

## AGENDA

## Thriving Communities Program & Upcoming Toolkit Recap MSA's partnership with USDOT and preview the upcoming Toolkit.

## **Tools for Transportation**

6 quick-format presentations from expert panelists that preview content being featured in the toolkit.

## Coming Fall 2025!

Watch for the publication on the MSA Knowledge Hub in the Fall.

## **Panelists**

Main Street America Shane Hampton and Maggie Gillespie

CTL Engineering Leigh Lane

Equiticity
Olatunji "Oboi" Reed

National Association of Development Organizations
Bret Allphin

Project for Public Spaces
Emily Putnam

Rails to Trails Conservancy
Liz Thorstensen

Rural Community Assistance Partnership Verna Al-Ag and Carissa Patrone-Maikuri















## MSA CAPACITY BUILDER TEAM

















## TCP COMMUNITIES SAID THEY'RE...

## Challenged by...

- + Roads that don't support multiple modes of transportation
- + Dangerous conditions for pedestrians
- + Disconnected and missing infrastructure
- + Aging and poorly maintained infrastructure

"We hope to be proactive in making our community a great place to live and thrive."

## Seeing transportation's role for...

- + Increased quality of life
- + Better foundation for economic growth
- + Improved sense of community and place
- + Increased connectivity
- + Enhanced tourism opportunity

## MSA SURVEY FINDINGS

It's hard to pursue transformative infrastructure investments, no matter where you are! But there are special challenges for rural and tribal places...

- + Staff capacity to manage projects
- + Access to specialized knowledge & services nearby
- + Funding to pay for professional services
- + Funding to pay grant matches
- + Long-standing economic hardships

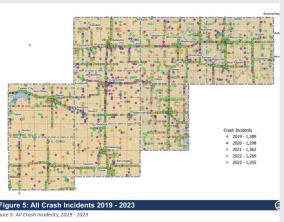
"Big things can happen in small towns!"

## MSA APPROACH TO TCP









#### **Community Assessment**

Assessing capacity and gaps

On-site assessments to inform work plan

## Capacity Building

Monthly cohort

Virtual and in-person workshops

Transportation planning, policy, and practices

\$90,000 sub-awards driven by local priorities

## Visioning

Concept planning and prioritization

Community engagement practices

Regional partnerships

#### Technical Assistance

Data & analysis

Recommendations

Identify funding & produce materials to support project readiness/grant competitiveness

## **HIGHLIGHT: ASSESSMENT**

## Over 500

Community stakeholders recorded across 20 communities in assessment phase

13

State DOTs engaged in partnerships and conversations

















## HIGHLIGHT: SHARED LEARNING

8

Virtual workshops by subject matter experts

In-person convenings in Washington, DC

Short-Term Improvements, Long-Term Perspectives



Building Communities Through Transportation

E.L. Robinson Engineerin February 20, 2024

Trails



Community Mobility Rituals:

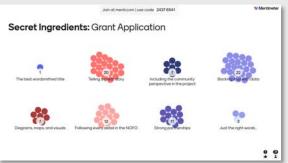
Vehicles for Neighborhood Transformation

Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Underground Infrastructure - How to Afford, Maintain, and Sustain your Community's Water and Wastewater

