MEMO

TO: Prospective Grant Applicants

FROM: Kirk Nelson

DATE: June 2015

SUBJECT: **Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant Application**

The grant application for financial assistance through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is enclosed with this memorandum. **Please discard all previous application packets. <u>This will be the only application accepted for projects.</u>**

Eligible grant sponsors are political subdivisions and they may enlist the assistance of individuals, private organizations or corporations for funding and construction of the project in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Eligible projects are trail development, trail related support facilities, renovation and repair of trails, trail support facilities and acquisition of land for trails. Sponsors must have ownership or control (lease or easement) of the trail corridor or property that will be developed. Land for trails may be acquired ONLY on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. Federal assistance up to 80% from the RTP is allowed to match a project's cost or up to $250,000.00. **This year, we require an electronic copy of the grant application. If you have problems with this, please contact us.**

<u>APPLICATION DEADLINE—NOTE NEW DEADLINE</u>
POSTMARKED FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015
Or
DELIVERED BY 5:00 P.M. FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

The application shall consist of the Grant Application and <u>all</u> required supporting documentation. You are encouraged to call me at (402) 471-5513, if you have any questions or need assistance completing the required documents. Thank you.

<u>Send or deliver to:</u> Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Attn: Kirk Nelson
2200 N. 33rd St. P.O. Box 3037
Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

June 2015

Background
The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. This program is through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-2). The program continues to be a 30-30-40 split, where 30% of funds go to motorized projects, 30% of funds go to non-motorized projects and the remaining 40% go to diversified projects, either motorized or non-motorized.

Program Intent
The purpose of financial assistance through RTP is to provide recreational public trails and trail-related development and restoration funding to political subdivisions in Nebraska. Private organizations, individuals, and corporations may assist the grant applicants on the project through their contributions of funding, but they CANNOT be the project sponsor or the financial pass-through. RTP is specifically to provide recreation trails, so transportation connections/commuter trails will be referred to Nebraska's Transportation Enhancement program.

Federal Share and Local Share
This is an 80/20 grant, where the federal share is 80% of the total allowable cost and the local matching share is 20%. The match may be derived from one or a combination of state, local, and sometimes federal or private funds. Cash, design engineering, environmental costs, and/or forced labor of political subdivisions are allowed as part of the local matching share. Project sponsors will be required to document the costs prior to obtaining reimbursement. At a minimum, **5%** of the match must be in cash. Volunteer labor does not count as part of the local match. Grant funds will only be awarded to sponsors who have the local match on hand at the application due date so the project can be completed in a timely manner. **You must provide a letter of commitment from the Chief Financial Officer that the sponsor has the required match on hand and allocated to this project. If the cash funds will be derived from individual organizations or foundations, please provide a letter of commitment from those that these funds are on hand to donate to the project when needed by the sponsor.** Forced account labor and equipment usage must also be documented. See page 5 of this application for more information.

FHWA has changed RTP regulations to allow local political subdivisions the ability to use design engineering, environmental costs such as wetland mitigation, cultural surveys, appraisals…etc. as part of the local match. A sponsor may only use costs incurred 18 months or less out from the date of authorization from FHWA. See ranking sheet for amount of points received for local match. Those that provide a higher percent cash match greater than 20%, receive more points when being ranked by the Committee.

Reimbursement of RTP Grant Funds
RTP is a reimbursement program, which means the grant sponsor first incurs the cost for the project and then is reimbursed up to 80% of the allowable costs or whatever percentage is in the signed contract between the political subdivision and NGPC. If political entity cannot afford to incur ALL costs of the project with a reimbursement turnaround of 45-60 days, it is recommended that they do not apply for RTP funds or modify the project to what they can afford.

All project business must be coordinated through the grant sponsor and payments to vendors for project items issued through the sponsor's regular checking account. NGPC will reimburse sponsors after major items have been completed. All requests must be substantial enough to warrant the paperwork process. Indirect cost rates(see 2 CFR Part 200) are not allowed to be charged to the project. **Reimbursement will not be permitted for costs incurred PRIOR (besides approved matching elements) to the date of federal approval. Grant staff will inform grant sponsors at the appropriate time when to proceed on the various stages of the project. DO NOT PROCEED WITH ANY PLANS AND/OR CONSTRUCTION UNLESS APPROVED BY GRANT STAFF FIRST IN WRITING OR BY E-MAIL.**

Assured Access to Funds and Diversified Trail Use
Program funds must be allocated in compliance with the RTP 30%-30%-40% minimums as an assurance of access to the funds for all potential trail uses. Not less than 30% for non-motorized projects such as hiking or biking trails; not less than 30% for motorized projects such as snowmobiles, 4-wheel drive or motorcycle trails; and not less than 40% for diversified projects, including combination of motorized and/or non-motorized projects.

Project Eligibility - Permissible uses
Projects must fall under the following categories to be eligible for funding:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trial linkages
- Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Construction of new trails (with restriction for new trails on Federal lands)
- Acquisition of easements or property for trails
- Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance

Assurance that the landowner is a willing seller will be part of the required documentation if acquiring land or an easement on land and must follow federal guidelines for acquisition. Non-motorized trails must be, at minimum, eight feet wide unless the application is for connector trails that connect two or more existing trails. See policies, page 5 on minimum width of trails.

Minimum/Maximum Grant Levels
The RTP Committee has set a limit on the amount of funding a political subdivision can receive. The minimum grant requirement is $50,000 and the maximum grant amount that can be requested is $250,000 for projects. The minimum or maximum grant amount request can be waived for applications if requested via letter, which includes justification as to why they are requesting the waiver. The Committee will determine if the waiver request is justifiable.

