

## RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT (RCP) PROGRAM

	Fast Act (extension)	Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)				
Fiscal year (FY)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Contract authority	---	\$95 M	\$98 M	\$100 M	\$102 M	\$105 M
Advance appropriation (General Fund)	---	\$100 M	\$100 M	\$100 M	\$100 M	\$100 M
<b>Total BIL Funding (FY22-26)</b>	---	<b>\$195 M</b>	<b>\$198 M</b>	<b>\$200 M</b>	<b>\$202 M</b>	<b>\$205 M</b>

**Note:** Except as indicated, all references in this document are to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021).

### Program Purpose

The BIL establishes the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program to provide grants, on a competitive basis, to restore community connectivity by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.

### Statutory Citations

- § 11509; Division J, title VIII, Highway Infrastructure Programs (HIP) heading, paragraph (7)

### Funding Features

#### Type of Budget Authority or Authorization of Appropriations

- Contract authority from the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund, subject to the overall Federal-aid obligation limitation.
- Advance appropriations from the General Fund, not subject to any limitation on obligations.

#### Distribution of Funds

- Reserves, for each of FY22-26—
  - \$50 million for planning grants; and
  - \$150 million (average annual) for construction grants.
 [§ 11103(d)(3); division J, title VIII, HIP heading, paragraph (7)]

#### Types of Awards

- Authorizes DOT to award grants under the RCP Program for two types of awards:
  - A Planning grant (≤ \$2 million per recipient) [§ 11509(c)(5)]; and
  - A Capital Construction grant (≥ \$5 million per recipient). [§ 11509(d)(5)]

#### Allowable Amount for Technical Assistance

- Authorizes DOT to use up to \$30 million from funds made available for planning grants to provide technical assistance support in building community or organizational capacity (FY22-26). [§ 11509(f); Div. J., Title VIII, HIP heading, paragraph (7)]

### **Federal Share**

- Federal share not to exceed 80% of the cost of a planning activity for which a planning grant is used. [§ 11509(c)(6)]
- Federal share not to exceed 50% of the total cost of the project for which a capital construction grant is awarded. [§ 11509(d)(6)(A)]

### Other Considerations

- Federal assistance other than a capital construction grant under the RCP Program may be used to satisfy the non-Federal share of the cost of a project for which a RCP Program capital construction grant is awarded, except that the total Federal assistance provided for a project for which the grant is awarded may not exceed 80% of the total cost of the project. [§ 11509(d)(6)(B)]

### **Eligible Activities**

#### Planning Grants

- Activities eligible for funding under RCP Program planning grants include—
  - planning studies to evaluate the feasibility of removing, retrofitting, or mitigating an existing eligible facility to restore community connectivity, including potential safety, environmental, mobility, and economic effects;
  - public engagement activities to provide opportunities for public input into a plan to remove and convert an eligible facility; and
  - other transportation planning activities required in advance of a project to remove, retrofit, or mitigate an existing eligible facility to restore community connectivity, as determined by the Secretary. [§ 11509(c)(2)]
- Activities eligible for technical assistance support include building organizational or community capacity—
  - to engage in transportation planning; and
  - to identify innovative solutions to infrastructure challenges, including reconnecting communities that are bifurcated by eligible facilities or lack safe, reliable, and affordable transportation choices. [§ 11509(c)(3)(A) and (B)]

#### Capital Construction Grants

- Projects eligible to receive a RCP Program capital construction grant must have completed all necessary feasibility studies and other planning activities. Eligible projects include—
  - the removal, retrofit, or mitigation of an eligible facility; and
  - the replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility that – (i) restores community connectivity, and (ii) is sensitive to the context of the surrounding community and is otherwise eligible for funding under Title 23, United States Code. [§ 11509(d)(1) and (d)(3)]

### **Program Features**

This is a new program established under BIL.

### Eligible Applicants for Planning Grants

- a State;
- a unit of local government;
- a Tribal government;
- a metropolitan planning organization; and
- a nonprofit organization. [§ 11509(c)(1)]

### Eligible Applicants for Capital Construction Grants

- An owner of an eligible facility [§ 11509(d)(1)]

### Capital Construction Grant Application Partnerships

- An owner of an eligible facility, for the purposes of submitting an application for a capital construction grant, may partner with—
  - a State;
  - a unit of local government;
  - a Tribal government;
  - a metropolitan planning organization; or
  - a nonprofit organization. [§ 11509(d) (2)]

### Priority for Technical Assistance

- In selecting recipients of technical assistance, the Secretary shall give priority to an application from a community that is economically disadvantaged. [§ 11509(c)(3)(C)]

### Community Advisory Board

- The recipient of a capital construction grant may form a community advisory board, composed of representatives of the community, owners of businesses and labor organizations serving the community, and State and local government, to help facilitate community engagement and achieve inclusive economic development benefits. [§ 11509(d)(7)]

### Treatment of Projects

- Treats every project funded under the program as if it were located on a Federal-aid highway. This ensures applicability of Davis-Bacon wage requirements that apply to other projects on Federal-aid highways. [§ 11509(g)]

## **Additional Information and Assistance**

- For more information about the Reconnecting Communities Program, visit: [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants | US Department of Transportation.](#)
- For more information on resources to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and delivery transformative infrastructure projects and services. Whether it's the first time you're applying for a DOT grant or you're looking for more technical details and guidance, visit: the [DOT Navigator.](#)
- FHWA can connect you with your local FHWA office and support you with technical assistance for planning, design, construction, preserving, and improving public roads and in the stewardship of

Federal funds. For assistance, visit: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/technical\\_support.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/technical_support.cfm).