20

Virtual cohort meetings





## HIGHLIGHT: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

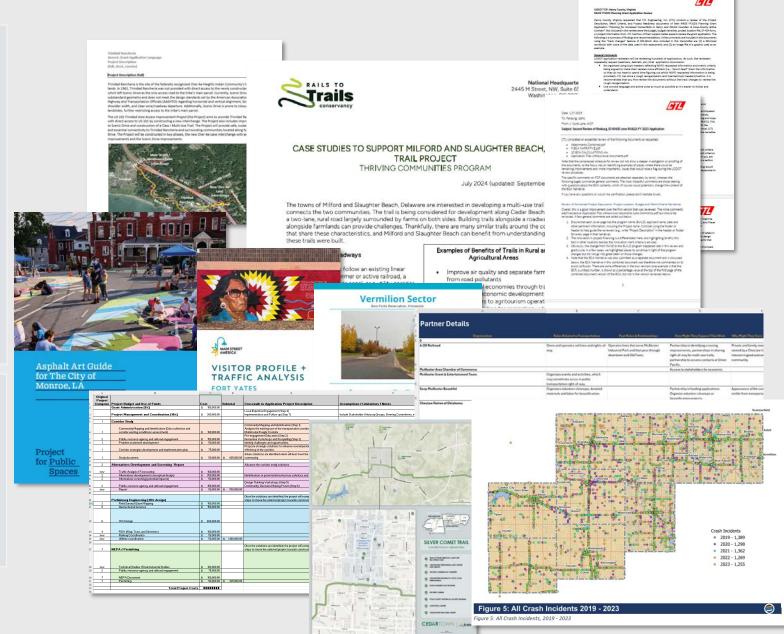
## 13,000 hours

Engagements
Analyses
Spreadsheets
Reports
Visualizations
Recommendations

•

45

Major contributors from MSA, its partner organizations and USDOT



## **HIGHLIGHT: SUB-AWARDS**

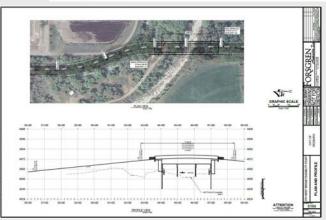
\$1.8m

Funding to communities through TCP sub-award from MSA to advance project readiness

- Feasibility studies and preliminary engineering
- Long range transportation plan updates
- Grant language and grant management plans
- Active transportation visions
- Asphalt ground murals for engagement
- Transit fare support
- Trail support and safety campaigns
- Environmental work
- GIS data







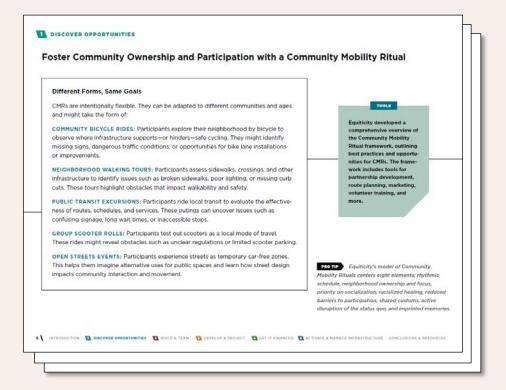








## TRANSPORTATION TOOLKIT



#### **How to Use This Toolkit**

DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES: learn

how to assess your community's infrastructure opportunities and engage community members in the planning so that they feel a sense of ownership. You'll also find tools to help you map, organize, and prioritize potential projects.

2 BUILD A TEAM: find strategies for creating a coalition of partners and regional collaborators to pursue infrastructure opportunities. This section outlines practical approaches to bring people to the table and keep them engaged.

OPPORTUNITIES
BUILD A TEAM
DEVELOP A PROJECT
GET IT FINANCED
ACTIVATE & MANAGE
INFRASTRUCTURE

DISCOVER

DEVELOP A PROJECT: learn what it takes to shepherd a project from conception to reality, including available tools, how to assess your transportation landscape, and what feasibility studies you might need.

4 GET IT FINANCED: learn how to find—and secure—funding to cover the planning, design, and/or construction of a project. This section includes common sources of funding and tips on how to determine if a project is grant-ready. You'll also learn how to effectively tell your project's story to funders.

3 THRIVING COMMUNITIES TRANSPORTATION TOOLKIT

5 ACTIVATE & MANAGE

INFRASTRUCTURE: encounter key

actively being used by the community.

frameworks for managing and maintaining

completed infrastructure projects. This section

and frameworks to ensure that infrastructure is

includes tools for tracking infrastructure conditions

**Empower community** Form and sustain ownership and participation

Map your assets to identify projects & make quick changes

> Get the right people, projects, and plans in place for long-term change

**DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES** 

**BUILD A TEAM** 

**DEVELOP A PROJECT** 

**GET IT FINANCED** 

**ACTIVATE & MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE** 

Learn to talk with DOTs and agencies

> Get into the grant groove

Find and track funding sources

partnerships









## TOOLS FOR TRANSPORTATION

MSA's Thriving Communities Team

# Leveraging the Power of 10 in McAlester, OK

**Thriving Communities Program** 

Project for Public Spaces



## **Our Mission**

# Great public spaces strengthen communities.



We bring public spaces to life by planning and designing them with the people who use them every day. Our knowledge, skills, and strategies equip people to fuel lasting change. Together, we create community-powered public spaces around the world.

