

James River Association (JRA)

James A. Buzzard River Education Center

Multimodal Connectivity Plan Scope of Work: Funding Opportunities

Memorandum

Prepared by the U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe National Transportation Systems Center on behalf of the James River Association



The Virginia Capital Trail Trailhead at Great Shiplock Park
Adjacent to the River Education Center Site
Source: U.S. DOT Volpe Center, March 2024



The James River Association (JRA), founded in 1976, is the oldest and largest river conservation group in Virginia, and the only organization solely dedicated to protecting and restoring America’s Founding River, the James River. JRA’s mission is to be the guardian of the James River – to provide a voice for the river and take action to promote conservation and responsible stewardship of its natural resources. To accomplish its mission, JRA’s two strategic goals include: 1) Achieving a fully healthy James River; and 2) Helping communities within the watershed realize the benefits from a healthy James River and support protecting it.



Financial and technical assistance for this study was provided by the National Park Service Chesapeake Gateways Office, Chesapeake Gateways Program.

Through Chesapeake Gateways, the NPS Chesapeake Gateways Office inspires and helps people discover, experience, and connect with the natural and cultural heritage and recreational opportunities of the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers, landscapes, and communities across its watershed. NPS Chesapeake Gateways works with people and partners to conserve and steward special places important to communities, visitors, and the nation, for this and future generations. Support through this program is typically in the form of collaborative partnerships, technical assistance, and grants. NPS Chesapeake Gateways provides technical assistance through staff expertise to aid the managers and partners of Chesapeake places and programmatic partners in conserving, restoring, interpreting, and providing access to cultural, natural, and recreational resources within the watershed.



The U.S. DOT Volpe Center was established within U.S. DOT in 1970 to bring technical capability and a future-oriented outlook to pressing national transportation issues. The DOT Volpe Center provides technical expertise and develops solutions to complex transportation challenges in support of U.S. DOT, other Federal, State, and local agencies, non-profit organizations, private entities, and others. NPS Chesapeake Gateways funds an interagency agreement with the DOT Volpe Center to bring transportation and access expertise and technical assistance to aid Chesapeake places and partners.

Introduction & Background

This memorandum identifies and discusses funding opportunities to support the upcoming James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan Scope of Work.

The James River Association’s (JRA) River Education Center (REC) project partners have played a critical role in contributing knowledge on available funding sources at multiple different scales. Funding opportunities were discussed alongside challenges and opportunities for improved multimodal access at both the in-person project partner kickoff meeting on March 29, 2024, and the virtual project partner kickoff meeting on April 22, 2024.

Entities that have been identified are organized based on the scale at which they apply. These range from Federal and State grants to funding opportunities from local/regional or non-profit/community-based organizations. All the potential funding opportunities identified for the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan are summarized in Table 1 and discussed in the sections that follow. Given the numerous grant programs that exist, this funding memo is not comprehensive of all potential opportunities, rather it is meant to serve as a starting point for funding opportunities that JRA and its partners could further explore to fund multimodal access at and around the James River Education Center and the City of Richmond. In addition, due to the upcoming reauthorization of infrastructure funding after Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, it is important to note that not all these programs are guaranteed to exist after that point.

Table 1. Potential Funding Opportunities for James River Multimodal Connectivity Plan

Program	Issuing Agency	Anticipated Application Cycle or Deadline
Federal Level Funding Opportunities		
<u>NPS Chesapeake Gateways Network Grants</u>	National Park Service (NPS) Chesapeake Gateways	FY 25 Deadline: October 21, 2024
<u>Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program</u>	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	FY 24 Application Cycle: Anticipated to open in Fall 2024 and close in Winter 2025 (based on previous FY application cycle)
<u>SS4A</u>	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST)	FY 24 P&D Deadline: 08/29/24, 5:00 pm Eastern FY 25-26 Deadlines: Yet to be announced
<u>Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program</u>	U.S. DOT Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	FY 23-24 Deadline: 09/23/24, 11:59 pm Eastern
<u>NAE</u>	U.S. DOT OST	FY 24 Grant Cycle and Deadline: Yet to be announced
<u>RAISE</u>	U.S. DOT OST	FY 25 Deadline: 01/13/25, 11:59 pm Eastern FY 26 Deadline: 01/13/26, 11:59 pm Eastern
<u>Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)</u>	U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	FY 23 Deadline: 07/17/24, 11:59 pm Eastern FY 24 Grant Cycle and Deadline: Yet to be announced

Program	Issuing Agency	Anticipated Application Cycle or Deadline
State Level Funding Opportunities		
<u>Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) NPS Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Grants Program</u>	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)	Round 8 Grant Cycle and Deadline: Yet to be announced
<u>Virginia Recreational Trails Program (RTP)</u>	Virginia DCR	FY 25 Grant Cycle and Deadline: Pending funding notification from FHWA but is anticipated to be held in Spring 2025.
<u>Transportation Alternatives Program</u>	Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)	FY 23-24 Deadline: 09/15/24, 5:00 pm Eastern
Local Level Funding Opportunities		
<u>Regional Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (RSTBG) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside</u>	Regional Richmond Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) - PlanRVA	Timelines vary by program, consult with PlanRVA for specific program deadlines.
<u>Community Development Block (CDBG) Program</u>	City of Richmond	Timelines vary by grant application type, consult with the City of Richmond and the State for specific application deadlines.
Nonprofit / Community-Based Organizations Level Funding Opportunities		
<u>Preservation Trust Fund</u>	Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF)	FY 25 Deadline: 08/08/24, 5:00 pm Eastern Applications are also being accepted on a rolling basis for the Easement Assistance for Localities grants.
<u>Get Outdoors Fund</u>	VOF	No grant rounds for the Get Outdoors Fund will be offered in FY 2025.
<u>Targeted Environmental Remediation and Restoration Accounts (TERRA) Program</u>	VOF	No active funds from this program would apply to JRA at this time.
<u>Capital Trail Outdoor Equity Fund</u>	Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF)	2024-2025 Cycle Deadline: 08/14/24
<u>American Water and Environment Grant Program</u>	American Water	2025 Application Cycle and Deadlines: Yet to be announced; dates will be posted by 01/31/25.

Source: U.S. DOT Volpe Center, July 2024

Federal Level

National Park Service (NPS) Grants

Chesapeake Gateways Network Grants

Chesapeake Gateways offers an annual, competitive grant opportunity to strengthen a community's ability to enhance public education of and access to the Chesapeake Bay as detailed in the *Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998*.

The focus of the annual grant opportunity varies from year to year. For FY25, Chesapeake Gateways seeks to develop Chesapeake Gateways Communities as strategic focal points by:

- Supporting community collaboration projects that link local nature, culture, history, and/or recreation-based tourism to economic impact of the community.
- Supporting the development and implementation of community events that celebrate the rich cultural, historical, natural, or recreational legacy and ongoing story of the Bay as a way of engaging with residents and visitors.

The application deadline is October 21, 2024.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities, but projects / programs must be conducted within the [watershed boundary](#) to be considered.¹

- State, County, City/Township, or Special District governments
- Independent school districts
- Public and State controlled institutions and Private institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized) and Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized Tribal governments)
- Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS and nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- For profit organization other than small businesses
- Small businesses

Eligible Project Types

The program will provide approximately \$1 million for the FY 2025 grant cycle in two categories:

- 1. Linking Tourism and Economic Development Grants (Award Range: \$50,000 to \$100,000)**

¹ While applicants can be from outside the Chesapeake watershed, only projects that take place in the watershed will be considered.

Proposals submitted should demonstrate that the projects reflect a community need; link local recreation, culture, history, and/or nature tourism to economic impact of the community; and involve a collaboration among community partners. Projects should link nature-based and cultural tourism with economic initiatives for local resilience and community sustainability, especially tied with sectors closely linked with Chesapeake heritage, such as historical or cultural crafts and trades, working lands, or maritime activities.

2. Event Support Grants (Award Range: \$10,000-\$25,000)

Proposals should demonstrate how the event or festival celebrates the rich cultural, historical, natural, or recreational legacy and ongoing story of Chesapeake Gateways communities. Public events and festivals should encourage exploration and enjoyment of the wealth of cultural, historical, natural, and recreational experiences available in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The events encourage new and enhanced opportunities to connect with underrepresented communities through inclusive and welcoming events, festivals, places, and programming.

Grants may not be used for acquisition of property or services of direct benefit to the Federal government, including support of the day-to-day operations of a federal agency.