Planning Requirements
Proper planning ensures that trail objectives will be met and guarantees there are adequate funds to complete the project. Seek advice from experts, consult with landscape architects, architects (if buildings are involved), engineers, your attorney, volunteers, users, NGPC staff, and others and then develop a project scope and a work plan. Experience has shown that well thought out projects will prevent problems that later could delay or possibly cause the project to be withdrawn. NGPC is willing to review applications prior to the deadline and give recommendations on how to improve the application. **NGPC must receive the application at least 4 weeks prior to the deadline for time to review and get back to the political sponsor for additions and/or corrections by the sponsor.**

Nebraska Recreational Trails Program Committee
The RTP grant requires the establishment of an advisory committee before Nebraska may allocate funds for any project. Nebraska's committee consists of members who represent both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Other advisory members include the representative from FHWA assigned to manage Nebraska’s RTP projects, a representative from

the State Historical Society, and a representative from Nebraska Tourism Commission. The committee normally meets twice a year; once to rank the applications received and once to make policy and application changes.

Design, Construction, Signage, and Accessibility Criteria
Design and construction standards should meet the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) trail standards as published in the Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities as a development guide for non-motorized trails. The guide can be purchased from: AASHTO, 444 North Capitol St, NW, Suite 225, Washington, D.C. 20001. Specific disability accessibility technical standards have been finalized for recreational trails by the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board), sponsors have statutory responsibilities to provide opportunities for people with disabilities. Project elements, where possible, should be provided in accord with current standards that are contained in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) or in the Uniform Federal Access Standards (UFAS).

Signs and other traffic control devices must conform with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and Standard Highway Signs (these standards allow some smaller dimensions for signs on trails). These documents are available for purchase from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Signage for Motorized Trails will conform to the United States Forest Service's December 2005 EM 7100-15, Sign and Poster Guide for the US Forest Service (Chapters 5, 7, 9, 10, 11 & 12). Motorized trail design should follow the recommendations of "Park Guidelines for OHVs" by George Fogg, "Management Guidelines for OHV Recreation" by Tom M. Crimmins, and/or the "Trail Planning, Design & Development Guidelines" by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and/or federal agency design guidelines. Contact NGPC for more information on these guidelines.

Environmental Requirements
Generally, a sponsor's trail project will not have to comply with all of the requirements of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) because most projects will qualify as a Categorical Exclusion (CE). Nevertheless **all** projects will be reviewed by both FHWA and NGPC staffs to ensure there will be no significant impacts on the environment. Included in the application is a short environmental form that must be completed and signed by the political subdivision. NGPC will then review the form and if funded, the sponsor will go through a more intensive form about the project. Additional reviews will need to take place by other state and federal agencies, so plan accordingly. The costs of the environmental reviews can and should be used as match for the project (as long as included in the cost estimate).

Projects in Partnership with Federal Agencies
RTP funds can be used on federal lands, and any federal land management agency may be a project sponsor. However, the non-federal share cannot include other federal funds, unless specific legislation allows the other federal funds to be used for a match. At least 5% of the 20% match must come from a partner to the Federal agency as cash. The remaining 15% can come from other "identified and approved" sources. Contact NGPC for more details.

Project Administration
Once a project sponsor has been contacted by NGPC regarding the success of the application, a grant administration training session will occur prior to the sponsor starting on the project. It is required that a sponsor goes through training prior to signing any agreement with NGPC. NGPC staff will inform grant recipients when to initiate the required processes so that the project can flow in a logical manner and comply with all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The grant recipient should call NGPC staff any time there is a question on how to proceed with a project phase. The grant recipient should assign a staff member to administer the project who will have a good working knowledge of the project and with whom NGPC staff can

make day-to-day contact as the need arises. We recommend only one person administer the grant on behalf of the recipient to alleviate miscommunications. If there is a need on the project sponsor's side to have more than one person involved, NGPC requests that these individuals coordinate with one another and have only one person as the liaison to NGPC to alleviate any miscommunication between parties.

Project Deadline

From the date of authorization of funds from Federal Highway Administration and contracts have been signed between NGPC and the Project Sponsor, the project will have two years to complete the project. Extension(s) may be granted, **IF** requested in writing 30 days prior to the deadline set in the **contract**. However, recent changes to federal Grant Implementation Guidance requires a set deadline in the federal Funding Request that may be different than the contract deadline but, once established, cannot be changed.

Donations

Forced Account Labor and Equipment

The NGPC staff will require the political subdivision to provide the appropriate forms to track forced account labor and equipment. Forced account refers to the grant sponsor's labor force and to sponsor-owned equipment. The allowable rate that may be charged to the project is the hourly or salaried rate he/she earns in the normal course of their employment. The wages include benefits but do not include overhead and indirect costs. The sponsor will provide a wage schedule of all employees working on the trail in the application, along with the estimated hours it will take to complete the tasks. Equipment may be charged to a project at the rate charged for similar work within the applicant(s) jurisdiction through NDOR. The sponsor must contact NDOR to provide the **FHWA rates** and NDOR's response must be included in the application, along with the estimated hours of use of the equipment. FEMA rates are not acceptable for the equipment. DO NOT rely on estimates from your engineers on equipment costs; the only acceptable rate is from NDOR. Donated land and/or easements are acceptable as part of the local match once a federal appraisal and review have been completed at the cost of the political subdivision. Contact NGPC staff for questions and assistance.