## What is Placemaking at Project for Public Spaces?

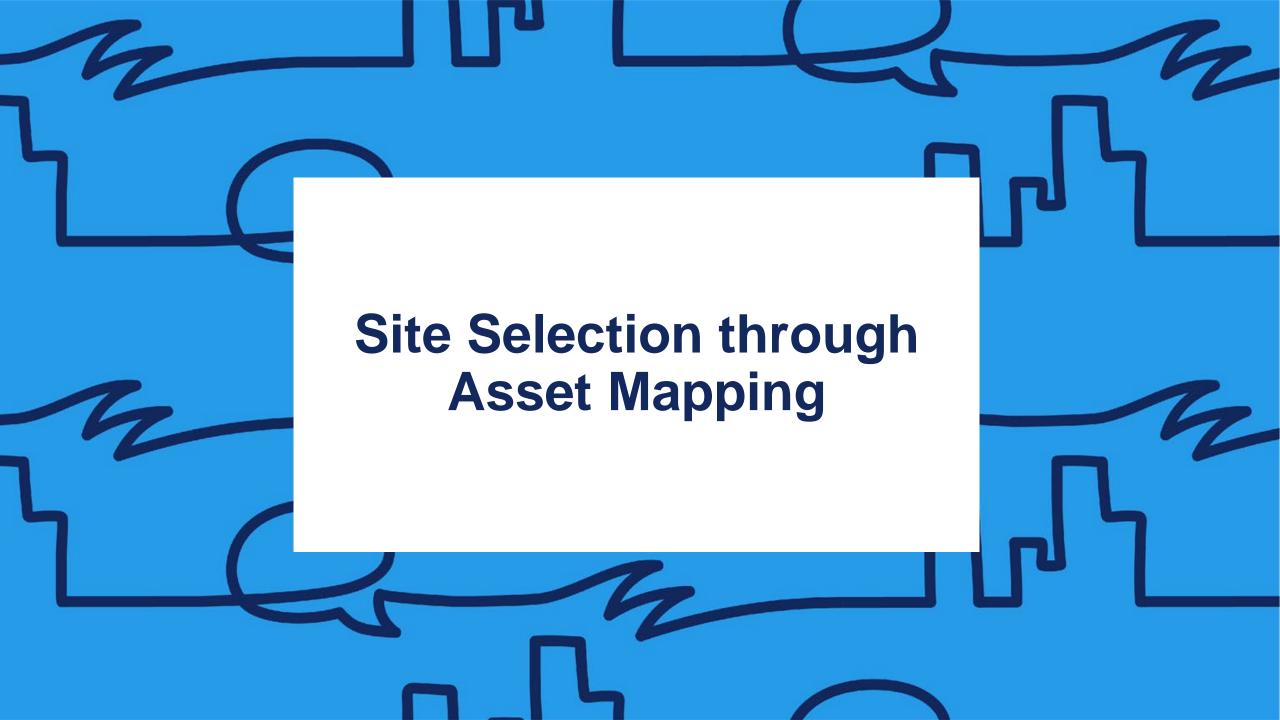
Placemaking is a community-based process of visioning, experimentation, and care to change the way people use and experience a public space.



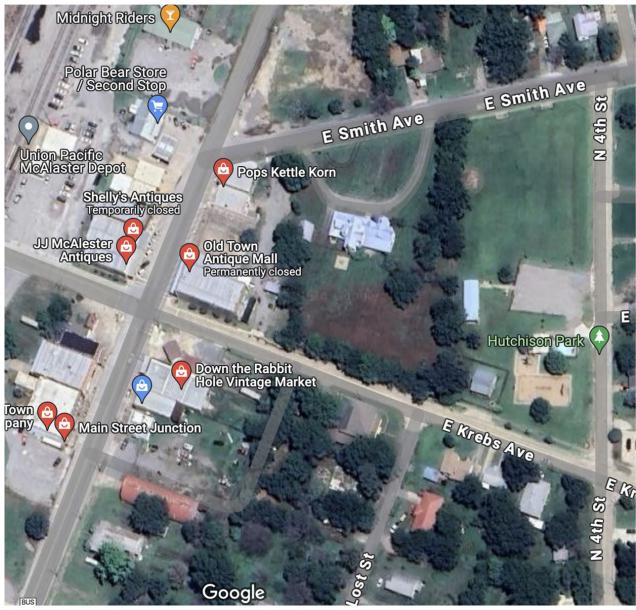










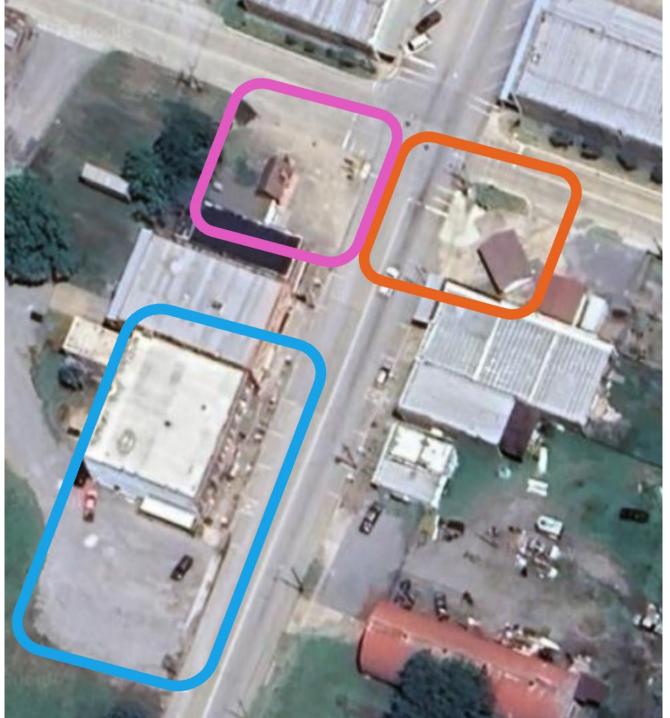














What makes a great place?



