



Connecticut Recreational Trails Program Grant Information and Application

(For any State funds that may become available in 2025-26)

Deadline for Submission is December 18, 2025.

The grants awarded will be funded by a potential allocation of state bond funds in fiscal year 2026, authorized by CGS 23-103, as amended by PA 25-174, and may be limited by the actual amount allocated

Eligible Applicants: Eligible sponsors include private organizations; municipalities; federal, state and regional agencies and other government entities such as tribal.

Eligible Uses: Grants to be used for planning/design, trail corridor acquisition, construction, construction administration, maintenance equipment, amenities and publications/outreach related to bikeways, multi-use trails (including motorized) and water trails (blueways).

Grant Making Process: The following outlines the general grant making process. Once program funds have been secured by DEEP, the process can take up to 6 months or more; please plan accordingly. The grant requires a 20% match which can be accrued up to 18 months prior to your contract document finalization. Match can be provided as cash or in-kind services.

1. You will receive an email or letter acknowledging receipt of your application.
2. Applications will be assessed for eligibility and given a score according to the program guidelines on page 2 of this application.
3. The program's Advisory Committee will advise DEEP on scores and ultimate rankings.
4. A short list of projects recommended for potential funding will be created. Applicants on this short list will be contacted and will be required to provide the following relevant items:
 - a. Copies of permits obtained and time-frames for necessary, but still outstanding permits (Part III, Item 1);
 - b. Copies of relevant excerpts of local and/or regional plan documents that reference your project (Part III, Item 3);
 - c. Evidence of public participation, such as public notices, news releases, public surveys, minutes and news articles (Part III, Item 6);
 - d. Any additional information requested by the Advisory Committee.
5. A final list of applications to be funded will be generated. You will be notified by DEEP via email that our contracting process has begun. You must not begin any project work that you intend to be reimbursed for prior to your receipt of an executed DEEP contract.

Submission and Deadline: Proposals must be received by **December 18, 2025**.

- a. Email to DEEP.CTTrails@ct.gov, CC: kimberly.bradley@ct.gov

OR

- b. Mail reports **on a CD** or other electronic storage device as appropriate to:

Kimberly Bradley, Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

Guidelines: The CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) staff and its advisory committee [The CT Greenways Council](#) (CGC) score proposals based upon the following criteria. Final proposal ranks (High, Medium and Low) will be developed based upon the score and other potential information associated with the project provided by DEEP Staff and the CGC.

Table 1. Standard RTP Proposal Review Guidelines

Section	Project Attribute	Tiers	Value	Total Points Per Section
Proposal Completion		General Information and Applicant Contact Information Complete and Accurate	1	
		Project description complete and detailed.	1	
		Maps included and complete, provide ease of site review.	1	
		Scope of Work/ Timeline complete and per requested format.	1	
		Project Cost Estimate complete and per requested format	1	0-5 pts
Impact / Budget	Distressed Municipalities	Project location is within a CT DECD Listed Distressed Municipality : https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02_Review_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities	10	
		Project area is NOT within a distressed community.	0	0-10 pts.
	Budget Review	Funding from range of other state or federal agencies secured, and 20% match is fully secured through this funding and volunteer commitments.	5	
		Additional funding is not fully secured to proposed RTG application, 20% match is fully secured through staff time volunteer efforts.	3	
		No additional funding secured, and match is not documented as secure.	0	0-5 pts.
Land Ownership	Type of Land	Public Lands - Fee Simple (State/ Municipal/ Land Trust)	5	.
		Public Lands - Easement (State/ Municipal/ Land Trust)	3	
		Private Land Allowing Public Use	1	1-5 pts
	Agreement	Ownership of land or complete land use agreement executed upon application.	4	.
		Letter of support from landowner included, no full use agreement established.	3	
		No land use agreement provided.	0	0-4 pts
CT Greenways & Trail Connections		Project is a part of a CT Greenway Council designated Greenway and connects to trails on municipal, state, and private land (land trusts, public allowed open space).	10	
		Project includes connections to trails on municipal, state, and private land (land trusts, public allowed open space), NOT a Greenway (more than one type land).	8	
		Project is self-contained trail on single ownership land.	5	

