



Recreational Trails Program Project Selection Guide FFY 2016 and FFY 2017

The Recreational Trails Program provides federal funding to eligible entities within New Mexico to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized uses. These Federal transportation funds benefit recreationists who enjoy hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrianism, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, and off-road four-wheel driving.

-New Mexico Recreational Trails Program
Mission Statement

NM Recreational Trails Program Guide

Table of Contents

I. Program Background	5
A. Legislative History.....	5
B. Program Goals.....	5
2. Program Administration and Structure	5
A. Funding.....	6
B. Match.....	7
C. Cost Reimbursement and Sponsoring Agency.....	7
D. Availability.....	7
E. Eligible Entities.....	7
F. Ineligible Entities.....	7
G. Project Categories.....	8
H. Eligible Projects and Activities.....	8
I. Project Location.....	9
J. Ineligible Projects.....	9
3. Program Requirements	10
A. Compliance with Federal and State Requirements.....	10
B. Minimum Project Requirements.....	11
4. RTP Application and Selection Process Overview	12
A. Application Process.....	12
B. FFY16 and FFY17 Funding Cycle Deadlines.....	14
5. New Mexico RTP Project Selection Criteria	15
A. Introduction and Methodology.....	15
B. Scoring Matrix and Application Questions.....	17
6. Appendices	21
I. NMDOT Project Identification Form (PIF) and RTP Application.....	21
II. New Mexico MainStreet Program.....	29
III. Sample Resolution of Sponsorship.....	31
IV. Federal and State Requirements/Guidelines.....	34
V. NMDOT Environmental Level of Effort Form.....	35
VI. NMDOT District Offices and Design Centers.....	37
VII. Types of National Trails.....	38

NM Recreational Trails Program Guide

This document is intended to be a guide for potential Recreational Trails Program (RTP) applicants, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), and other transportation planning partners. It includes information on New Mexico's RTP structure, selection criteria, eligibility requirements, and application process. Please direct any requests for additional information to:

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I. Program Background

The New Mexico (NM) Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a federal reimbursement program funded through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) enacted July 1, 2012, as codified in 23 U.S.C. 206.

The RTP provides funding authority to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.

Note: The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) is also responsible for administering the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The TAP is administered separately and has its own eligibility requirements and application process. Please contact Rosa Kozub (rosa.kozub@state.nm.us), NMDOT's TAP Coordinator, for more information on the TAP.

A. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 authorized the Symms National Recreational Trails Fund Act, but did not provide guaranteed funding. The Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 1993 appropriations act provided funds in 1993. The National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 provided funds for FFY 1996 and 1997. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) replaced the Symms Act with the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and codified it in Title 23 United States Code. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) extended funding in 2005. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act of 2012 changed the RTP to be a set-aside of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds, but did not change other RTP provisions or requirements.

The RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from nonhighway recreational fuel use: fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks.

B. PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the NM RTP are to:

1. Improve the health and quality of life for New Mexicans by increasing trail-related recreational opportunities within and around communities.
2. Provide funding through a transparent, accessible program to communities and government agencies for the development of recreational trails and related educational programs for a variety of users.
3. Fund projects that result in “on-the-ground” benefits to users.
4. Meet the federal requirements regarding expenditure of 30% of funds on non-motorized trails, 30% on motorized trails and 40% on diversified trails.

2. Program Administration & Structure

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires that each state Governor designate an agency to administer the program. Governor Susana Martinez designated the NMDOT to administer the program beginning January 1, 2014. Prior to that date, the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department administered the program and continues to oversee some projects funded in previous years.

Included in the following information is a summary of FHWA RTP Guidance. More information is available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/.

A. FUNDING

MAP-21 reauthorized the RTP as a set-aside from the [Transportation Alternatives Program](#) (TAP). The amount set aside is equal to the State's Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009 RTP apportionment. (From FFY 1993 through FFY 2012, the RTP funds were distributed to the States by legislative formula: half of the funds were distributed equally among all States, and half were distributed in proportion to the estimated amount of non-highway recreational fuel use in each State.) The RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use: fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks. The estimates are based on a model developed by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory: http://www.cta.ornl.gov/cta/Publications/Publications_1999.html.

In New Mexico, the **estimated** set aside of RTP funds on an annual basis is \$1,429,831. In addition, there are currently unspent funds remaining from previous years. Thus the total amount available in this application cycle is approximately \$5.2 million, although the total amount awarded in this application cycle is at the discretion of the NMDOT.

Further sub-allocation of the federal funds from the RTP apportionment requires the following distribution (refer to Section G below for the definitions of the trail funding categories):

- 30% of the funds must be used for non-motorized trails (Categories 1 and 2),
- 30% for motorized trails (Categories 4 and 5), and
- 40% for diversified trails (Category 2, 3, and 5).

A total of 5% of the annual appropriation may be spent on educational programs and 7% may be used by the NMDOT for administrative costs.

This current call for applications will provide funding for selected projects—with separate Cooperative Project Agreements for each fiscal year—as follows:

- **FFY16—Planning, design, and certifications.** Required of all Tribal or Local Public Agency (T/LPA) projects unless the applicable NMDOT Regional Design Center grants an exception. State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies with documentation indicating all certifications are approved by the NMDOT and the FHWA-NM Division Office, and with pre-approval for design from the applicable NMDOT Regional Design Center, are not required to submit funding requests for this phase. *NMDOT reserves the right to deny funding requests for planning, design, and certifications from State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies.*
- **FFY17—Construction.**

Applications for projects that do not involve construction, such as maintenance projects that do not disturb new ground, purchase of equipment, and/or educational programs may be submitted for FFY16, FFY17, or both. These types of projects typically do not require design or certifications, although some certifications may still be required.

See the [NMDOT Tribal/Local Public Agency Handbook](#) for more information on the planning, design, certification, and construction requirements.

B. MATCH

RTP requires a local match of 14.56% of the *total project cost*. Tribal entities may use Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds for their local match. A federal agency project sponsor may provide matching funds by using other federal funds apportioned to that agency. However, the combined federal funds shall not exceed 95% of the total project cost. The remaining 5% non-federal match share must come from other non-federal funding sources.

C. COST REIMBURSEMENT AND SPONSORING AGENCY

The RTP is a cost-reimbursement program. If your agency's application is selected for funding, the agency will enter into a Cooperative Project Agreement with NMDOT and serve as the sponsoring agency. As the sponsoring agency, your agency will be responsible for paying all costs up front and requesting quarterly (at a minimum) reimbursement from NMDOT by submitting an invoice and proof of payment. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to Federal and State eligibility requirements.

Please note that any work completed before receipt of a Notice to Proceed (triggered by the execution of the Cooperative Project Agreement by the NMDOT) is not eligible for reimbursement. For example, you cannot be reimbursed for costs associated with completing an application or for engineering/design work completed before a Cooperative Project Agreement is executed.

Sponsoring agencies are responsible for any costs that exceed the award amount.

D. AVAILABILITY

RTP funds are available for the year obligated plus three Federal fiscal years. Thus agencies awarded funds will have approximately four years from obligation to spend the funds, unless the NMDOT determines otherwise. Please remember, however, that the obligation of construction funds is contingent upon completion of the design phase of a project; therefore, you must complete your design phase within the required timeframe in order for NMDOT to obligate your construction funds.

E. ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

The following entities are considered eligible project sponsors under the RTP:

- Local governments;
- Transit agencies;
- State and Federal natural resource or public land agencies;
- Public education institutions, such as school districts;
- Tribal governments;
- NMDOT, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and/or Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs); and
- Non-profits, **only** if partnered with an eligible entity project sponsor.

States are encouraged to use qualified youth conservation or service corps for construction and maintenance of recreational trails under this program. See www.emnrd.state.nm.us/YCC/ for more information on the New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps program.

F. INELIGIBLE ENTITIES

The following entities are not considered eligible project sponsors under the RTP:

- Non-profits as direct grant recipients of the funds. Non-profits must partner with an eligible entity on an eligible RTP project, if State or local requirements permit.
- High-risk entities, determined at NMDOT's discretion, will not be awarded funds, even if they are otherwise eligible. High-risk entities can be defined by financial risk or historical lack of capacity to manage federally-funded projects.

G. PROJECT CATEGORIES

There are five categories of RTP projects. Categories 1 and 2 count toward the 30% funding allocation for non-motorized single-use and diverse-use projects; Categories 2, 3 and 5 count towards the required 40% diversified-use projects; and Categories 4 and 5 count toward the 30% motorized-use projects.