#### Rate the Place

Comfort & Image	POOR		GOOD	
Overall attractiveness	1	2	3	4
Quality of maintenance	1	2	3	4
Choice of places to sit	1	2	3	4

Comments/Notes:

Access & Linkages	POOI	POOR		GOOD	
Visibility from a distance	1	2	3	4	
Ease in walking to the place	1.1	2	3	4	
Clarity of information/signage	1	2	3	4	

Comments/Notes:

Uses & Activities	POOR		GOOD	
Mix of activities (spontaneous & organized)	1	2	3	4
Frequency of community events	1	2	3	4
Overall busy-ness of area	1	2	3	4

Comments/Notes:

Sociability	POOR		GOOD	
Number of people in groups	1	2	3	4
Presence of children and seniors	1	2	3	4
Users reflect the diversity of the community overall	1	2	3	4

## **Identify Opportunities**

1. What do you like best about this place?

2. What are things that you could do to improve this place that could be done right away and wouldn't cost a lot?

3. What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

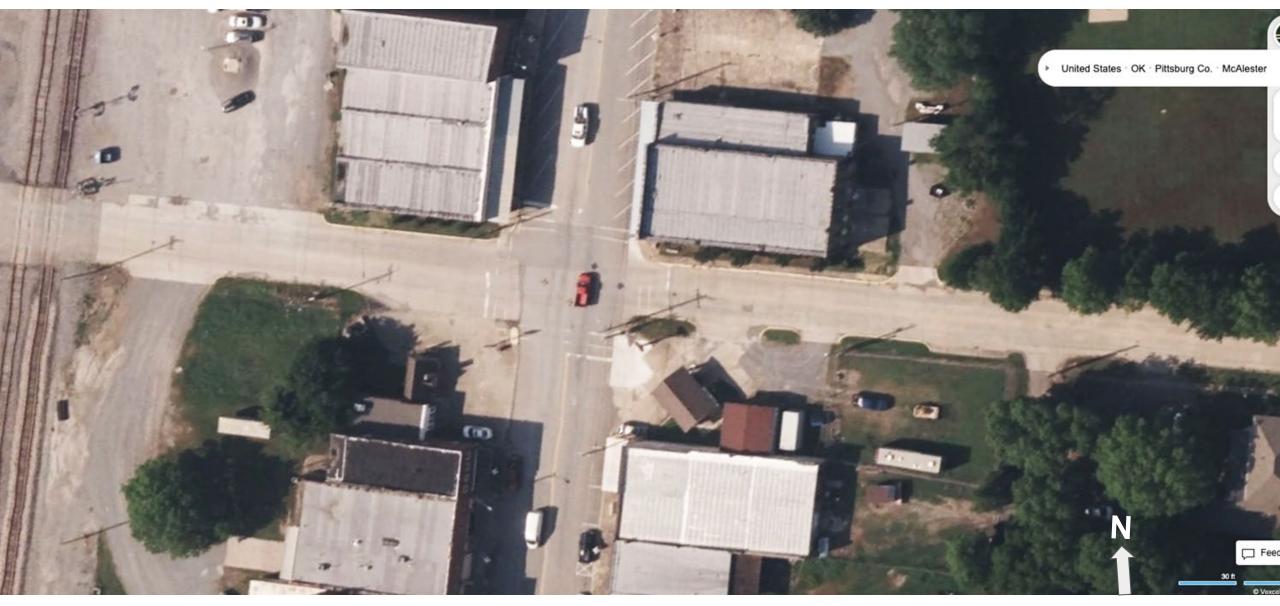
4. How can you encourage tourists to visit this place? How can you enhance connections between this place and other local place assets?