Land Acquisition

Land may be acquired **only** on a willing seller/willing buyer basis. *You may not, at application time, negotiate a price for the land with a landowner; you may only inquire if the land is for sale*. Later, at the direction of the NGPC staff, an appraisal report will be required utilizing the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice and to the extent appropriate the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, revised 1992. A general certified appraiser of Nebraska must complete the report. The project sponsor will be required to comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, P. L. 91-646, as amended, 42 U.S.C. ss 4601, et seq. and comply with 49 CFR Part 24, regarding appraisals. During the acquisition process, NGPC staff will provide guidance when and as needed. The sponsor will also be responsible for an appraisal review by a qualified General Certified Appraiser of Nebraska. See pages 7-9 of the policies for more information and guidance for this process. The appraisal is a cost that is reimbursable or can be used as part of the local match. This type of project will require more time for set up due to the appraisal and review period. Please expect the project to take at least **6 more months** than originally figured to deal with the appraisal process.

Easements

If the trail project requires an easement and the cost of acquiring the easement is not being requested for reimbursement, the easement paperwork should be included in the application. If the easement is a donation and is part of the local match for the application, the proper paperwork along with a federal appraisal and appraisal review meeting federal requirements MUST be completed prior to development. To determine the "Value of land" for the match, the sponsor will have to coordinate with its sources to provide a value. If this value is determined to be less than

what was stated in the application, the sponsor will provide additional matching funds in the form of cash. If the easement is a donation then you must submit forms showing the owner was advised of their right to receive just compensation and follow NDOR's Right-of-Way Acquisition Guide for Local Public Agencies, see page 8 of the policies for more information. These must accompany the application or be provided to NGPC within 3 months of receiving notification of approval of the grant. If the easement is a part of the request for reimbursement of the project, the applicant must provide a "Letter of Intent" from the landowner for the land in question. The paperwork and appraisal may be completed after the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Board of Commissioners approve the project and NGPC has provided a letter stating the project can move forward with the appraisal process. If an applicant is unsure of how to proceed in this or has questions, they are encouraged to contact NGPC staff.

Maintenance Plan

In recent years, maintenance of trails has become an issue of concern. Therefore, it has been decided to REQUIRE that a project sponsor include a maintenance plan with the RTP application. The maintenance plan shall include on an annual basis, cost estimates of routine maintenance (fencing, repairs to surface, spraying for weeds, mowing, replacement of signage, snow removal…etc.), a maintenance schedule for the care of the project, what type of labor will be used to maintain the trail (Adopt-a-trail volunteer programs are highly recommended), and how the sponsor plans to pay for the maintenance during the life of the project (25 years for non-motorized, 10 years for motorized). If this maintenance plan is not included within the narrative of the application, the application will be ranked lower than other applications. A sample maintenance plan can be viewed on our website at http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/trails/programs/RTP.asp.

Progress Reports

Each project sponsor will be required to provide NGPC with progress reports regarding the progress of the project. These reports will be due every quarter after the contract has been signed between NGPC and the sponsor. This information will be covered in the training after notification of award. The project sponsor is responsible for supplying NGPC with the report **without** NGPC having to request the form, except for the first report. NGPC will remind sponsors for the first report, but no reminders will be sent after the initial report. If a sponsor misses more than two reports in a row, they will be subject to reduced funding or potentially lose all funding for the project. The reports may be downloaded off the web at http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/trails/programs/RTP.asp.

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION
RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

(Revised June 2 010)

Applicant:		**Project Contact:**			
Address:		**Zip Code:**			
E-Mail Address:		**Congressional District:**		**Cell:**	
Business Telephone:		**Federal ID No:**			
Project Title:					
Project Description:					
Legal Description:					
Project Cost Data:					
1. Development:	$	2. Acquisitions:	$	3. Engineering	$
4. Total Cost: $					
5. Federal RTP Share (Maximum: 80% of the Total Project Cost):				$	
6. Percent of Request:	%	Percent of Match:	%		
Local 20% Matching Share: (Entire amount must be available at application time-5% in cash)					
7. Cash:	$	Source:			
8. Taxes:	$	Source:			
9. Donations:	$	Source:			
10. Other:	$	Source:			
11. Other:	$	Source:			
12. Total:	$				

NOTE: Grant application is on-line at:
http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/trails/programs/RTP.asp.

Certification:

I hereby certify that the information contained on this application form and in the supplemental documents is, to the best of my knowledge, both true and accurate. I have also read the policies information that go along with the RTP application and understand the policies for the program.

_____
Signature of Project Sponsor

_____
Title

_____
Date

RETURN THE ORIGINAL APPLICATION FORMS WITH THE SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS TO:

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION
ATTN: KIRK NELSON
2200 N 33rd Street, P.O. Box 30370
Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

The penalty for knowingly and willfully providing inaccurate or insufficient information is automatic withdrawal of the project from consideration for Recreational Trails Program assistance. If you do not have match in hand at the time of application, you will be considered an ineligible applicant. If awarded and false information has been discovered by NGPC, the project will no longer remain eligible for funding and the project sponsor will be notified that the project has been cancelled.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

Applicant is the **political** subdivision applying for assistance from the RTP. Non-profit organizations and Foundations are not eligible to apply for funds.

Project Officer is the contact with whom NGPC staff could contact daily concerning any grant business. Usually this person is the clerk, city administrator or manager or other staff member of the applicant. This contact person must be employed by the political subdivision applying for funds.

Address is the business address for the applicant. Please supply physical address and PO Box number if available.

Zip Code- Self-explanatory. **E-mail Address -** Self-explanatory. **Congressional District-** Self explanatory. **Cell Telephone**- Self-explanatory. **Business Telephone -** Self-explanatory.

Federal I. D. Number - The Federal Employer Identification number assigned to your political subdivision by the IRS.

Project Title-The general name of the project; make sure it indicates development, acquisition or both. For example: Development of Steamboat Trace Trail or, Acquisition of 25 Acres and Development for the Steamboat Trace Trail, or Acquisition of 25 Acres for the Steamboat Trace Trail.