Example Awards

In FY 2023, NPS Chesapeake Gateways awarded 22 grants totaling nearly \$2.3 million, which included a \$149,520.56 award for JRA's [Seeing is Believing - Linking 5th Grade Hampton City Students with Local Culture and Nature through Outdoor Environmental Education Project](#). The project advances a curriculum which connects 5th grade students and teachers in 21 elementary schools with nature and culture, through a professional development session, in-class lessons and hands-on field experiences, and community environmental days.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** The FY 2025 application cycle is anticipated to open in July 2024 and close on October 21, 2024. Though the timeline may be too close, there may be sufficient time for JRA to prepare an application for this deadline. Alternatively, since this is an annual opportunity, JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding if it fits the focus.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** Given its proximity to downtown businesses and tourist activities, increasing visitorship and use of the REC and adjoining Dock Street Park would allow for more tourist dollars flowing through this part of the city. A proposal to address elements of the JRA's REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan that would allow for greater public use of the REC and Dock Street Park could help increase economic development of the area.

- **Eligibility:** Projects submitted must reflect a community collaboration. In addition to the City of Richmond, the partners involved in the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could be engaged in a community-level proposal to address elements of the connectivity that would contribute to local economic impact. JRA or the City could take on the role of lead applicant. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Grants

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\) program](#), which supports projects that address hazard mitigation and management, where the goal is to reduce risks from natural hazards and disasters. BRIC’s guiding principles include supporting communities through capability and capacity building, encouraging and enabling innovation, promoting partnerships, enabling large infrastructure projects, maintaining flexibility, and providing consistency.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible States, territories, and federally recognized tribal governments can submit applications on behalf of sub applicants for BRIC funding.² Each state, territory, federally recognized tribal government and the District of Columbia shall designate one agency to serve as the applicant for BRIC funding. Each agency may submit only one BRIC grant application to FEMA. An application can be made up of an unlimited number of sub applications. Applicants must have a FEMA-approved state or tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) by the application deadline.³ They also must have one at the time of obligation of grant funds. Homeowners, business operators and nonprofit organizations cannot apply directly to FEMA. However, they can be included in a sub application submitted by an eligible sub applicant.

Eligible sub applicants include local governments, including cities, townships, counties, special district governments, state agencies and federally recognized tribal governments (who choose to apply as sub applicants).⁴ They must submit sub applications to their state, territory or tribal applicant agency. Sub applicants must have a FEMA-approved local or tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan in accordance with [Title 44 Code of Federal Regulations Part 201](#) by the application deadline. They must also have one at the time of obligation of grant funds for hazard mitigation projects and capability- and capacity-building activities. Hazard mitigation planning and planning-related activities, partnerships and building codes are exempt from the plan requirement. Federally

² Sub applicants cannot submit these directly to FEMA.

³ States, territories, and federally recognized tribal governments must have received a major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in the 7 years before the application period start date.

⁴ Federally recognized tribal governments can choose to apply as a sub applicant to an eligible state or territory.

recognized tribal governments, submitting as sub applicants to a state or territory, are included in this exemption.

Eligible Project Types

BRIC funds may be used for:

- Capability- and capacity-building activities to include partnerships, as well as mitigation planning and planning-related activities.⁵
- Mitigation projects
- Management costs⁶

Existing project types detailed in the [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance](#) for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program are eligible under the BRIC program. Eligible projects must:

- Be cost-effective.
- Be designed to increase resilience and reduce risk of injuries, loss of life, and damage and destruction of property.
- Meet either of the two latest published editions of relevant consensus-based codes, specifications and standards.
- Align with the applicable hazard mitigation plan (HMP).
- Meet all criteria found in the [2023 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide \(HMA Guide\)](#).
- Meet all applicable Federal, State, tribal, and local floodplain and land use laws defined in the HMA Guide.
- Meet all Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) requirements.

Example Awards

Funding through the BRIC program was [announced for Richmond](#) in August 2023 for the Richmond Water Treatment Facility – Feeder Channel Retaining Wall Restoration. The project will improve the feeder channel, concrete wall, and berms at the Richmond Water Treatment Facility; rehabilitate concrete walls and increase their height to prevent overtopping; repair and replace channel gates;

⁵ Capability- and capacity-building activities enhance the knowledge, skills and expertise of the current workforce to expand or improve the administration of mitigation assistance. Activities include building codes, partnerships, project scoping, and hazard mitigation planning and planning-related activities. Capability- and capacity-building activities can only be submitted under the State/Territory Allocation and the Tribal Set-Aside.

⁶ There is financial assistance to reimburse the recipient and subrecipient for eligible and reasonable indirect costs, direct administrative costs, and other administrative expenses for a specific mitigation measure or project in an amount up to 15% of the total grant award. Of this amount, no more than 10% may be used by the recipient and 5% by the subrecipient for such costs generally. Applicant requests for management costs must be submitted in a separate sub application in FEMA GO. Applicants may submit up to 10% of the application budget. This includes sub applicant management costs for applicants to administer and manage award and subaward activities. The sub applicant management costs (up to 5%) must be added to the sub application total budget prior to the calculation of the applicant management costs (up to 10%).

improve slope stability; remove vegetation and burrowing animals; and repair cracks.⁷ The project will also protect water treatment and distribution services for those within the facility’s service area, ultimately making the plant more resilient to 100-year flood events and protect or restore wetlands. This funding source, as well as the [FEMA Disaster Relief Fund](#), are essential for flood management and increasing the city’s resilience.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that also protect the city from climate impacts in the future.

- **Timeline:** The FY 2024 application cycle is anticipated to open in Fall 2024 and close in Winter 2025 (based on previous FY application cycle). JRA could plan to work with the city to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the third guiding principle of the program, “Promote partnerships and enable high-impact investments to reduce risk from natural hazards with a focus on critical services and facilities, public infrastructure, public safety, public health and communities.”
- **Eligibility:** Though mitigation planning and planning related activities are eligible projects, it is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that also protect the city from climate impacts in the future, could be eligible expenses. JRA is not eligible on their own, but they can be included in a sub application submitted by an eligible sub applicant such as the City could take on the role of lead applicant. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

U.S. Department of Transportation Grants⁸

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST) administers the [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#), authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58, November 15, 2021, “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” or “BIL”) for \$5 billion in appropriated funds for FY2022 – 2026 (or \$1 billion per year through FY2026). SS4A is a discretionary grant program that provides financial support for

⁷ The Richmond Water Treatment Facility serves businesses, public properties, and essential community facilities.

⁸ The U.S. DOT created the [DOT Navigator](#) as a resource to help communities understand how to apply for grants, and plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services. In addition, U.S. DOT created the [BIL Launchpad](#) to provide customized information on available grant funding, interactive technical support, data on successful awards, and essential resources. JRA can explore additional Federal grant opportunities via the U.S. DOT [Discretionary Grants Dashboard](#) or the U.S. DOT webpage at: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/find-federal-grant-opportunities>.

regional, local, and Tribal initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users. In FY 2022 and 2023 combined, USDOT awarded \$1.7 billion in Federal funding to over 1,000 communities in all 50 States and Puerto Rico. As of May 2024, over \$3 billion is still available in the SS4A program for future funding rounds.⁹ Funding is provided for two types of grants: [Planning and Demonstration \(P&D\) Grants](#) and [Implementation Grants](#).

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities as follows:

- State Governments
- Local Governments and Political Subdivisions of a State
- U.S. Territories
- Political subdivisions of a State
- Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)
- Federally recognized Tribal governments and Affiliated Groups
- Planning and Project Organizations
- Transportation Providers and Operators
- Academic and Research Institutions
- Multijurisdictional group of entities from the ones described above (select one lead applicant from group)

Eligible Project Types

Proposals may include more than one action or activity. Eligible projects under the P&D Grants support the development of comprehensive safety action plans that identify the most significant roadway safety concerns in a community. Eligible projects under the Implementation Grants support the implementation of projects and strategies to address roadway safety issues. Eligible project types for SS4A grant funding include:

- Planning
- Construction
- Equipment and Materials
- Operations and Maintenance
- Technology Demonstrations and Deployment
- Technical Assistance, Workforce Development, and Training/Education
- Accessibility

P&D Grants provide Federal funds to do three types of activities:

1. Develop a [comprehensive safety action plan](#) (referred to as an “Action Plan”).

⁹ The SS4A program is authorized at \$1 billion in competitive grants per year through FY 2026. There is no statutory minimum or maximum but expected award sizes in fiscal year 2024 are between \$100,000 and \$25 million depending on the scope.

2. Conduct [supplemental safety planning](#) to complete or enhance an Action Plan.
3. Carry out [demonstration activities](#) to inform the development of, or an update to, an Action Plan.

The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribal area, or region. Eligible uses of P&D grant funds include activities such as goal setting, safety analyses, equity representation, policy and process improvement, strategic planning, and demonstration activities that will inform the development of an Action Plan.