5. What local partners or talent could help implement some of your proposed improvements? Be specific!

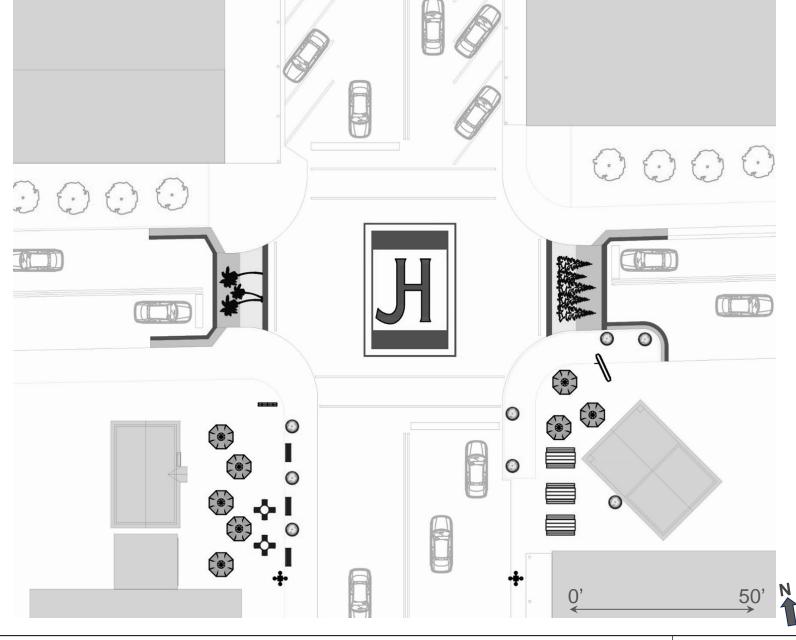








Intersection Improvements at Jefferson Highway and Krebs Avenue, Old Town McAlester, OK - Existing Intersection at Jefferson Highway and Krebs Avenue Thriving Communities Program, McAlester, OK November 12, 2024





Intersection Improvements at Jefferson Highway and Krebs Avenue, Old Town McAlester, OK - Plan

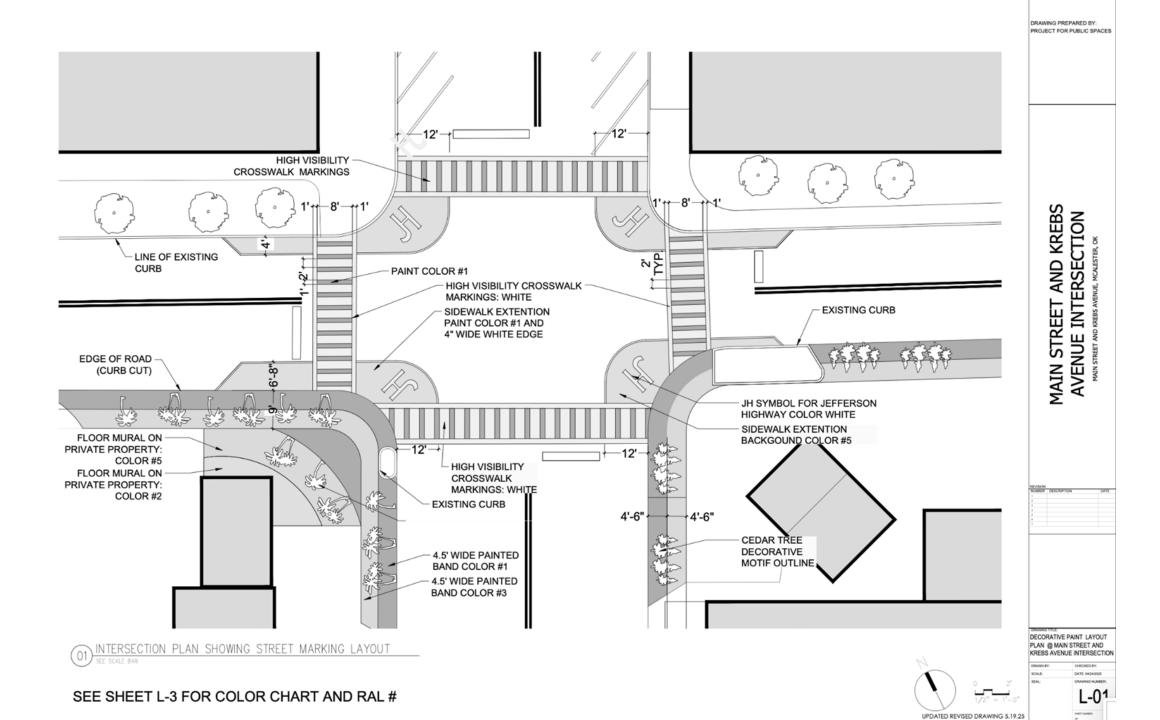


Intersection Improvements at Jefferson Highway and Krebs Avenue, Old Town McAlester, OK - View Looking East on Krebs Avenue

