



# Q&A: Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Grant Program

Answers to questions asked during the Local Infrastructure Hub's Reconnecting Communities + Equity: Engagement & Environmental Justice webinar on Aug. 2, 2022

**Q:** Can American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds be used for the 20% local match requirement?

**A:** Yes. State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) may be used for the 20% local match for planning or construction grants. SLFRF funds available under sections 602(c)(1)(C) and 603(c)(1)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C §§ 802–803) may be used for the provision of government services up to the amount of the recipient government's reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. However, if the recipient's SLFRF payment exceeded their reduction in revenue due to the emergency, the excess amounts cannot be used as non-Federal share.

**Q:** There are many submission categories, including Complete Streets, Main Street Revitalization, Equity, Connecting Communities, and more. Is there a Federal priority or preference for what type of project will get funded?

**A:** No, all projects that meet the four criteria will be considered. The merit criteria are as follows:

- ❖ **Equity, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement:** Robust community engagement and a plan to assess and reduce inequities, historic and current.
- ❖ **Mobility and Community Connectivity:** Existing community connection issues and a plan to address by meaningfully improving affordable, multi-modal access to jobs, healthcare, schools, etc.
- ❖ **Community-based Stewardship, Management, and Partnerships:** A community-centered approach, by mechanisms such as partnerships, community advisory groups, and land trusts.
- ❖ **Equitable Development and Shared Prosperity:** A holistic plan to create a thriving, resilient community through restoration and anti-displacement, place-making, affordable housing, entrepreneurship particularly for disadvantaged businesses, and good-paying local jobs.

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**Q:** How much of the design and planning process must be completed for a project to qualify for a Capital Construction grant? If we are at 30% design, can the Capital Construction Grant be utilized to fill the gap between 30% and 100% schematic design? Or must 100% of the design be complete before applying for the Construction Grant?

**A:** Design activities are an eligible activity under the capital construction grant, so you do not need to be at 100%. The pre-requisite for the capital construction grant is to have the project on a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), or Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan at the time of the obligation of award.

**Q:** Can a jurisdiction submit more than one project application?

**A:** Yes. You can be a lead applicant on up to three applications. There is no limit on how many applications you are a joint applicant and not the lead.

**Q:** Will in-kind contributions from private/non-profit grant application partners be considered a match contribution?

**A:** Yes, in-kind contributions from partners can be considered a match contribution.

**Q:** What funding sources have others used to create the apprenticeship/career pathway program?

**A:** *Answered live by Ben Walsh, Mayor of Syracuse, NY:* We launched Syracuse Build using private philanthropy led by our regional economic development partner, CenterState CEO. We have since received funding from the State of New York and are pursuing additional State and Federal funding.

Charlene Wang, *Special Assistant, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy at the U.S. Department of Transportation*, provided an overview of the RCP discretionary grant program and answered questions from mayors during the webinar. Visit the [Local Infrastructure Hub's website](#) for additional resources and expert advice.