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

		No clear connections identified.	0	0-10 pts.
Community Connections		Project will connect schools, downtown, public spaces for a community within a city, urban area (as defined by CTDOT), or tribal land that have limited access to trails and outdoor recreation opportunities within a 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk.	10	
		Project will connect schools, town centers, public spaces for a rural region (as defined by CTDOT) that have limited access to trails and outdoor recreation opportunities within a 10-mile drive.	10	
		Project doesn't meet either condition above but is still underserved by public trail opportunities; applicant has provided sufficient detail to justify the need.	5	
		Project area is already served by public trail opportunities.	0	0-10 pts.
User Groups Served		Project includes concurrent and diverse multiple trail uses.	10	
		Project involves two or more concurrent uses.	8	
		Project involves single trail use (pedestrian use alone is considered a single use).	5	0-10 pts.
Adherence to Local / Regional / State Plans		Project addresses specific needs identified in local, regional (Regional Council of Governments) and state level plans and is a component of a regional, statewide or national trail system as identified in the SCORP.	10	
		Project furthers a specific goal of the SCORP and/or regional (Regional Council of Governments) transportation or planning document.	8	
		Project furthers a general goal of the SCORP, regional or local plan.	5	
		Project does not document plan inclusion, or further objectives of state, local or regional plans.	0	0-10 pts.
Accessibility / ADA		Project is fully ADA accessible and compliant.	10	
		Project is partially ADA accessible/compliant where feasible.	5	
		Project has no ADA accessible features or is not compliant.	0	0-10 pts.
Equity / Service		Project provides new opportunities where none previously existed, where input from the underserved community was part of the planning process and indications are strong that they will benefit from the resource.	10	
		Project provides new opportunities and evidence indicates the underserved community will use/ benefit. Direct public outreach planned within project scope.	8	
		Project enhances existing resources to improve probability of use.	5	
		No evidence of consideration for underserved populations.	0	0-10 pts.
Environmental / Cultural Review		Environmental and cultural site suitability has been reviewed (ie. FEMA, NDDDB, Aquifer Protection, Historic Preservation, Coastal area, hazardous material, etc.) and required permits have been identified.	8	
		Project is a planning project and while preliminary information is provided in application, scope will take into account environmental and cultural review and identify appropriate permit identification.	5	

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

		Environmental and cultural evaluations require further development in project proposal materials or built into scope.	3	
		Environmental and cultural evaluation not completed or considered.	0	0-8 pts
Public Support / Participation	Public Participation	Documentation and summary of public support for proposal planning (public meetings, public notices, news releases, public surveys, minutes and news articles), and detailed plan for public engagement in scope.	8	
		Limited public engagement documented prior to proposal, with detailed public engagement process proposed within scope.	5	
		No documentation of public engagement.	0	0-8 pts.
	Letters of Support	Letters of support from regional, state, and federal organizations and officials.	5	
		Letters of support from local organizations and officials.	3	
		Letters of support not included with application.	0	0-5 pts.
Maintenance Plan		Detailed maintenance plan developed, and includes summary of how the project will be maintained including who will be responsible, who will perform the maintenance and how will it be performed, anticipated maintenance schedule, anticipated maintenance budget and funding mechanism(s).	5	
		Application provides a general overview of maintenance and includes maintenance plan in scope of work.	3	
		No maintenance plan included.	0	0 -5 pts.
Additional Considerations	Prior Involvement in CT Recreational Trails Grants	Successful participation in the CT Recreational Trails Grant program, with timely reporting, project execution, and successful completion of contract. Projects with previous success in the CT RTP, which request funding for continuing phases in development of a project.	Up to 5 pts	0 -5 pts.
	Geographic Distribution	Consideration may be given to projects in areas that have or have not received funding in recent cycles. This will be based on the proximity to other funded sites and the diversity of projects being funded on a regional and local basis, as well as the service area of the developed or planned facilities.	Up to 5 pts.	0-5 pts.
	Innovation	Consideration may be given to develop particularly significant resources and facilities or to develop innovative approaches to preserve valuable resources. This will be based on the type of resource being developed or rehabilitated, its rarity on a local, regional, statewide, and national basis. Innovative technology or approaches to address an emergency or mitigate future problems; how well an innovation/technology can be applied on other properties and resources, and/or how the project will allow public access that would not otherwise be available.	Up to 5 pts.	0-5 pts.