Project Description - Brief description of the project, including length in feet, width in feet, surfacing choice and/or types of facilities that are included within the project. This information must be included on the application form **as well as in the supplemental narrative**.

Legal Description- Include a Section(s), Township and Range description of the trail. This includes which part of the section the trail is traversing (i.e. the northwest quarter section) and which direction it is traversing, as well as the starting and stopping points of the trail. Please include a map that coincides with the legal description. If an example is needed, contact NGPC. This information must be included within the application and can be an attachment if there is not enough room on the application form for the legal description. **It is imperative, due to the environmental reviews of projects that sponsors provide a detailed legal description in the application. Without this, sponsors will experience delays in getting started after the project is approved.**

Project Cost Data:

1. **Development** is the total cost of the facilities; 2. **Acquisition** is total cost for the land;
3. **Engineering Cost** is the sum of the total design and construction engineering for the project.
4. **Total Cost** is the sum of the facilities and land and engineering. 5. **Federal RTP Share** is that amount of money the project sponsor is requesting from RTP. 6. **Percentage of request** is the percent that the project sponsor is requesting from RTP. **Percentage of match** is the percent that the project sponsor is supplying for the project. **<u>These percentages should be rounded to whole percentages.</u>**

Local Matching Share: (5% of Match MUST be in cash)

7. **Cash** is money from the grant sponsor, individuals, corporations, organizations, et al.
8. **Taxes** are revenues from sales, property, etc.
9. **Donations** are the labor, materials, or equipment donated from the political subdivision or cash from other sources (organizations, foundations). Additional information will be needed for labor and equipment costs, please see narrative guidelines.
10. **Other** may be funds from other governmental entities such as a County, NRD, School District that are partners in the project. Other funds also include design engineering, wetland mitigation, cultural surveys, in-house design costs, appraisal costs…etc. for matching purposes.
11. An additional other category if it is needed.
12. **Total** is the sum of all of the <u>local matching funds</u>.

Certification- Self-explanatory.

Signature- Self-explanatory. The Project sponsor must sign the application form and supplemental attachment.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT ATTACHMENT

Please complete and return with Grant Application

1. Name of Project:	
2. Name of Sponsor:	

3. Kind of recipient – from Section 1302 (e) (3): [**please check type of political subdivision on the appropriate line]**

☐	Municipal	☐	Public Power District	
☐	County	☐	School District/ College	
☐	Natural Resources District	☐	Federal Agency	
☐	State	☐	Other (Please list)	
☐	Recognized Indian Tribe			

4. Project Location:

Municipality [Closest City, Town or Village]	
County:	
Congressional District [# and Representative]	
NE Legislative District [# and Representative]	

5. Classification of Land **[please check appropriate classification]**

Public:	☐	Private:	☐	Combination public and private:	☐	
Fee Simple Title:	☐	Easement:	☐	Lease:	☐	

6. Permissible Use category(s) – Section 1302 (e)(1) Please indicate which categories the project belongs to

☐	Maintenance and restoration of existing trails
☐	Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages
☐	Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment
☐	Construction of new trails (with restriction for new trails on Federal lands)
☐	Acquisition of easements or property for trails
☐	Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance

7. Assured Access Funding category: from section 1302(e)(4)and(5)**[please check one]**

Motorized	☐	Non-Motorized	☐	Diversified trail use	☐

Trail uses permitted (list major uses of trail, i.e. pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, atv)

8. Estimated date of completion:	

GRANT APPLICATION ATTACHMENT INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Name of Project** is self-explanatory.
2. **Name of Sponsor** is the name of the political subdivision and local contact person.
3. **Kind of Recipient** is the type of political subdivision that is applying for funds.
4. **Project Location** includes the community the project is taking place in, the county the project is taking place in, the U.S. Congressional District and Representative that is represented, and the Nebraska Legislative District and Representative where the project is taking place. Please identify the **specific** NE Senator's district that the project is located.
5. **Classification of Land** indicates the ownership of land on which the project is taking place.
6. **Permissible Uses.** The following is a list of permissible uses of RTP funds. A box needs to be checked on this item. On previous sheet, please indicate the category(s) that the project falls under:
   a. Maintenance and restoration of existing trails.
   b. Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages.
   c. Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment.
   d. Construction of new trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands.
   e. Acquisition of easements or property for trails.
   f. Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.
7. **Assured Access Funding Category from Section 1302 (e)(4) and (5) A box needs to be checked on this item.**

   Motorized Trails consist of those trails that allow all terrain vehicles and/or off highway vehicles, including Motorbikes, ATVs, and Snowmobiles.

   Non-motorized Trails consist of those trails that allow foot traffic, bicycle traffic, wheeled traffic like strollers, roller bladders or wheelchairs, cross country skiers, equestrian traffic and water oriented traffic like canoes and/or kayaks.

   Diversified Trails consist of trails that allow different users to share the trail. This could be a trail that allows pedestrian users, biking users, and equestrian users. Diversified trails may also be defined as trail corridors sharing to accommodate motorized and nonmotorized trail uses such as Equestrian users and Snowmobilers sharing trails.
8. **Estimated date of completion** is self-explanatory. It should be noted that grants are not announced until after the January NGPC Commissioners meeting. NGPC requests federal approval once NEPA compliance is completed and the sponsor is ready to move forward. It should be noted that NGPC recommends that the completion date be approximately 18-24 months after FHWA authorization.

NEBRASKA GAME & PARKS COMISSION
RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

June 2015

GENERAL

These guidelines are designed to assist prospective grant recipients prepare the application and various supplemental documents for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The application and the supplemental documents must be sufficient in detail so that staff and the RTP committee can adequately evaluate and rank the proposed trail project. Eligible applicants are political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska who will have long-term responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the trail project. You will be required to send an electronic version of the complete grant application to kirk.nelson@nebraska.gov.