Thriving Communities Program, McAlester, OK November 12, 2024



Intersection Improvements at Jefferson Highway and Krebs Avenue, Old Town McAlester, OK - Aerial View of Intersection Thriving Communities Program, McAlester, OK November 12, 2024







# **Key Takeaways**

#### **Community-led Asset Mapping**

to identify places of most opportunity for initial focus

#### **Performance Evaluation Workshops**

with the public help understand needs and brainstorm new ideas and partnerships

#### Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper

demonstration projects allow for testing ideas, and leveraging success and adaptation

Project for Public Spaces



# COMMUNITY MOBILITY RITUALS

Tools for Neighborhood Transformation

Olatunji Oboi Reed

Oboi@equiticity.org | 773-916-6264

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+ Equiticity is a racial equity movement, operationalizing racial equity by harnessing our collective power through research, advocacy, programs, and Community Mobility Rituals, to improve the lives of Black, Brown, and Indigenous people in our society.





Community Mobility Rituals help create community ownership of the transportation planning process and socialize people around infrastructure and development in neighborhoods.

- + Rolling Thunder: Exploring the Beauty of York
  - + Community bicycle ride in York, Alabama covering 6 miles roundtrip.
  - + Hosted on Veteran's Day, in partnership with STEM and bike giveaway events.
  - + Ride title and thematic storytelling.
  - + Eight narrated stops, including City Hall, Hill Hospital, Coleman Arts Center, Cherokee Park, York Park, Sumter High School, Broad Street mural, and Second Avenue mural.
  - + Focused on socializing people around infrastructure, developments, and assets in York.
  - + Pop up feedback boards from Project for Public Space.



- + Comprehensive Planning Process:
  - + Planning team made up of partners.
  - + Planning meeting with regular meeting cadence.
  - + Planning document to establish our planning process, manage tasks, and track our progress.
  - + Establish a Squad Ride Management Team.



#### + Community Bicycle Ride Outcomes:

- + Formal partnership with City of York (Alabama), IV Vets, and Coleman Center for the Arts.
- + About 50 ride participants.
- + Donated about 75 bikes and helmets to youth and families.
- + Interest in hosting an annual community bicycle ride.
- + Interest in hosting an Open Streets Festival.
- + Development of a Community Mobility Rituals Framework.



#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Communities want and need social infrastructure.

Communities are interested in owning planning processes impacting our neighborhoods.

Demand for active transportation must be generated in neighborhoods.

Olatunji Oboi Reed, President & CEO, Equiticity | Oboi@equiticity.org | 773-916-6264





# POWERING UP PARTNERSHIPS

Leveraging Relationships for Future Success

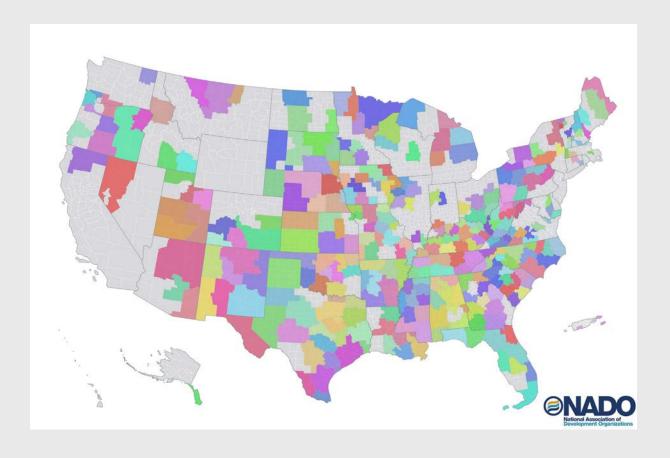
**Bret Allphin** 

ballphin@nado.org

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#### NADO

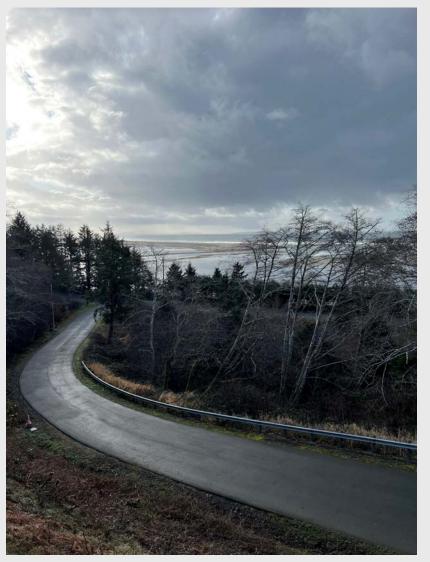
+The National Association of **Development Organizations** (NADO) represents a network of more than 400 multi-jurisdictional planning and development entities generally representing rural and small metro areas of the US.



