential to provide social, economic, and public health benefits. But they are not equally distributed. Low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, people with limited English proficiency, and populations with disabilities have been historically disenfranchised and left out of the planning and decision-making process of trail development.

FPR seeks to address these inequities to ensure that recreational trails throughout Vermont are extended to all residents, working toward a more equitable and just culture. As such, an application must describe to what ends a project is seeking to help create equitable access, especially for underserved communities. You can help make a difference by demonstrating how your project can facilitate equitable and just public access, trail use and development of recreational assets across Vermont.

Universally Accessible Trails and Accessible Design Standards

[Accessible design standards](#) are required to be used for all new trail construction projects. Exceptions are permitted for any portion of the trail where compliance would:

1. Cause substantial harm to cultural, historic, religious, or significant natural features or characteristics,
2. Substantially alter the nature of the setting or the purpose,
3. Require construction methods or materials that rare prohibited by Federal, State, or local regulations or statutes, or
4. Not be feasible due to terrain or the prevailing construction practices.

The basis for all exceptions must be documented and submitted to FPR as part of the full application.

UEI Required

If invited to submit a full application, you will be required to provide a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from Sam.gov in the application.

New for 2025! You do NOT have to maintain an active SAM registration to receive an RTP grant – only to have an “ID Assigned” so that you have a UEI.

Application Tip: Getting a UEI the first time can be an extended process! If you do not already have a UEI, please begin the process of registering as soon as possible at <https://sam.gov>

Example Materials

Workplan Example

Trail Name	<i>Davidson River Trail (DRT) – 2 mile section between town and campground</i>			
City/Town	<i>Pisgah Forest, NC</i>			
Activity (Briefly describe work component and, if applicable, the specific location on the trail)	Description (What tasks are included? In general terms, who will do the work? What tools, equipment, and/or materials will be used?)	Anticipated Results (Quantifiable list of what you will accomplish)	Anticipated Start Date (Month/Year)	Anticipated End Date (Month/Year)
Permitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town project manager will host RFP and select contractor. Contractor to complete wetlands delineation and prepare permit applications. Town project manager to submit permit applications to state for approval. 	State Wetlands Permit and Stream Alteration Permit Secured	October 2025	June 2026
Replace Bridge Damaged by Flooding at DRT mile marker 1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town project manager will host RFP and select construction company for old bridge removal, new metal bridge prefabrication and installation on existing footings. Construction company will provide labor, crane, tools, bridge structure and installation hardware, and waste disposal. Construction to begin after permits are secured. 	45-foot-long metal bridge installed	May 2026	September 2026
Repair rotted boardwalk treads on multiple small boardwalks from DRT mile marker 0.6-0.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer trail crew will remove rotten 6-foot-wide wood boardwalk treads and replace with weather-resistant composite decking boards using hand tools after permits secured. All materials and waste will be transported using town truck. 	At least 100 feet of boardwalk treads replaced	June 2026	September 2026

Budget Example

Budget Form for 2025 RTP Projects

Expense Name	Description/Calculation Explanation	RTP Requested Amount	Match Amount (Cash or in-kind value)
A. Environmental Permitting, Archeology, Surveying and Planning Costs			
Trail Design	Completed summer 2024. See attached receipt from ABC Company. Cash match.		\$4,000.00
ARA	Estimated from guidance	\$3,500.00	
Sub-Total:		\$3,500.00	\$4,000.00
B. Grant/ Project Administration			
Project Coordinator	\$35/hour, 60 hours covered by RTP, 20 hours paid by town.	\$2,100.00	\$700.00
Sub-Total:		\$2,100.00	\$700.00
C. Construction On-Site Labor Paid Labor (Project Manager, Work Crews, Professional Contractors, Services) and Donated On-Site Labor (Volunteers)			
Contracted Trail Builder	120 hours at \$130/hour, based on average cost from two estimates	\$15,600.00	
Volunteer Trail Labor	100 hours at \$32.73/hour. In-kind labor.		\$3,273.00
Sub-Total:		\$15,600.00	\$3,273.00
D. Hand Tool Purchase			
Shovels, rakes, and loppers	Average value \$15 each x 20 tools. In-kind donation.	\$0.00	\$300.00
Sub-Total:		\$0.00	\$300.00
E. Construction Equipment Rental			
Bobcat	20 hours at \$37.32/hour, based on 2024 FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates	\$746.00	
Sub-Total:		\$746.00	\$0.00
F. Construction Materials/Supplies			
Crushed Stone	30 cubic yards at \$45/cubic yard, plus delivery. Based on 2024 estimate from XYZ gravel company + 5% for inflation.	\$1,850.00	
Sub-Total:		\$1,850.00	\$0.00
		Total Grant Request	Total Match
		\$23,796.00	\$8,273.00

Total Project Cost	\$32,069.00
Match Rate (Minimum match of 20% of the project's total cost required)	26%