Implementation Grants may also use Federal funds for three activities:

1. [Demonstration activities](#) to inform an existing Action Plan.
2. [Supplemental planning](#) to inform an existing Action Plan.
3. Project-level planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan. Project-level planning, design, and development activities must be directly connected to the completion of projects and strategies funded through an Implementation Grant.

Eligible uses of Implementation grant funds include carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan such as:

- Applying low-cost roadway safety treatments system-wide
- Transforming roadway corridors on a [High-Injury Network](#) into a [Complete Street](#)
- Installing pedestrian safety enhancements
- Carrying out speed management strategies
- Creating safe routes to school
- Conducting education campaigns
- Reducing roadway departure crashes through additional safety infrastructure
- Improving the safety of intersections

Example Awards

In FY 2022, funding through the [SS4A program](#) was [awarded to the City of Richmond](#) for a Planning and Demonstration grant totaling \$762,414 in Federal funds to build upon the existing safety action plan and address issues of speed management, lighting, accessibility, and high-risk drivers. In FY 2023, [the City of Richmond was awarded](#) a second round of funding for an Implementation grant totaling \$10,768,909 in Federal funds to address 13 different corridors across the City with various interventions in alignment with the high-injury network (HIN).

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan, except that the City of Richmond already received a FY 2022 SS4A P&D grant to build upon the [existing safety action plan](#). However, the City of Richmond has been successful in receiving additional SS4A funds for an implementation grant to fund safety improvement priority projects identified in the action plan including upgrading intersections with flashing yellow arrows,

upgrading street lighting from high pressure sodium fixtures to LED fixtures, installing signs and markings at unsignalized intersections to meet Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards, installing pedestrian hybrid beacons at high-risk crossings, and adding concrete barriers to marked separated bike lane, among other intersection and safety improvements. Similarly, an SS4A Implementation Grant could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that align with safety projects and strategies identified in the Action Plan, specifically those that align with Richmond’s Vision Zero Priorities such as providing an equitable transportation network.

- **Timeline:** The FY 2024 P&D grant deadline is August 29, 2024 at 5:00 pm Eastern. The FY 2024 Implementation grant deadline closed on May 16, 2024. The FY 2025 / 2026 deadlines are yet to be announced, though it is anticipated that these cycles will follow a similar cycle as previous years, with grant applications opening around February. Though the timeline passed for this year, JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding once the Multimodal Connectivity Plan is complete.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the SS4A program goal to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users.
- **Eligibility:** Though planning is an eligible project activity, it is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type given that the City of Richmond already has a Vision Zero Action Plan. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that provide an equitable transportation network and improve safety for all roadway users, could be eligible expenses. JRA would need to partner with the City, who could take on the role of lead applicant. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program

The U.S. DOT Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) administers the [Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program](#), authorized in Section 22305 of BIL. The Railroad Crossing Elimination program is a discretionary grant program that provides funding for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities including:

- States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other United States territories and possessions
- Political subdivision of a state
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes
- A unit of local government or a group of local governments
- A public port authority
- A metropolitan planning organization

- A group of the entities described above

Eligible Project Types

Eligible projects include:

- Grade separation or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, tunnel, or combination thereof;
- Track relocation;
- Improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other;
- Measures to improve safety related to a separation, closure, or track relocation project;
- Other means to improve the safety if related to the mobility of people and goods at highway-rail grade crossings (including technological solutions); and,
- The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project type.

Example Awards

In FY 2022 the Maryland DOT Maryland Transit Administration was awarded up to \$1,534,280 in grant funds for the Warner Street Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Project. The proposed project will support planning activities and construction of minor safety improvements at an existing at-grade crossing as well as fund a long-term study to grade separate the crossing. The project will encompass grade separation alternatives analysis, feasibility, and concept design study as well as design and construction of short-term crossing improvements on CSX right-of-way. The Maryland Department of Transportation and Baltimore City are providing a 20 percent non-Federal match. \$400,000 of this project funding amount qualifies for the statutory set-aside for Planning projects.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as infrastructure improvement projects that also improve safety related to the separation of the at-grade rail crossing at the Dock Street and Pear Street intersection.

- **Timeline:** The FY 2023-2024 application cycle open through 11:59 pm Eastern on September 23, 2024. open in Fall 2024 and close in Winter 2025 (based on previous FY application cycle). Though JRA will not have the Multimodal Connectivity Plan complete for this cycle of funding, JRA could plan to work with the city to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding once the Multimodal Connectivity Plan is complete.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** Given the safety concerns at the Dock Street and Pear Street intersection, the REC's location proximate to the intersection positions JRA well for including a project to address safety improvements for the highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and good in the Multimodal Connectivity Plan.

Eligibility: Though planning and planning related activities for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossings are eligible projects, funding to develop the REC Multimodal Connectivity

Plan would not be an eligible project type. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as infrastructure improvement projects that also improve safety related to the separation of the at-grade rail crossing at the Dock Street and Pear Street intersection, could be eligible expenses. JRA is not eligible to apply for the grant on their own, but the City of Richmond could take on the role of lead applicant. JRA could then work with the City of Richmond to develop a grant application. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program (NAE)

U.S. DOT OST administers the [NAE Program](#), established by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), provides awards to support transportation access projects that connect communities in supporting neighborhood level equity, safety, and affordability, as well as mitigating negative environmental impacts. The program will provide up to \$3.155 billion in grant awards, with an emphasize on assisting economically disadvantaged or underserved communities with planning and capacity building. There are three types of grants through this program, all of which JRA could feasibly apply for, to include:

- **Community Planning Grants:** Used for planning activities for future construction projects and allow for innovative community planning to address localized transportation challenges.
- **Capital Construction Grants:** Used to carry out a project to remove, retrofit, mitigate, or replace an existing eligible dividing facility with a new facility that reconnects communities; mitigate a burdening facility that is a source of air pollution, noise, stormwater, or other burdens; or implement a strategy to reduce environmental harm and/or improve access.
- **Regional Partnerships Challenge Grants:** Used for projects led by two or more eligible applicants to address a persistent regional challenge related to equitable access and mobility.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities including:

- States and territories of the U.S.
- Units of local governments
- Political subdivisions of a State
- Federally recognized Tribal governments
- U.S. Territories
- Special purpose districts or public authorities with a transportation function
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Nonprofit organizations or institutions of higher education (must have entered into a partnership with an eligible entity above and be applying for planning and capacity building activities in disadvantaged or underserved communities)

Eligible Project Types

Proposals may include more than one action or activity. Eligible projects under this program include projects that improve walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access through context-sensitive strategies and address existing transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity or negative impacts on the human or natural environment, especially in disadvantaged or underserved communities. The program also provides funding for planning and capacity building activities in disadvantaged or underserved communities as well as funding for technical assistance to units of local government to facilitate efficient and effective contracting, design, and project delivery and to build capacity for delivering surface transportation projects. Facilities that are eligible for the NAE program include a dividing facility, which is a surface transportation facility that creates an obstacle to community connectivity by design factors such as high speeds or grade separation, and burdening facility, which is a surface transportation facility that is a source of burdens to a disadvantaged or underserved community, such as air pollution, noise, stormwater. Eligible project types include those that:

- Improve walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access through projects that are context-sensitive –
 - to remove, remediate, or reuse a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(1);
 - to replace a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(1) with a facility that is at-grade or lower speed;
 - to retrofit or cap a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(1);
 - to build or improve complete streets, multiuse trails, regional greenways, or active transportation networks and spines; or
 - to provide affordable access to essential destinations, public spaces, or transportation links and hubs.
- Mitigate or remediate negative impacts on the human or natural environment resulting from a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(2) in a disadvantaged or underserved community through –
 - noise barriers to reduce impacts resulting from a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(2);
 - technologies, infrastructure, and activities to reduce surface transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution;
 - natural infrastructure, pervious, permeable, or porous pavement, or protective features to reduce or manage stormwater run-off resulting from a facility described in 23 U.S.C. 177(c)(2);
 - infrastructure and natural features to reduce or mitigate urban heat island hot spots in the transportation right-of-way or on surface transportation facilities; or
 - safety improvements for vulnerable road users; and
- Are for planning and capacity building activities in disadvantaged or underserved communities to –
 - identify, monitor, or assess local and ambient air quality, emissions of transportation greenhouse gases, hot spot areas of extreme heat or elevated air pollution, gaps in tree canopy coverage, or flood prone transportation infrastructure;

- assess transportation equity or pollution impacts and develop local anti-displacement policies and community benefit agreements;
- conduct predevelopment activities for projects eligible under 23 U.S.C. 177(a);
- expand public participation in transportation planning by individuals and organizations in disadvantaged or underserved communities; or
- administer or obtain technical assistance related to activities described in 23 U.S.C. 177(a).