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

THIS INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED WITH THE GRANT FORMS. Send one copy of each of the following items for our files.

Project Narrative - The following elements should be addressed. Please mark each with the coinciding letter and title within the narrative so the Committee can follow the application. For example, start out with #1 Narrative and address all letters below, then #2 Site Plan, #3 Itemized Cost Estimate…etc. Also mark each subcategory within each section; i.e. #1 a) purpose, #1 b) linkages, #1 c) surface…etc.

1. Narrative (Send 1 copy) - **a)** State the purpose of the trail and tell if it is new, a renovation, an extension of an existing trail , maintenance, or combination; **b)** If the trail will link other trail(s) give the trail(s) name and provide a map; **c)** Type of trail surface, its proposed length and width; **d)** Identify the public users the trail will primarily serve (bicycles, pedestrian, equestrian, motorized, etc. or combination); **e)** The anticipated start and completion dates (please refer back to page 11), do not provide number of days it will take, give dates in month and year; **f)** Special or unique characteristics and features that are included in the project; **g)** Describe any partnerships with others; **h)** Describe any known controversy or objections; **i)** Describe signage that is included in cost estimate and what the purpose of the signage is; **j)** Provide maintenance plan for the trail, including type of maintenance, who will maintain the trail and how the sponsor plans to pay for the maintenance of the project for 25 years if the project is non-motorized or 10 years if the project is motorized; see example of maintenance plan on NGPC's website of what is recommended; **k)** If utilizing forced account labor, describe how many employees and hours this project will utilize as well as the types of equipment used, if applicable. Provide wage schedule including benefits of employees and NDOR quoted FHWA rental rates on equipment if necessary (along with proof from NDOR on FHWA equipment rates); **l)** Describe what a user will see and experience on the trail; and m) Provide photographs of proposed trail (if in color, provide 20 copies of each photo).

2. Site Plan (Send 1 copy & please label as Site Plan on the map) - **a)** Legal boundaries of the trail corridor or the public park through which the trail will extend, **including** section, township and range; **b)** Existing recreation facilities within the corridor or park; **c)** Trail route within property; **d)** Scale drawing and show the scale; **e)** North arrow; **f)** Surrounding land uses (denote in writing or, if desired, draw on the plan); **g)** Abutting streets or highways (name them). ***Note: 8 ½ x 11 inch size is desired for reproducing in black and white. If the maps are in color, provide 20 copies of the map.*** Items listed above must be located on map but do not need to be included in narrative.

3.Itemized Cost Estimate (Send 1 copy & mark as Cost Estimate in application) – It is important that cost estimates are determined by a licensed engineer and that the individual understands the estimates should reflect costs for the upcoming year as opposed to what costs were in recent past (see example on page 18 of this document). Costs of trails continue to rise due to inflation and gas/transport costs and that should be noted. **Additional funds are not available for costs that are overrun from estimates.** So if a sponsor doesn't get started as soon as NGPC gives the approval, the sponsor could incur a lot more costs associated with their trail project. Show the following: **a)** the proposed project items and their estimated costs, see Attachment 1, Sample (this is only a sample and does not reflect market prices) Cost Estimate (we suggest including a provision for inflation and seasonal delays in each of the cost items); **b)**the cost for advertising for bids, if applicable to your project and reimbursement is desired; **c)** the cost for construction engineering/architectural fees, if applicable; **d)** land acres to-be-acquired and estimated Cost per acre; **e)** environmental costs, surveying costs, wetland delineation and if necessary wetland mitigation planning, cultural surveys appraisals, costs for permitting, f)the total project cost. **Engineering fees must be reasonable for the scope of the project. The sponsor must provide proof that a licensed engineer did determine the costs in letter form from the engineer or by their stamp on the estimate.**

Note: Refer to state bidding statutes for procuring the Engineers for your project as well as for procuring contractors to develop the project. Because federal dollars are being use, state bidding statutes do pertain to all elements of RTP projects.

4. Plat Map (Send 1 copy & please mark this as plat map in the application) - Provide a plat map of your political subdivision and show the location of the proposed trail project. Please include Section, Township, and Range where project is located on the Plat Map. It is preferred to have the Plat Map in a 8 ½ x 11" format.

5. Floor Plan (Send 1 copy) - If a building, such as a restroom or picnic shelter, is included in the proposed project provide a scale drawing showing: **a)** buildings dimensions; **b)** floor plan showing the proposed uses of the rooms; **c)** scale; **d)** title block. This may be submitted on 8 ½ x 11 sized paper.

Note: The proposed public building must be designed to conform to ADA standards for accessibility and this must be indicated on the floor plan. We recommend you consult an informed source to ensure compliance with the law. If floor plan is not accessible, the project will not receive funds unless rectified in the design phase of the project.

6.Environmental Documentation (Send 1 copy) - Complete the attached Environmental Review form and if necessary elaborate on the elements on the form. **It is extremely important to review this form and provide all pertinent information.** The environmental review conclusions form must be filled out and signed by the sponsor and NGPC will sign off on the review after the grant is successful obtaining funding. If funded, sponsor will complete the necessary NEPA compliance as required. The local floodplain official must review and approve projects proposed in the flood plain. Include one copy of their (floodplain official) comments in the application.

