

ARKANSAS RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) MOTORIZED TRAILS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

▪ ***Is there a deadline for submitting a RTP Motorized application?***

No. These applications can be submitted year-round and will be considered on a first-come first-served basis.

▪ ***Who can apply for the RTP?***

Under 23 USC 206(d)(4)(A), the eligible entities to receive RTP funds are:

- Private organizations (i.e. youth groups, trail clubs, private schools, etc.)
- Municipal agencies (i.e. city, county, township agencies, etc.)
- State agencies (i.e. State park agencies, State game and fish agencies, State forest agencies, State public education institutions, etc.)
- Federal agencies (i.e. National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, etc.)
- Other government entities (i.e. tribal governments, multi-state public agencies, public transit operators, etc.)

▪ ***Can an applicant apply for more than one project?***

If a sponsor wishes to apply for more than one project, separate applications for each project must be submitted and they must be prioritized by the applicant.

▪ ***How do I fill out and send in the application?***

The application this year is a fillable PDF form. You should be able to type directly into the form and save it to your own computer. Read the questions in the application carefully. Determine what information is required and provide the information in the space provided. Use the application in the form received.

Do not skip any questions on the application. Do not omit the budget sheet(s).

The fillable form includes space for 20 items on the budget sheet. If you have more than 20 items in your construction cost estimate, please use the Excel© sheet provided with the application. This Excel© sheet also includes a tab for you to utilize when trying to determine your overall budget for the project, not just the construction phase.

Please submit an electronic copy of the application and required attachments to LFP@ardot.gov. If necessary, a physical copy of the original application with attachments will be accepted. Any physical copies should be mailed to the address on the application packet.

▪ ***Are resolutions accepted after the application deadline?***

Because there is no deadline for Motorized Trail applications, a governing body resolution must be submitted with the application.

▪ ***What should be included on the project location map?***

At minimum, your project location map should include the project path, relevant landmarks, a north arrow, a legend if necessary, and a scale.

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- ***What are the likely design requirements that my project must meet?***
Previously we have allowed projects to be designed by a Licensed Architect. Starting in 2017, all projects that include infrastructure components will require design by a Registered Professional Engineer. Due to the diversity of projects funded by the RTP, further design requirements will vary with each project. For project specific questions please contact LFPA@ardot.gov.
- ***What documentation is required for the maintenance commitment?***
A statement from the party having maintenance jurisdiction should be attached to the application. In the statement, describe how maintenance will be accomplished after project completion. Include who will perform maintenance, a maintenance schedule and checklist, and an inspection schedule. This certification of ownership and maintenance may also be included in the resolution of support provided by the applicant.
- ***Do I need to include proof of support for the project?***
It is not necessary to provide copies of letters from individuals supporting your project unless they are indicating a financial commitment to the project as requested in the application. However, they may be submitted if you so choose.
- ***When will applicants know if their projects will be funded?***
All applicants will be informed on the status of their applications as soon as the information becomes available.
- ***What is the minimum width of a paved trail?***
To meet existing safety and design guidelines, multiple-use trails allowing access to other user groups must be at least 10 feet wide. Such facilities can be as narrow as 8 feet in width when other group's usage is expected to be low. **Proposing a width of less than 10 feet must be carefully justified.**
- ***Is using deductive/additive alternates an option?***
Yes. Using deductive/additive alternates may be used to keep the project on budget.
- ***Is there a required match for my project?***
The RTP requires matching local funds of at least 20% of the project costs. Additional consideration may be given to projects whose match exceeds the minimum required.
- ***What can I use for my 20% local match?***
 - Budgeted line item funds (cash) are the preferred source of local match.
 - The documented and verified value of donated materials can be used as local match.
 - Volunteer labor can be credited at the prevailing minimum wage rate and used as local match.
 - The appraised value of real estate donated to the sponsor for the express purpose of the trail project can be used as local match.

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- ***Is there a minimum funding request?***
All RTP projects will have a minimum requested federal funding amount of \$20,000. This would mean a total project cost of \$25,000 including the required local match.
- ***Is there a maximum funding request?***
All RTP projects will have a maximum requested federal funding amount of \$500,000. This would mean a total project cost of \$625,000 including the required local match; however, providing a match greater than 20% for a larger project is also acceptable.
- ***If all the requested funds are not received can the local match be increased rather than the project scope decreasing?***
Yes.
- ***Are contingency costs allowed in the estimate?***
Including contingency will not cause your project to be deemed ineligible. However, contingency does not qualify as an eligible cost and federal funds will not be awarded to cover this amount.
- ***Does my project need to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act?***
With few exceptions, all trails, particularly in urban areas, must be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The project must adhere to existing barrier free design standards.
- ***Does the RTP require projects to follow the Buy America Act?***
Yes. The Buy America Act applies to all projects receiving RTP funding.
- ***What expenses qualify for reimbursement under the RTP?***
Per ARDOT guidelines, only construction costs are eligible for reimbursement. At the Department's sole discretion, other phases of large, regionally-significant projects may be awarded federal funds.
- ***What expenses do not qualify for reimbursement under the RTP?***
Landscaping beyond what is necessary to eliminate construction damage and irrigation facilities cannot be approved. Visitor center construction/improvements and playground equipment will not be funded.

