

# Applicant's To-Do List

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## Recreational Trails Program

This to-do list is designed to help an applicant prepare and submit a grant application for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

*Grants may be used to reduce the backlog of deferred maintenance on recreational trails and trail-related facilities that provide a backcountry experience for both nonmotorized and motorized trail uses. Under limited circumstances, new "linking" trails, relocations, and education proposals also are eligible.*

Applicants must submit the information required through [PRISM Online](#), the online project data system used by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). These steps will guide an applicant through the application process.

NOTE: For all documents, forms, and manuals referenced herein, go to the [grant program web page](#) and [grant manuals web page](#).

### Step 1: Establish Eligibility

**Eligible Applicants:** Municipal agencies (cities, towns, counties, school districts, etc.); state agencies; federal government agencies; tribal governments; other government entities (multi-state public agencies and others); nonprofit organizations; municipal corporations such as port districts, park and recreation districts, public utility districts, may be eligible if legally authorized to develop and maintain recreation facilities.

- ☐ A first-time applicant must submit a legal opinion to establish eligibility. It is due by the technical completion deadline (see Step 5).
- ☐ Nonprofit applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria (also see Section 2: Program Policies in *Manual 16: Recreational Trails Program*):
  - Register with the State of Washington as a nonprofit. Verify "active" status with Washington's [Secretary of State](#).
  - Will name a successor as required by state law.
  - Has been active in trail-related activities for at least three years.
  - Does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender, income, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

- Provide a copy of their Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Please email these documents directly to your RCO grants manager.

## Step 2: Review Materials

- ❑ Review the appropriate Recreation and Conservation Funding Board manuals for this grant program:
  - *Manual 16: Recreational Trails Program*
  - *Manual 4: Development Projects*
- ❑ Review the Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization attachment and schedule time for the governing body's approval. The signed authorization is due by the technical completion deadline (see Step 5).

Applicants for development or maintenance projects, and who are required to plan under the Growth Management Act (Revised Code of Washington 36.70A), should consult their organizations' planning department or contact the Washington State Department of Commerce's [Growth Management Services](#) to determine their compliance status with the Act. RCO uses information reported by the Department of Commerce in evaluation scoring. Applicants in compliance receive no score on the question; out of compliance status results in a minus one score. If the applicant's organization is out of compliance, this advance inquiry may give the applicant time to change the status before the technical completion deadline.

## Step 3: Submit Application–October 31, 2024

### SecureAccess Washington Account

Before beginning an application, if you do not already have one, you must sign up for a [SecureAccess Washington](#) account. Log into [PRISM Online](#) or submit a [PRISM New User Account Form](#). When using either of these databases for the first time, an applicant must complete a double sign-in.

### PRISM Online Application

PRISM will open in August. To start an application, go [PRISM Online](#) to and select "+ New Application." Follow the prompts to fill out the application. On-screen instructions, tool tips, and links are available throughout the *Application Wizard*.

## PRISM Attachments

There is an Attachments screen for each PRISM Online application. Attach the documents below before submitting the application. Include the applicant name, project name, and RCO project number on each attachment. Maps must include a north arrow, scale, and labels for any major highways, roads, cities, water bodies, etc.

- ☐ **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** (due by the technical completion deadline, see Step 5) to show the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant's organization. A standard form is available on the grant program web page. An applicant must adopt the text verbatim even if using a different format.
- ☐ **Control and Tenure Documentation** (development and maintenance projects only). Include property ownership information such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. See *Manual 4: Development Projects*, for additional details about control and tenure.
  - If proposing a maintenance project on property not owned by the applicant, submit a Landowner Agreement for Maintenance Projects.
- ☐ **Evaluation: Packet Visuals.** Up to two pages of photographs or other graphics such as schematic drawings, renderings, etc. Applicants may submit visuals in a collage style with several images on each page.
- ☐ **Map: Boundary Map–Proposed** (development projects only) shows the extent of the site covered by the grant application and includes the footprint of the project scope/area plus additional property necessary to make a complete recreational experience (e.g., access, parking, pathways). The map is used by RCO and the sponsor to ensure compliance with provisions in the grant agreement. Factors to consider when establishing boundary maps include: project scope, a complete recreation or public access experience, site management unit or area, and past RCO grants at the site. See *Manual 4: Development Projects*, for additional details and boundary map requirements.
- ☐ **Map: Regional Location.** One, single-sided page that shows the location of the project in a geographic region of the state. The regional map should identify the county, incorporated areas, major highways, and water bodies, etc., so RCO staff and evaluators can locate the general worksite to within a few miles.
- ☐ **Map: Site Location.** One, single-sided page showing the specific location of the project. This map must show the project in relation to local roads, park or ranger district boundaries, trailheads, water bodies, landmarks, etc. If possible, show the boundaries of the site on the map.