7. Ownership of Land (Send 1 Copy) - The project sponsor must have clear title to the property being proposed for development. A deed to the property is the most thorough and desirable way of proving ownership and will be required if funded. Provide evidence of ownership in the form of a copy of the deed or title opinion from your attorney or title insurance (send one copy of the insurance policy or the commitment for title insurance). **Identify, and describe easements and any other outstanding rights located on the property.** Quit claim deeds require title insurance. If ownership is in the form of an easement, provide a copy of the easement. If acquisition of land or easement is part of the

application, indicate that in this section. Do not provide the deed/easement to every parcel in the park. This deed information will be compared to the legal description given of the trail. Provide only land ownership information for the property that deals specifically with the trail.

8.Resolution (Send 1 Copy) - The sponsoring governing board **must** pass a resolution showing its willingness to participate in RTP. (See Attachment 2, Sample Resolution). Send a signed, dated and attested copy. It is important that applicants plan ahead and have this to the governing board at least one month prior to the application deadline. If the resolution is not included in the application, the project is ineligible to receive funding.

9. Land Acquisition-At the point of the application submittal, you may only ask the landowner if he/she is a willing seller. You may not negotiate a price until after the appraisal process is completed, nor may you place an option on the piece of property. You may make inquiries from a person having knowledge of real estate values in your area to estimate the cost per acre for the purpose of determining the total cost for the land. It is recommended that the sponsor looks at comparable pieces of property to assist in determining the general costs for the estimate. Note if there is a business or farming operation on said property, relocation costs may be required. After federal approval of the project, NGPC staff will direct the sponsor to have the property appraised and will also provide the proper guidelines. At the point of application process, please provide: **a)** number of acres; **b)** name of landowner (s); **c)** estimated date of acquisition; **d)** estimated cost per acre and **e)** method of acquisition (purchase or donation); **f)** provide written assurance from the landowner that he/she is interested in selling the property; **g)** a map of the piece of property, including surrounding land use(s).

10. Easements/Leases- (send 1 Copy) - If your political subdivision does not own the property where the trail will be developed, a lease or easement may be executed to gain control of the corridor for the purpose of using federal funds to develop it if acquisition is not appropriate or feasible. All leases or easements must be for a minimum of 25 years for non-motorized trails and facilities and 10 years for motorized trails and facilities. It is recommended to include an option to renew the lease/easement for an equal period of time. Submit one copy of the lease or easement as assurance your board and the other entity that owns the property has reviewed and accepted the agreement conditions. If acquiring an easement, there are federal regulations that must be met and NGPC will guide the sponsor through that process.

A project sponsor MUST address this issue within the narrative of the application so those who rank the grant understand where the sponsor is at in this process. If this does not pertain to the project, please respond within the narrative that this issue is not applicable to the project and the sponsor has the land already under ownership.

If the project sponsor has decided to use the “value of the land” for the easement as part of their local match, a federal appraisal and appraisal review meeting federal requirements will be required and the applicant will need to approximate a value for the easement within the narrative of the application. The costs for the appraisal and review of the appraisal will be incurred by the project sponsor and can be used as part of the local match or for reimbursement if identified in the cost estimate that accompanies the grant application as long as it is within 18 months of obligating the federal funds to the project.

If the project sponsor wants reimbursement for the purchase of an easement, the project sponsor must provide a “Letter of Intent” from the landowner to assure those ranking the grant that this property owner is interested in having a trail on his/her property (Send one copy). If the easement is a donation then the sponsor must submit forms showing the owner was advised of their right to receive just compensation. If a project sponsor has questions

on what to include in the application, they are encouraged to contact NGPC staff. **Leases are not eligible for reimbursement, but can be used in lieu of an easement if necessary.**

11. Historical/Cultural Resources Identify any historical or cultural resources, if known, on or near the proposed project. Discuss the project's impact on these resources and then describe the mitigating measures that will be included in the project for protecting them. NGPC staff will coordinate the required formal review of the project in conformance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act once the project has been approved by NGPC Commissioners. In-depth Cultural Resource Surveys are a reimbursable cost for the Project Sponsor or can be used as part of the match (if identified in the cost estimates).

12. Local Comprehensive Planning Planning is a part of the ranking of each grant. If the project is in accordance with a local or regional comprehensive plan or state comprehensive trail plan, forward copies of pages from the plan that identifies the trail. If the political subdivision has a Plan for that area, such as a Trails Master Plan or a Park Master Plan, please include that in the application. The trail should be identified in any of these plans to be considered a part of the sponsor's planning process. Do not provide generalized information that pertains to recreation but not the specific trail that the application is for. Having a trail placed on the community's Transportation Improvement Program or the State's Transportation Improvement Program is not considered a part of the planning process because it won't be current when the project is under construction.

13. Wetlands Should wetlands exist on or near the proposed project site notify the local Army Corps of Engineers personnel and find out if a Section 404 permit and/or a delineation of wetlands is needed. A wetland delineation must take place prior to receiving a permit to work in wetland areas and can be done through outside consultants. The project sponsor is responsible for this delineation and this cost can be used as part of the match, as long as it is in the cost estimate. An engineer should be able to make a preliminary determination on if this is needed or not. Wetlands are afforded protection under P.L. 99-645, Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986, to promote the conservation of migratory waterfowl and to offset or prevent the serious loss of wetlands. In the event wetlands will be affected by the project, a Section 404 Permit must first be obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers. It is recommended that applicants consult with personnel at the Omaha office at (402) 896-0896. **The permit must be obtained prior to commencing construction activities.**

The Army Corps of Engineers has a process that determines how to deal with wetlands. The overall goal is to avoid and minimize all impacts on areas that have wetlands. If that cannot be done, then the project sponsor may look into completing a wetland mitigation plan for what they cannot avoid. The Plan needs to provide the classification and, if applicable, describe both the project impacts and measures that will be implemented to mitigate the impacts. The sponsor will also be required to mitigate any wetlands after being delineated that are being affected at a mitigation ratio. For example, if a trail encroaches on one acre of wetlands and the Corps determines that the mitigation ratio is 1.5:1, the political subdivision must replace that one acre with one and one half acres of similar wetlands elsewhere within the community (preference is within on site if possible). Even if the authority states that there are wetlands but mitigation is not necessary, FHWA has deemed that **all** projects must be mitigated on a one to one and one half basis. Contact NGPC if questions arise about the wetland delineation and/or mitigation planning process.

