

## Scenic Byways Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) 2024

### NHDOT 's Instructions, guidance and scoring criteria.

Refer to the updated – Important deadlines and other requirements

#### What are the Requirements for Each Application?

The following provides details on NHDOT's process for consideration of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Scenic Byways Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) 2024 funding. This is a highly competitive nationwide grant opportunity.

NHDOT is not establishing a minimum or maximum limit for the potential project cost. The federal match requirement is 80/20. All applicants should be keenly knowledgeable that projects which are awarded federal funds require a significant level of oversight and administration and must adhere to all state and federal requirement for the use and distribution of funds. This is a reimbursement program. NHDOT strongly encourages applicants to evaluate the administrative responsibilities when considering applying. In NHDOT's experience smaller projects may not be worth the administrative responsibilities. Interested parties should also continue to monitor the grants.gov website for other funding opportunities which may be more suitable.

**General Expectations and Important Items:** Please review the following if you intend to apply.

- ❖ NHDOT is the applicant to FHWA for the project(s) NHDOT has determined to be eligible for the funding, and per the ranking established by the NHDOT scoring committee.
- ❖ NHDOT will be submitting up to the top five (5) applications into grants.gov for consideration. If there is a tie in the scoring process, NHDOT will determine which projects will be submitted into grant.gov by NHDOT per the application requirements.
- ❖ Potential applicants should review the FHWA NOFO, webinar materials, and grants.gov.
- ❖ If the successful applicant is a State DOT or if a State DOT will serve as a pass-through entity to a non-State entity, the NSBP funds will be awarded upon the execution of a project agreement, which is a type of grant agreement.
- ❖ Late submissions of any of the following -Letter of Intent, Summary Statement and Application will not be considered. Refer to the important dates posted on the NHDOT website.
- ❖ NHDOT has established specific naming conventions for items submitted as part of the application packet. The email subject line shall state - Scenic Byway Name and name of municipality or agency submitting. If more than one email is needed to include all the application elements, please note in the subject line (email 1 of 2, etc.). All attachments shall be submitted as individual pdf documents. Name the pdf documents with key words to describe the attached item, for example: Smithville Narrative, Smithville Form ###, Smithville Byway Council Status, Smithville Letters of Support, Smithville Appendices, Smithville Maps, Smithville Key Contacts. Refer to other requirements as noted within.
- FHWA has recommended some standard formatting preferences, NOFO page 16. NHDOT is requiring the following standard formatting:
  - ✓ Project narrative to be prepared as a single-spaced document, using standard 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. The project narrative may not exceed 10 pages in length. The narrative shall be submitted as both a pdf and Word document.

- ✓ Appendices may include documents supporting assertions or conclusions made in the 10-page project narrative and do not count towards the 10-page limit.
  - ✓ If possible, Website links to supporting documentation should be provided rather than copies of these supporting materials. If supporting documents are submitted, applicants should clearly identify within the project narrative the relevant portion of the project narrative that each supporting document supports.
- Forms should be submitted as individual PDF documents in addition to the application; forms are not included in the page limit.

### **FHWA and NHDOT – evaluation and scoring criteria**

- ❖ FHWA will award NSBP grants based on an evaluation of the Merit Criteria, Statutorily required project selection priorities, and FHWA priority selection considerations described in Section E, refer to the NOFO, pages 26-32 for all the details.
- ❖ NHDOT has also developed scoring criteria to be used in reviewing and ranking the applications. The scoring criteria are noted below. The scoring committee will include staff with various levels of expertise in project programming and development activities. Refer to the details within.

### **How Should Each Application be Structured and Organized?**

#### **Application Content and Format Requirements – Refer to the NOFO for all FHWA requirements. Refer to NHDOT requirements as noted in this document.**

- Applicants are advised to review all the details described in the NOFO for example - Basic Project Information- refer to the NOFO page 16.
- Project location - Refer to the NOFO page 17. The map is intended as a mechanism to clearly articulate the location of the project and other general features of the area including connections to existing transportation infrastructure. NHDOT requires that a map must be included for each project. The map must clearly define the limits of the project area, boundaries of the project activity, north arrow, roads to be impacted and other relevant details including a notation to convey the distance and relationship of the proposed project to the actual byway route.
- Project Narrative - The project narrative should thoroughly address each of the statutory eligibility criteria and project selection criteria with as much detail as possible without exceeding the overall page limit. Refer to the NOFO page 16 for the specific details to be included in the narrative.
  1. Name/title of proposed project.
  2. The State DOT or Indian Tribe applying for funding (23 U.S.C. 162(b)(1)).
  3. Name and contact information for the State DOT or Tribal applicant point of contact.