- Category 1** Non-motorized project for a single use: A project primarily intended to benefit only one mode of non-motorized recreational trail use, such as pedestrian only, or bicycling only. Projects serving various pedestrian uses (such as walking, hiking, wheelchair use, running, bird-watching, nature-interpretation, backpacking, etc.) constitute a single use for the purposes of this category. *(Note: wheelchair use by mobility-impaired people, whether operated manually or powered, constitutes pedestrian use, non-motorized use).* Projects serving various non-motorized, human-powered snow uses (such as skiing, snowshoeing, etc.) constitute a single use for this category.
- Category 2** Non-motorized diverse use project: A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of non-motorized recreational trail use such as: walking, bicycling, and skating; pedestrian and equestrian use; or pedestrian use in summer and cross-country ski use in winter. *(Note: Electrically powered bicycles, scooters, and personal mobility devices – such as the Segway – are considered motorized vehicles for the purposes of this program under 23 U.S.C. 206(g)(4). The exception is a motorized wheelchair.)*
- Category 3** Diverse use project including both motorized and non-motorized uses: A project intended to benefit both non-motorized recreational trail use and motorized recreational trail use. This category includes projects where motorized use is permitted, but is not the predominant beneficiary. This category includes projects where motorized and non-motorized uses are separated by season, such as equestrian use in summer and snowmobile use in winter.
- Category 4** Motorized single use project: A project primarily intended to benefit only one mode of motorized recreational use. A project may be classified in this category if the project also benefits some non-motorized uses (it is not necessary to exclude non-motorized uses), but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.
- Category 5** Motorized diverse use project: A project primarily intended to benefit more than one mode of motorized recreational use, such as: motorcycle and ATV use; or ATV use in summer and snowmobile use in winter. A project may be classified in this category if the project also benefits some non-motorized uses (it is not necessary to exclude non-motorized uses), but the primary intent must be for the benefit of motorized use.

H. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

FHWA defines a recreational trail as a thoroughfare or track across land or snow, used for recreational transportation purposes such as pedestrian activities (including wheelchair use), skating and skateboarding, equestrian activities (including carriage driving), non-motorized snow trail activities (including skiing), bicycling or use of other human powered vehicles, aquatic or water activities, and motorized off-road vehicular activities (including all-terrain vehicle riding, motorcycling, snowmobiling, use of off-road light trucks, or use of other off-road motorized vehicles).

Projects eligible for RTP funding include:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails to include any kind of trail maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or relocation, provided the work is completed within the time period outlined in the Cooperative Project Agreement.
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside, trailhead facilities, and trail linkages (including but not limited to drainage, crossings, stabilization, parking, benches, signage, traffic controls, water, sanitation, and access facilities). Rehabilitation can include extensive repair needed to bring a facility

up to standards suitable for public use (not routine maintenance). Trailside and trailhead facilities should have a direct relationship with a recreational trail; **a highway rest area or visitor center is not an eligible project.**

- Purchase of trail construction and maintenance equipment to construct and maintain recreational trails. Purchased equipment must be included on inventory records per state and federal requirements and must meet [Buy America requirements](#).
- Lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment to construct and maintain recreational trails during the time period outlined in the Cooperative Project Agreement.
- Construction of new trails on allowable federal, state, county, municipal, and private lands, where a recreational need for such construction is shown.
- Construction of rail trails on abandoned railroad corridors,
- Construction of “rails with trails,” provided that trails do not place trail users on or between actively used railroad tracks, except for purposes of an authorized railroad crossing (applicants must take adequate safety measures in consultation with the railroad owner, operator, and state agency with jurisdiction over railroads).
- Improvements to roads and/or bridges specifically designated for recreational trail use by the managing agency (RTP funds may **not** be used for improvements to roads/bridges intended to be generally accessible by low clearance vehicles, ie regular passenger cars). Eligible high clearance primitive roads/bridges may include old county, town, or township rights-of-way no longer maintained for general passenger vehicle traffic, provided the project does not open the road to general passenger vehicle traffic.
- Planning, design, certifications, and documentation specific to a project. NMDOT reserves the right to deny requests for planning, design, and certifications from State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies.
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails (NMDOT may use up to 5% of the total annual apportionment for educational programs, per Federal guidelines).

Priority consideration (as reflected in the scoring criteria) is given to the following projects:

- Proposals which provide enhanced recreational access for people with disabilities;
- Projects on National Scenic trails, National Historic Trails (provided the project provides a recreational purpose), and trails designated as National Recreation Trails (see Appendix VIII for the list of trails); and
- Projects and project sponsors that incorporate qualified youth conservation or service corps. See www.emnrd.state.nm.us/YCC/ for more information on the New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps program.

I. PROJECT LOCATION

RTP projects are not required to be located along a Federal-aid highway. Projects located within or connected to the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway will be treated as Federal-aid highways and must comply with all State and Federal regulations.

If an RTP project is located in a designated New Mexico MainStreet Community, a State-Authorized Arts and Cultural District, or an official Frontier Community, they must coordinate with the New Mexico Economic Development Department on project development. Please see Appendix II for a map of these communities and additional information.

J. INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects that are not eligible for RTP funding include:

- **Condemning land** - Recipients shall not use funds as reimbursement for condemning land, nor use the value of condemned land as matching funds.
- **Feasibility Studies** - As the focus of the RTP is “on-the-ground” trail projects and associated activities, feasibility studies are not eligible for funding so must be completed prior to submission of the application.
- **Law Enforcement** - Routine law enforcement costs are not eligible under the RTP. The NMDOT is responsible for distinguishing routine from non-routine enforcement.
- **Planning** - A project solely for the purpose of trail planning is not eligible; however, trail planning as a relatively small portion of a specific trail project is allowed.
- **Railroads** - Projects on railroad rights-of-way on which the railroad tracks are in place, if trail users will traverse on or between the railroad tracks, are not eligible.
- **Roads** - Applicants shall not use RTP funds for improvements to roads or bridges intended to be generally accessible by regular motorized passenger vehicles, unless those roads/bridges are specifically designated for recreational trail use by the managing agency.
- **Sidewalks** - FHWA defines a sidewalk as a path parallel to a public road or street and does not allow sidewalks as projects unless the project meets the eligibility requirements outlined in Section H.
- **Road Facilities** - The RTP does not fund road shoulders and other associated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. A potential and more suitable source of funding for these types of projects is the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).
- **Wilderness Areas** - Federally designated wilderness areas are subject to the restrictions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131).
- **Non-Motorized to Motorized Use** - Applicants shall not use RTP funds to expand, convert, or otherwise facilitate motorized use or access to trails predominately used by non-motorized trail users, and on which, as of May 1, 1991, motorized use is either prohibited or has not occurred.
- **Circuit Race Tracks** - Circular or elliptical race tracks are not considered trails for the purposes of the RTP and are not eligible for funding.
- **Construction of any recreational trail for motorized users on Bureau of Land Management or National Forest Service lands, unless such lands:**
 - * Have been allocated for uses other than wilderness by an approved agency resource management plan or have been released to uses other than wilderness by an act of Congress, and
 - * Such construction is otherwise consistent with the management direction of such approved land and resource management plan.

3. Program Requirements

The following is a list of the basic eligibility requirements that all New Mexico RTP projects must meet.

A. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

RTP funds are Federal-aid funds and must be expended in accordance with all applicable Federal and State regulations. *Applicants are advised that compliance with Federal and State regulations requires a significant time and resource commitment on the part of the applicant/sponsoring agency.* Applicants are encouraged to consider the following questions prior to submitting an application for RTP funding:

- Does your agency have the necessary staff to administer the funding?
- Does your agency have the funding to pay the costs until reimbursed?
- Does your agency have the funding to pay the match requirement and support any costs that cannot be reimbursed?

Projects must comply with all applicable Federal and State requirements from project design through implementation/construction, administration, and close-out. See Appendix IV for a brief introduction

and link to the NMDOT Tribal/Local Public Agency (T/LPA) Handbook, as well as Appendix IV for information on the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and trail design guidelines. Further, all T/LPAs applying for RTP funds are **strongly encouraged** to have the appropriate staff person attend NMDOT's Cradle to Grave Training, which trains agencies on the Tribal/Local Public Agency Handbook.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Requirements

Projects located on US Forest Service (USFS) lands must comply with the [Forest Service Trails Accessibility Guidelines \(FSTAG\)](#) and [Accessibility Guidebook on Outdoor Recreation and Trails](#).

Projects located on State or Federal natural resource or public land agency (other than USFS) lands and Tribal/Local Public Agency projects that are NOT located within or connected to a Federal-aid highway right-of-way must comply with the Access Board's [Final Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas](#), published on September 26, 2013, under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968.

Urban trails located within or connected to a Federal-aid highway right of way are required to meet standard ADA requirements as outlined in NMDOT design guidelines (NMDOT Design Centers provide this information and standard drawings are available at www.dot.state.nm.us/en/Standards.html).