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

Table 2. Education RTP Proposal Review Guidelines

Section	Project Attribute	Tiers	Value	Total Points per Section
Proposal Completion		General Information and Applicant Contact Information Complete and Accurate	1	
		Project description complete and detailed.	1	
		Maps included and complete, provide ease of site review.	1	
		Scope of Work/ Timeline complete and per requested format.	1	
		Project Cost Estimate complete and per requested format	1	0-5 pts
Impact / Budget	Distressed Municipalities	Project will serve CT DECD Listed Distressed Municipalities : https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02_Review_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities	10	0-10 pts.
	Budget Review	Funding from other state or federal agencies is secured, and 20% match is fully secured through funding, staff time and volunteer commitments.	5	
		Additional funding is not fully secured to proposed RTG application, 20% match is fully secured through staff time volunteer efforts.	3	
		No additional funding secured, and match is not documented as secure.	0	0-5 pts.
Adherence to Local / Regional / State Plans		Project addresses specific goals identified is local, regional, and state level plans including the CT SCORP.	10	
		Project furthers a general goal of the SCORP, regional or local plan.	5	
		Project does not document plan inclusion, or further objectives of state. Local or regional plans	0	0-10 pts
Target Audience		Audience of programs ranges between statewide, regional, and local participants, and can serve as a reproducible model.	15	
		Audience is focused on state-wide, regional, OR local participants.	10	
		Audience is small-scale local program.	5	0-15 pts.
Educational Method / Materials		Program provides long standing resources available to public and sustained plan for continued development and sustained public access to websites, learning materials including signage, lecture & workshop materials.	15	
		Program provides access to learning material for those participating in activities and may require educational assoc. fees for workshops, etc.	10	
		Programs are in person with limited sustained educational materials provided.	8	
		Not clear on educational method approach and supporting materials.	0	0-15 pts.
Public Outreach / Partnerships	Outreach / Partnerships	Program includes a detailed overview of public outreach and collaboration priorities and plans with volunteers, public participants, and other supporting organizations on statewide, regional and local levels. An advisory committee is proposed for the program.	10	
		Program includes an overview of collaboration on regional scale with supporting advisory authority.	8	

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

		Program focuses on local public outreach and partnerships, with no clear advisory role.	5	
		Limited overview of public outreach and partnership priorities and plans	0	0-10 pts.
	Letters of Support	Letters of support from regional, state, and federal organizations and officials.	10	
		Letters of support from local organizations and officials.	8	
		Letters of support not included with application.	0	0-10 pts.
Equity / Service	Equity / Service	Project provides new opportunities where none previously existed, where input from the underserved community was part of the planning process and indications are strong that they will benefit from the resource.	15	
		Project provides new opportunities and evidence indicates the underserved community will use/ benefit. Direct public outreach planned within project scope.	10	
		Project enhances existing resources to improve probability of use.	5	
		No evidence of consideration for underserved populations.	0	0-15 pts.
Program Evaluation		Project includes detailed evaluation plan with target metrics, reviewed by advisory committee, and reporting to participants/public.	10	
		Project includes general evaluation supported by advisory committee.	5	
		No evaluation plan proposed.	0	0-10 pts.
Maintenance Plan		Detailed maintenance plan developed, and includes a summary of how the project will be maintained including who will be responsible, who will perform the maintenance and how will it be performed, anticipated maintenance schedule, anticipated maintenance budget and funding mechanism(s).	5	
		Application provides a general overview of maintenance and includes maintenance plan in scope of work.	3	
		No maintenance plan included.	0	0 -5 pts.
Additional Considerations	Prior Involvement in CT Recreational Trails Grants	Successful participation in the CT Recreational Trails Grant program, with timely reporting, project execution, and successful completion of contract. Projects with previous success in the CT RTP, which request funding for continuing phases in development of a project.	Up to 5 pts	0-5 pts.
	Geographic Distribution	Consideration may be given to projects in areas that have or have not received funding in recent cycles. This will be based on the proximity to other funded sites and the diversity of projects being funded on a regional and local basis, as well as the service area of the developed or planned facilities.	Up to 5 pts.	0-5 pts.
	Innovation	Consideration may be given to develop particularly significant resources and facilities or to develop innovative approaches to preserve valuable resources. This will be based on the type of resource being developed or rehabilitated, its rarity on a local, regional, statewide and national basis. Innovative technology or approaches to address an emergency or mitigate future problems; how well an innovation/technology can be applied on other properties and resources, and/or how the project will allow public access that would not otherwise be available.	Up to 10 pts.	0-10 pts.

Outline of the Application:

Part I: General Information

Ensure your general information section is filled out completely. Include the Estimated Total Project Cost (Requested Grant Amount PLUS Estimated Total Match Contributions), as well as the Total Amount Requested for this grant.

