

RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM

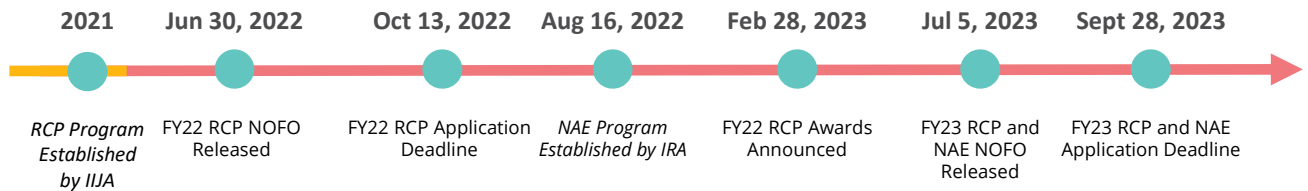


PART I: BACKGROUND

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (RCP) is a new program created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It provides technical assistance and funding for planning and capital construction to address infrastructure barriers, restore community connectivity, and improve lives. The goals of the program include advancing community-centered transportation connection projects, with a priority for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities that improve access to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, nature, and recreation, and foster equitable development and restoration.

For FY2023, the RCP Program was offered collectively on the same Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) as the Neighborhood Access and Equity Program (NAE), a new program under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These two programs are jointly referred to as the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program (RCN). It is expected there will be future NOFOs for RCP, however the full allocation for NAE was offered through the FY23 RCN NOFO, and future opportunities are not currently available without a future appropriation from Congress. Eligible applicants include States, Local Governments, Tribal Governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and non-profit organizations.



FUNDING INFORMATION

Fiscal Year	Funding Source	Total Funding	Max Award	Match Req.	Funding and Obligation Restrictions
2023	IIJA (RCP)	\$50M Planning \$148M Construction	\$2M Planning	20% Planning 50% Construction ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$100,000 minimum award for planning \$5M minimum award for construction Funding Obligation Deadline: September 30, 2026
2023	IRA (NAE)	\$3,155M Total \$135M Planning \$2,570M Construction \$450M Regional Partnerships	None	20% ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$100,000 minimum award for planning \$5M minimum award for construction Funding Obligation Deadline: September 30, 2026 DOT expects to make three to five Regional Partnerships Challenges Grants
2022	IIJA	\$195M Total \$50M Planning \$145M Construction	\$2M Planning \$100M Construction	20% Planning 50% Construction ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$100,000 minimum award for planning \$5M minimum award for construction Funding Obligation Deadline: September 30, 2025

1. Additional federal funds can be leveraged to satisfy match, as long as the total federal share does not exceed 80%
 2. Match is not required if the project is located in a disadvantaged or underserved community

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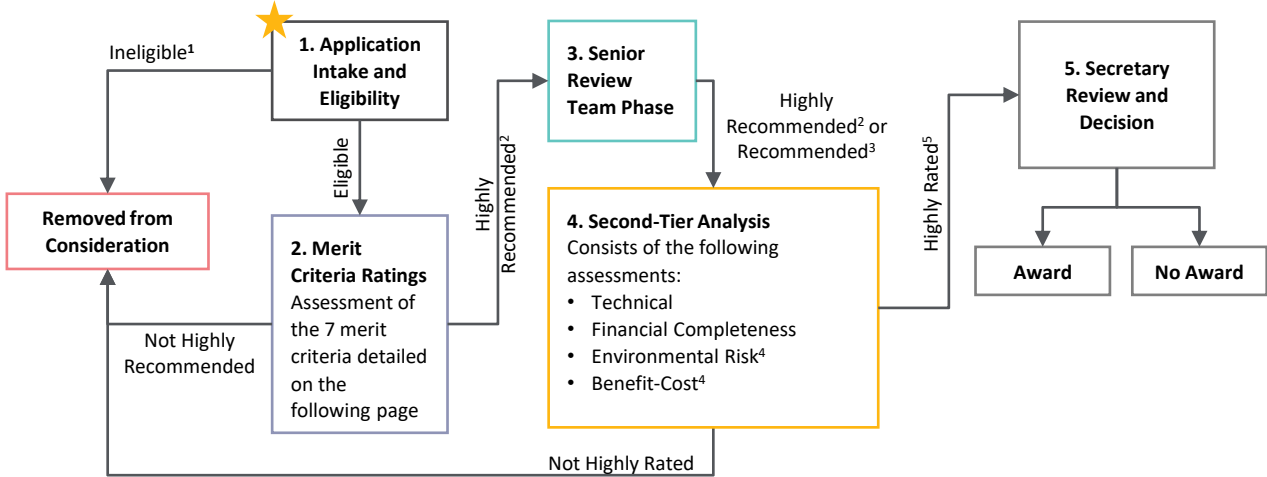
ATLANTA REGION APPLICATION AND AWARD HISTORY