B. MINIMUM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the above, applicants for RTP funds must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Sponsoring agency and proposed activity/project must meet eligibility requirements (see pages 8-10).
2. Sponsoring agency must provide a Resolution of Sponsorship indicating proof of local match, commitment to operating and maintaining the project for the useful life of the project, and availability of funds in agency budget to pay all project/program costs up front. See Appendix III for a sample resolution. State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies may substitute a letter of commitment from the agency director provided that the letter includes the same information outlined in the Resolution of Sponsorship.
3. If the project is not located entirely within the jurisdiction of the sponsoring agency, the sponsoring agency must submit a letter(s) of concurrence from the jurisdiction(s) that has(have) ownership over the affected right(s)-of-way.
4. Sponsoring agency must submit a basic map identifying the location of the project.
5. Prior to the NMDOT obligating design funds, sponsoring agencies must have a fully-executed Cooperative Project Agreement for design.
6. Prior to the NMDOT obligating construction funds, sponsoring agencies must have:
 - All certifications, including environmental, design, right-of-way, ITS, utility, and railroad.
 - A fully-executed Cooperative Project Agreement for construction.
7. All RTP projects must be consistent with the recommendations of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and/or other eligible local or agency planning documents. See page 15 for a list of potential documents.
8. If within an MPO's planning area, RTP projects must be consistent with the MPO's Metropolitan

Transportation Plan (MTP). State or Federal natural resource or public land agency projects located entirely within that agency's jurisdiction and not connected to a Federal-Aid transportation facility are exempt from this requirement.

9. Sponsoring agencies are required to include funding requests for both design and construction phases in their applications, *unless the sponsoring agency is a State or Federal natural resource or public land agency with documentation indicating all pertinent certifications are approved by the NMDOT and the FHWA-NM Division Office, and/or the T/LPA receives an exception from the applicable NMDOT Regional Design Center.* The design phase includes the entire certification and project design process and is considered complete when a project meets Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) requirements. Applications for projects that do not involve construction, such as maintenance projects that do not disturb new ground, purchase of equipment, and/or educational programs may be submitted for FFY16, FFY17, or both. These types of projects typically do not require design or certifications, although some certifications may still be required. NMDOT reserves the right to deny funding requests for planning, design, and certifications from State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies.
10. NMDOT will not reimburse sponsoring agencies for any costs incurred prior to receipt of a Notice to Proceed from NMDOT, which is sent after the execution of the Cooperative Project Agreement.
11. All projects must meet Federal and State requirements, including trail design and ADA requirements. Signs must be installed indicating that RTP funds were used to fund the project.

4. RTP Application and Selection Process Overview

The goal of the New Mexico RTP project selection process is to encourage and reward efforts that go above and beyond the minimum program requirements.

A. APPLICATION PROCESS

NMDOT is responsible for administering the RTP in New Mexico and developing a competitive and transparent application process. NMDOT developed the process outlined below in consultation with the New Mexico Recreational Trails Advisory Board (RTAB) and State/Federal agencies.

Prior to submitting an RTP application, **Tribal/Local Public Agencies (T/LPAs) must consult with their MPO/RTPO.** (State and Federal natural resource and public land agencies are exempt from this requirement). If a sponsoring agency is located within an MPO, the agency must work with MPO staff to ensure that the project meets the minimum requirements listed in the previous section, as well as discuss engineering estimates, project phasing, the agency's familiarity with the T/LPA Handbook and training, project maintenance, whether the agency has previously had trouble successfully meeting deadlines for Federal or State-funded projects, and other items as needed. Alternatively, MPOs may elect to use the Project Feasibility Form (PFF) and process as outlined below.

The RTP application process for State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies submitting applications for **maintenance projects that do not disturb new ground, purchase of equipment and/or educational programs or for construction projects located entirely within the agency's jurisdiction and not connected to a Federal-aid transportation facility**, is as follows:

1. NMDOT issues a call for RTP applications from State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies at the same time that the RTPOs/MPOs issue a call for RTP applications from their member entities.
2. The sponsoring agency submits the following documents as PDF files to the RTP Coordinator by February 1, 2015:
 - RTP Application - see Appendix I
 - Letter from agency director for State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies (indicating proof of match, maintenance, and budget from sponsoring entity)

- Letter(s) of concurrence regarding right(s)-of-way, if necessary (see page 11)
 - Basic map of project location (not required for non-infrastructure projects, such as education)
 - Required certifications (documentation showing approval by NMDOT and FHWA-NM Division)
3. The RTP Coordinator will review the applications for completeness. Complete applications will be combined with those submitted through the MPO/RTPO process and follow the process outlined below, starting with step #6 .

The RTP application process for **all other projects** is as follows:

1. RTPOs/MPOs issue call for applications.
2. If the project is located within an RTPO area, the sponsoring agency submits a PFF to the RTPO planner. If the project is located within an MPO area, the sponsoring agency and MPO planner will follow the established MPO process.
3. The RTPO planner (and, if applicable, the MPO planner) sets up a meeting with the sponsoring agency, NMDOT District representative, NMDOT planning liaison, NMDOT environmental liaison, and RTPO representative. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss feasibility of the project, as detailed on the PFF, and for the NMDOT District to determine if the application can move forward.
4. If the project is deemed feasible, the sponsoring agency submits the following documents to the RTPO/MPO:
 - Project Identification Form (PIF) – see Appendix I
 - RTP Application - see Appendix I, supplement to PIF
 - Resolution of Sponsorship or letter from agency director for State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies (indicating proof of match, maintenance and budget from sponsoring entity) - see Appendix III
 - Letter(s) of concurrence regarding right(s)-of-way (see page 11)
 - Basic map of project location (not required for non-infrastructure projects, such as education)
5. MPO/RTPO planners submit eligible application packages to the NMDOT RTP Coordinator in **electronic form as a PDF file. They may either mail a flash drive or CD-ROM with the PDF files, or upload them to NMDOT's FTP site. Email or paper submissions will not be accepted.** Additionally, MPO/RTPO planners must submit a cover letter or confirmation email to the NMDOT RTP Coordinator itemizing all of the applications submitted from their region. All of this information must be received by the RTP Coordinator no later than February 1, 2015. Late submissions and/or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
6. Application packages submitted into the statewide competitive process will be rated and ranked by the RTAB, according to the criteria listed in this Guide. The higher ranked projects are more likely to receive RTP funding; however, the project funding is limited by the total RTP funds available.
7. After the RTAB selects projects and makes funding award recommendations to NMDOT, the NMDOT RTP Coordinator will provide MPOs/RTPOs and State/Federal agencies with information on the selected projects, and MPOs/RTPOs will add the selected projects to their TIPs/RTIPs, for ultimate inclusion in the STIP.
8. NMDOT sends out award letters to the sponsoring agencies of the selected projects. **Recipients of RTP funds are required to attend an orientation webinar that will outline critical deadlines and requirements.**
9. The Cooperative Project Agreement process starts, per the T/LPA Handbook (see Appendix IV).

B. FFY16 AND FFY17 FUNDING CYCLE DEADLINES

Month	Year	Activity
Sept-Oct	2014	Call for projects
Nov	2014	PFFs due to RTPO planners
Nov-Dec	2014	RTPO planner schedules PFF meetings with RTPO / GTG / District / Enviro / T/LPA; MPO planner screens all potential applicants for feasibility, phasing, etc.
Feb 1	2015	Complete RTP applications due to NMDOT RTP Coordinator (submitted via MPO/RTPO or directly from State/Federal natural resource or public land agency); if in RTPO area, must have PFF recommendation to apply
Feb	2015	RTP Coordinator reviews applications for completeness, prepares packages for RTAB
March	2015	RTAB reviews projects and makes recommendations to NMDOT
April	2015	Projects added to TIPs/RTIPs and STIP Preview (out for public review concurrently)
		RTP award letters sent: If FFY16 construction funds: begin design phase once award letter is received; include critical deadlines; have 10 months to complete PS&E prior to 3/15/16 deadline. If FFY16 design, FFY17 construction: submit design Agreement Request Form (ARF) and begin working through draft agreement.
April/May	2015	All entities receiving RTP funds will be required to attend an 'orientation webinar' outlining critical deadlines and processes
May	2015	TIPs/RTIPs adopted by MPO/RTPO policy boards
June	2015	3 rd Thurs of month, STC meets, reviews 2016-2021 STIP Preview
July	2015	3 rd Thurs of month, STC meets, potentially adopts baseline 2016-2021 STIP
Aug	2015	FHWA has 30 days from second STC meeting to approve STIP
Oct 1	2015	2016-2021 STIP becomes active
Oct	2015	FFY16 design funds are obligated (pending executed agreement); these entities have 17 months to complete PS&E prior to 3/15/17
Feb	2016	PS&E and construction agreements executed for FFY16 construction funds
March 15	2016	Last possible day for FFY16 construction funds to be obligated
Feb	2017	PS&E and construction agreements executed for FFY17 construction funds
March 15	2017	Last possible day for FFY17 construction funds to be obligated

5. New Mexico RTP Project Selection Criteria

A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

NMDOT developed the following RTP project selection criteria in consultation with the NM Recreational Trails Advisory Board (RTAB). If a project is deemed eligible and feasible by the NMDOT and applicable RTPO/MPO, the RTAB will use the following scoring criteria to rate and rank projects.