Check all appropriate project types associated with your proposal.

Part II: Applicant Information

Complete all requested information. Please ensure the individual identified as the Grant Administrator will serve as the main contact for reporting and reimbursement requests and correspondence. We will use the Applicant and Grant Administrator contacts for award decision notification.

Please ensure if the property owner differs from the applying organization, that permission of recreational access is documented as **Attachment A**.

Part III: Project Information

1. **Project Description** Provide the following information (no more than 3 pages) as **Attachment B**:
 - what is the overall purpose and need for this project and what user group(s) will it serve;
 - what is the physical extent of the project (refer to your map, Item 2 below and in **Attachment C**); Note is the trail system is on state, municipal or land trust owned land. Identify if the property has been acquired through OSWA or has a Conservation Easement.
 - what type of ground disturbance (specify depth and any tree cutting if stumps will be removed) will occur and what type of equipment will be used (if applicable);
 - what type of amenities will be installed or repaired (for example: parking lots, benches, signs which must be located on your map in **Attachment C**);
 - will bridges or boardwalks be installed or repaired?
 - are permits necessary (**list them**) and are they obtainable?
 - If you are proposing and Educational Project, Project Description should provide project overview, with focus on guiding questions of the "Educational Project Supplemental Application" (DEEP-TRAILS-APP-001A) as Attachment H.
2. **Project Maps.** Your application will be rejected unless you provide maps that will allow a field inspection to occur **with ease**. Include a town level project location map **and** a more detailed site plan showing the proposed trail bed improvements, trail heads, locations, and technical drawings of trail amenities (parking areas, benches, plantings, fencing, bathrooms, etc.) and signs and/or kiosks and bridges and/or boardwalks as **Attachment C**. Digital photos and maps (digital photos taken of hard copy maps are acceptable) are preferred.
3. **Grant Selection Criteria.** The Grant selection criteria provide check the Yes or No box as applicable and provide details as specified.
4. **Site Suitability:**

The DEEP CT Recreation Trail Funding webpage includes a grant application tool that can support completion of the site suitability evaluation for the grant application <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Outdoor-Recreation/Trails/CRT--Funding>

 - You can find FEMA information at your town hall in the building department or on the Internet at FEMA's map center (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>): If your proposal is recommended for funding, it will be forwarded to DEEP's Inland Water Resources Division staff for assessment of the need for Flood

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant Application

Management Certification (FMC). As a part of your contractual obligations, your project work within the flood plain will not be able to begin until FMC is obtained. Other restrictions may be attached.

- To view the applicable list of towns and maps visit the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/deep/aquiferprotection . To speak with someone about the Aquifer Protection Areas, call 860-424-3020.
- If the project lies within an area identified by the CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base as possibly containing endangered species, and your proposal is recommended for funding, you will be required to submit an NDDDB Environmental Review filing through DEEP' ezFile Portal. Any restrictions will become part of your contractual obligations. For more information visit the DEEP website <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/NDDDB/Requests-for-NDDDB-Environmental-Reviews> .
- If the project may impact significant historical or archaeological sites and your proposal is recommended for funding, you may be required to complete DEEPs Historic Preservation Review (can be found within Appendix G of The DEEP General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities ("Construction General Permit")). Any costs you incur in obtaining the required SHPO finding will be applied toward your 20% match requirement. Non-profit organizations and municipalities are eligible for up to \$20,000.00 on a non-matching basis to undertake general area archaeological reconnaissance surveys. Contact SHPO for details at 860-256-2761.
- Review whether the project is in a coastal area www.ct.gov/deep/gis (GIS Data)
- Take into consideration is there are rights or restrictions to environmental intrusions (power lines, dumps, factories, roads, etc.) on or in close proximity to the trail, or if there may be suspected property containing hazardous and/or contaminated materials. Identify in detail what has been done to address such issues/concerns.

5. **Site Accessibility and User Group Information:**

- Include review and evaluation of how the proposed trail project will serve any elderly housing projects, housing authority (public housing), underserved communities, affordable housing developments, or low or very low-income areas or neighborhoods.
- To be considered multi-use the trail must allow two (2) or more of the following four main user group categories: foot-travel (hike, ski, roller blade, etc.), bicycle/mountain bike, equestrian, and motorized.
- Your project must use the best information available to ensure broad usability. List any ADA trailside amenities or trailhead facilities that are available (such as platforms, parking areas, shelters, compost toilets, etc.) to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. Please note: Accessibility measures may not be feasible on trails due to trail terrain, environmental conditions, nature of the setting, prevailing construction methods or required materials that would be prohibited by federal, state, or local laws or where compliance would cause substantial harm to or alter cultural, historic, religious, or significant natural features of the setting. See the Forest Service website for the best available guidance for trail projects (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/national-forests-grasslands/accessibility/resources>).