4. Name of the byway(s) impacted by the proposed project, and whether the project is a statewide or multi-State project.
  5. Designation type of the byway(s) impacted by the proposed project (National Scenic Byway, All-American Road, State scenic byway, or Indian Tribe scenic byway) (23 U.S.C. 162(b)(1)(A)(i) (v)).
  6. The primary project type under which the proposed project aligns (23 U.S.C. 162(c)).
  7. If applicable, the additional project types identified.
  8. Project Abstract (maximum five sentences): Summarize project work that would be completed under the project. The project abstract must succinctly describe how the specific request for NSBP funds would be used to complete the project.
- **Project Funding- Budget Narrative and Details.** Refer to the NOFO, pages 18-19 which outlines the budget details which must be included. Below are key points-
    - Lead applicant’s demonstrated experience with receipt and expenditure of Federal-aid highway program funds under 23.U.S.C.
    - Plans for covering the full cost of the project from all sources.
    - Show how different funding sources will share in each major project activity and present that data in dollars and percentages.
    - Identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for or has been awarded, if any that the applicant intends to use.
    - Funding sources shall be grouped and identified into three categories: Non-federal; NSBP funds and other federal funds with specific amounts from each funding source.
    - If project contains components, include the costs of each project component.
    - If the project will be completed in phases, identify the cost for each phase.
    - Clearly identifies the NSBP statutory cost-sharing requirements.
    - Identify all Federal funds to be used for future eligible cost of the project, including the requested NSBP grant amount, other Federal grants that have been awarded to the project or for which the project intends to apply in the future, and any Federal formula funds that have already been programmed for the project or are planned to be programmed for the project.
    - Information showing how the applicant has budgeted sufficient contingency amounts to cover unanticipated cost increases.
    - Information on how all project funds may be used, availability, funding commitments and if any conditions attached to such funding or restrictions related to a fixed period of time.
    - Match amount is available or will be available in a reasonable timeframe acceptable for NHDOT to implement the project.
    - Describe if the project can be implemented successfully if the full amount is not awarded.

**NHDOT requirements-** The following is a list of other items that NHDOT requires with the application packet. The is for NHDOT’s purposes and does not count for the page limit requirement of the specific grant program.

- NHDOT requires information regarding the current status of the Byway Council or other formal entity of the Byway. NHDOT requires the submission of a list of the current membership as of April 1, 2024 (names, towns represented and terms of appointment) and a copy of the meeting notes from at least three of the meetings held between the period of January 2022 to August 2024. The attached pages should be named: Byway Council Status.
- NHDOT requires information from the current Corridor Management Plan (CMP). Pages to be included are the cover page with the date of the CMP and the specific pages that identify the project or includes specific recommendations to support the project identified in the application. The attached pages should be named: CMP Selected Pages.
- NHDOT requires information from the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Pages to be included are the cover page with the date of the RTP and the specific pages that identify the project or includes specific recommendations to support the project identified in the application. The attached pages should be named: RTP Selected Pages.
- NHDOT requires acknowledgement of support. This may include letters of support or minutes from relevant local meetings or other information to support interest in the project. The attached pages should be named: Support.
- NHDOT requires a summary of 200 words or less explaining why your project should be ranked #1. This shall be submitted as both a pdf and Word document. The attached page should be named: Why # 1.
- NHDOT requires the Key Contacts page. The attached pages should be named: Key Contacts.

