

Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) – Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
Funding Available: Up to \$1.9 Million

DESCRIPTION:

The **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). In New York State, the RTP is administered by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).

The RTP is a reimbursement program, meaning that the applicant must finance the project while requesting periodic reimbursements. RTP grants provide Federal funding of up to 80 percent of the total project cost with a minimum 20 percent matching share.

The RTP funding is authorized in phases by the Federal Highway Administration. Project budgets and schedules must account for phased authorizations to comply with State and Federal requirements including but not limited to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), the “Uniform Act”, and “Buy America” requirements.

Projects must be legally and physically accessible to the public or be a portion of an identified trail project which, when completed, will be legally and physically accessible to the public.

- All applicants **must** read the *RTP Guide* available online at <https://parks.ny.gov/grants/recreational-trails/default.aspx> for a detailed description of the RTP grant administration procedures.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

- Municipalities
- Pre-Qualified Not-for-Profit Corporations (<http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>)

Note: There are several terms often used interchangeably to refer to the entity applying for RTP funding and undertaking the project (e.g. “contractor,” “grantee,” “project sponsor,” “recipient,” or “non-Federal entity”). In this document, *applicant* refers to the entity during the application stage, and *project sponsor* or *grantee* refers to the entity after a grant is awarded.

PROJECT PHASE AUTHORIZATIONS

All projects will require phased Federal Authorizations. Project expenses are not eligible for reimbursement until the Federal Highway Administration has authorized that phase. All project activities must progress by project phase and only as authorized. Each phase must be completed before obtaining authorization for the next phase. Project managers should anticipate project costs, funding sources and reimbursement schedule when budgeting for project expenses. The OPRHP Regional Grant Administrator will notify the grantee when they have received Federal authorization for each phase. Below is an overview of each phase (See the [RTP Guide](#) for more detailed information):

1. **Preliminary Design:** Defines the general project location and design concepts. Identifies the project elements in relation to property boundaries and existing features. Includes but is not limited to the preparation of the [RTP Design Report](#), environmental surveys and NEPA approval. The applicant’s project manager is responsible for completion of the Design Report. Any work which falls outside the scope of the RTP funded project should be excluded from the Design Report. Design Report documents and project approvals are progressed through the OPRHP. OPRHP will obtain necessary approvals through FHWA.
2. **Final Design:** Includes the preparation of final construction plans and specifications for the performance of construction work. All necessary permits should be secured during the Final Design

Phase. Projects that do not include acquisition of real property may receive Right-of-way approval in Final Design Phase.

All RTP projects are subject to New York State Education Law (Articles 145, 147 & 148) regarding the preparation of plans and specifications. Plans which include the design of buildings and/or structures, such as bridges, tunnels, and scenic overlooks, must be stamped, signed and dated by a Licensed Professional, as defined in New York State Education Law.

3. **Right-of-way:** A Right-of-Way Clearance Certificate is required for every RTP project, which certifies that the project sponsor has the legal right to construct, maintain and operate the recreational trail for its intended use. It is the sponsor's responsibility to provide proof of these property rights and demonstrate that all proposed work will occur within the project limits. Evidence to support the current right-of-way status is required with the RTP application.

All RTP projects must comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), as amended. The acquisition of additional right-of-way itself does not need to utilize Federal funds for the rules to apply. When Federal funds are present anywhere in the project, the rules of the Uniform Act apply. This applies to donations as well as purchases.

4. **Construction:** Allows the project to proceed to construction. Project sponsors must use their own documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable State, local, and tribal laws and regulations. Adequate supervision and inspection must be provided by the project sponsor to ensure projects are completed in conformance with design standards, construction contract documents, plans and specifications. OPRHP Regional Grant personnel will oversee administration of the project in accordance with applicable Federal laws, regulations and guidance during construction.

ELIGIBLE RTP PROJECTS:

All applicants must link their proposed project to one, or more, of the following categories:

- **Maintenance and restoration of existing trails** 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.
- **Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages** for recreational trails may include development or rehabilitation of any trailside or trailhead facility. Trailside and trailhead facilities must have a direct relationship with a recreational trail.
- **Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment** includes purchase or lease of any trail construction or maintenance equipment, including lawn mowers and trail grooming machines, provided the equipment is used primarily to construct and maintain recreational trails.
- **Construction of new recreational trails** may include construction of new trail bridges or installation of appropriate signage along a trail. Separate guidelines and approvals apply to the construction of trails on Federal land.
- **Acquisition of easements and/or fee simple title to real property** may include acquisition of old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges. However, 23 USC 206(g)(1) prohibits condemnation of any kind of interest in property (e.g. eminent domain). Therefore, acquisition of any kind of interest in property must be from a willing landowner or seller.
- **Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance** authorizes specific projects to assess trails to determine the level of accessibility for people who have disabilities, and to assess trails for current or future maintenance needs.