Fiscal Year	Project Name	Applicant	Funding Request	Funding Awarded?
2022	Gwinnett I-85 Connectivity Study	City of Stockbridge	\$205,325	No
2022	Study of a bike/ped connection of communities separated by the I-285 at I-85 interchange.	City of Savannah	\$1,600,000	No
2022	Traffic Safety and Road Infrastructure affecting Auburn, GA, Gwinnett and Barrow Counties	Whitfield County	\$300,000	No
2022	Pleasant Hill Reconnection	Athens-Clarke County Unified Government	\$700,000	No
2022	I-20 Corridor Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program	City of Atlanta	\$1,600,000	No
2022	Stockbridge Pedestrian Bridge Project	City of South Fulton	\$779,520	No
2022	RCP - I-16 Ramp Removal Planning	City of East Point	\$600,000	No
2022	Reimagining Wolfe Street	Cobb County	\$1,440,000	No
2022	Envision Hawthorne Avenue: Building Connections for Disadvantaged Communities	City of Union City	\$880,000	No
2022	The Lee Street Complete Streets Project	City of Gainesville	\$400,000	No
2022	Citywide Sidewalk Network Expansion	Cobb County, GA	\$2,000,000	No
2022	Pathways to Equitable Mobility	Whitfield County	\$300,000	No
2022	East-West Connector Corridor Improvements Planning Study*	City of Villa Rica	\$6,400,000	No
2022	Union City Pedestrian Multi-Use Trail System*	Georgia Tech Research Corporation	\$19,766,515	No
2022	Planning Grant for Gainesville's Athens Street-E.E. Butler Parkway/US Hwy 129-South Corridor between Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Interstate 985	City of Stockbridge	\$205,325	No
2022	Cumberland Sweep Planning Grant	City of Savannah	\$1,600,000	No
2022	Preserving Small Town America and Embracing Growth: Cohutta-A Real Life Mayberry	Whitfield County	\$300,000	No
2022	Villa Rica Transportation Reunification Program (TRP)	Athens-Clarke County Unified Government	\$700,000	No
2022	Westside Community Connector Bridge	City of Atlanta	\$1,600,000	No
2022	Big Creek Greenway Community Connectivity Planning Project	City of Roswell	\$2,000,000	Yes - \$2,000,000
2022	The Stitch: Reconnecting a Torn Urban Fabric	City of Atlanta	\$1,100,000	Yes - \$1,100,000

* Denotes capital construction project

PART II: APPLICATION EVALUATION INFORMATION

Applications will go through a five-part application review process, starting with eligibility:



1. Applications that may not be eligible will be referred to an evaluation management oversight team to make the final determination of eligibility.
2. Highly Recommended applications must receive: four or more *highs*, and no *non-responsive* on their merit review; Recommended applications must receive: two or more *highs*, no more than three *lows*, and no *non-responsive* on their merit review. Criteria for merit review are as follows:

High	Medium	Low	Non-Responsive
The application is substantively and comprehensively responsive to the criterion. It makes a strong case about advancing the program goals as described in the criterion descriptions	The application is moderately responsive to the criterion. It makes a moderate case about advancing the program goals as described in the criterion descriptions.	The application is minimally responsive to the criterion. It makes a weak case about advancing the program goals as described in the criterion descriptions.	The narrative indicates the proposal is counter to the criterion or does not contain sufficient information. It does not advance or may or negatively impact criterion goals.

3. The SRT may only advance 'Recommended' applications that exhibit exceptional benefits for economically disadvantaged communities per Criterion #2 – Access and Criterion #5 – Equitable Development
4. Community Planning Grants do not require environmental risk or benefit cost assessments
5. The Senior Review Team will determine which applications are designated as highly rated after the second-tier analysis

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RCP MERRIT CRITERIA:

EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- Analysis of harmful historic or current policies (e.g., displacement, segregation, exclusionary zoning²¹), existing socioeconomic disparities, environmental disparities (e.g. burdens and risks, lack of access to greenspace), the needs of the surrounding community—including special consideration for those most affected by the eligible facility—and how proposed solutions equitably distribute benefits and mitigate impacts supported by geospatial tools like EPA’s EJSCREEN, the DOT’s Equitable Transportation Community Explorer, the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, and FHWA’s Screening Tool for Equity Analysis of Projects.

