

NY State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP)
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

APPLICATION SELECTION CRITERIA:

When award recommendations are finalized, OPRHP submits recommended projects to the Federal Highway Administration for approval. Grant awards are contingent upon Federal approval. The Grant Selection Criteria are listed below. The maximum total score is 100 points.

- A. Project provides for corridor sharing for motorized and/or non-motorized use (Maximum 4 points).
Key Consideration: The most important concern is that two or more trail use types can utilize the same trail corridor.
- (4) Project involves motorized and non-motorized concurrent uses.
 - (2) Project involves two or more concurrent uses, either motorized or non-motorized.
 - (1) Project only accommodates a single trail use.
- B. Project provides for multiple uses in multiple seasons. (Maximum 4 points).
- (4) Project provides for multiple concurrent uses in multiple seasons.
 - (3) Project provides for multiple concurrent uses in a single season.
 - (2) Project provides for a singular use in multiple seasons.
 - (1) Project provides for a singular use in a singular season.
- C. Project provides new or improved trails and trail connections in potential Environmental Justice areas (Maximum 3 points).
Key Considerations: The project is in a potential Environmental Justice area.
- (3) Project provides new trails or trail connections in potential Environmental Justice areas.
- D. Project provides for maintenance or restoration of an existing trail (Maximum 3 points).
Key Consideration: The project scope is primarily maintenance and restoration of existing trails, which may include any kind of trail maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation. This category may include maintenance and restoration of trail bridges or appropriate signage along a trail.
- (3) Project provides for maintenance or restoration of an existing trail.
- E. Project is identified as a component of a statewide or national trail system or furthers a specific goal of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), OPRHP Statewide Trails Plan, Statewide Greenway Trails Plan, or a local trail plan (Maximum 5 points).
Key Consideration: The degree to which the project is clearly identifiable as a priority for action, ties in with specific goals, priorities, and implementation strategies, and/or complies with identified needs of the area.
- (5) Project is a component of a statewide or national trail system as identified in the SCORP (e.g., National Scenic, Historic, Heritage Area or Recreational Trails, Empire State Trail, Canalway Trail).
 - (4) Project furthers a specific goal of the Statewide Trails Plan, Statewide Greenway Trails Plan, or State Snowmobile Plan.
 - (3) Project furthers a specific goal of, or is identified in, a regional or local transportation plan or other planning document.
 - (0) Project does not further the goals of any trails plan.

- F. Index of Need – based on the “Relative Index of Needs” table in the SCORP (Maximum 5 points).
Key Consideration: The project satisfies county recreation needs based on a statewide supply and demand assessment.
(0 – 5) points based on the average Relative Index of Need for pertinent trail activities.
- G. Documentation of community support for the project (Maximum 5 points).
Key Consideration: The major concern is that this project is responding to community-identified needs and shows evidence of community support.
(0 - 5) Citizens or community groups where the project is located have participated in the planning of the project, demonstrated support for the project and/or will be involved in project implementation.
- H. Project ties into other trails, greenways, scenic corridors, natural, cultural, historical, or recreational areas (Maximum 6 points).
Key Considerations:
(a) Project is a component of or connects into the Empire State Trail, Hudson River Greenway, or other recognized state or national trail corridor.
(b) Project ties into a designated scenic corridor of National, State, or regional significance.
(c) Project connects into other trails.
(d) Project links natural, cultural, historic or recreation areas or resources.
(6) Project meets at least three of the above criteria.
(4) Project meets only two of the above criteria.
(2) Project meets only one of the above criteria.
(0) Project does not meet any of the above criteria.
- I. Project planning, design and schedule demonstrate an understanding of the program requirements and an ability to progress through the necessary phases and approvals appropriately (Maximum 6 points).
Key Consideration: The major concern is that the project is planned and designed in compliance with State and Federal requirements and will proceed efficiently through the necessary steps upon receiving Federal authorization for the applicable phases. There is no statutory limit on the number of grants one property, or one applicant may receive, but in the interest of equity and fairness and in consideration of applicant capacity, applicants that have three or more open grants with OPRHP should not receive additional awards.