**NOFO- Required Forms-** All forms required per the NOFO shall be included and use a standard naming convention when submitted, for example Smithville Form 424. Refer to the NOFO and grants.gov. The following forms are to be submitted as individual PDF documents:

1. Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) (mandatory)
2. Grants.gov Lobbying Form (mandatory)
3. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SF-LLL) (mandatory)
4. Key Contacts (this is required by NHDOT, not- optional)

And either:

1. Standard Form 424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs) (mandatory) and Standard Form 424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs) (mandatory)
- or
2. Standard Form 424C (Budget Information for Construction Programs) (mandatory) and Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs) (mandatory)

### **How Each Application will be Reviewed and Scored**

**NHDOT Scoring Criteria:** The NHDOT will use the following criteria when ranking the projects. Total potential points- 100. Refer below for additional details.

Breakdown of Potential Points to be awarded:

- Project Narrative 20 points
- Project Readiness- Schedule and Implementation Strategy 35 points
- Budget Details 25 points
- Corridor Management Plan (CMP) & Regional Transportation Plan 10 points
- Support and Public Involvement 5 points
- Why should this project be ranked # 1? 5 points
- **Total potential points 100 points**

1. **Project Narrative-** Name and title of the proposed project and who is the lead applicant. Provides concise information to explain- determine

- the project satisfies eligibility requirements for the grant program,
- achieves two or more of the NSBP program goals,
- achieves two or more of the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) goals,
- defines current challenges and how the project would address these challenges,
- how the funds will be used to complete the project,
- identifies the intrinsic qualities which will be protected and enhanced,
- how the project may contribute to the functioning and growth of the economy,
- how the project addresses congestion or freight connectivity, bridge service gaps in rural areas or promotes greater land-use productivity including main street revitalization or locally driven-density decisions that support equitable commercial and mixed- income residential development, project’s history and a description of any previously incurred costs. Include a Table of Contents, maps, graphics and other information to easily inform the reviewer of the overall project.
- identifies if the project is in a rural or urban community as defined in the NOFO.
- project location is clearly described, identifies if the project is located within the boundary of a 2020 Census-designated Urbanized area and if the project is located in one of our federally designated community development zones (Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones or Choice Neighborhoods), and shown and map shows connections to existing transportation infrastructure.
- **Potential Points 20**

2. **Project Readiness- Schedule and Implementation Strategy** – Project schedule clearly outlines successful completion opportunities for the project per FHWA and NHDOT requirements. Refer to the NOFO pages 19-22. Describe and provide information on technical feasibility; project schedule; approvals received or needed; environmental issues or concerns; basis of the cost estimates included; Scope of Work (SOW) that focuses on the technical and engineering aspects of the project and describes the project to be constructed; demonstrates compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements; define all major project milestone; real property and right-of-way details; documentation of environmental approvals and anticipated approvals; state and local approvals received or anticipated); demonstrate that a project is included in relevant State, metropolitan and local planning documents or statement from the agency for Federal Aid highway projects; identify greatest risk and

mitigation initiatives, as well as other key project elements and project milestones. **Potential Points 35.**

3. **Budget Details-** Detailed information shall be provided to address the following:
  - Lead applicant’s demonstrated experience with receipt and expenditure of Federal-aid highway program funds under 23.U.S.C.
  - Plans for covering the full cost of the project from all sources.
  - Show how different funding sources will share in each major project activity and present those data in dollars and percentages.
  - Identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for or has been awarded , if any that the applicant intends to use.
  - Funding sources shall be grouped and identified into three categories: Non-federal; NSBP funds and other federal funds with specific amounts from each funding source.
  - If project contains components, include the costs of each project component.
  - If the project will be completed in phases, identify the cost for each phase.
  - Clearly identifies the NSBP statutory cost-sharing requirements.
  - Identifies all Federal funds to be used for future eligible cost of the project, including the requested NSBP grant amount, other Federal grants that have been awarded to the project or for which the project intends to apply in the future, and any Federal formula funds that have already been programmed for the project or are planned to be programmed for the project.
  - Information showing how the applicant has budgeted sufficient contingency amounts to cover unanticipated cost increases.
  - Complete information is provided to how all project funds may be used, availability, funding commitments and if any conditions attached to such funding or restrictions related to a fixed period of time.
  - Match amount is available or will be available in a reasonable timeframe acceptable for NHDOT to implement the project.
  - Describe if the project can be implemented successfully if the full amount is not awarded. **Potential Points 25.**
  