Scoring Factors

Planning

The Planning factor is intended to ensure that RTP projects are consistent with adopted plans and policies. If the RTP project is identified in an adopted local, regional or state plan, study or other document, this indicates a level of public involvement and support for the project. In addition to completing this section of the application, applicants must provide a copy of the title page and page(s) identifying the proposed RTP project(s) (do not attach the entire document). See the box below for a list of potential documents. Proposed RTP projects identified in plans receive 2 points per plan, with a maximum of 8 points available (meaning the project is listed in 4 documents). If your project is in an MPO area, the MTP may not be used to score planning points, as it is a minimum requirement that the project be consistent with the MTP.

ELIGIBLE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- Regional Transportation Plans (RTP)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans
- Parks, Trails, and/or Open Space Plans
- Local Health Council Plans
- Economic Development Plans
- Comprehensive Plans
- Land Use Plans/Studies
- Corridor Studies
- Master Plans
- NM State Park Management Plans
- USFS Forest Management Plans
- NMDOH State Health Improvement Plans
- BLM Resource Management Plans
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans
- Sector Plans
- Road Safety Assessments
- Safety Plans
- NM MainStreet Plans

And other documents deemed eligible by the NMDOT.

State or Federal natural resource or public land agency applications for maintenance projects that do not disturb new ground; purchase of equipment; educational programs; or construction projects located entirely within the agency's jurisdiction and not connected to a Federal-aid transportation facility are

expected to conform **at a minimum** with the agency's own Management Plan for an automatic 4 points. If the project involves a partnership with another entity and therefore also conforms to other entity plans, the projects may earn additional points accordingly, up to the established maximum of 8 points (meaning the project is listed in the agency's own Management Plan and 2 additional documents).

Application Question: Describe how the project is identified in adopted plans and policies.

Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to the success of RTP projects and partners must indicate their level of commitment to the project. A commitment can include materials, staff time, volunteer labor or other resources. It is feasible that the commitment can count towards the required local match; however, this needs to be outlined in the application proposal. Each letter of commitment from a project partner is awarded 2 points per letter, with a maximum of 8 points available (meaning there are 4 letters).

Application question: Describe the partners involved in the project and their commitment.

Other Scoring Factors

In addition to the Planning and Partnerships factors, eligible RTP projects are evaluated using the six factors described below.

1. Compatibility and Safety of Users
2. Health and Quality of Life
3. Protection and Enhancement of the Environment
4. Accessibility and Mobility through Integration and Connectivity
5. Economic Vitality
6. Operation and Maintenance
7. Leveraging of Funds/Resources
8. Citizen Involvement

The scoring system is as follows:

- **3 points:** The application demonstrates a thorough understanding of how this factor applies, and provides clear and compelling documentation on how the project meets and exceeds the factor.
- **2 points:** The application demonstrates a basic understanding of this factor, and provides minimal documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- **1 point:** The application demonstrates very little understanding of this factor, and does not provide any documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- **0 points:** Does not meet factor.

Extra Points

Extra points (using the scoring system above) **may** be given to project proposals that include and/or meet one or more of the following:

- evaluation plan measuring usage before and after the project;
- provide enhanced recreational access for people with disabilities; and/or
- incorporate qualified youth conservation or service corps.

Projects located on a designated National Scenic trails, National Historic Trails or National Recreation Trails receive 1 point.

B. SCORING MATRIX AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Scoring Factors	Maximum Points
Planning and Partnerships (must provide documentation, such as cover of plan and page(s) on which project is identified for plans and letters of commitment to demonstrate partnerships)	
a. Eligible plans (2 points each, maximum of 4)	8
b. Partnerships (2 points each, maximum of 4)	8
Factor 1: Compatibility and Safety of Users	3
Factor 2: Health and Quality of Life	3
Factor 3: Protection and Enhancement of the Environment	3
Factor 4: Accessibility and Mobility through Integration and Connectivity	3
Factor 5: Economic Vitality	3
Factor 6: Operation and Maintenance	3
Factor 7: Financial Management and Leveraging of Funds/Resources	3
Factor 8: Citizen Involvement	3
Possible Extra Points	
Evaluation plan measuring usage before and after the project	3
Enhanced recreational access for people with disabilities.	3
Incorporates qualified youth conservation or service corps.	3
Located on National Scenic trails, National Historic Trails (provided the project provides a recreational purpose), and trails designated as National Recreation Trails.	1

Total	50
--------------	-----------

Factor 1: Compatibility and Safety of Users

Most recreational trails will have a variety of uses, including, but not limited to bicycling, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking/jogging/fitness, nature trail activities, equestrian, snowmobiling, and/or motorized uses such as motorcycle or OHV. Therefore, it is critical to encourage responsible use by different user groups. The project can include etiquette signage and pavement markings to encourage trail sharing by different types of users. Safety is also critical as users will not utilize a trail perceived as being unsafe. Examples of safety factors include lighting and in some case, a trail patrol program. Educational programs such as off-highway vehicle safety are also eligible projects.

Application Question: *Describe how your eligible RTP project will increase the compatibility and safety of different user groups by encouraging trail sharing as well as implementing counter measures that improve safety for all users.*

Factor 2: Health and Quality of Life

One of the goals of the NMDOT RTP is to improve the health and quality of life of New Mexicans by increasing recreational opportunities within and around communities. Projects can provide a broad array of quality-of-life improvements, such as access to culturally or historically significant sites, or improved community health resulting from increased infrastructure for recreational bicycling and walking. Examples of such projects could include an urban trail that increases multi-modal access to a school, thus reducing motor vehicle congestion, improving air quality and providing opportunities for daily physical activity, which helps improve quality of life and overall community health. An example of a motorized project is a snowmobiling trail that provides recreational opportunities in winter months or a motocross track geared towards teenagers on the outskirts of a community.

Application Question: *Describe how your eligible RTP project will increase recreational opportunities within and around communities and thus improve the health and quality of life of New Mexicans.*

Factor 3: Protection and Enhancement of the Environment

This factor emphasizes how RTP eligible projects can protect and enhance the environment, including the re-design, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of trails in order to mitigate and minimize impact to the natural environment. Projects may promote environmental conservation in diverse ways, from reducing motorized vehicle usage, to erosion control improvements. An example is construction of an OHV trail to minimize environmental impacts on other areas. An example of a non-motorized project is an urban trail that increases pedestrian and bicycle access to a school, thus reducing motor vehicle congestion, and improving air quality around the school.

Application Question: *Describe how your eligible RTP project will protect and enhance the environment through mitigation of existing trails or environmental conservation.*

Factor 4: Accessibility and Mobility through Integration and Connectivity

Trails can provide accessibility and mobility within communities by connecting destinations, such as homes to schools, parks, and job centers. In rural/back-country settings, trails can provide connectivity to natural wonders, as well as scenic, historic and/or cultural sites. For example, an urban trail between a downtown and local and/or regional recreational destinations provides easily accessible recreational opportunities to local citizens.

Application Question: *Please describe how your eligible RTP project will increase accessibility*

and mobility through the integration and connectivity of trail networks in an urban setting and/or provide connectivity within a rural/backcountry setting.

Factor 5: Economic Vitality

In addition to achieving recreation goals, RTP projects may provide positive economic impacts to a community. The economic vitality of an eligible RTP project is measured through its positive economic impact to local, regional or statewide economic development efforts. For example, a potential project, such as a regional trail, could provide economic benefits to nearby local businesses by attracting tourists.

Application Question: Provide detailed information on how your eligible RTP project will benefit local, regional and/or state economic development efforts.

Factor 6: Operation and Maintenance

RTP project sponsors are required by Federal law to maintain projects after the RTP funds are expended or otherwise no longer available. The project sponsor must acknowledge in the Resolution of Sponsorship (see page 11 and Appendix III) both the short-term and long-term maintenance of the RTP project(s). Maintenance projects on existing trails are allowed provided they are completed within the time limit of the Cooperative Project Agreement. Purchase of equipment to construct and maintain trails is also allowed but must be included on inventory records. Project sponsors should have an operation and maintenance plan for all projects.