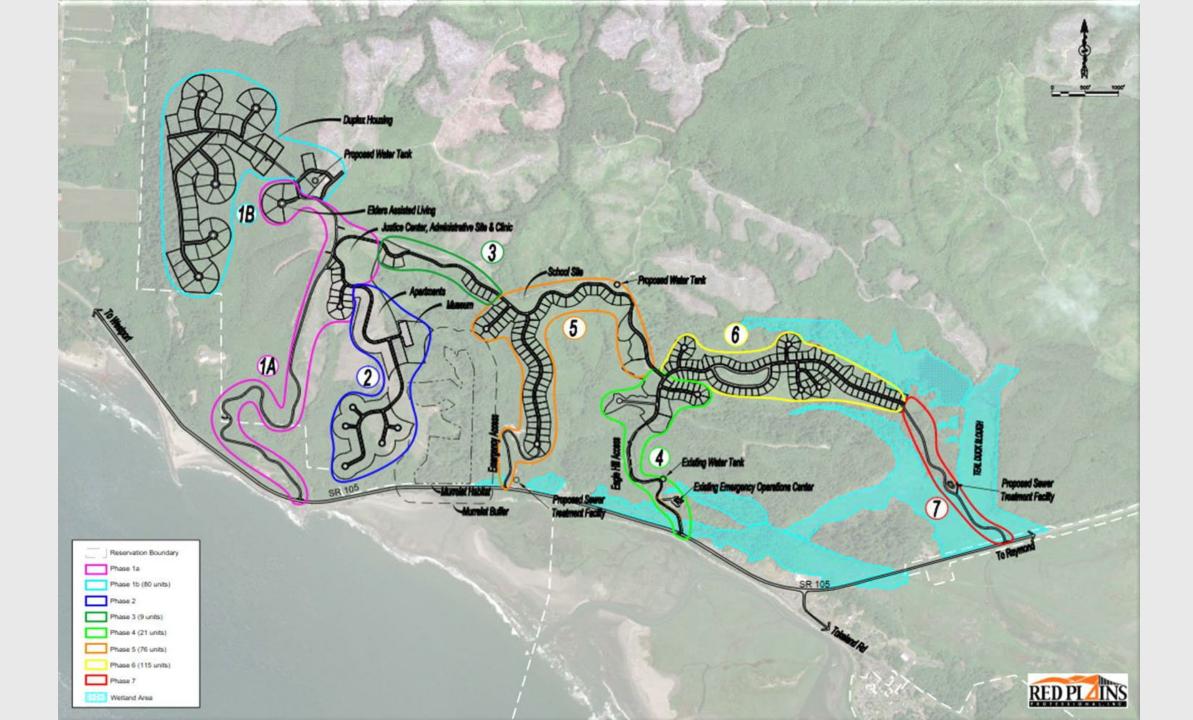


#### SHOALWATER BAY INDIAN TRIBE

- + Coastal Washington (Tokeland)
- + Working to minimize climate impacts on tribal lands and facilities
- + Relocate critical infrastructure and future developments







#### POWERING UP PARTNERSHIPS

- + Wealthworks approach to wealth creation outlines multiple forms of capitol
- + Connect with partners who can meaningfully contribute
- + Each partner plays a specific and important role
- + Connect to existing processes and ecosystems through partnerships





#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Understand demand to understand who is missing
Ensure those who would benefit from your project are helping to develop it

Write it down

Memorialize what each partner is contributing to the project and why they are interested

Keep it going

Share the partnership information with others in case of turn over

Bret Allphin - ballphin@nado.org



### LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

Demystifying Working with Transportation Agencies and Securing Funding

Leigh Lane

© National Main Street Center

#### **OUR TEAM**



Leigh Lane



Douglas Parker, CEP



Sam Ellison



Wanda Webster Stansbury



**Gary Toth** 



Julie Hunkins, PE



Caroline Williams, PE



Scott Lane, ACIP



Paul Graham

#### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES PROVIDED

#### + Grant:

- + Strategic Planning
- + Competitiveness Screening
- + Materials Preparation
- + Application Reviews
- + Story Maps

#### + Project Management:

- + Request for Proposals
- + Scopes of Work
- + Project Budgets / Cost Estimates
- + Project Delivery Guidance
- + Transportation Planning Process Guidance
- + Community Engagement Strategies

#### + Environmental:

- + Preliminary Environmental Screenings
- + Street Audits Guidance
- + Existing Conditions Assessments

#### + Engineering Reviews:

- + Roadway Designs
- + Structural Conditions (Bridges)

