



# Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program



**Application deadline: 10/08/2025**



**Available funding for 2025: \$54M**  
(\$20M is set-aside for tribal applicants)

Note: Current as of August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Subject to change with future announcements (e.g., agency announcements, revised NOFOs).

Source: [Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program](#)

DOCUMENT INTENDED TO PROVIDE INSIGHT BASED ON CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION FOR CONSIDERATION AND NOT SPECIFIC ADVICE

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**

# The Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program aims to help applicants develop transportation infrastructure projects in rural and tribal communities that are expected to be eligible for federal funding



## Goals and merit criteria:

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This program will award grants for either the hiring of staff or the procurement of expert firms to provide financial, technical, and legal assistance with project-related planning and design phase activities. The Application Review Team will consider:

- The current state of the project's development and project readiness
- Whether the proposed activities are appropriate for the current state of the project's development
- The likelihood that the activities will materially advance the project
- Whether the applicant has obtained bids or quotes (for applicants seeking to procure advisory services)
- Hiring process (defined job description for completing these activities, process for recruitment, etc.) (for applicants seeking to hire staff for the proposed activities)

# Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program details

Match funding  
requirement: none

Direct Pay  
applicability: No

Eligible grant uses

Financial services, technical services, and legal services for infrastructure projects that would reasonably qualify for one or more of:

- Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program
- Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program
- Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects Program (INFRA)
- National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program (Mega)
- Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Program
- National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Program

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to feasibility studies, project planning, revenue forecasting, funding and financing options analyses, preliminary engineering and design work, environmental review, economic assessments and cost-benefit analyses, public benefits studies, statutory and regulatory framework analyses, value-for-money (VFM) studies, evaluations of costs to sustain the project and evaluation opportunities for private financing and project bundling

Award amounts	Minimum award	\$250,000
	Maximum award	\$2,500,000
	Award distribution	\$20M of total RTAPP funding is set aside for eligible tribal applicants; no more than 20% of RTAPP funding will be allocated to a single state
	Period of performance	Up to 36 months
Previous awards (national, 2023)		13 awards (\$3.4M)
Previous awards (MI, 2023)		1 award (\$300K)

# High-level requirements to apply for a Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program grant



## Eligible Entities<sup>1</sup>

- **Rural local governments or political subdivisions** located outside of an urbanized area that has a population of more 150,000 residents as determined by census<sup>2</sup>
  - e.g., town, township, parish (under state of LA), local public authority<sup>3</sup>, special district, school district, council of governments<sup>4</sup>, or any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-, regional, or intra-State or local govt.
- **State, territory or possession of the United States** seeking to advance a project in a location outside of an urbanized area that has a population of more than 150K residents as determined by Bureau of the Census
- **Federally recognized Indian tribe**
- **Department of Hawaiian Home Lands**



## Key Grant Application Components

- An active System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registration for the entity that is applying and Points of Contact (POC) listed under the organization's entity registration in SAM.gov
- Applicant information
- Organization information
- Project information including project location, description, cost and alignment with DoT policy
- Metrics against key goals:
  - Provide benefits to the community through transportation projects
  - Increase grant recipient's capacity, knowledge, and skills to execute transportation projects
  - Engage, educate, and listen to the community throughout the project planning process
  - Advance the transformational project(s) closer to delivery

1. Recipients of FY2022/2023 RTAPP grants may not apply for funding for the *same* project  
2. Determine rural eligibility using the [Rural Eligibility | US Department of Transportation](#) tool  
3. Including any public housing agency under US Housing Act of 1937  
4. Whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law

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# Examples of past winners in Michigan and the Midwest



## Technical services for design and permitting for new road and trail (2023)

**Applicant:** Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians

**Impacted locality:** Bradley, MI

**Funding:** \$300K

### Project description:

- Funding will provide technical services in support of design and permitting for road and trail construction on the lands of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians



## Design and engineering for street reconstruction and bicycle lane addition (2023)

**Applicant:** City of Elkhorn

**Impacted locality:** Elkhorn, WI

**Funding:** \$320K

### Project description:

- Funding will enable engineering and design services for roadway reconstruction, addition of a bike lane and improvements to off-street bike path
- Infrastructure improvements include, but is not limited to, watermain replacement, sanitary sewer replacement, erosion control and installation of new street signs



## Environmental review for construction of non-motorized path extension (2023)

**Applicant:** Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

**Impacted locality:** Cloquet, MN

**Funding:** \$320K

### Project description:

- Funding will enable an environmental review for the construction of a non-motorized path extension from multi-use Munger State recreational trail
- Trail extension will connect communities of Proctor (~3K residents) and Hermantown (~10K residents) to 70-mile multi-use recreational trail, not currently traversable by foot / bicycle due to a steep ridge