(3 – 6 points) Project schedule is clear, well planned, and logical. Applicant has clearly demonstrated an understanding of the program requirements and an approach to implement the project in a timely, efficient, and effective manner.
(0 – 3 points) Project planning and schedule is unclear, under-developed or unrealistic, either overly ambitious or under-achieving, based upon the information provided. Applicant demonstrates a lack of understanding of the program requirements.
- J. Project will utilize existing corridors, such as existing trail corridors, railroad right-of-way, canal towpath, utility lines, and parkways where the applicant clearly demonstrates their legal right to construct, maintain and operate the recreational trail for its intended use. (Maximum 4 points).
Key Consideration: The major concern is to maximize the use of existing corridors where the applicant has the legal right to implement the proposed project.
(4) The project will utilize an existing corridor, and the applicant has demonstrated clear legal

property rights. Additional right-of-way is *not* required.

(2) The project will utilize an existing corridor, but the applicant does *not* possess sufficient legal property rights. Additional right-of-way *will be* required.

(0) The project will not utilize an existing corridor.

K. Project will improve the continuity of a trail system (Maximum 4 points).

Key Consideration: The concern is to encourage the expansion and integration of trails.

NON-MOTORIZED USE (Non-Motorized and Diverse Categories):

(4) Project is part of a trail system over 10 miles in length.

(3) Project is part of a trail system 5-10 miles in length.

(2) Project is part of a trail system less than 5 miles in length.

MOTORIZED USE (Motorized and Diverse Categories):

(4) Project is part of a trail system over 20 miles in length.

(3) Project is part of a trail system 5-20 miles in length.

(2) Project is part of a trail system less than 5 miles in length.

L. Project budget is reasonable, justified, and cost-effective (Maximum 15 points).

Key Consideration: Points are determined by assessing the completeness of the project budget, the eligibility, necessity and cost-effectiveness of the cost items, and the availability of matching share.

(10 - 15 points) A detailed budget has been provided which contains only eligible and necessary costs. Estimates are justified, cost-effective and based on sound principles and experience.

Matching share is identified and will be available for the project term.

(5 - 10 points) A complete budget has been provided but the basis for cost estimates is unclear or not cost-effective. Matching share is identified and will be available for the project term.

(0 - 5 points) A budget has been provided but contains ineligible costs or lacks the necessary details to determine eligibility, cost-effectiveness, or matching share requirements.

M. Project addresses State and Federal program initiatives (Maximum 6 points).

(a) Project utilizes Qualified Youth Conservation or Service Corps.

(b) Project specifically provides enhanced recreational access for persons with disabilities.

(c) Project provides for the redesign, reconstruction, nonroutine maintenance, or relocation of recreational trails to benefit the natural environment or to mitigate and minimize the impact to the natural environment.

N. Regional Economic Development Council Assessment (Maximum 20 points)

O. Statewide Assessment Factors (Maximum 10 points)

The Commissioner may award up to ten (10) points for any of the following factors. All applications will be reviewed for their relevance to these factors:

- **Geographic Distribution.** Consideration may be given to projects in areas that have or have not received funding in recent cycles or where funding is not commensurate with the population of the area. This will be based on the proximity to other funded sites and the diversity of projects being funded on a regional and local basis, as well as the service area of the developed or planned facilities.
- **Maximize Use and Accessibility.** Consideration may be given to projects where funding will allow underutilized facilities to be accessed or to develop underutilized resources for public use.

This will be based on the resources offered by the facility, the use of those resources and whether the proposed project will help the facility expand and enhance its public use.

- **Special Engineering, Environmental, Preservation Benefits.** Consideration may be given to develop particularly significant resources and facilities or to develop innovative approaches to preserve valuable resources. This will be based on the type of resource being developed or rehabilitated; its rarity on a local, regional, statewide and national basis; the ability of an innovative technology to address an emergency or mitigate future problems; how well a technology can be “exported” for use on other properties and resources; and how/if the project will allow public access that would not otherwise be available.
- **Past Performance.** Consideration may be given to how timely an applicant completed previous projects, including its reporting requirements; how successful it was in outreach, especially to minority- and woman-owned businesses; the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the property; and its cooperation in allowing OPRHP to complete inspections and other follow-up activities.