Application Question: Describe the operation and maintenance plan for the project after the initial RTP funding is no longer available.

Factor 7: Financial Management and Leveraging of Funds/Resources

RTP funds are limited and sponsoring agencies are encouraged to develop realistic, practical budgets for the project as well as leverage public and private investments (in the form of services and materials, as well as dollars) to ensure adequate funding for the project.

Application Question: Describe how the project uses the RTP funds to leverage greater public and/or private investments. Attach a detailed project budget.

Factor 8: Citizen Involvement

In addition to inclusion of the projects in a local, regional or state plan, citizen involvement in the project proposal, as well as implementation, is critical to the success of the project. Project ideas that originated with trail users or a community group will have citizen support ensuring greater success and use of the project. Citizen involvement can include representatives from the business community, such as local business that will benefit from the project.

Application Question: Describe the citizen involvement in the proposal conception and implementation of the project.

RTP Questions?

State or Federal natural resource or public land agencies should direct questions to the NMDOT RTP Coordinator. Tribal/Local Public Agencies should direct RTP project and application questions to MPO/RTPO planning staff.

MPOs:

El Paso MPO

Christina Stokes
(915) 591-9735 x 34
cstokes@elpasompo.org

Farmington MPO

Duane Wakan
(505) 599-1449
dwakan@fmtn.org

Las Cruces MPO

Tom Murphy
(575) 528-3225
tmurphy@las-cruces.org

Mid-Region MPO

Steven Montiel
(505) 724-3633
smontiel@mrcog-nm.gov

Santa Fe MPO

Keith Wilson
(505) 955-6706
kpwilson@santafenm.gov

RTPOs:

Mid-Region RTPO

Valerie Hermanson
(505) 724-3611
vhermanson@mrcog-nm.gov

Northeast RTPO

(within Eastern Plains Council of Governments)
Renee Ortiz
(575) 714-1410
rortiz@epcog.org
(within North Central NM Economic Development District)
Lesah Sedillo
(505) 476-0107
lsedillo@ncnmedd.com

Northern Pueblos RTPO

Eric Ghahate
(505) 827-7333
ericg@ncnmedd.com

Northwest RTPO

Nick Pappas
(505) 722-4327
npappas@nwnmcog.com

South Central RTPO

Angela Rael
(575) 744-0039
arael@sccog-nm.com

Southeast RTPO

(within Eastern Plains Council of Governments)
Renee Ortiz
(575) 714-1410
rortiz@epcog.org
(within Southeastern NM Economic Development District/Council of Governments)
Mary Ann Burr
(575) 624-6131
mbsnmedd@plateautel.net

Southwest RTPO

Cerisse Grijalva
(505) 388-1509
grijalvac1@swnmcog.org

For all general questions about the RTP, please contact the NMDOT RTP Coordinator:

Aaron J. Detter
NMDOT RTP Coordinator
(505) 467-9454
aaron.detter@state.nm.us

Appendix I: NMDOT Project Identification Form (PIF) and RTP Application

To apply for RTP funds, eligible entities must complete the NMDOT Project Identification Form (PIF) and then the RTP Application, which is a supplement to the PIF. These two documents are featured below within this appendix for purposes of reference.

Editable, electronic versions of this form are available from the NMDOT RTP Coordinator or your MPO/RTPO planner.



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

**INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete all sections thoroughly.
See the end of this document for required distribution.**

1. **Date of Submittal:** Click here to enter date. 2. **Initial or Revised PIF?** Initial / Revised
3. **Is this project phased?** Yes / No **If phased:** Enter phase number and total # of phases.
4. **Sponsoring public entity:** Enter entity name. 5. **Project Name:** Enter project name.
Note: per MAP-21, Non-Profit Organizations cannot be lead agencies, but they can contribute to projects.
-
6. **Is the project on the ICIP?** Yes / No **If yes, year and priority #:** Year, priority # (if available)
7. **Is the project in or consistent with a MPO/RTPO/Local planning document?** Yes / No
If yes, which document (MTP/SLRP/TTP/etc.): Enter document name and year.
8. **Is the project in the TIP/STIP?** Yes / No **If yes, year(s):** Enter year(s). **Control #:** Enter CN.
9. **Is the project on the MPO TIP/RTPO RTIPR?** Yes / No **If yes, which year(s):** Enter year(s).
Notes: Please contact your MPO/RTPO planner if this project is not in any local planning documents; if it is, please include the first page and the page on which the project is listed for any relevant documents.
-
10. **County:** Select a county. 11. **US Congressional District:** Select a district.
12. **New Mexico House District:** Enter House District. 13. **New Mexico Senate District:** Enter Senate District.
-
14. **Contact Person and/or PDE:** Click here to enter contact person/PDE name.
15. **Address:** Enter street address, city, state, and zip code.
16. **Phone:** Enter phone #. 17. **Fax:** Enter fax #. 18. **E-mail:** Enter email address.
19. **MPO or RTPO:** Select a MPO/RTPO. 20. **NMDOT District #:** Select a district.
-

Project Description

21. **In the space below, please provide a narrative describing the Project, its Purpose and Need, i.e., the rationale behind the project. If this project has or will go through the NEPA process, the description below should match the NEPA description as closely as possible.**

Enter a project description – this field will expand as needed, but please be concise.

22. **Select an Improvement Type for the project:** Select the (primary) Improvement Type.
Notes: See [FMIS Improvement Type Codes](#) for complete improvement descriptions. List additional improvement types here: Enter improvement type(s), including improvement type number.

Project Details (fill out where applicable)

23. **Route # (or Street) Name:** Enter route number or name. 24. **Length (mi.):** Enter length in miles.
25. **Begin mile post/intersection:** Enter begin point. 26. **End mile post/intersect.:** Enter end point.
27. **Directions from nearest major intersection or landmark:** Enter directions, field will expand.
28. **Google Maps link (see tutorial for help):** Enter shortened Google Maps URL [goo.gl/maps/xxxx].
29. **Roadway FHWA Functional Classification(s):** Select a road type, or enter road types.
-

Funding Information

30. **Has this project received Federal funding previously?** Yes / No **If yes, which years?** Enter year (s). **Which program(s)?** Enter program(s).

In the table below, please itemize the total project cost by type and funding source.

	Federal	State	Local*	Tribal	Other	
31. Environmental/Planning	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	
32. Preliminary Engineering	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	
33. Design	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	
34. Right-Of-Way	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	
35. Construction	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	Total
36. Other Process	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount	\$Amount

* Identify the specific local/ city/ county/ tribal government fund(s) source, such as gas tax, sales tax, etc.

Project Readiness

This is a list of certifications, clearances, and other processes that could apply to the project. These steps may not be required at this time, but could be necessary at a later date. Identify the **date** that the certification or clearance was received **OR** if a certification/ clearance is under way **OR** will be started in the future **OR** the step is not applicable (N/A). **Do not leave any field blank.**

37. **Public Involvement:** Date completed, under way, OR to be started.
38. **Right of Way:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.
39. **Design:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.
40. **Environmental Certification**:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.
41. **Utility Clearances:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.

42. **ITS Clearances:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.

43. **Railroad Clearances:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.

44. **Other Clearances:** Date completed, under way, to be started, OR N/A.

** NEPA assessment may evaluate: Threatened & Endangered Species, Surface Water Quality (Clean Water Act), Ground Water Quality, Wetlands, NPDES Permit, Noxious weeds, Air Quality Analysis, Noise Analysis, Hazardous Materials Analysis, and other areas; 4-F properties. NHPA Section 106 Cultural Resources Investigation may include: coordination with land management agencies and State Historic Preservation Officer, Cultural Properties Inventory (buildings recorded), Traditional Cultural Property Inventory (consult with appropriate Native American tribes), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and State Historic Preservation Officer. **For a full list of environmental and cultural areas that may be evaluated, see the Tribal/Local Public Agency Handbook.**

Project Planning Factors

Below are the federally mandated planning factors for all transportation projects. Please check all that apply and provide a brief explanation of how the project addresses the factor. Comment area will expand as needed. **NOTE: if you are applying for TAP or RTP funds, leave this section blank and complete the supplemental TAP or RTP application.**

45. **Economic Vitality:** Type explanation.

46. **Safety for Motorized and Non-motorized Users:** Type explanation.

47. **Security for Motorized and Non-motorized Users:** Type explanation.

48. **Accessibility and Mobility of People and Freight:** Type explanation.

49. **Environment, Energy Conservation, Quality of Life:** Type explanation.

50. **Integration and Connectivity:** Type explanation.

51. **System Management and Operation:** Type explanation.

52. **System Preservation:** Type explanation.