TRAIL USE CATEGORIES

The RTP legislation requires that States use 30% of funds for non-motorized recreation, 30% for motorized recreation, and 40% for diverse recreational trail use. To provide flexibility in RTP project selection, the following categories are recognized for meeting this requirement:

- **Non-motorized use project:** A project primarily intended to benefit non-motorized recreational trail use, such as pedestrian, equestrian, or mountain biking. A project may be classified in this category if the project serves one or more mode of non-motorized recreational use. RTP projects serving various pedestrian uses (such as walking, hiking, wheelchair use, running, bird-watching, nature interpretation, backpacking, etc.) constitute a single use for the purposes of this category.
- **Motorized use project:** A project primarily intended to benefit motorized use. A project may be classified in this category if the project serves only one mode of motorized recreational use or more than one mode of motorized recreational use. A project may be classified in this category if the project also benefits some non-motorized uses (it is not necessary to exclude non-motorized uses), but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.
- **Diverse use project:** A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of recreational use, such as pedestrian and bicycling, or pedestrian and equestrian. A diverse use project may also include both motorized and non-motorized uses where motorized use is not the predominant use or when the motorized and non-motorized uses are separated by season, such as equestrian use in summer and snowmobile use in winter. Other examples include: a common trailhead project serving separate ATV and bicycle trails; or purchasing a machine to groom both snowmobile and cross-country ski trails.

PROJECT COST:

The applicant's funding request must not exceed 80% of the total eligible project cost including donated value of materials and labor. Grant funding will not be increased after an award is made.

The minimum and maximum funding guidelines are as follows:

- **Minimum** Federal funding request for maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, development, construction, acquisition, and assessment projects: **\$25,000** (\$31,250 minimum total project cost).
- **Minimum** Federal funding request for *equipment purchase-only projects*: **\$5,000** (\$6,250 minimum total project cost).
- **Maximum** Federal funding request for all projects: **\$250,000** (\$312,500 minimum total project cost).

ELIGIBLE COSTS:

The total cost of each project may only include eligible costs. Eligible costs must be necessary and reasonable for the performance of the Federal award and be allowable under the principles outlined in the *Grant Management Cost Principles* outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 2: Grants and Agreements – Part 200 (2 CFR 200) Subpart E and Appendices. Refer to www.ecfr.gov for the full text.

INELIGIBLE COSTS:

Grantees may not use RTP funds to carry out any of the following activities.

- Condemnation of any kind of interest in property;

- **Condemned Land as Matching Value:** An RTP project may be located on land condemned with funds from other sources. However, it is not permissible to use the value of condemned land toward the match requirement for an RTP project;
- **Planning project proposals, gap analysis studies, feasibility studies;**
- **Law Enforcement;**
- **Railroads:** RTP projects will not be approved on railroad right-of-way on which the railroad tracks are in place, if trail users will traverse on or between the railroad tracks, except for providing railroad crossing in coordination with the railroad owner, operator, or State agency with jurisdiction over railroads;
- **Roads:** RTP funds may not be used for improvements to roads and/or bridges intended to be generally accessible by low clearance passenger vehicles (regular passenger cars), unless those roads/bridges are specifically designed for recreational use by the managing agency;
- **Sidewalks:** unless needed to complete a missing link between other recreational trails;
- **Construction of any recreational trail on National Forest System land for any motorized use unless the land has been designated for uses other than wilderness by an approved forest land and resource management plan, or has been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress; and the construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in the approved forest land and resource management plan;**
- **Construction of any recreational trail on Bureau of Land Management land for any motorized use unless the land has been designated for uses other than wilderness by an approved Bureau of Land Management resource management plan, or has been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress; and the construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction in the approved management plan;**
- **Upgrading, expanding, or otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to recreational trails predominantly used by non-motorized recreational trail users and on which, as of May 1, 1991, motorized use was prohibited or had not occurred.**

INDIRECT COSTS:

Costs *not* directly attributable to the project, i.e. “indirect costs”, are *not* generally eligible for reimbursement (i.e. expenditures for the general operating or capital overhead of the Sponsor’s organization). In certain instances, indirect costs can be approved for reimbursement if the Sponsor’s indirect cost rates are approved by the Federal cognizant agency.