If the Corps determines that the wetland is non-jurisdictional (i.e. no 404 permit is needed), the applicant will still need to comply with Title 117 (water quality standards) of state law that is administered by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. Contact NGPC staff with questions.

14. Fish/Wildlife/Plants Describe the threatened or endangered species that are on or near the project site. **A review is required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and must be completed prior to the advertising and bidding of the project.** NGPC will also review the project for threatened and endangered species. If applicable, describe both the project impacts and measures that will be implemented to mitigate the impacts. Many times tree, shrub or bush removal is necessary for the trail development. Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712: Ch. 128 as amended) vegetation MAY NOT be removed between Feb. 15 and July 15 without a biologist survey done to determine if the area is prime habitat for migratory birds and the Northern Long-Eared Bat. This includes trees that are "volunteers" or "scrub" trees due to smaller birds nesting in them as well as shrubs and other habitat that is conducive for nesting birds. Some species do nest outside of this time period and USFWS will inform us of this when your project is reviewed by them prior to construction. The survey must take place in the planned construction period, so plan accordingly to have that in place right before construction.

NGPC recommends when re-seeding the area around a trail system, if necessary, that the project sponsor use native species of Nebraska to deal better with the climate.

15. Right-Of-Way Certificate This information is for the knowledge of project sponsors and the form is not included within this application packet. Prospective applicants must sign a Right-of-Way (ROW) Certificate to assure that they have followed proper procedure regarding the public Right-of-Way within the community. Right-of-way is defined as all land or property acquired or devoted to public use. In this case it is the trail as well as a shoulder area on each side of the trail for public use. The ROW Certificate will be part of the paperwork that must be filled out prior to authorization from FHWA and forms will be given to recipients to fill out that are successful in receiving funds and can be downloaded off of our website.

16. Trails Dealing with Railroads (Send 1 copy) There are numerous projects where a railroad could be involved in the trail project. It is up to the project sponsor to secure at minimum, a "letter of intent" from the railroad and provide that with the trail application to show that the railroad has knowledge and generally approves of the project in question. It is important that a project describe the relationship and process taken when dealing with trails within the Railroad's Rights-of-Way. If the community does not have this information included within the application, the project will be deemed as ineligible because they will not be ready to complete the project within the two-year completion requirement. Railbanked land can be used as part of the cash match once the proper appraisal and review has taken place. Emails and/or phone calls from the Railroad are not considered "letters of intent."

17. Support of the Community Part of the ranking of each grant deals with how much support is shown by the community for the project. Provide letters from civic organizations, individuals, tourism entities and/or other groups and individuals to show support of project. Have supporters be specific to the project within the application as opposed to general support of trails in community or showing support of a project not requested through this funding source, such as TE projects. If your community held public input meetings (besides the required meeting where the Resolution is signed), provide minutes of the meeting, how many individuals were present and any other pertinent information to show support of this specific trail. It is important to show community support from individuals and groups as opposed to only the Chamber of Commerce or political leaders.

ATTACHMENT 1
SAMPLE COST ESTIMATE

DEVELOPMENT of WARFIELD TRACE
CITY OF_____,NEBRASKA

Item	**Unit**	**No. Required**	**Unit Cost**	**Cost**
Clearing & Grubbing	Acre	1	$2,000	$2,000
Earth Work (Cut & Fill)	Cubic Yard	1,500	$8.00	$12,000
Trail Surfacing- (indicate type of surface, depth & width)	Linear Foot	2,500	$30	$75,000
Subgrade Preparation	Square Yards	1,000	$2.50	$2,500
Seeding	Acre	3	$500	$1,500
Signage (MUTCD only)	Each	4	$250	$1,000
Culverts	Linear Foot	150	$50	$7,500
Bollards	Each	2	$350	$700
Bridge (if necessary-include decking, railing, length, abutments…etc)	Each	1	$20,000	$25,000
Environmental Costs (cultural surveys, biological survey, soil determination wetland delineation, wetland mitigation…etc)	Cultural Survey	1	$5,000	$5,000
Construction Costs Subtotal				$127,200
Mobilization (1)	Lump Sum	1	8% of subtotal	$10,176
Total Construction Costs				$137,376
Engineering Costs				
Design Engineering (Recommend this be used as part of local match)	Lump Sum	1	10% of total construction	$13,737
Construction Engineering/Contingency	Lump Sum	1	10% of total construction	$13,737
Funding Sign	Lump Sum	1		$1,000
Total Project Costs				$165,850
Funding Sources				
Private Funding/Donations			0%	$0
Forced Account Funding			0%	$0
Cash Match from Sponsor			20%	$33,116
Federal Funding			80%	$132,680

DISCLAIMER: This is a sample estimate that is not current with today's market prices. A licensed engineer must provide the cost estimate and proof (by letter) that the engineer did determine the costs. Items that are not included within the estimate are not eligible for reimbursement. It is important that when the engineer is determining the costs that they think to include everything that may be needed for trail development. DO NOT USE THE NUMBERS IN THIS SAMPLE AS YOUR BASIS FOR COSTS!

ATTACHMENT 2
SAMPLE PROJECT RESOLUTION

1. The (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska is applying for federal assistance from the Recreational Trails Program for the purpose of: (the project as described in the grant application).