REQUIRED DISTRIBUTION

53. **Send a completed electronic version** to appropriate MPO/RTPO, District staff, and NMDOT Planning liaison.



RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Applicants are required to read through the FFY16/17 New Mexico RTP Guide prior to completing this application. Please complete the Project Identification Form (PIF) first, complete this RTP application form and submit both forms to your MPO/RTPO. Projects from State and Federal natural resource or public land agencies that meet the eligibility criteria in the RTP Guide submit the PIF and RTP application form directly to the NMDOT RTP coordinator.

Introduction

As outlined in the FFY16/17 NM RTP Guide, this application will be completed by entities applying for RTP funds, and used by the Recreational Trails Advisory Board (RTAB) to score and rank projects submitted for RTP funding. The process is competitive and the highest scoring projects will be the first priority for funding.

Please refer to the FFY16/17 New Mexico RTP Guide when filling out this application. The Guide provides information on the overall RTP process, eligible entities, and eligible projects. *Before submitting an application, if within an RTPO area, applicants are required to complete the Project Feasibility Form (PFF) process and must have District recommendation. If within an MPO area, please first consult with your MPO planner to ensure project feasibility and eligibility. These last two requirements do not apply to State and Federal natural resource or public land agencies.*

Basic Project Information

A. Date of Submittal: Click here to enter date

B. Sponsoring entity and type (Non-profits must partner with a governmental entity): Enter entity name and type of organization

C. Project Name: Enter project name

D. Project Category from section G (page 8) of the NM RTP Guide (enter only one number, from 1-5):

Enter project category

E. Enter the estimated number of people the proposed project will serve. Enter population

F. Project Trail Length: Enter length in miles or feet

G. Project Location: Enter location of project and attach location map

H. If located within an RTPO area, was the project recommended by the District Representative via the PFF process? Yes or No

I. Total amount of RTP funding requested (do not include local match or other sources of funding). Please indicate separate amounts for FFY16 (design and certifications) and FFY17 (construction):

FFY16 Enter RTP funding in \$0.00

FFY17 Enter RTP funding in \$0.00

Planning

*The Planning factor is intended to ensure that RTP projects are consistent with adopted plans and policies. If the RTP project is identified in an adopted local, regional, or state plan, study, or other document, this indicates a level of public involvement and support for the project. In addition to completing this section of the application, applicants must provide a copy of the title page of the plan and page(s) identifying the proposed RTP project(s) (do not attach the entire document). Proposed RTP projects identified in plans receive 2 points per plan, with a maximum of 8 points available (meaning the project is listed in 4 documents). If your project is in an MPO area, the MTP may not be used to score planning points, as it is a minimum requirement that the project be consistent with the MTP. State or Federal natural resource or public land agency applications for maintenance projects that do not disturb new ground; purchase of equipment; educational programs; or construction projects located entirely within the agency's jurisdiction and not connected to a Federal-Aid transportation facility are expected to conform **at a minimum** with the agency's own Management Plan for an automatic 4 points. If the project involves a partnership with another entity and therefore also conforms to other entity plans, the projects may earn additional points accordingly, up to the established maximum of 8 points (meaning the project is listed in the agency's own Management Plan and 2 additional documents).*

Planning

List plans that include the proposed RTP project and describe how the project is identified in adopted plans and policies.

Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to the success of RTP projects and partners must indicate their level of commitment to the project. A commitment can include materials, staff time, volunteer labor, or other resources. It is feasible that the commitment can count toward the required local match; however, this needs to be outlined in the application proposal. Each letter of commitment from a project partner is awarded 2 points per letter, with a maximum of 8 points available (meaning there are 4 letters).

Partnerships

List the partners involved in the project and describe how their commitment will contribute to the project's success.

Additional Scoring Factors

Beyond planning and partnerships, RTP projects are evaluated on the following considerations, which are adapted from the "planning factors" outlined in Federal transportation legislation. Responses to the questions will be scored according to the following scale:

- 3 points: The application demonstrates a thorough understanding of how this factor applies, and provides clear and compelling documentation on how the project meets and exceeds the factor.
- 2 points: The application demonstrates a basic understanding of this factor, and provides minimal documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- 1 point: The application demonstrates very little understanding of this factor, and does not provide any documentation on how the project meets the factor.
- 0 points: Does not meet factor.

In your application packet, provide any supporting documentation that is referenced in your responses to 1-6 below.

Your responses are **limited to 250 words** for each question below.

1. Compatibility and Safety of Users

Most recreational trails will have a variety of uses, including, but not limited to bicycling, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking/jogging/fitness, nature trail activities, equestrian, snowmobiling, and/or motorized uses such as motorcycle or OHV. Therefore, it is critical to encourage responsible use by different user groups. The project can include etiquette signage and pavement markings to encourage trail sharing by different types of users. Safety is also critical as users will not utilize a trail perceived as being unsafe. Examples of safety factors include lighting and in some case, a trail patrol program. Educational programs such as off-highway vehicle safety are also eligible projects.

Describe how your eligible RTP project will increase the compatibility and safety of different user groups by encouraging trail sharing as well as implementing countermeasures that improve safety for all users.

2. Health and Quality of Life

One of the goals of the NMDOT RTP is to improve the health and quality of life of New Mexicans by increasing recreational opportunities within and around communities. Projects can provide a broad array of quality-of-life improvements, such as access to culturally or historically significant sites, or improved community health resulting from increased infrastructure for recreational bicycling and walking. Examples of such projects could include an urban trail that increases multi-modal access to a school, thus reducing motor vehicle congestion, improving air quality and providing opportunities for daily physical activity, which helps improve quality of life and overall community health. An example of a motorized project is a snowmobiling trail that provides recreational opportunities in winter months or a motocross track geared towards teenagers on the outskirts of a community.

Describe how your eligible RTP project will increase recreational opportunities within and around communities and thus improve the health and quality of life of New Mexicans.

3. Protection and Enhancement of the Environment

This factor emphasizes how RTP eligible projects can protect and enhance the environment, including the re-design, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of trails in order to mitigate and minimize impact to the natural environment. Projects may promote environmental conservation in diverse ways, from reducing motorized vehicle usage, to erosion control improvements. An example is construction of an OHV trail to minimize environmental impacts on other areas. An example of a non-motorized project is an urban trail that increases pedestrian and bicycle access to a school, thus reducing motor vehicle congestion, and improving air quality around the school.

Describe how your eligible RTP project will protect and enhance the environment through mitigation of existing trails or environmental conservation.

4. Accessibility and Mobility Through Integration and Connectivity

Trails can provide accessibility and mobility within communities by connecting destinations, such as homes to schools, parks, and job centers. In rural/back-country settings, trails can provide connectivity to natural wonders, as well as scenic, historic and/or cultural sites. For example, an urban trail between a downtown and local and/or regional recreational destinations provides easily accessible recreational opportunities to local citizens.

Please describe how your eligible RTP project will increase accessibility and mobility through the integration and connectivity of trail networks in an urban setting and/or provide connectivity within a rural/backcountry setting.

5. Economic Vitality

In addition to achieving recreation goals, RTP projects may provide positive economic impacts to a community. The economic vitality of an eligible RTP project is measured through its positive economic impact to local, regional or statewide economic development efforts. For example, a potential project, such as a regional trail, could provide economic benefits to nearby local businesses by attracting tourists.

Provide detailed information on how your eligible RTP project will benefit local, regional and/or state economic development efforts.

6. Operation and Maintenance

RTP project sponsors are required by Federal law to maintain projects after the RTP funds are expended or otherwise no longer available. The project sponsor must acknowledge in the Resolution of Sponsorship (see page 11 and Appendix IV) both the short-term and long-term maintenance of the RTP project(s). Maintenance projects on existing trails are allowed provided they are completed within the time limit of the Cooperative Project Agreement. Purchase of equipment to construct and maintain trails is also allowed but must be included on inventory records. Project sponsors should have an operation and maintenance plan for all projects.

Describe the operation and maintenance plan for the project after the initial RTP funding is no longer available.

7. Financial Management and Leveraging of Funds/Resources

RTP funds are limited and sponsoring agencies are encouraged to develop realistic, practical budgets for the project as well as leverage public and private investments (in the form of services and materials, as well as dollars) to ensure adequate funding for the project.

Describe how the project uses RTP funds to leverage greater public and/or private investments. Attach a detailed project budget.

8. Citizen Involvement

In addition to inclusion of the projects in a local, regional, or state plan, citizen involvement in the project proposal, as well as implementation, is critical to the success of the project. Project ideas that originated with trail users or a community group will have citizen support ensuring greater success and use of the project. Citizen involvement can include representatives from the business community, such as local business that will benefit from the project.

Describe the citizen involvement in the proposal conception and implementation of the project.