Engineering, architect, planning and construction inspection services are not eligible for reimbursement. At the Department's sole discretion, other phases of large, regionally-significant projects may be awarded federal funds. In addition, advertising costs incurred during the bid process are **not eligible** for reimbursement.

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▪ ***Are sidewalks eligible for funding under the RTP?***

Sidewalks may be funded, but should be of an appropriate width to be considered a trail. Funding of sidewalk projects is up to the discretion of the Arkansas Recreational Trails Advisory Committee.

▪ ***Do Davis-Bacon Wage Rates apply to the RTP?***

No, Davis-Bacon Wage Rates are not required on RTP projects, unless your project is on a Federal-aid route (i.e. highway right of way).

▪ ***What if project costs increase after funds have been awarded?***

Since the amount of the RTP award does not increase if the construction costs increase, the percentage of the local cash match will increase. The project sponsor is responsible for increased costs, regardless of the cash match identified in the original RTP application and the Agreement of Understanding. This includes relevant change orders for the project.

▪ ***What type of work can I apply for?***

The primary goal of this program is to construct new trails or repair damage to existing trails due to overuse. Trail amenities (benches, lighting, information kiosks, signing, brochures, etc.) will be given a lesser priority. Furthermore, funding for an approved project may be reduced to reflect the deletion of select items. The following items are eligible for funding.

- new trail construction,
- relocation of existing trails,
- major maintenance of existing trails,
- bridge purchase and installation,
- bridge construction,
- interpretive brochures and trail education materials *,
- lighting *,
- landscaping necessary to heal construction damage along paved trails,
(Landscaping with non-native plants cannot be funded with federal funds)
- bike racks *
- trail signs and marking *, and
- trail head facilities *:
 - restrooms *,
 - bulletin boards *,
 - all-terrain vehicle/dirt-bike loading ramps *,
 - parking areas *,
 - water supply *,
 - drinking fountains *, and
 - trash receptacles *

* Funding may be withheld for these items within approved projects.

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The following items will not be approved.

- landscaping beyond that necessary to heal construction damage along paved trails,
- non-motorized trails,
- irrigation equipment and decorative fountains,
- property condemnation (eminent domain),
- visitor center construction/improvements and welcome signs,
- maintenance costs for equipment,
- equipment purchases - equipment should be rented or leased,

▪ ***Can a project on private property be approved?***

Projects on private property can be funded. However, access must be provided to the general public for public recreational purposes. Public access must be provided throughout the life of the project.

▪ ***When can I start work on the project?***

ARDOT will issue an official notice to proceed to each sponsor who submits required project development information (proof of ownership, plans, specifications, and estimated cost) and who signs an Agreement of Understanding and a Contract. Any approved costs directly associated with the project incurred **after** the issuance of the notice to proceed are eligible for reimbursement. **Costs incurred prior to the issuance of the notice to proceed will not be eligible for reimbursement.**

▪ ***Can I receive funds to get started on the construction?***

This is a reimbursable program. The sponsor is responsible for accomplishing work on the project and incurring actual expenses prior to receiving funds from ARDOT.

▪ ***Why might my project scope be reduced?***

The RTP Advisory Committee may choose to reduce the project scope for multiple reasons. Exclusions of ineligible items or funding constraints are common examples. Having the project scope broken into phases will assist the ARTAC in selecting the most appropriate funding amount if funding constraints are encountered.

▪ ***Can I use prison inmate labor on my project?***

The value of prison inmate labor cannot be used as part of the local sponsor's match. This labor can be used to decrease the overall cost of the project, but is not eligible for reimbursement or match.

▪ ***What documentation is required if the proposed project is located on state highway right of way?***

The ARDOT local district office can supply verification of state right-of-way. If the project is located within ARDOT right of way, coordination with ARDOT right of way and district personnel will occur during the design of the project.

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- ***Who is responsible for initiating the National Environmental Protection Agency process?***

ARDOT will provide routine environmental documentation for RTP projects. Other documents, such as permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will be the responsibility of the sponsor. If your project will require a more extensive environmental document due to environmentally-sensitive areas included in your project, you may be required to hire a consultant to prepare the environmental document for the project. This would not be Federal-aid eligible under this program.

- ***What do I need to consider if I anticipate that property (right of way) will need to be acquired for my project?***

When the acquisition of real property is required for any federally-funded project, and/or persons are displaced as a result of the acquisition, demolition, or rehabilitation, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 “The Uniform Act” must be followed to ensure fair and consistent treatment is given to those persons. **Do not start acquiring property now.** To expedite the acquisition, it is very important to reach out to ARDOT throughout the entire process to assure that all Federal and State requirements are met. You may familiarize yourself with “The Uniform Act”, as well as obtain electronic versions of the Federal Highway Administration’s brochures on acquisition and relocation by visiting https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/index.cfm.

- ***Would a trails solely for the benefit of Electric Bicycles be eligible for RTP Motorized funds?***

No. However, a trail that was diverse and would accommodate other modes of motorized trail users would be acceptable.