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Subject: **NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY**
Federal Recreational Trails Program (FRT)

Iowa DOT is now accepting applications for the Federal Recreational Trails Program (FRT). Eligible project activities continue to include maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development of trailside and trailhead facilities, purchase of trail construction and maintenance equipment, construction of new trails and trail amenities, and acquisition of land for trails.

Program intent: The intent of the Federal Recreational Trails competitive application program is to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized trail users. Projects likely to be competitive in the Federal Recreational Trails program are generally well-planned projects that accommodate a variety of user groups, provide access to underserved populations, link trails together, and leverage other types of funding. Eligible activities and eligible project sponsors are identified in the program guidance available on the program website.

Available funding: Approximately $1.3 million is available for this application cycle. Because funding for this program comes from federal fuel taxes paid by off-road recreational vehicles, this federal program requires 30% of available funding to be awarded to motorized projects.

Review of applications: Complete applications will be evaluated and assessed based on the following criteria:

- Degree to which motorized and non-motorized trail use are accommodated
- Greatest number of compatible multi-purpose uses
- Access and use for persons with disabilities, older citizens, economically challenged and other special populations or groups
- Provides development of trail linkages
- Opportunities for new partnerships between trail users and private interests
- Identified in or furthers a specific goal of a state, regional, or local plan
- Leverages greater public or private investments
- Citizen involvement in the project’s conception and implementation.
- Degree to which project ties into other trails.
- Public/private partnerships to continue operation and maintenance.
- Trails with national designation or resulting in the cleanup of an area

Award process and funding availability: Federal Recreational Trail program awards will be made by the Iowa Transportation Commission upon recommendation by Iowa DOT. Awards are anticipated in January 2027 with funds estimated to be available October 2027.

Cost reimbursement and required match: Funds awarded through the Federal Recreational Trails program are provided to project sponsors on a reimbursement basis and are not provided as a lump sum or cash payment in advance of costs being incurred. All projects require project sponsors to pay 100 percent of project costs up front. Federal Recreational Trails program funds may reimburse for up to 80 percent of eligible project costs or up to the approved grant maximum, whichever is less.

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Treatment of Projects: Projects funded by the FRT program will be subject to applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to Build America, Buy America, planning, environmental review, letting, etc.

Application: The program guidance and application materials are available on the program website. All of the following application components must be submitted in the form prescribed:

- Application Form (pdf)
- Minority Impact Statement (pdf)
- Additional Attachments (pdf preferred)
    - Detailed map
    - Sketch plan and cross section
    - Digital photographs
    - Itemized breakdown of total project costs
    - Time schedule
    - Official endorsement (resolution)
    - Narrative of public input process
    - Letter of support from the Iowa DOT District (if applicable)
    - Buy America Certification (if applicable-equipment only)

Complete applications are due **by email to scott.flagg@iowadot.us before 4:00 pm on OCTOBER 1, 2026**. The email subject line shall be **FRT Application – Applicant Name**. Emails greater than 20 MB will not be received. Attachments may be zip files. If sending multiple emails due to size restrictions, indicate sequence in the subject line e.g. 1 of 2, 2 of 2, etc. Applications received after the deadline will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed. Incomplete applications may be disqualified from consideration. Iowa DOT is not responsible for any errors or delays caused by technical difficulties resulting from the emailing of applications.

To learn more about this funding opportunity and how to apply visit https://iowadot.gov/modes-travel/trails/federal-state-recreational-trails. You may direct any specific questions to Scott Flagg at scott.flagg@iowadot.us or (515) 239-1252.