Application Submission

Please submit an electronic copy of your entire application package to your MPO or RTPO planner or contact. See page 20 of the NM RTP Guide for a list of contacts. State and Federal natural resource or public land agencies submit directly to the NMDOT RTP Coordinator, per the RTP Guide.

Your application should include:

1. NMDOT Project Identification Form (PIF)
2. NMDOT RTP Application
3. Signed Resolution of Sponsorship from the sponsoring entity, indicating proof of local match, maintenance commitment, and available budget to pay project costs up front. (There is a sample Resolution of Sponsorship in the Appendix of the NM RTP Guide.)
4. Letter(s) of concurrence from the jurisdiction(s) with ownership over affected right(s)-of-way. This is only required if the project is not entirely within the jurisdiction of sponsoring entity.
5. Basic map of project location (not required for non-infrastructure projects).
6. Any documentation—such as plans, studies, and letters of commitment—that are referenced and support the application.

Appendix II: New Mexico MainStreet Program

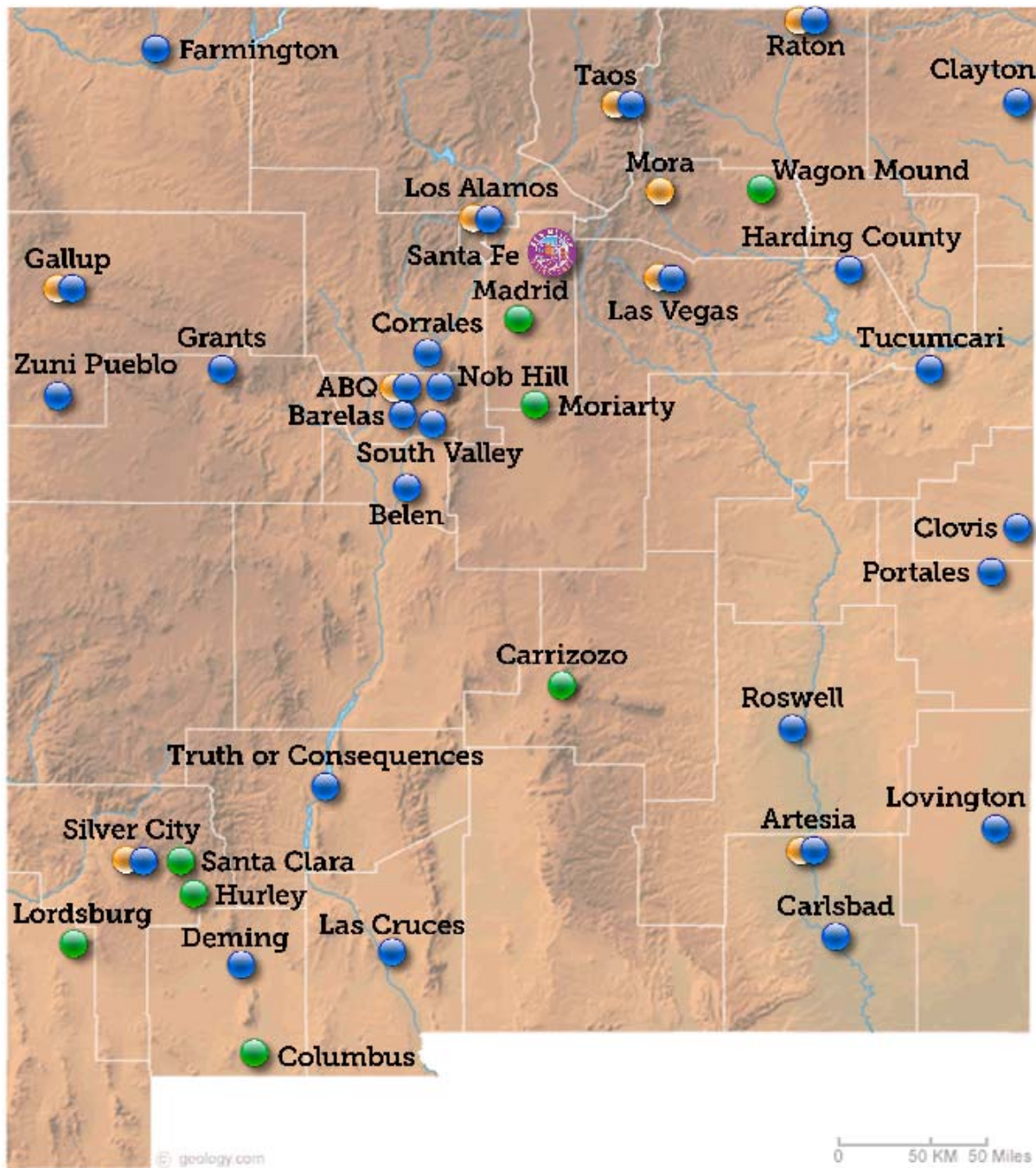
If your RTP project is located within any of the three following types of communities, you are required to coordinate with NM MainStreet on project development.

- NM MainStreet Communities
- State-Authorized Arts & Cultural Districts
- Frontier Communities

Please review the map on the following page to see whether your project is within one of these communities. If so, please contact Rich Williams, Director of NM MainStreet at:
rich.williams@state.nm.us, or
505-827-0168

2014 NMMS Map of Communities

(As of July 2014)



- Active NM MainStreet Communities
- State-Authorized Arts & Cultural Districts
- Frontier Community Projects

Appendix III: Sample Resolution of Sponsorship

The following pages contain a sample Resolution of Sponsorship for sponsoring agencies to use in order to demonstrate support for the RTP application, as well as the availability of funds and acknowledgement of maintenance responsibility. The Resolution of Sponsorship is a required component of the RTP application package, as described on [page 11](#) of this Guide.

An editable, electronic version of this form is available from the NMDOT RTP Coordinator.

**RESOLUTION OF SPONSORSHIP
For a Recreational Trails Program Application and Maintenance
Commitment**

Resolution No. _____

A resolution declaring the eligibility and intent of the <name of sponsoring entity> to submit an application to the New Mexico Department of Transportation for Federal Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Recreational Trails Program funds.

Whereas, the <name of sponsoring agency>, New Mexico, has the legal authority to apply for, receive and administer federal funds; and,

Whereas, the <name of sponsoring agency>, is submitting an application for Federal Fiscal Year 2016/2017 (FFY16/17) New Mexico Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds in the amount of \$____,____, as set forth by the Federal legislation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and as outlined in the FFY 16/17 New Mexico RTP Guide; and,

Whereas, the <identify project(s)> named in the RTP application are eligible project(s) under New Mexico RTP and MAP-21; and,

Whereas, the <name of sponsoring agency>, acknowledges availability of the required local match of 20% and the availability of funds to pay all upfront costs, as RTP is a cost reimbursement program; and,

Whereas, the <name of sponsoring agency>, agrees to pay any costs that exceed the project amount if the application is selected for funding; and,

Whereas, the <name of sponsoring agency>, agrees to maintain all project(s) constructed with RTP funding for the useable life of the project(s); and,

Now, therefore be it resolved by the governing body of the <name of sponsoring agency>, New Mexico, that:

1. The <name of sponsoring agency>, authorizes <agency representative> to submit an application for FFY16/17 New Mexico RTP funds in the amount of \$____,____ from the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) on behalf of the citizens of <name of agency>.

2. That the <name of sponsoring agency>, assures the NMDOT that if RTP funds are awarded, sufficient funding for the local match and for upfront project costs are available, since RTP is a reimbursement program, and that any costs exceeding the award amount will be paid for by <name of sponsoring agency>.

3. That the <name of sponsoring agency>, assures the NMDOT that if awarded RTP funds, sufficient funding for the operation and maintenance of the RTP projects will be available for the life of the projects.

4. That the <agency representative> of <name of sponsoring agency>, is authorized to enter into a Cooperative Project Agreement with the NMDOT for construction of RTP projects using these funds as set forth by MAP-21 on behalf of the citizens of <name of agency>. The <agency representative> is also authorized to submit additional information as may be required and act as the official representative of the <name of agency> in this and subsequent related activities.

5. That the <name of sponsoring agency>, assures the NMDOT that the <name of sponsoring agency>, is willing and able to administer all activities associated with the proposed project.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED this _____ day of 20__.

(Name of sponsoring agency)

(Agency representative), (Title)

ATTEST:

(Name), (Clerk or other appropriate entity staff)

Appendix IV: Federal and State Requirements/Guidelines

To understand the Federal requirements associated with the construction aspects of RTP funding, please visit the Federal Highway Administration’s Construction Program Guide web-site:

“The Construction Program Guide is intended to provide fast, easy access to Federal-aid construction program regulations, policy, guidance, and training. All construction related information is consolidated under key subject areas, with links to related information. The web site provides a consolidated source for Federal and State construction personnel to find updated information about FHWA's construction program.”