ACCESS

- New or improved, context-sensitive, affordable transportation options to increase safe mobility and connectivity for all, including for people with disabilities, to daily destinations like affordable housing, jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreation, greenspaces, and parks.
- Safe accommodation for all users and seamless integration with the surrounding character, context, and land use, with consideration of public health, nature, and the economy.
- Encourage thriving communities for individuals to work, live, and play by creating transportation choices for individuals to move freely with or without a car and have meaningful access to natural areas

FACILITY SUITABILITY

- Facility currently presents significant barriers to access, mobility, and economic development and is poorly suited to the community. Proposes removal of barriers, including over-reliance on automobiles, to reconnect communities for people to live, work, play, and move freely and safely.
- The eligible facility currently creates an environmental burden on the community, including issues related to air quality, emissions of transportation greenhouse gases, hot spot areas of extreme heat or elevated air pollution, gaps in tree canopy coverage, lack of greenspace, or flood prone transportation infrastructure, supported by analysis

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Local inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship such as the utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority-owned Businesses, Women-owned Businesses, or 8(a) firms.
- High-quality workforce development programs with supportive services to train, place, and retain workers, especially joint-labor management training partnerships and registered apprenticeships.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Community restoration, stabilization, and anti-displacement strategies, such as value capture, assistance for renters and legacy homeowner and small businesses, preservation, rehabilitation and expansion of location-efficient affordable housing, mixed-income, mixed use development, affordable commercial spaces, and other community wealth-building activities.
- Creative place-making that celebrates local history and culture through public art, greenspace, and recreational spaces for residents and visitors or enhances the unique characteristics of the community.
- Supports a Local/Regional/State Equitable Development Plan.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

- Approach to providing high-quality choices for lower-carbon travel like walking, cycling, rolling, and transit that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote active travel.
- A Local/Regional/State Climate Action Plan that results in lower greenhouse gas emissions has been prepared and the project directly supports that Climate Action Plan
- Expected reduction in transportation-related pollution such as air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions; hot spot areas of extreme heat; lack greenspace; consideration of climate resilience, stormwater, and flood risk management²⁴; neighborhood naturalness or access to greenspace; noise reduction; or the extent to which the project

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

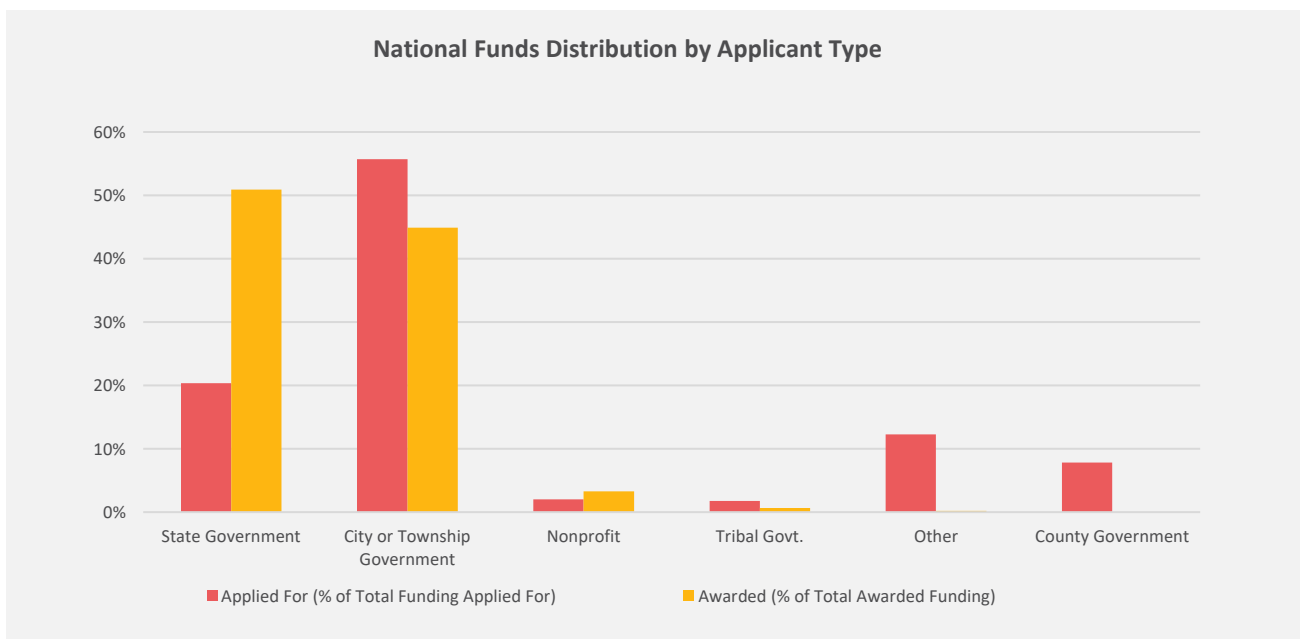
- Community Participation Plan that facilitates meaningful engagement in planning, design, construction, operations, and related land use decisions. Consistent with DOT Order 1000.12C, the Plan establishes goals and measures for effectiveness.
- Community-centered approach to envision a solution that reconnects and/or mitigates burdens to meaningfully redress inequities and benefit economically disadvantaged communities and addresses community priorities to the extent possible.
- Formal partnerships, substantiated through signed commitment letters and budget. Partners may include entities with geographic ties to communities adjacent to the facility, such as community-based organizations, anchor institutions, community development financial institutions, philanthropic and civic organizations, private sector entities, and State and local government.