The program also provides funding for other technical assistance activities including:

- Guidance, technical assistance, templates, training, or tools to facilitate efficient and effective contracting, design, and project delivery by units of local government;
- Subgrants to units of local government to build capacity to assume responsibilities to deliver surface transportation projects; and
- FHWA operations and administration. [§ 60501; 23 U.S.C. 177(g)].

Example Awards

In FY 2023, the City of Newport News, Virginia received \$1 million in Community Planning grant funds for the Southeast Community Greenway Reconnector Project. The Southeast Community Greenway Reconnector will reconnect the Southeast Community neighborhood and provide equity of access to the Southeast Community with the Downtown District over I-664 and the CSX rail line. The City of Winchester, Virginia also received \$1 million in Community Planning grant funds for its Neighborhood Access and Equity Program. Grant funds will be used to assist in planning and capacity building activities in disadvantaged communities and feasibility and pre-development activities.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** Funds for this program were appropriated in FY 2022 and remain available until September 30, 2026. FY 2023 project awards were announced in March 2024. It is unclear whether there will be another round of funding for the program, but JRA could plan to work with the city to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding if one is offered.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA's REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could align well with the Program's Community Planning Grants if it were to include project elements as outlined under Eligible Project Types.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could be an eligible project type under the Community Planning Grants. Though JRA is not an eligible entity by itself, the City could take on the role of lead applicant and JRA could partner with the city and surrounding historically disadvantaged / underserved communities to develop an application. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

U.S. DOT OST administers the [RAISE Grant Program](#), authorized under the Local and Regional Assistance Program in the BIL. RAISE is a discretionary grant program that provides \$1.5 billion annually for FY 2022 – 2026 for a wide variety of infrastructure projects across the nation, investing in road, rail, transit, and port projects with a significant local or regional impact that promises to achieve national objectives.¹⁰ Funded projects help build and repair critical pieces of our freight and passenger transportation networks. Funding is split equally between urban and rural areas, with a large percentage of grants supporting regions defined as historically disadvantaged or areas of persistent poverty. The eligibility requirements of RAISE allow project sponsors to pursue multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects that are more difficult to fund through other grant programs. Applicants may submit a total of three (3) project applications (planning and/or capital) for RAISE grants. U.S. DOT has received more than 12,466 applications requesting over \$213 billion for transportation projects across the country.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities including:

- States and the District of Columbia;
- Any territory or possession of the United States;
- Unit of local government;
- Public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more States;
- Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function, including a port authority;
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe or a consortium of such Indian Tribes;
- Transit agency; and
- Multi-State or multijurisdictional group of entities that are separately eligible.

Multiple States or jurisdictions may submit a joint application and must identify a lead applicant as the primary point of contact and identify the primary recipient of the award. Joint applications must include a description of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant.

Eligible Project Types

RAISE grants are awarded on a competitive basis, per statute, for planning or constructing surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation. Proposals may include more than one action or activity. Eligible projects under this program include Capital and Planning projects. Eligible planning projects are those which include planning, preparation, or design (for

¹⁰ Previously known as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants, the program dates back to the Recovery Act of 2009. Since its inception, Congress has dedicated nearly \$14.3 billion for fifteen rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact. (Source: [U.S. DOT](#)).

example - environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, benefit cost analysis (BCA), and other pre-construction activities) of eligible surface transportation capital projects that will not result in construction with RAISE FY funding. Eligible capital projects include, but are not limited to:

- Highway, bridge, or other road projects eligible under title 23, United States Code;
- Public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code;
- Passenger and freight rail transportation projects;
- Port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry);
- The surface transportation components of an airport project eligible for assistance under part B of subtitle VII (see FAQ # 10 for details);
- Intermodal projects;
- Projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species while advancing the goals of the RAISE program;
- Projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land and for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in the Federal Government; and
- Any other surface transportation infrastructure project that the Secretary considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program.

Example Awards

In FY 2023, USDOT awarded 162 projects across 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the US Virgin Islands totaling approximately \$2.2 billion. Several of the projects already awarded FY 2024 RAISE grant funding are for multimodal networks including, but not limited to:

- Adams County, Colorado received \$4.8 million to plan the I-270 & Vasquez Boulevard Interchange Safety and Multimodal Improvements Project. RAISE grant funds will be used for public outreach, environmental clearance, preliminary engineering, and final design for the reconstruction of the I-270 & Vasquez Blvd cloverleaf interchange into a partial cloverleaf, and enhancing existing, as well as implementing a new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure through and around I-270 and Vasquez Blvd.
- The City of Atlanta, Georgia received \$16 million to plan and construct the Westside Park Multimodal Access Project. RAISE grant funds will be used for planning and constructing multi-use paths, buffered cycle tracks, sidewalk improvements, ADA bus stop enhancements, lighting, and stormwater updates along Johnson Road, West Marietta Street, Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, Brady Avenue, and 10th Street.
- The City of Dublin, Georgia received \$1.5 million to plan the Connect Dublin Multimodal and Streetscape Plan Project. RAISE grant funds will be used for planning activities for future improvements to approximately 13.5-miles of city-owned roadway, drainage, and pedestrian facilities, along with other various corridor improvements. Planning elements include a feasibility study; bicycle-pedestrian study; data collection; environmental screening; community outreach; conceptual design; and economic analysis.
- The Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia received \$1.0 million to plan the Highway 40 Corridor Multimodal Assessment and Master Plan Project. RAISE grant funds will be used for

planning activities to identify potential mobility and connectivity improvements along approximately 1.5-miles of Highway 40 between Booker Washington Highway (Route 122) and Main Street, as well as approximately 0.7-miles of Tanyard Road from Highway 40 to the North Main Street intersection. The plan will consider access management solutions, Complete Streets improvements, frontage roadways, bicycle infrastructure, existing park-and-ride lot improvements.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** The FY 2025 application cycle is anticipated to open in Fall 2024 and close at 11:59 pm Eastern on January 13, 2025. A similar cycle is anticipated for FY 2026, with applications closing at 11:59 pm Eastern on January 13, 2026. Though the timeline may be too close, there may be sufficient time for JRA to prepare an application for the FY 2025 deadline. Alternatively, JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the Program’s goal of investing in road, rail, transit, and port projects with a significant local or regional impact that promises to achieve national objectives.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could be an eligible project type. Though JRA is not an eligible entity by itself, the City could take on the role of lead applicant and JRA could partner with the city to develop an application. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)

The U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) administers the [Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program \(ATIIP\)](#), authorized under BIL. The ATIIP is a discretionary grant program to construct projects to provide safe and connected active transportation facilities in active transportation networks or active transportation spines. ATIIP also provides an opportunity for eligible organizations to enhance their overall transportation network by integrating active transportation facilities with transit services, where available, to improve access to public transportation.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities including:

- Local or regional governmental organization, including a metropolitan planning organization or regional planning organization or council
- Multicounty special district
- States
- A multistate group of governments
- An Indian tribe (BIL § 11529(l)(5))

Eligible Project Types

Grants awarded under this program are to help communities plan, design, and construct safe and connected active transportation networks (*i.e.*, sidewalks, bikeways, and trails) that connect destinations within a community or metropolitan region (*i.e.*, schools, workplaces, residences, businesses, recreation areas, and medical facilities). Grants will also be provided for projects used for trails, pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and other routes that serve as backbones to connect two or more communities, metropolitan regions, or States. ATIIIP also provides an opportunity for eligible organizations to enhance their overall transportation network by integrating active transportation facilities with transit services, where available, to improve access to public transportation. The program offers two grants: 1) Planning and Design grants to develop plans for active transportation networks and active transportation spines; and 2) Construction grants to construct projects to provide safe and connected active transportation facilities in an active transportation network or active transportation spine. Construction funds are limited and extremely competitive. Both types of grants can go towards planning, designing, and constructing active transportation networks and active transportation spines.¹¹

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** The FY 2023 application cycle opened March 2024 and closes at 11:59 pm, Eastern on July 17, 2024. Though the timeline has passed, and it is unclear whether there will be another round of funding for the program, JRA could plan to work with the city to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding if one is offered.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA's REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is well-aligned the Program's goal to provide safe and connected active transportation facilities in active transportation networks or active transportation spines. The Plan could potentially be funded under the Planning and Design grant track. The program would provide an opportunity to enhance their overall transportation network by integrating active transportation facilities with transit services, where available, to improve access to public transportation.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could be an eligible project type under the Community Planning Grants. Though JRA is not an eligible entity by itself, the City or Regional Rural Transportation Planning Organization could take on the role of lead applicant and JRA could work with the lead to develop an application. If available in future years, the City or Regional Planning Organization could also utilize the ATIIIP program to construct bike/pedestrian infrastructure projects derived from the Multimodal Connectivity Plan that would provide safe and connected active transportation facilities from the BRT stop to the

¹¹ Active transportation *networks* are active transportation facilities that *connect between destinations within a community or metropolitan region*, including schools, workplaces, residences, businesses, recreation areas, medical facilities, and other community areas (BIL § 11529(l)(2)). Active transportation *spines* are active transportation facilities that *connect between communities, metropolitan regions, or States* (BIL § 11529(l)(3)).