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/cqit/>

Sponsoring agencies should review and regularly reference NMDOT’s Tribal/Local Public Agency Handbook to understand the State processes for federal funds:

“The Tribal/Local Public Agency (T/LPA) Handbook is published by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). This handbook provides guidance to Tribal and Local Public Agencies working to develop and construct highway, street, road, and other multi modal transportation related projects, funded by the NMDOT with federal and/or state funds.”

<http://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Infrastructure/PINF/TLPA-HANDBOOK.PDF>

Design Guidelines

- **Federal Highway Administration Trails Construction and Maintenance Notebook:**
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/publications/fs_publications/07232806/
- **US Forest Service National Trail Drawings and Specifications:**
<http://www.fs.fed.us/ftpoot/pub/acad/dev/trails/trails.htm>
- **Resources for specific trail features:**
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/publications/fs_publications/
- **Forest Service Equestrian Design Guidebook:**
http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/php/library_card.php?p_num=0723%202816
- **AASHTO Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Guides:**
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/manuals.cfm#aashto

ADA/Accessibility Guidelines

- **US Forest Service Accessibility resources:**
<http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/>
- **Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG):**
http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/FSORAG_2013%20Update.1.pdf
- **Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG):**
http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/FSTAG_2013%20Update.pdf
- **US Access Board Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas:**
<http://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1500/outdoor-rule.pdf>

Appendix V: NMDOT Environmental Level of Effort Form

Please see following page for the Environmental Level of Effort (LoE) Form. This form will allow NMDOT's Environmental Section to establish the level of environmental review for your project.

An editable, electronic version of this form is available from your MPO/RTPO planner, the NMDOT RTP Coordinator, or NMDOT's T/LPA Environmental Liaison.



Tribal/Local Public Agency Environmental Level of Effort (LoE) Form

The environmental review process is a critical part of planning a proposed action, and all local/tribal governments must obtain an environmental certification for their projects receiving funds administered through NMDOT. To determine the level of effort for environmental certification, please submit the following information by mail or email to Gwyneth Duncan, NMDOT Environmental Section, P.O. Box 1149, Room 205, and Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149. Email: gwyneth.duncan@state.nm.us. Phone: 505-827-0751. *Please do not send files over 7 MB via email.*

1. **Control Number (CN) and/or Project Number (PN).**
2. **A) If FHWA funded, attach page of STIP listing the project. B) If state funded, attach first 2 pages of the cooperative agreement.**
3. **Attach a footprint of your project (example submitted in a separate email).**
4. **City/Town/Village, or County, or Tribe/Pueblo that is the local lead for the project.** Include contact name, title, address, phone number, and [email address](#).
5. **Engineering Firm and Environmental Consultant** retained by the local lead. Include contact name, title, address, phone number, and [email address](#) for each.
6. **NMDOT Project Development Engineer** reviewing your project:
7. **Purpose and Need:**
8. **Project Description.** Include **nearest town, highway number or road name, termini.** Provide scope of activities associated with the project (e.g., drainage improvements, sidewalks, etc.). Describe the **width** and **length** of each construction activity and **depth(s)** of ground disturbance. **Public involvement?**
9. **A map and photos of your project area are required.** Indicate the project area on map showing the **beginning** of the project area (**BOP**) and the **end** of the project area (**EOP**). Provide **photos** of the BOP & EOP as well as any drainage (s) in the project area.
10. **Total Cost of Project?** _____ **Is funding available through construction?**
11. **List all funding sources (including CDBG and other sources):**

State Funded? Yes ___ No ___	Federally Funded? Yes ___ No ___	Local Gov % _____
a. Type of funds _____	Type of funds _____	Type of funds _____
b. Amount _____	Amount _____	Amount _____
12. **Land Status. Is the highway right of way adjacent to:**
Private land? BLM land? Forest Service land? Tribal land? State Trust land? Other?
13. Will new right-of-way be required? This also includes Construction Maintenance Easements (CMEs) or Temporary Construction Permits (TCPs):
14. Contact Audrey Moore, Environmental Geology Section. EGS will review your project with regard to the potential for hazardous materials if you are acquiring ROW or if there are ground disturbing activities. Attach copy of EGS's response. Audrey.Moore@state.nm.us or 505-827-1715.
15. **Biological and cultural resource surveys are *not* always required!** If these types of surveys have been conducted, please indicate.

Appendix VI: NMDOT District Offices and Design Centers

District 1:

2912 E. Pine St.
Deming, NM 88030
Main: (575) 544-6530

District 2:

4505 W. Second St.
Roswell, NM 88201
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1457
Roswell, NM 88202
Main: (575) 637-7200

District 3:

7500 Pan American Blvd.
Albuquerque, NM 87199
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 91750
Albuquerque, NM 87199
Main: (505) 798-6600

District 4:

South Highway 85
Las Vegas, NM 87701
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 10
Las Vegas, NM 87701
Main: (505) 454-3600

District 5:

7315 Cerrillos Rd.
Santa Fe, NM 87502
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 4127
Santa Fe, NM 87502
Main: (505) 476-4100

District 6:

1919 Pinon Dr.
Milan, NM 87021
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2160
Milan, NM 87021
Main: (505) 285-3200

North Regional Design Center (D4 & D5):

1120 Cerrillos Rd.
Room 225
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Local Government Coordinator:
Yolanda Roybal,
(505) 827-9734,
yolanda.roybal@state.nm.us

Central Regional Design Center (D3 & D6):

7500 Pan American Freeway NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
Local Government Coordinator:
Ray Chavez,
(505) 798-6708,
ray.chavez2@state.nm.us

South Regional Design Center (D1 & D2):

750 N. Solano Dr.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Local Government Coordinator:
Kimberley Fetherlin,
(575) 525-7355,
kimberley.fetherlin@state.nm.us

Appendix VII: Types of National Trails

National trails are officially established by congress, the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary of the Interior under the authorities of the National Trails System Act (16 USC 1241-51). There are three types of national trails, all of which are present in the State of New Mexico.

National Scenic Trails are 100 miles or longer, continuous, primarily non-motorized routes of outstanding recreation opportunity. Such trails are established by Act of Congress. The **Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST)** traverses New Mexico, providing for high quality, scenic, primitive hiking and horseback-riding while conserving natural, historic, and cultural resources along the Continental Divide. The entire route of the trail extends 3,100 miles between Mexico and Canada, traversing diverse landscapes primarily on public lands within 50 miles of the geographic feature. This National Scenic Trail was established in 1978 through the authority of the National Trails System Act (P.L. 90-543) and is one of the outstanding resources of the National Landscape Conservation System. The CDNST traverses approximately 650 miles of beautiful, rugged terrain in New Mexico, from the Mexican border in the Bootheel to the border with Colorado near Chama.

National Historic Trails commemorate historic and prehistoric routes of travel that are of significance to the entire Nation. They must meet all three criteria listed in Section 5(b)(11) of the National Trails System Act. Such trails are established by Act of Congress. There are three National Historic Trails in New Mexico. The **El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail** extends for approximately 400 miles through New Mexico, with a small portion in Texas. The historic trail extended all the way from Mexico City to Santa Fe and points north. There are museums, historic sites, churches, and original trail segments located all along the length of the trail. The **Santa Fe National Historic Trail** commemorates the Santa Fe Trail, a 19th-century transportation route through central North America that connected Franklin, Missouri with Santa Fe, New Mexico. Finally, the **Old Spanish National Historic Trail** commemorates the historical trade routes which connected Spanish settlements in northern New Mexico with those of southern California, traversing six modern-day states. Of particular note, National Historic Trails are often fragmented and lack the level of visitor facilities, signage, and information often associated with typical trail facilities.

National Recreation Trails, also authorized in the National Trails System Act, are existing regional and local trails recognized by either the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior upon application. There are thirty such trails located all around the state of New Mexico. For additional information on these trails, visit www.americantrails.org and conduct a search of all trails located in New Mexico.

Sources:

National Park Service

- National Trails FAQ, http://www.nps.gov/nts/nts_faq.html
- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, <http://www.nps.gov/elca/index.htm>
- Old Spanish National Historic Trail, <http://www.nps.gov/olsp/index.htm>
- Santa Fe National Historic Trail, <http://www.nps.gov/safe/index.htm>

Bureau of Land Management

- Continental Divide Trail, http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/recreation/continental_divide_nst.html

American Trails

- National Recreation Trails of New Mexico, <http://www.americantrails.org/NRTDatabase/trailList.php?usrTrailName=&usrTrailState=NM&usrTrailCounty=&usrTrailUse>

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