MATCHING SHARE REQUIREMENTS:

At a minimum, a local match is required for 20% of the total eligible project costs. Contributions to the Matching Share must be necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of the project and comply with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306. Eligible Sources of Matching Share include: cash, donations, eligible matching grant funds, force account (payroll of applicant), professional services, supplies and materials, volunteer labor, equipment usage/donation, and real property. The project sponsor is responsible for any increases in the total cost of the project. Grant awards will not be increased. The RTP funds may be matched with funds available under other Federal funding programs, if the project is also eligible for funding under the other Federal program. Federal funds received by any project sponsor from another Federal program may be credited as if they were the non-Federal share and may be used to match the RTP project funds up to 100 percent of the project cost. However, other Federal programs may require a non-Federal share, which must be adhered to as part of grant administration (see [RTP Guide](#) for examples).

CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS:

OPRHP is responsible for contracting with the grantee. Federal authorization is required prior to OPRHP signing the New York State Master Contract for Grants. The earliest date of Federal Authorization serves as the start date for all RTP projects. All RTP construction contracts and sub-contracts must include the *RTP Federal Construction Contract Requirements*. When Federal, State and Local laws and regulations conflict, OPRHP must be contacted for consultation with the FHWA.

PROGRESS REPORTS:

Project sponsors must submit quarterly progress reports providing the status of the trail project. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to submit progress reports to OPRHP. Failure to submit reports may result in withholding of reimbursements or repayment of previously reimbursed funds.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

One person should be assigned as the Project Manager (PM). This person will schedule the progression of activities, ensure timely completion of project tasks and address any problems or inquiries which may develop. The Project Manager will be the primary contact person for the submission of necessary reports, approvals, or requests for payments. The Project Manager *must* work closely with the OPRHP Regional Grants Administrator (RGA) to ensure proper interpretation of all project requirements. The Project Manager is responsible for providing adequate supervision and inspection, including materials inspection and quality assurance to ensure projects are completed in conformance with the construction contract documents, plans and specifications. The project budget should account for the costs associated with this requirement.

The grantee's Responsible Local Official (RLO) has ultimate oversight and responsibility for the project and is typically assigned the role of "Grantee Contract Signatory" in the Grants Gateway. The RLO may assign a Project Manager (PM) to be in responsible charge of the project. The Project Manager will report to the Responsible Local Official. The PM and the RLO may be the same individual, if the RLO has project management experience.

CONSULTANT SELECTION:

The selection of consultants and contractors is regulated by 40 USC 11 (The Brooks Act), which requires the award of Federally funded architectural/engineering contracts on the basis of fair and open competitive negotiations, demonstrated competence, and professional qualifications. 23 CFR 172 details the requirements of a Qualifications-Based Selection process. Article 9 Section 136-a of the State Finance Law contains provisions for the selection of consultants which is similar to the Brooks Act.

PROCUREMENT:

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.318, RTP project sponsors are expected to adhere to their own documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable State, local, and tribal laws and regulations.

Project sponsors and their contractors must also adhere to the *RTP Federal Construction Contract Requirements*, including but not limited to, Buy America requirements (23 CFR 635.410).

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:

This is a reimbursement program; therefore, the grant recipient must pay 100% of the cost of any item before submitting a request for reimbursement of eligible expenses. Each request for reimbursement must not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs incurred. Only expenses incurred after obtaining Federal authorization and during the contract period are eligible for reimbursement.

Reimbursements will be made only for those items that were approved in the contract and cost estimate. OPRHP requires verification and justification of all expenditures including proof of payment, labor, materials, supplies and services. All reimbursement requests require documentation suitable for audit, which verify expenditures for work performed in accordance with contract documents and proof of payment accompanied by a signed certification from the project sponsor. Failure to submit necessary payment documentation may prevent approval of reimbursement.

OPRHP will only reimburse the final 10% of the approved maximum grant amount to the project sponsor after all required close-out documentation has been submitted, OPRHP has completed a final on-site inspection and the close-out documentation has been approved by OPRHP.

A minimum payment amount of no less than \$500, should be submitted for reimbursement every six (6) months. Failure to submit regular payments for reimbursement, or demonstrate progress, may result in termination of project funding and repayment of previously reimbursed Federal funds.