River Education Center along Dock Street. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

State of Virginia Grant Opportunities

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

The [Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation \(DCR\)](#) is the State's lead natural resource conservation agency. DCR protects the natural habitat, parks, clean water, dams, open space and access to the outdoors, enabling and encouraging people to enjoy and benefit from Virginia's natural and cultural resources. DCR accomplishes its mission through funding, expertise, education, acquisition and improved access. The Department administers a variety of [grant and funding resources](#) including but not limited to helping reduce the impacts of flooding, building and rehabilitating trails and trail facilities and land acquisition for trail projects, increasing access to trail opportunities, securing permanent conservation easements, and purchasing open spaces and parklands, to name a few. Several of DCR's funding opportunities could be applicable to JRA's Multimodal Scope of Work.

[The Land and Water Conservation Fund State and Local Assistance Program](#)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established a federal reimbursement program for the acquisition and/or development of public outdoor recreation areas. The Virginia DCR administers the [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#) on behalf of NPS. The program represents a Federal, State and local partnership. Virginia has received more than \$80 million in assistance since the LWCF began. It has made more than 420 projects possible within the commonwealth. The LWCF is a 50-50% matching reimbursement program. The grant recipient must be able to fund 100% of the project while seeking periodic reimbursements. All LWCF assisted areas must be maintained and opened, in perpetuity, as public outdoor recreation areas to ensure their use for future generations.

The DCR administers the [Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership \(ORLP\) program](#) under the LWCF on behalf of NPS. NPS's ORLP program was established in 2014 to aid disadvantaged, urban communities that lack access to close-by outdoor recreation. ORLP is a nationally competitive, dollar-for-dollar matching grant program funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Funds can be used for the acquisition and/or development of, or substantial renovation of, public parks and other outdoor recreation spaces.¹²

¹² Note: ORLP is administered under Section 200305 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act which provides that project sites assisted with these funds must be maintained and accessible exclusively for public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity. This applies to the assisted park or site in its entirety, not just the area assisted by the grant funds.

Eligible Applicants

The ORLP application process differs from most Federal grant programs. Each State has a Lead Agency charged in administering the LWCF within the State. This agency solicits proposals from project sponsors across the State, then selects and submits those they feel are best qualified to meet the goals of the ORLP program to NPS for inclusion in the national competition. If the project is selected in the national competition, the State Lead Agency then works with the project sponsor to prepare and submit additional required documents necessary for NPS to complete a full and final review of the project and make a funding determination. The Virginia DCR is the Lead Agency in Virginia charged in administering the LWCF for the State.

The Virginia DCR may apply on behalf of itself or on behalf of an eligible sub-recipient (aka project sponsor) which includes other State agencies, local governments, special purpose districts such as park districts, and Federally recognized Indian tribes. Nonprofits and other private organizations are not eligible for a subgrant but are encouraged to collaborate with an eligible sub-recipient in developing projects.

Eligible Project Types

Eligible projects can include acquisition, development, a combination of acquisition and development, or rehabilitation of parks and other outdoor recreation areas. However, the park project must be located within an incorporated city or town with a population of at least 30,000 people.¹³ Within those cities and towns, the project must also serve disadvantaged communities lacking access to walkable outdoor recreation, in specific census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the federal [Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool](#) as the park tract itself must serve these communities. Project sites funded by ORLP must be preserved for public outdoor recreation uses in perpetuity.

Example Awards

The City of Mobile, Alabama was awarded \$386,525 in ORLP funds for its Three Mile Creek Greenway Project to transform Three Mile Creek from a degraded urban stormwater conveyance into a community asset that connects diverse neighborhoods and provides new recreation opportunities. The grant supported the initial construction of a greenway system in a low-income, minority area with limited recreation resources. The portion of the trail segment completed includes a fitness circuit/parcourse, lighting, benches, and more. Learn more about the project on the City of Mobile's website, [Map for Mobile](#).

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that provide access to close-by

¹³ Based on the 2020 census, qualifying cities and towns in Virginia are the cities of Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Chesapeake, Danville, Hampton, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Manassas, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, Portsmouth, **Richmond**, Roanoke, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach; and Blacksburg and Leesburg towns.

outdoor recreation spaces such as the surrounding James River Park System sites like Dock Street Park and Great Shiplock Park.

- **Timeline:** The Round 7 application cycle opened November 7, 2023, and closed April 30, 2024.¹⁴ Though the timeline has passed for this application cycle, JRA could plan to work with the city (or another eligible entity) to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding if one is offered.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the goal of the program, as it supports access to outdoor recreation in underserved urban areas. Further, the City of Richmond is located within an incorporated city or town with a population of at least 30,000 people, making the area eligible for funding. Further, the Multimodal Connectivity Plan would serve disadvantaged communities lacking access to walkable outdoor recreation in specific census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the federal [Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool](#) such as the neighborhoods of Fulton Bottom, Manchester, and a portion of Rockett’s Landing.
- **Eligibility:** It is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type under this grant program. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that also protect the city from climate impacts in the future, could be eligible expenses. JRA is not eligible on their own, but they are encouraged to collaborate with an eligible sub-recipient in developing projects. The City or James River Park System could take on the role of lead sub-recipient under the Virginia DCR to develop an application. The application could be developed in partnership with some of the surrounding historically disadvantaged / underserved communities. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Virginia Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The DCR administers the [Recreational Trails Program](#), a Federal 80-20 matching reimbursement program for building and rehabilitating trails and trail facilities and land acquisition for trail projects. Program funding is provided by the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under BIL, with mandated allocations to non-motorized, diversified and motorized trail categories. The Recreational Trails Program and Virginia Recreational Trails Program Advisory Committee steer project selections after a competitive call for applications.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities, a city, county, town, tribal or other government entities, as well as registered nonprofit groups partnered with a government body.

¹⁴ Note: State Lead Agency selection deadlines are earlier than the NPS’s national ORLP competition deadline and may include additional requirements. Entities interested in seeking funding under the ORLP program should contact their [State’s Lead Agency](#) to get details about their state’s process for selecting and submitting projects to the NPS’ national competition.

Eligible Project Types

Proposals may include more than one action or activity. Eligible project types under this program include new trail construction and improvements to existing trails (trail maintenance, repair, and amenity projects on existing land and water trails) including:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails.
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails.
- Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment.
- Construction of new recreational trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands).
- Acquisition of easements and property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.
- Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.
- Development and dissemination of publications and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails, including supporting non-law enforcement trail safety and trail use monitoring patrol programs, and providing trail-related training (limited to 5 percent of a state’s apportionment).
- State costs incurred in administering the program (limited to 7 percent of a state’s apportionment).

The RTP currently accepts applications for new trail construction in even-year grant rounds (2022, 2024, etc.).¹⁵ Existing trail maintenance and amenity project applications are accepted every grant round but are most competitive in odd-year grant rounds.

Example Awards

In FY 2021, Prince George County, Virginia received \$50k (\$62.5k project total) for the James River National Wildlife Refuge – Universal Access Trail to develop a nature trail and support signage. The City of Richmond Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities also received \$206,211 in FY 2021 funding (\$257,764 project total) for its Pump House ADA Trail Access and Amenities Project to provide ADA-compliant parking on Pump House Drive and an ADA accessible path to access existing pedestrian bridge and trail.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian trail or water-based trail projects that develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

- **Timeline:** The FY 2024 application cycle closed in May 2024. The 2025 RTP grant round is pending funding notification from FHWA but is anticipated to be held in Spring 2025 with

¹⁵ The 2024 RTP grant round closed on May 7, 2024. Twenty-nine applications were received requesting over \$6.3 million in RTP funding. Both new trail construction and improvements to existing trails were eligible for funding in this grant round. (Source: [Virginia Recreational Trails Program](#)).

only maintenance, repair, and amenity projects on existing trails eligible for funding. JRA could plan to work with the city to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.