6. **Public Participation:** Public participation can be defined as: special public meetings, proposal reviewed by special interest groups or advisory councils and boards, public fund raising, construction or maintenance, etc.

You will describe how public participation at the local level was included in planning this project or how you intend to include public participation within your planning or design project. If your project is recommended for funding, you will be required to provide evidence of this public participation, such as public notices, news releases, public surveys, minutes and news articles if your project is moving toward implementation. Please do not provide this evidence in advance.

7. **Letters of Support – Include as Attachment D.**

8. Scope of work: You will be granted 3 years to complete your project. Provide your “Project Tasks, Subtask identification and deliverables, and Timeline,” as **Attachment E** in a table format as shown below.

**Per CGS 23-103(c) Trail Publications referencing specific bikeways, pedestrian walkways, greenways, or multi-use trails.*

<i>Project Tasks and Anticipated Completion Timeline</i>			
Tasks	Project Task Types	Project Subtasks	Timeline
Task A	Planning	Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental studies Survey Alternative Route Analysis Public Participation 	September 2026
Task B	Design	Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering Conceptual Design Final Design State & Local Permitting 	Oct – Dec 2026
Task C	Land Acquisition	Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land purchase costs Legal support 	January 2027
Task D	Construction	Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Administration Mobilization/ Site Prep Materials and Activities (Including Trail Attributes such as signs/kiosks, benches, bathrooms, parking lots, bollards, etc.) Labor Trail Attributes Equipment 	June-August 2027
Task E	Maintenance	Maintenance activities can be construction on <u>existing</u> trails and may include trail attributes as sub-items. Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resurfacing Trail / Bridge repairs Trail Attributes such as signs/kiosks, benches, bathrooms, parking lots, bollards, etc.) Drainage upgrades Equipment 	November 2027
Task F	Trail Publications*	Subtasks may include (not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Websites Hard copy books, handouts, reports Data visualizations Educational Signage 	January 2028

9. Project Cost Estimates: Provide an itemized project cost breakdown as **Attachment F**. Describe the means by which said cost was derived. List any engineers, appraisers, contractors or manufacturers that were consulted. Use the following table format shown below:

Name of Applicant	
Project Cost Estimates	
Item (should correspond to your scope of work and may have more detail)	Cost
Task A – Planning Subtask 1 – Public Outreach	\$3,000.00
Task B – Design Subtask 1 - Survey	\$5,000.00
Task B – Design Subtask 2 - Final Design	\$20,000.00
Task C – Construction Subtask 1 - Construction Administration	\$15,000.00
Task C – Construction Subtask 2 - Materials and Activities	\$50,000.00
Task C – Construction Subtask 3 – Equipment rental	\$1,500.00
TOTAL Project Costs	\$94,500.00
Match ($\geq 20\%$ of total project costs.)	\$18,900.00
Grant Amount ($\leq 80\%$ of total project costs)	\$75,600.00

10. **Maintenance Plan:** Grantees are required to maintain projects that utilize CT Recreational Trails Grant funds and to provide assurance of such operation and maintenance for a period of at least the life expectancy of the trail, twenty years, or until total destruction or degradation by an act of nature, whichever comes first. All projects **must** provide a description of how the trail will be maintained including who will be responsible, who will perform the maintenance and how will it be performed, anticipated maintenance schedule, anticipated maintenance budget and funding mechanism(s).

Provide a maintenance plan as **Attachment G**.

11. If you are proposing a Land Acquisition Project and your project is recommended for funding by the Recreational Trails Advisory Committee, you will be required to provide an appraisal of the land to be acquired, and a review of the appraisal by an independent review appraiser. You will also be required, when the grant agreement is executed, to provide assurances that the property will be dedicated to public passive recreation for a period of at least the life expectancy of the trail, twenty years, or until total destruction or degradation by an act of nature, whichever comes first.
12. If you are proposing an **Educational Project**, complete and submit the “Educational Project Supplemental Application” (DEEP-TRAILS-APP-001A) as **Attachment G**.