4. **Corridor Management Plan (CMP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**
  - a. The local byway entity has met at least three (3) times in the period from Jan 2022- August 2024. Include a copy of the meeting notes from each meetings. **3 points**
  - b. Include selected pages (including the cover page with the date of the current CMP) that specifically identify the project or includes specific recommendations to support the project identified in the application. **2 points**
  - c. Transportation infrastructure improvements specifically related to the project proposal and the area immediately adjacent to the project area are discussed in the Regional Transportation Plan. Includes selected pages (including the cover page with the date of the plan) from the RTP. **5 points**
  - d. **Potential Total Points 10.**

5. **Support and Public Involvement** – The project has the support of the community in which the project is located. Include letters of support from the community, other communities along the byways and other entities interested in supporting the byways initiatives. A letter from the governing body where the project is located must be included, or documentation that it will be included on an upcoming agenda for discussion. **Potential points 5**
  
6. **Why should this project be ranked # 1?** Response limited to 200 words. **Potential points 5.**

**TIPs on how to navigate Grants.gov**

The grants.gov website provides information on numerous grant opportunities. In the search bar key words can be inserted to assist in a more refined search, for example Scenic Byways. Refer to the tabs located at the top of the page- Home, Learn Grants, Search Grants and etc. Click on each of the tabs for specific information about the grant, and more detailed information can be found under the heading- - Synopsis, Version History, Related Document, Package.

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov search interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation tabs including Home, Learn Grants, Search Grants, Applicants, Grants, System-To-System, Forms, Connect, and Support. The 'SEARCH GRANTS' section includes filters for BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA (Keyword(s), Opportunity Number, Assistance Listings) and SORT BY (Posted Date (Descending)). There are also DATE RANGE and Update buttons. The OPPORTUNITY STATUS filter shows 'Forecasted (702)', 'Posted (1,941)', 'Closed (7,682)', and 'Archived (69,003)'. The FUNDING INSTRUMENT TYPE filter shows 'All Funding Instruments' and 'Cooperative Agreement (962)'. The search results table is as follows:

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
<a href="#">ED-GRANTS-100824-003</a>	OSERS-OSEP: Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Preparation of Early Intervention and Special Education Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs, ALN 84.325K	ED	Posted	10/08/2024	12/03/2024
<a href="#">25-502</a>	Cultural Anthropology Program Senior Research Awards	NSF	Posted	10/08/2024	01/15/2025
<a href="#">72068724RFA00008</a>	USAID Access Miahya	USAID-MAD	Posted	10/08/2024	11/27/2024
<a href="#">ED-GRANTS-100824-001</a>	OSERS-OSEP: Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Leadership Personnel, Assistance Listing Number 84.325D	ED	Posted	10/08/2024	11/22/2024
<a href="#">ED-GRANTS-</a>	OSERS-OSEP: Personnel Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel at Historically Black				

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File Description	File Name	Last Updated Date/Time	File Size
* Folder: Full Announcement - 2023-2024 NSBP NOFO	<a href="#">693JJ324NF00029-FullAnnouncement-2023-2024-NSBP-NOFO.zip</a>	Sep 17, 2024 07:55:46 AM EDT	357.5 KB

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### General Information

<b>Document Type:</b> Grants Notice	<b>Version:</b> Synopsis 3
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b> 693JJ324NF00029	<b>Posted Date:</b> Sep 17, 2024
<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b> Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 National Scenic Byways Program	<b>Last Updated Date:</b> Sep 19, 2024
<b>Opportunity Category:</b> Discretionary	<b>Original Closing Date for Applications:</b> Dec 16, 2024
<b>Opportunity Category Explanation:</b>	<b>Current Closing Date for Applications:</b> Dec 16, 2024
<b>Funding Instrument Type:</b> Grant	<b>Archive Date:</b> Jan 15, 2025
<b>Category of Funding Activity:</b> Transportation	<b>Estimated Total Program Funding:</b>
<b>Category Explanation:</b>	<b>Award Ceiling:</b> \$4,000,000
<b>Expected Number of Awards:</b> 40	<b>Award Floor:</b> \$0