- **Alignment with grant program goals:** Though JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is not well aligned with the goal of the program, it is likely that implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan will align well with the goal of the program to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses.
- **Eligibility:** It is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type under this grant program. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian trail or water-based trail projects that develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses, could be eligible expenses. JRA is not eligible on their own, but they are eligible in partnership with a government body. The city could take on the role of lead applicant and work with JRA to develop an application. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Virginia has the third-largest state-maintained highway system in the country, behind Texas and North Carolina. The [Virginia Department of Transportation \(VDOT\)](#) is responsible for building, maintaining and operating the state's roads, bridges and tunnels. VDOT also provides funding for airports, seaports, rail and public transportation through the [Commonwealth Transportation Board](#).

VDOT has [nine districts](#), each of which oversees maintenance and construction on the State-maintained highways, bridges, and tunnels in its area. JRA’s administrative office and its River Education Center fall under the jurisdiction of the Richmond District, which covers 14 counties and eight cities of the Commonwealth Capital Region. The district covers approximately 5,122 square miles of Central Virginia and serves as home to about 1.4 million people. It is divided by the James River, stretches between Virginia’s Piedmont and Tidewater regions, and is bounded by Lynchburg, Fredericksburg and Hampton Roads Districts and the North Carolina state line. In addition, VDOT has dozens of [divisions](#) to handle a wide variety of duties. VDOT’s [Local Assistance Division](#) develops policy and provides guidance for special funding programs and other programs that impact work performed by localities, and it serves as a liaison to local governments. Several of the VDOT Local Assistance Division’s funding opportunities could be applicable to JRA’s Multimodal Scope of Work.

Transportation Alternatives Program

VDOT administers the [Transportation Alternatives Program](#), a Federal reimbursement program intended to help local sponsors fund community-based projects that expand non-motorized travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of the transportation infrastructure. Program funding is provided by the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under BIL. The program focuses on providing

pedestrian and bicycle facilities and community improvements to expand travel choices, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment. It does not fund traditional roadway projects or maintenance.

VDOT also administers the Ready, Set, Go! (RSG!) population-based technical assistance program to support localities in developing project ideas toward future TA applications. VDOT is providing a second round of Ready, Set, Go!, a grant program that supports our local partners with smaller populations in refining projects for future Transportation Alternatives (TA) applications. This program is provided with 100% funding and requires no local match from selected applicants. Participating in the Ready, Set, Go! program alone will not result in readiness to submit a complete TA application, but localities that participate will receive guidance about other application requirements.

Eligible Applicants

The grant opportunity is open to a broad list of eligible entities including:

- Local government: any unit of local government below a state government agency, except for an MPO. Examples include city, town, or county agencies.
- Regional transportation authority: Considered the same as the Regional Transportation Planning Organizations defined in the statewide planning section (23 U.S.C. 135(m)).
- Transit agency: any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds as determined by the Federal Transit Administration.
- Natural resource or public land agency: any Federal, Tribal, State, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land, including state or local forest agencies, fish and game or wildlife agencies, Department of the Interior land management agencies, and U.S. Forest Service.
- School district, local education agency, or school: any school district or school, including public or nonprofit private schools. Projects should benefit the public and not a private entity.
- Tribal government
- Metropolitan planning organization that serves an urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more (i.e., Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), Transportation Planning Organizations (TPOs), Council of Governments (COG)).
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for or oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than an ineligible MPO or state agency) that the state determines to be eligible consistent with the goals of 23 U.S.C. 133(h)
- A State (VDOT), at the request of an eligible entity listed above

Eligible Project Types

TAP provides funding for a variety of transportation projects. Proposals may include more than one action or activity including:¹⁶

- On- and off-road trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation.
- Construction, planning, and design of projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers to access daily needs.
- Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized transportation users (Rails-to-Trails).
- Construction of turnouts and viewing areas, which are comprised of a project that supports a qualifying logical terminus with independent utility.
- Community improvement activities, including:
 - Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising.
 - Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities, solely to preserve and protect the structure according to historic preservation standards.
 - Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control.
 - Archaeological activities relating to impacts from a transportation project eligible under 23, U.S.C.
- Environmental mitigation activities, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement and mitigation to:
 - Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff.
 - Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
- Safe routes to school projects, as eligible under 23 U.S.C. 208, including:
 - Infrastructure-related projects [23 U.S.C. 208(g)(1)].
 - Non-infrastructure-related activities [23 U.S.C. 208(g)(3)].
- Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways (Boulevards from Divided Highways).

Starting with the FY 2027 – 2028 grant cycle, all projects submitted for TAP funding are required to be included in the applicant’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Example Awards

In FY 2021/2022, the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (Virginia) was awarded \$800,940 in Federal funds for its Deltaville Multi-Modal Project. Awarded funds were to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety by designing a multi-use or shared path on the Route 33 near and in

¹⁶ See [Appendix C: Eligible Project Activities](#) of the VDOT TAP Guidelines for additional project eligibility information.

Deltaville, VA. The path will connect the multitude of marinas located along Route 33 with Deltaville and the Deltaville Maritime Museum.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** The FY 2027-2028 application cycle opened in Spring 2024 and closes at 5:00 pm, Eastern on September 15, 2024. Though the timeline may be too close, there may be sufficient time for JRA to prepare an application for this deadline. Alternatively, JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the program’s intent to help local sponsors fund community-based projects that expand non-motorized travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of the transportation infrastructure.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan may be an eligible project type under the eligible project activity for “Construction, planning, and design of projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers to access daily needs”. However, if the plan itself is in fact ineligible, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as non-motorized bicycle and pedestrian projects that provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and community improvements to expand travel choices, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment, would likely be eligible projects. Though JRA may not be eligible to apply for funding on their own, the city could take on the role of lead applicant and work with JRA to develop an application. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Local Grant Opportunities – Regional Planning & the City of Richmond

Regional Richmond Transportation Planning Organization

The [Regional Richmond Transportation Planning Organization \(RRTPO\)](#) administers three regional transportation funding programs:

- **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG):** Provides States and regions with flexible Federal funding that may be used for a wide variety of highway and transit projects. Regional STBG funds are automatically sub allocated to regional planning organizations within the State. The wide variety of RSTGB investments in the Richmond Region support passenger and freight movement along the region’s surface transportation systems. Funds can be used to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on highways, bridges, tunnels, pedestrian facilities, bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects.

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program:** Provides Federal funding for transportation projects and programs that help improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion. The program was established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and continues to fund projects located in areas that do not currently – or previously did not – meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter. Portions of the Richmond region were previously nonattainment areas, but now the region’s air quality is in compliance. Through the RRTPO’s Ozone Advance agreement with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the RRTPO continues to qualify for CMAQ funds. The Federal government provides CMAQ funds to the Commonwealth of Virginia, which voluntarily suballocates a portion for projects and programs selected by regional metropolitan planning organizations.
- **Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside:** Provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school, and infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation. TA Set-Aside is an allocation set-aside within the Surface Transportation Block Grant funding allocation. This is no longer an independent program as it has been in the past. Starting Fiscal Year 2018, Virginia’s TA Set-Aside application cycle is moving to a biannual cycle. More information can be found with [VDOT’s Local Assistance Division – Transportation Alternatives](#).

These Federally funded transportation programs are designed to empower communities to cooperatively determine the future of transportation in a region. Although the Federal funds are provided to and administered by the State, the project selection and allocation decisions of how to expend the funds are performed by locally elected officials coming together as a regional council known as a metropolitan planning organization or transportation planning organization.

Eligible Applicants

For all these programs, grant funds are allocated to the States and regions and then regional funds are suballocated to regional planning organizations within the state.

Eligible Project Types

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

The BIL’s STBG Program continues [all prior STBG eligibilities](#) (see in particular 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(22), as amended, which carries forward all pre-FAST Act eligibilities). It also adds the following new eligibilities:¹⁷

- Privately-owned, or majority-privately owned, ferry boats and terminal facilities that, as determined by the Secretary, provide a substantial public transportation benefit or otherwise meet the foremost needs of the surface transportation system [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(1)(B)].
- Wildlife crossing structures, and projects and strategies designed to reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(1)(G); 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(14)].

¹⁷ [Except as noted, § 11109(a)(1)].

