Funding Sources For Trails Development

FUNDING SOURCE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION	NOTES
National-Level		
Federal Land Access Program (FLAP)	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Applicant must be state, county, tribal, or city government that owns or maintains the transportation facility. Project must be located on, adjacent to, or provide direct access to federal lands. Match: 20% non-federal match required. Link: http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/
NPS Challenge Cost Share Program	National Park Service (NPS), Outdoor Foundation	The Challenge Cost Share Program supports local projects that promote conservation and recreation, environmental stewardship, education, and engaging youth in the outdoors. Local project partners work with National Park Service (NPS) staff to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Applications are submitted by NPS staff in collaboration with project partners. Project should be completed within the fiscal year. Match: 50/50 (Cash, goods, or services from non-federal sources as match.) Link: https://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/ccsp/
NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance	National Park Service (NPS)	Technical assistance for projects demonstrating tangible conservation and recreational results in the near future. Assistance qualifies for in-kind match for many grants. Link: https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm
Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD)	U.S. Department of Transportation	Formerly known as TIGER. Applicant must be state, local, or tribal governments. At least 30% must be used in rural areas. Must have significant impact on nation, region, or metro area. Historically 6% of TIGER funds go to bike/ped projects. Eligible applicants are state or local governments. Applications require cost/benefit analysis. Minimum project size of \$1 million in rural areas; \$5 million in metro. Match: 20% non-federal match required, but can be less in rural areas. Link: https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants/about
Non-Motorized Safety Grant	National Highway Traffic Safety	Only states with more than 15% of traffic fatalities that involve bike/ped. In west includes CA, AZ, NM, OR, UT. Link: https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/blog/primer-nhtsa%E2%80%99s-bicycle-and-pedestrian-safety-dollars
Transportation Alternatives (TAP or TA Set-Aside)	State Departments of Transportation	Federal funding administered through state DOTs via the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Eligible applicants include local governments. Provides funding for programs/ projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian/bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy maintains a website with detailed information: http://trade.railstotrails.org/index Match: Cash match required. Link: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/

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National-Level	National-Level				
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	State agencies vary by state. See https:// www.fhwa.dot. gov/environment/ recreational_trails/ rtpstate.cfm	Federal funding administered through state agencies via the Surface Transportation Block Grant Progrram in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. RTP provides funds to the States to support a wide variety of trail activities and related facilities, as well as environmental education and safety programs. Eligible applicants include local government and non-profit organizations. Annual cycle typically closes early in calendar year. Funding tied to federal transportation bill. Paved paths typically discouraged. Match: Varies, cash and in-kind supported. Link: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/			
Land and Water Conservation Fund- State Side	National Park Service (NPS) State and Local Assistance Program Division	Eligible applicants include cities, counties, or district authorized to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain park and recreation facilities. LWCF funding is federal but allocated to states to provide matching grants to help communities protect parks and recreation resources. Federal funding is in state of flux and program future is unknown. Match: 50/50 Link: https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1600/index.htm			
State-Level					
Montana Fish & Wildlife Conservation Trust	Montana Fish & Wildlife Conservation Trust	Eligible applicants include non-profits and state and local government. Generally funds land acquisition and restoration projects that support hunting, fishing, and public recreation; not infrastructure development. Amount available each year varies. Annual cycle typically closes in spring. Link: http://www.mtconservationtrust.org/			
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)	Great Outdoors Colorado	Miscellaneous competitive grants fro outdoor recreation and conservation in Colorado, including habitat restoration, land conservation, local parks and recreation, and Connect Initiatives that work to improve trail connectivity. Funded by a portion of lottery proceeds. Match: Varies with grant. Link: http://www.goco.org/grants			
Private Foundations and Opportunities					
People for Bikes Community Grants	People for Bikes	Grants focus on bicycling, active transportation, or community development, from city or county agencies or departments, and from state or federal agencies working locally. Requests must support a specific project or program; operating costs are not funded. Match: No specific % match; no grants for more than 50% budget. Link: http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/community-grants			
American Greenways Grants	Kodak & The Conservation Fund	Non-profits eligible. Mapping, ecological assessments, surveying, conferences and design activities, public information. Link: http://www.rlch.org/funding/kodak-american-greenways-grants			

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Private Foundations and Organizations				
National Trails Fund Grants	American Hiking Society / L.L. Bean	Must be a member of the Alliance of Hiking Organizations to apply. Grants are between \$500 - \$3,000 to improve hiking access or hiker safety on a particular trail. Link: https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/		
Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy	Grants to build and improve multi-use trails. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Link: https://www.railstotrails.org/our-work/doppelt-family-trail-development-fund/		
BF Goodrich Tires Outstanding Trails Grant	BF Goodrich Tires	For sustainable and responsible off-roading clubs to help preserve local off-road trails. Link: https://garage.bfgoodrichtires.com/db/special-projects/record/outstanding-trails		
NFF Matching Awards Program (MAP)	National Forest Foundation (NFF)	On-the-ground projects that enhance forest health and outdoor experiences on or near National Forests and Grasslands. Can be used to improve recreation resources like trails and bridges, and to engage youth or volunteers in stewardship work. Does not have to be on National Forest or Grassland but must benefit those lands. Match: 50/50 nonfederal cash match required. Link: https://www.nationalforests.org/grant-programs/map		
REI Stewardship Grants	REI	Stewardship grants for outdoor access. Must be invited to apply by local REI store. Link: https://www.rei.com/stewardship/creating-access		
Local-Level				
Businesses	 Corporate foundations: grants, volunteers Small businesses or business partnerships: co-branding, events, sponsorship 			
Non-Profit Organizations	Community foundations Non-profit collaborators			
Local Government	 Ballot initiative: bonds, levies Granting programs Tax districts, such as resort tax, tax increment finance districts (TIF), improvement districts, renewal districts 			

Tips for Finding the Money



Think Big, Start Small

- ✓ Invest in planning at many scales, from individual project master plans to community plans and policies (e.g., neighborhood plans, transportation plans, comprehensive/growth plans).
- Identify phases that could be completed individually in sequence.
- ✓ Be patient and persistent.



Be Proactive About Match

- ✓ Demonstrate your commitment by having skin in the game. Be willing to take risks.
- ✓ Be creative and think broadly about how all partners contribute to the project.



Tell The Story

- ✓ Don't rely only on data—tell human stories.
- Explain the community impact. Share real examples about how individuals, neighborhoods, and the community will benefit.
- ✓ Use testimonials from real people.



Communicate Well

- ✓ Practice articulating the need, community impact, and your organizational effectiveness.
- ✓ Use clear, concise writing. Make use of bullets and headlines to simplify for the reader.
- ✓ Address grant criteria directly and explicitly.



Be A Collaborator

- ✓ Find overlap in your goals and values with your partners. Know where you are aligned.
- ✓ Be reciprocal in your requests and offers of help.
- ✓ Consider stretching your project to meet the needs of partners where possible.



Start Early

- ✓ Building community will and trust with partners takes time.
- ✓ Develop internal deadlines.
- ✓ Buffer time for external processes and input, including reviews, letters of support, and partner approval.



Use Data & Evidence

- Demonstrate the need using data.
- Measure and monitor whether you are achieving your goals and adapt accordingly.



Anticipate Hurdles

- ✓ Honestly listen to and learn from the concerns of your community.
- ✓ Work with neighbors and other concerned parties early and often.
- ✓ Plan and budget for mitigating reasonable concerns with strategies like landscaping, fencing, signage, and amenities.
- Commit to stewardship with monitoring and maintenance.

Trails as Economic Development Forum