PART III: AWARD TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

PROGRAM TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

PROGRAM

- **Housing Supply:** USDOT intends to further the goals of the White House Housing Supply Action Plan by encouraging an increase in housing supply, particularly location-efficient affordable housing, locally-driven land use and zoning reform, rural main street revitalization, growth management, and transit-oriented development.
- **Rural and Tribal Communities:** Consistent with USDOT’s Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) initiative, USDOT seeks to award funding to rural and Tribal communities which face unique challenges related to mobility and economic development, including isolation, transportation cost burden, and traffic safety.
- **AWARD**
- Overall, 86% of awarded projects mentioned benefits to disadvantaged groups in project descriptions
- 32% of projects mentioned housing components such as increased housing supply, section 8 subsidies or dedicated space for affordable housing
- 14% of projects mentioned local workforce benefits such as underrepresented employee hiring, increased neighborhood job opportunities, and disadvantaged/minority/woman owned business focus



*Other grouping includes, Special District Govts, Regional Organizations, Public Housing Authorities, and Institutions of Higher Education

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AWARD INSIGHTS

- **Planning grant applicants were twice as successful as Capital grant applicants** – Award success rates for Planning projects and Capital projects were 14% and 7% respectively
- **Capital grants were only awarded to City and State Government applicants, despite other entities making up 25% of the applicant pool** – Capital award success rates for City Governments and State Governments were 6% and 20%, respectively
- **Planning project funding requests between \$1.5 and \$1.75 million were most successful compared to other groups** – Award success rate for projects with funding requests in this range was 25%
- **Award success rates were highest for Tribal applicants, followed by State Governments, Nonprofits, and City or Township Governments respectively** – Award rates for the above groups were as follows: Tribal (25%), State Government (18%), Nonprofits (16%), City or Township Governments (12%)
- **Awards revealed an emphasis on projects providing housing benefits** – 32% of project descriptions mentioned housing components such as increased housing supply or dedicated space for affordable housing

Applicant Type	Planning Success Rate (Awards)	Construction Success Rate (Awards)
State	16% (4)	20% (3)
Local	11% (29)	4% (3)
Tribal	33% (2)	0%
Other ¹	14% (4)	0%
Overall	12% (39)	7% (6)

1. Includes non-profits and Institutions of Higher Education

APPENDIX: SOURCES & LINKS

DATA SOURCES

- [RCP FAQs](#)
- [RCP FY22 Awarded Projects](#)
- [RCP FY22 Other Applicants](#)
- [RCP 2022 NOFO](#)
- [RCP NAE 2023 NOFO](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Local Government Infrastructure Hub](#)
- [National League of Cities – 10 Ways to Make Your Local Match for Federal Projects](#)

This is data being tracked by the ARC as part the Reconnecting the Region Initiative. For more information on programs of interest and regional funding opportunities, please visit [\[website\]](#)