- The addition or retrofitting of structures or other measures to eliminate or reduce crashes involving vehicles and wildlife [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(3)].
- Projects eligible under 23 U.S.C 130 and installation of safety barriers and nets on bridges [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(5)].
- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(7)].
- Installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and vehicle-to-grid infrastructure [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(15)].
- Installation and deployment of current and emerging intelligent transportation technologies [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(16)].
- Planning and construction of projects that facilitate intermodal connections between emerging transportation technologies, such as magnetic levitation and hyperloop [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(17)].
- Protective features, including natural infrastructure, to enhance resilience of an eligible transportation facility [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(18)].
- Measures to protect an eligible transportation facility from cybersecurity threats [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(19)].
- Conducting value for money analyses or similar comparative analyses of public-private partnerships [§ 11508(d)(2); 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(21)].
- [Up to 5% of STBG apportionment] rural barge landing, docks, and waterfront infrastructure in a rural community or Alaska Native village that is off the road system; [§ 11109(a)(7); 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(23) and (j)].
- Projects to enhance travel and tourism [23 U.S.C. 133(b)(24)].
- Replacement of low-water crossing with a bridge not on a Federal-aid highway [§ 11109(a)(2)(D); 23 U.S.C. 133(c)(4)].
- Capital projects for the construction of a bus rapid transit corridor or dedicated bus lane [§ 11130; 23 U.S.C. 142(a)(3)].
- [Up to 15% of STBG apportionment] may be used on otherwise STBG-eligible projects or maintenance activities on roads functionally classified as rural minor collectors or local roads, ice roads, or seasonal roads, may be transferred to the Appalachian Highway System Program or the Denali Access System Program [§ 11109(a)(7); 23 U.S.C. 133(k)].

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program

The BIL continues all prior CMAQ eligibilities, and adds four new eligibilities:

- Shared micromobility, including bike sharing and shared scooter systems; [§ 11115(1); 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(7)].
- The purchase of diesel replacements, or medium-duty or heavy-duty zero emission vehicles and related charging equipment; [§ 11115(1); 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(8)].
- Modernization or rehabilitation of a lock and dam, or a marine highway corridor, connector, or crossing if functionally connected to the Federal-aid highway system and likely to contribute to attainment or maintenance of national ambient air quality standards (capped at 10% of CMAQ apportionment); and [§ 11115(1) and (2); 23 U.S.C. 149(b)(10), (b)(11), and (c)(4)].

- In alternative fuel projects, vehicle refueling infrastructure that would reduce emissions from nonroad vehicles and nonroad engines used in construction projects or port-related freight operations. [§ 11115(3); 23 U.S.C. 149(f)(4)(A)].

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside

The BIL continues all existing TA eligibilities and adds new eligibility for activities in furtherance of a vulnerable road user safety assessment. [§ 11109(b)(1)(C); 23 U.S.C. 133(h)(3)(C)].

Example Awards

In FY 2019 – FY 2021, the City of Richmond, Virginia received \$840k (\$1,050,000 project total) in FY19/FY20 Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-Aside funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program for the second and third phases of the multi-phased Gillies Creek Greenway Project. The second phase of the project received \$420k (\$525k project total) for the design and construction of a 10-foot-wide shared use path along Stony Run Road from Williamsburg Road to Government Road with crosswalks at both termini. The third phase of the project received \$420k (\$525k project total) for the design and construction of a 10-foot-wide shared use path along Stony Run Road from Government Road to Jennie Scher Road with crosswalks at both termini. When completed, the 2.5-mile Gillies Creek Greenway will extend from the Virginia Capital Trail adjacent to the James River to the Fulton & Oakwood communities.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan These Regional grant program opportunities are well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan:

- **Timeline:** Timelines vary by program, but JRA could plan to work with the City of Richmond and the RRTPO, PlanRVA, to prepare an application for future rounds of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the STBG and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding opportunities.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could be an eligible project type for either the STBG or the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding programs. JRA could work with the RRTPO on developing any applications. It is recommended that the City of Richmond or RRTPO take on the lead role for the projects. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Community Development Block Grants

The City of Richmond invests in homeless prevention and shelter, affordable housing, and neighborhood revitalization through specific Federally funded programs such as the [Community Development Block \(CDBG\) Program](#). The CDBG program receives Federal funding to develop viable urban communities by providing decent and affordable housing, services to the most vulnerable individuals in our communities, and by creating jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. Program funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Community Development Block Grant funds constitute the largest block of financial resources available to the City for housing and community development activities. These flexible funds are provided on an annual basis to the City to carry out a wide range of community activities focused in the areas of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, Economic Development, Public Facilities, Planning, and Public Services

Eligible Applicants

Eligible grantees of program funding include:

- Principal cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)
- Other metropolitan cities with populations of at least 50,000
- Qualified [Urban Counties](#) with populations of at least 200,000 (excluding the population of entitled cities)
- States and insular areas

States participating in the CDBG Program award grants only to non-entitlement Units of General Local Government (UGLG). Under this local grant opportunity, the City of Richmond receives annual suballocated funding from U.S. HUD to administer this program. HUD does not provide CDBG assistance directly to individuals, businesses, nonprofit or organizations, or other non-governmental entities. If any of these entities are interested in participating in this program, the organization needs to contact its local municipal or county officials to find out how the program operates in the area.

Eligible Project Types

CDBG Program funds may be used for activities which include, but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of real property
- Relocation and demolition
- Rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures Construction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers, and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes
- Public services, within certain limits
- Activities relating to energy conservation and renewable energy resources
- Provision of assistance to profit-motivated businesses to carry out economic development and job creation/retention activities

All CDBG activities must meet a Broad National Objective (BNO). The objectives fall into three primary categories: 1) Providing a Benefit to Low to Moderate Income Persons; 2) Preventing or Eliminating Slums and Blight; and 3) Meeting an urgent need, in cases of natural disasters or other emergencies.

Example Awards

In 2021, the City of Norton, VA was awarded \$1,500,000 in CDBG Community Improvement Grant funds for its Southside Comprehensive Community Development Project. The project includes the

rehabilitation of 14 housing units, replacement of waterline infrastructure, and sidewalk and street improvements. The project will serve 176 low- to moderate-income individuals in this neighborhood, which was voted as the highest-priority rehabilitation area for the city.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that improve the streets or neighborhood centers proximate to the REC.

- **Timeline:** Timelines vary by grant application type (i.e., competitive grants, planning grants, urgent needs grants, etc.) and have already closed for FY 2024, but JRA could plan to work with the City of Richmond to prepare an application for future rounds of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** Though JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is not well aligned with the goal of the program, it is likely that implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan will align well with the goal of the program to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.
- **Eligibility:** It is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type under this grant program. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that improve the streets or neighborhood centers proximate to the REC, could be eligible expenses. Once the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is adopted, JRA could work with the City to determine if any projects are eligible for funding under this program and to develop an application. It is recommended that the City of Richmond take on the lead role for the projects. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Nonprofit/Community-Based Organizations

A nonprofit grant resembles other financial donations typically given by public or private foundations, government agencies, or corporations. This section summarizes potential funding opportunities offered by nonprofit and community-based organizations to plan and implement multimodal transportation projects surrounding the James River Education Center in Richmond, VA. It is important to note that not all these programs are guaranteed to exist in future years.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation

The [Virginia Outdoors Foundation \(VOF\)](#) was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1966 and serves as the State’s leader in land conservation, having protected more than 910k acres in 114 counties and cities. VOF [provides funding](#) through three funding sources:

- **Preservation Trust Fund:** Established by the Virginia General Assembly in 1997 and administered by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF), the Open-Space Lands

Preservation Trust Fund (PTF) provides grants for acquisitions, easements, rights of way, and other methods of protecting open space for farming, forestry, recreation, wildlife, water quality, and more. VOF also provides income-based cost-share assistance grants to landowners donating an open-space or conservation easement to a locality. These grants cover legal, stewardship, and other costs associated with conveying an easement to VOF or a locality. VOF is seeking proposals for projects that provide new or expanded public access to open space, such as parks, preserves, trails, greenways, outdoor classrooms, beaches, and boat launches, as well as projects that protect exceptional natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the Commonwealth. Proposals may be submitted for both public and private lands. There is approximately \$1.7 million available for the first grant round of fiscal year 2025.

- **Get Outdoors Fund:** VOF’s Get Outdoors (GO) Fund was established in 2020 to provide grants for projects that increase access to safe open space in Virginia’s communities, especially those that are underserved. The intent of the program is to serve as a flexible, adaptable tool to be used to address communities’ needs.
- **Targeted Environmental Remediation and Restoration Accounts (TERRA) Program:** Established by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to administer funds resulting from legal and regulatory actions involving Virginia’s natural resources. It achieves this largely through grants. TERRA is subject to VOF’s high standards of transparency and accountability. TERRA can receive funds from a variety of legal and regulatory actions, such as mitigation plans, court orders, fines, civil, and criminal, and administrative settlements.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible entities vary by funding opportunity.