RECORD RETENTION:

Project sponsors are responsible for retaining project documents during each phase. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The signed RTP Design Report including all appendices;
- Documentation of NEPA determination;
- Signed Right-of-Way Clearance Certificate;
- Final construction contract documents, including change orders;
- Construction oversight documentation to support payments including;
 - Project Manager and/or Engineer's on-site inspection reports; and
 - Materials certifications, testing data and quantities verification, as applicable.

In addition, all required payment documentation must be retained and available for inspection upon request for a period defined in the *New York State Master Contract for Grants*.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The following documentation must be submitted, as applicable. Applications lacking these attachments, or an acceptable justification, are considered incomplete and may be deemed ineligible.

- **ALL APPLICANTS:**
 - **State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) compliance documentation**
 - **Not-for-profit corporations** must complete the *Environmental Review Form* available at <https://parks.ny.gov/grants/consolidated-funding-app.aspx>
 - **Municipalities** must document compliance with SEQRA or provide status of SEQRA.
 - Type II – statement and justification.
 - Unlisted – [Short Environmental Assessment Form \(SEAF\) – Parts I – III](#).
 - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6191.html>
 - Type I – [Full Environmental Assessment Form \(FEAF\)](#) and either a negative declaration or Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and SEQRA Findings. <https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6191.html>
 - **Photos** showing the project area and/or the type of equipment to be purchased.
 - **Maps** at an appropriate scale to identify the project location. 1:24,000 scale topographic or planimetric maps are recommended. (See “Grants Map for CFA,” at <https://parks.ny.gov/grants/consolidated-funding-app.aspx> or NYS GIS Clearinghouse <http://gis.ny.gov/gisdata/quads/>).

- **FRIENDS AND PARTNER GROUPS OF STATE PARKS:**
 - Letters of support from the Regional Director AND the Capital Facilities Manager. One letter of support may be provided with both signatures.
- **CONSTRUCTION, REHABILITATION, RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE PROJECTS:**
 - A conceptual plan that identifies the project elements in relation to property boundaries and existing features.
- **WORK ON PUBLIC LANDS:**
 - Applicants submitting proposals for work on lands owned by a public entity are required to enter into a separate legal agreement with that public entity to undertake the work described in the RTP application. A copy of this agreement must be included with the RTP application. If the agreement is pending, then the draft agreement must be included.
- **WORK ON PRIVATE LANDS:**
 - Applicants submitting proposals for work on privately owned land must submit documentation of their property rights (e.g., deed, lease or easement).
 - If the applicant does *not* have all necessary property rights secured at the time of application, see “Property Acquisition and Easement Acquisition Projects” below.
- **PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND EASEMENT ACQUISITION PROJECTS:**
 - A copy of the letter delivered to all property owners describing the RTP project, which includes language that eminent domain will not be utilized should negotiations to purchase fail (*Sample RTP Notice to Owner Letter available online at <https://parks.ny.gov/grants/consolidated-funding-app.aspx>*).
 - A copy of letter(s) from the property owner(s) indicating willingness and intent to sell, donate or transfer the property to the applicant.
 - Documentation of the status of the property acquisition. Any property acquired specifically for an RTP project must be “Uniform Act” compliant.
- **PURCHASE OR LEASE OF EQUIPMENT:**
 - A brochure or price quote of the *general type* of equipment to be purchased or leased.
 - The equipment referenced in the application *may or may not* be the exact equipment purchased. A competitive procurement process is required after Federal funding is authorized.
 - A signed statement from the Responsible Local Official that all landowner permissions have been obtained (*Landowner Permission Attestation*).
 - For projects involving the purchase of motorized grooming or trail maintenance equipment for use on New York State lands: A signed statement by the agency of jurisdiction certifying that the use of such equipment is consistent with the policies and management plan for such properties.
- **CONSTRUCTION OF TRAILS ON FEDERAL LANDS:**
 - A signed letter of support from the Federal Agency having jurisdiction.
- **CONSTRUCTION OF MOTORIZED TRAILS ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS:**
 - A signed statement certifying that the lands have been allocated for uses other than wilderness by the approved agency resource management plan or have been released to uses other than wilderness by an Act of Congress, and such construction is consistent with the resource management plan.

- **INDIRECT COSTS**

- A copy of the Indirect Cost Rate Approval Letter from Federal Cognizant Agency.

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 recreational trail corridor sharing for motorized and/or non-motorized use (Maximum 5 points).

Key Consideration: The most important concern is that two or more uses are compatible and provide a safe recreational experience for all users.