- ☐ **Map: Trail and/or Facility Map.** Up to two, single-sided pages showing the geographic scope and extent of the project including the trails and trail systems, or the facilities (such as campgrounds and trailheads), and features (peak, lake, river) that a typical user would expect to experience. The maps should show the complete area to be patrolled, developed, or maintained.
- ☐ **Photograph.** Every application requires at least one general project photograph in .jpg format. A current ground shot or aerial view of the project site is appropriate.
- ☐ **RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet.** For non-federal applicants only.
- ☐ **Site Plan: Development Site Plan** (development projects only). One, single-sided page, which shows the proposed improvements at the project site. Development site plans should show site boundaries, major site features, and proposed scope of work elements. If applicable, existing and future elements should be distinguished from those in the current project. Master, schematic design, and design development plans are suitable for development site plans. If you have construction document level plans those may be attached using the “Plans and Bid Specifications” attachment type.
- ☐ **Support Letters** and other documented expressions of project support or concern submitted with the application will be made available for advisory committee review. Applicants should also summarize this when responding to the Project Support evaluation question. **Please combine all letters into one PDF and attach to the project in PRISM**

Note that except for a few protected items, such as cultural resources data, as soon as the application is started, it and most attachments will be available for review by RCO staff, evaluators, and the public.

#### Step 4: Technical Review–November 1 to December 16, 2024

RCO staff reviews the application for eligibility, completeness, and clarity and then returns the application with feedback, questions, or suggested changes.

#### Step 5: Re-Submit Application by Technical Completion Deadline–January 15, 2025

- ☐ Address issues raised during application review and make modifications, if needed.
- ☐ Attach a signed **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** (if not already attached) to show the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant’s organization. A standard form is available on the grant program web page. An applicant must adopt the text verbatim even if using a different format.
- ☐ Attach **Environmental Clearance** document (maintenance projects only):

- Federal applicants and applicants with projects on federal land must submit environmental and cultural resources clearance documentation.
- Applicants with projects on non-federal land must reach out to the RCO grants manager to facilitate obtaining environmental and cultural resources clearance.
- ❑ **Legal Opinion** for applicants that have never applied for an RCO grant. This opinion helps verify that the applicant meets the legal requirements for RCO administered grants. Contact your RCO grants manager if you need an example.
- ❑ Complete all revisions and resubmit the application in PRISM Online by the technical completion deadline or the application will be deemed ineligible.

### Step 6: Project Evaluation–February 3 to March 3, 2025

RCO provides the advisory committee the applications for review and evaluation. Evaluators are typically given about four to five weeks to score the projects.

RCO staff tabulates the results and meets with the advisory committee to validate the results, establish the committee’s funding recommendation, and discuss any proposed process or policy changes. RCO then announces the results of the evaluation and posts the preliminary ranked lists on its website.

### Step 7: Submit Pre-Agreement Materials–May 1, 2025

- ❑ If match is included in the proposal, provide a **Certification of Applicant Match** to show what amounts and sources of match are in-hand for the project. Attach this document to the application in PRISM Online. There is a standard form available on the grant program web page. This must be provided at least one calendar month before the board funding meeting per Washington Administrative Code 286.
- ❑ Provide **Control and Tenure Documentation** if not already attached to the application in PRISM Online. Include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. See *Manual 4: Development Projects*, for details.
  - If proposing a maintenance project on property not owned by the applicant, submit a Landowner Agreement for Maintenance Projects.
- ❑ Provide any other requested pre-agreement materials (e.g., [electronic signature authorization form](#), environmental permits, project schedule or [milestone worksheet](#) for development projects) as required by RCO.

## Step 8: Sign Grant Agreement–After July 1, 2025

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves the grant awards, contingent on Congressional approval of funding for RTP. RCO works with the applicant to execute a grant agreement before work begins.

- ☐ Review other RCO policy manuals:
  - *Manual 7: Long-term Obligations*
  - *Manual 8: Reimbursements*
- ☐ Review the [Successful Applicant Workshop materials](#); then implement the project.
- ☐ If not already provided, submit documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act (development and maintenance projects only), unless this is included in the design phase of a Development project. Documentation must be submitted to RCO within two months (approximately August 31, 2025) of funding approval and before RCO will issue a project agreement. See Manual 16 for details. If permitting is included, a determination will be needed before RCO will issue a notice to proceed to construction.

*Updated July 31, 2024*