2. The _____(position of person signing application) of, _____, (City, Village or Other) Nebraska is authorized to sign the application for federal assistance, and any other official project documents that are necessary to obtain such assistance, including any agreements, contracts or other documents that are required by the State of Nebraska or the Federal Highway Administration.

3. The (City, Village, or Other) _____, Nebraska currently has the written commitment for the 20% local matching share for the project elements that are identified on the application form and the supplemental documents and will, as it becomes necessary, allocate the local funds for the project.

4. The (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska will commit the necessary financial resources to operate and maintain the completed project in a safe and attractive manner for _____ years (25 for non-motorized, 10 for motorized).

5. The (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, age, religion, disability, sex or nation origin in the use of any property or facility that is acquired or developed pursuant to the project proposal, and shall comply with the terms and intent of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and any of the regulations promulgated pursuant to such Act.

6. The (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska will comply with all rules and regulations of the Recreational Trails Program, applicable Executive Orders and all state laws that govern the grant applicant during the performance of the project.

7. The (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska will comply with the Federal accessibility and use standards where they can be reasonably applied.

8. All paperwork may be signed by the project sponsor, but the Resolution MUST be signed by the Mayor, Board Chairman, School Board Chairman, or Director of the Public Power District.

I certify that this resolution is a true copy of the original document that was adopted by the (City, Village, or Other)_____, Nebraska at a properly advertised and announced public meeting held this day of _____, 20____.

ATTEST: (Clerk)

_____ (SEAL)

_____ (SIGNATURE)
(Mayor/Chairman/Director of the Board)

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
Name of Sponsor:
Project Name:

	ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW				
	Review Area	**Estimated Involvement**			**Remarks**
1	Project on new alignment	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ Don't Know	
2	Additional right-of-way required	☐ No	☐ Yes		
3	Any railroad crossings	☐ No	☐ Yes		
4	Airport within 1/2 mile	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ N/A	
5	Public interest likely to be:	☐ Low	☐ Moderate	☐ High	
6	NPDES Permit needed	☐ No	☐ Yes		
7	Relocation of persons, businesses, farm	☐ No	☐ Yes	Est #	
8	Any significant stream crossings	☐ No	☐ Yes		
9	Any channel changes required	☐ No	☐ Yes		
10	Section 404 permit required	☐ No	☐ Possible	☐ Yes	
11	Floodplain permit required	☐ No	☐ Possible	☐ Yes	
12	Any wetland involvement	☐ No	☐ Possible	☐ Yes	
	Review Areas	**Possible Effect**			
13	Air Quality	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
14	Noise Quality	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
15	Landscaping	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
16	Fish and Wildlife	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
17	Water Quality/Impacts	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
18	Civil Rights (Minority Involvement)	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
19	Neighborhood disruption	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
20	Schools, churches, cemeteries or hospitals	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
21	Public health and safety	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
22	Economic activity	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
23	6(f) land	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
24	Historic sites	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
25	Multiple use of space	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	
26	Prime farmland or unique farmland	☐ None	☐ Minor	☐ Significant	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CONCLUSIONS

POLITICAL SUBDIVISION:

POLITICAL SUBDIVISION CONCLUSION
In the final analysis, we have determined that the project **will / will not** (Circle One) significantly impact the natural environment of the project location or general vicinity.

Political Subdivision:_____

Signed:_____
(Signature of Mayor, Chairperson or Manager)

Date:_____

STATE OF NEBRASKA:
Conclusion
It has been determined by the information above provided to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, on behalf of the State of Nebraska, that this project **will / will not** significantly impact the natural environment of the project location or general vicinity.

Signed:_____ **Date:**_____
Kirk Nelson
Trails Grant Administrator
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

(ALL OF THESE ITEMS MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE GRANT APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION.)

- ☐ Application Form (completed and signed)
- ☐ Certification of Application
- ☐ Grant Attachment
- ☐ Letter requesting waiver of minimum or maximum grant amount request, if necessary
- ☐ Letter of Financial Commitment regarding match
- ☐ Narrative/Supplemental Documentation as outlined on pages 12-17 of this packet.
- ☐ Photographs of potential trail.
- ☐ Maintenance Plan included within the narrative-see website for example.
- ☐ Site Plan (a) Development (b) Acquisition, or (c) Combination of (a) & (b)
- ☐ Plat Map (include Section, Township and Range on Plat Map)
- ☐ Floor Plan and Perspective (if restroom or other buildings are part of project)
- ☐ Land Ownership (deed, title opinions, title insurance, quit claim deed)
- ☐ Lease (Existing or Proposed). Minimum of 25 years remaining & recommend option for 25-year renewal for non-motorized projects. A minimum of 10 years on lease for motorized projects is needed.
- ☐ Easement -- Minimum of 25 years for non-motorized projects and a minimum of 10 years for motorized projects. Includes just compensation forms if donated.

- [ ] Project Resolution (governing board must pass a resolution--Attachment 2): MUST BE SIGNED PRIOR TO OCTOBER GRANT DEADLINE; NO LATE RESOLUTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

- [ ] Itemized Cost Estimate

- [ ] Wage Schedule of employees, number of employees and approximated hours to work for in-kind match. Wage schedule includes health benefit costs but no indirect costs such as electricity, building rental…etc.

- [ ] List of equipment (includes make, model, year and description), approved Nebraska Department of Roads Rental Rates for equipment, and estimated number of hours of equipment use for in-kind match.

- [ ] Local Comprehensive Planning or Other Documentation

- [ ] Letters of Support

- [ ] Environmental Form – including Floodplain and other necessary information

- [ ] Electronic Version of grant application to michelle.stryker@nebraska.gov

- [ ] Railroad Information (if applicable)