- (5) Project involves two or more trails in the same corridor that accommodate both motorized and non-motorized trail uses;
- (4) Project involves two or more trails in the same corridor that accommodate either motorized or non-motorized trail uses;
- (3) Project involves one trail with motorized and non-motorized concurrent uses;
- (2) Project involves time sharing of the trail other than on a seasonal basis;
- (1) Project involves seasonal time sharing of the trail;
- (0) Criterion is not applicable.

- B. Project provides for motorized and/or non-motorized use that will enhance the quality and quantity of recreational trail opportunities (Maximum 5 points).

Key Consideration: An important consideration is that this project will enhance the quality and quantity of recreational trail opportunities available in the community or region.

- (5) Project provides for both motorized and non-motorized use for both summer and winter activities;
- (4) Project provides for both motorized and non-motorized use for either summer or winter activities;
- (3) Project provides for either motorized or non-motorized use for both summer and winter activities;
- (2) Project provides either motorized or non-motorized use for either summer or winter activities.

- C. Project provides urban trail linkages (Maximum 4 points).

Key Considerations:

- (a) Project provides linkage to other trail opportunities in urban areas;
 - (b) Project provides linkage to recreational areas, residential communities, places of employment, commerce, schools, parks, or other public places in urban areas;
 - (c) Project is located in a census defined Standard Metropolitan/Micropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA);
 - (d) Project demonstrates advancement of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Strategic Community Investment.
- (4) Project meets all of the criteria above;
 - (3) Project meets only two of the criteria above;
 - (2) Project meets only one of the criteria above;
 - (0) Project does not meet any of the criteria above.

D. 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) or the Statewide 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 or the Statewide Trails Plan (e.g., National Scenic, Historic, Heritage Area or Recreational Trails, Millennium Trails, Empire State Trail, Canalway Trail or State Snowmobile Plan);

(4) Project furthers a specific goal of a regional trail plan referenced in the Statewide Trails Plan or the SCORP;

(3) Project furthers a specific goal of a local trail plan referenced in regional or local planning documents.

(0) Project does not further the goals of any trails plan.

E. 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.

F. 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.

G. Project ties into other trails, greenways, scenic corridors, natural, cultural, historical or recreational areas (Maximum 4 points).

Key Considerations:

(a) Project ties into the Empire State Trail, Hudson River Greenway, or another major trail

(b) Project ties into a designated scenic corridor of National, State or regional significance

(c) Project ties into other trails

(d) Project links natural, cultural, historic or recreation areas or resources

(4) Project meets at least three of the above criteria

(3) 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

H. 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.

- I. Project will utilize existing corridors, such as existing trail corridors, railroad right-of-way, canal towpath, utility lines, publicly owned river valleys or highland ridges, parkways, etc. (Maximum 4 points).

Key Consideration: The major concern is to maximize the use and maintain the integrity of existing corridors.

(4) The project will utilize only existing corridors;

(2) The project will utilize an existing corridor but requires additional right-of-way;

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

- J. 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 50 miles in length.

(3) Project is part of a trail system 5-50 miles in length.

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

- K. 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.

- L. Project addresses State and Federal program initiatives (2 points *each*, Maximum 8 points).

(2) Project utilizes Youth Conservation or Service Corps.

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

(2) 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.

(2) Project will address communities currently lacking recreational opportunities.

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

N. 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.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS:

Successful applicants are advised NOT to begin work until Federal Authorization for the applicable project phase has been granted and a project contract with the State has been fully executed. Proceeding without FHWA and OPRHP approval will jeopardize grant reimbursement. Certain conditions of award must be met before a contract can be executed. These include:

- Submission of a signed authorizing resolution that names the Responsible Local Official authorized to accept grant funds and execute a contract with the State;
- Documentation of compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA);
- And for not-for-profit organizations:
 - Documentation of coverage or exemption for Workers’ Compensation and Disability Insurance;
 - Current filings under Section 501 of the United States Internal Revenue Code and the following New York State Laws, as applicable: Article 7-A of the Executive Law; Section 8-1.4 of the Estates, Powers and Trusts Law; Section 1508 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law; or Section 215 of the Education Law; and
 - [Valid New York State Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire \(VRQ\).](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Go to <https://parks.ny.gov/grants/> for additional information, including the *Recreational Trails Program Guide*, which contains an overview of RTP grant procedures. For more information, contact the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) Regional Grants Administrator for your county (<https://parks.ny.gov/grants/contact.aspx>), or NYSOPRHPGrants@parks.ny.gov.