Preservation Trust Fund: PTF grants may be awarded to any person, organization, or locality with a real estate interest to convey on either public or private land. In most cases, the real estate interest must be conveyed to VOF or a locality. Land already under locality ownership may be eligible for PTF funding as long as the parcel is not already protected through certain existing deed restrictions.

GO Fund: Eligible funding applicants were not listed on the VOF website.

TERRA Program: No active funds to support this project are available at this time, but applicant type varies by available funding opportunity.

Eligible Project Types

Preservation Trust Fund: PTF grants may pay for any costs that are associated with the conveyance of an interest, right, or privilege in open space to VOF, a locality, or an approved eligible holder under the Open-Space Land Act including fee-simple acquisition, development rights, public access rights of way, leases, legal costs, and survey costs. Components critical for public use of the land may also be included in the grant request such as infrastructure and the associated necessary engineering, design, and planning. Although design costs may be included as part of a larger proposal, priority will be given to shovel-ready land protection projects with tangible, measurable results. While infrastructure is an eligible cost, impervious surface will be capped, and

project sites that are currently predominantly hardscape or are intended to be predominately hardscape are not good candidates for PTF funding.

GO Fund: Projects should increase access to safe open space in Virginia’s communities, especially those that are underserved. Examples of project types include planning, capacity building, programming, and infrastructure, although priority will be given to shovel-ready projects with tangible, measurable results.

TERRA Program: No active funds to support this project are available at this time, but project type varies by available funding opportunity.

Example Awards

Preservation Trust Fund: Shenandoah County, VA received \$300k in funding for the Shenandoah County Conservation and Public River Access Along the North Fork of the Shenandoah Project. The project would enable Shenandoah County to purchase a 14-acre parcel located along a portion of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River that recently received its scenic river designation. The County plans to grant VDOT an easement to build a new road and provide better transportation access to 7 Bends State Park, a 1,066-acre park located on the opposite side of the river and to grant DWR an easement for public river access boat ramps and parking then place the parcel under conservation easement.

GO Fund: In 2021, funding through the Get Outdoors Fund was [announced for the City of Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities](#) for its Southside Neighbors Collaborating with the City of Richmond to Create a Community-Driven Greening Plan to Guide Development of Raw Land into Community Project. The project was for planning efforts related to the development of five parcels of city-owned into parkland in neighborhoods that have disproportionately low usable green space per capita.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

Funding opportunities are not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan. However, funds from this program could be useful to JRA in the future.

- **Timeline:**

- **Preservation Trust Fund:** The fall grant round for FY 2025 is now open through 5:00 pm Eastern on August 8, 2024. Eastern. Applications are also being accepted on a rolling basis for the Easement Assistance for Localities grants. JRA could plan to work with the RRTPO to prepare an application for future rounds of this funding.
- **GO Fund:** No grant rounds for the Get Outdoors Fund will be offered in FY 2025. The program was funded with revenue from a recordation fee on real estate transactions in localities where VOF holds open-space easements. The program will be paused until there is an outside revenue source for funding, making it unclear whether this program will return in future years.
- **TERRA Program:** No active funds from this program would apply to JRA at this time.

- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is not well-aligned with the funding opportunities. However, the PTF and GO Fund opportunities could be useful to JRA in the future.
- **Eligibility:** The REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan does not appear to be an eligible project type for these funding opportunities but could potentially be utilized in the future. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Virginia Capital Trail Foundation’s Capital Trail Outdoor Equity Fund

The [Virginia Capital Trail Foundation \(VCTF\)](#) is a nonprofit, 501 (c)(3) organization, with a mission to enhance, promote, manage, and advocate for the continued development of the Virginia Capital Trail.¹⁸ VCTF also serves as a resource, community builder, and connector to other trails throughout the Commonwealth. In 2021, VCTF established [the Capital Trail Outdoor Equity Fund](#) with the goal of increasing equitable access to the Capital Trail. The program has two funding goals:

1. Increase access and equity to low-income neighborhoods through outdoor recreational programs that provide outdoor experiences and utilize the Virginia Capital Trail.
2. Provide recreational and fitness programming for underserved communities with an emphasis on BIPOC (black, Indigenous and people of color), tribes, and people with physical or intellectual disabilities.

Grants are awarded with a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$5,000; a total of \$20,000 is available.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include any certified nonprofit organization or State, local, regional, tribal, educational or government entity. For-profit companies and individuals are not eligible.

Eligible Project Types

This grant will fund programs or projects, to include operating expenditures, that serve BIPOC, tribes, low-income neighborhoods, and people with physical or intellectual disabilities utilizing the Capital Trail. These programs and projects will work toward building equity and access to outdoor recreation involving the Capital Trail.

Example Awards

In the [2023-2024 application cycle](#), the Richmond Cycling Corps (RCC) was awarded funding for its project, The Kickstand, to support RCC’s efforts to provide workforce development opportunities for youth in Richmond’s public housing neighborhoods including employment with on-the-job training, experience working with customers, and learning about business operations. The Kickstand is a bicycle rental shop that is uniquely located near the James River Park System and is directly on the Virginia Capital Trail. In addition, the Richmond Urban Collective was awarded

¹⁸ The Virginia Capital Trail is a 52-mile dedicated multi-use trail connecting Richmond and Williamsburg along the historic Route 5 corridor.

funding for its project, Trail Tales, to support promoting fitness and celebrating the rich history of Virginia's Capital Trail among BIPOC communities within Richmond and Williamsburg. This initiative seeks to create a fun and engaging experience for 50 families.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that serve BIPOC, tribes, low-income neighborhoods, and people with physical or intellectual disabilities utilizing the Capital Trail and work toward building equity and access to outdoor recreation involving the Capital Trail.

- **Timeline:** The 2024-2025 application cycle opened on July 1, 2024, and closes on August 14, 2024. Though the timeline may be too close, JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA's REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan could align well with the second funding goal of the program, "Increase access and equity to low-income neighborhoods through outdoor recreational programs that provide outdoor experiences and utilize the Virginia Capital Trail."
- **Eligibility:** It is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type under this grant program. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that serve BIPOC, tribes, low-income neighborhoods, and people with physical or intellectual disabilities utilizing the Capital Trail and work toward building equity and access to outdoor recreation involving the Capital Trail, could be eligible expenses. Once the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is adopted, JRA could work to develop an application for future rounds of funding. JRA is eligible to serve as the lead for developing the application but could work with local partners and stakeholders on the effort, specifically some of the surrounding historically disadvantaged / underserved communities. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.

Virginia American Water and Environment Grant Program

[American Water](#) is the largest and most geographically diverse publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company. Since 2012, the American Water Charitable Foundation has invested 15.5 million in funding through [grants and matching gifts](#) that are important to its employees and its communities. One of the funding opportunities offered by American Water is its [American Water and Environment Grant Program](#).

Eligible Applicants

Applications will be accepted in the following states served by American Water, in addition to its Military Service locations: California, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Eligible applicants must be

classified as a 501(c)(3) public charity by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or K-12 public school, college or university.

Eligible Project Types

Grants will be awarded to help fund innovative, community-based projects that:

- Improve, restore or protect the watersheds, surface water and/or groundwater supplies.
- Promote water conservation.
- Improve equitable access to water-based recreation in underserved communities.

Eligible projects must be located within and benefit American Water’s service areas and must be completed within 12 months of the grant being awarded.

Example Awards

In 2022, funding through the Virginia American Water and Environmental grant program was [announced for JRA](#) to help Hopewell City Schools incorporate environmental literacy into curriculum that aligns with the 4th grade Virginia standards of learning for watersheds and ecosystems and provide approximately 260 students and 16 teachers with hands-on educational lessons and outdoor hands-on field experiences to the James River Ecology School at Presquile National Wildlife Refuge.

Applicability to James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan

This grant program is not well-aligned with the James River Education Center Multimodal Connectivity Plan; however, it could be utilized for implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that improve equitable access to water-based recreation in underserved communities.

- **Timeline:** The 2025 application cycle has yet to be announced but grant cycle dates will be posted by January 31, 2025. JRA could plan to prepare an application for a potential future round of this funding.
- **Alignment with grant program goals:** JRA’s REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is aligned well with the third project type to “Improve equitable access to water-based recreation in underserved communities.”
- **Eligibility:** It is likely that the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan would not be an eligible project type under this grant program. However, as mentioned, future implementation projects that would likely be recommended in the plan, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that improve equitable access to water-based recreation in underserved communities, could be eligible expenses. Once the REC Multimodal Connectivity Plan is adopted, JRA could work to develop an application for future rounds of funding. JRA is eligible to serve as the lead for developing the application but could work with local partners and stakeholders on the effort. More information on the program and eligibility can be found on the program page linked in Table 1.