#### + Technical Studies Review:

- + SS4A Safety Action Plan
- + Feasibility Study
- + Project Funding Strategies
- + Business Development Strategies
- + Community Center Operations Guidance

#### TOOL KIT CONTRIBUTION



# Effectively Communicating with your State DOT



Getting into the Grant Groove

#### EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STATE DOT

#### Five Key Principles:



Understanding Local and State Government Differences



**Understanding the Basics** 



Doing Your Homework



Defining the Problem (Not the Solution)



Partnering for Success





# SOUTH COLLEGE ST BRIDGE - CEDARTOWN, GA



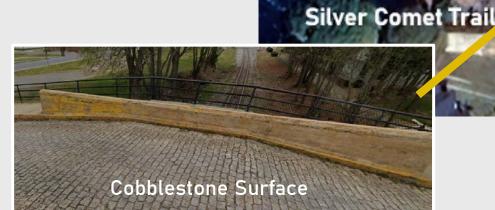


#### **Existing Historic Bridge**

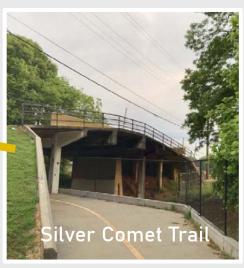




**CSX Railroad** 



**Built 1910** 





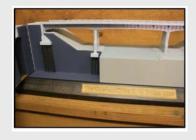
## SOUTH COLLEGE ST BRIDGE - CEDARTOWN, GA



#### Strategies for Preserving Historic Elements within the New Bridge



Reuse Cobblestones



Historic Bridge Model



**Commemorative Signage** 



Commemorative Medallions from Historic Bridge Metal



Preserve Structural Elements

#### GETTING INTO THE GRANT GROOVE

#### **Key Concepts:**

- + Pre/post-application preparedness
- + High quality Letters of Support
- + Meeting the NOFO requirements
- + Compelling, data driven story
- + Writing to the reviewers
- + Clear project descriptions
- + Demonstrating project readiness
- +Thorough reviews of application prior to submittal



#### GRANT PREPAREDNESS - TRINIDAD RANCHERIA, CA

#### Information Organization

ArcGIS StoryMaps



A Future Vision

#### **Generic Grant Application Materials**

- + Community History
- Clear Project Description
- Project Background (data driven story)
- + Safety
- + Economic Competitiveness

#### Right-sized to Meet Page Limits

- + Full
- + Short
- + Concise

#### We would like to thank the

# USDOT Thriving Communities Program



#### Our Mission

We are building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors.

#### Our Vision

A nation where trails connect everyone, everywhere.

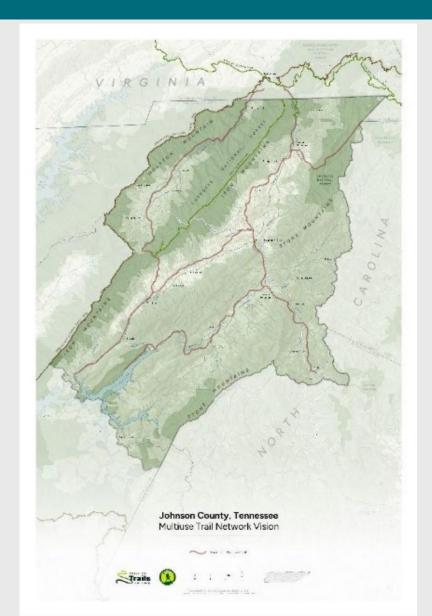
#### Our Impact

Since 1986, Rails to Trails Conservancy has supported the creation of tens of thousands of miles of rail-trails and multiuse trails nationwide by building and championing infrastructure, advocating for public funding for trails and active transportation, and inspiring more people to make trails part of their everyday lives.





#### MOUNTAIN CITY, TN



- + 2,500 residents
- + County Seat of Johnson County
- + Beautiful location with amazing access to outdoor activities
- + World renowned music history
- + Looking to make its active transportation/trail network safer and more accessible



#### RENEWED PERSPECTIVE IN LIGHT OF HELENE

- Initial research around old rail corridor proved trail development difficult
- + Helene changed everything
- + Virginia Creeper Trail Destruction
- + Digitized & Improved Regional Trail Connection Mapping
- =Sub award shifted from Laurel Creek Trail over to Iron Mountain Trail Improvements & Connection



#### PARTNERSHIPS & URGENCY

- + Pivot to Iron Mountain Trail
- + Damascus & Abingdon Partner Network Revitalized

VIRGINIA CREEPER

+ Elected Leaders, Non-Profit Partners & Private Business

Came Together



















#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

#### Plan, Plan, Plan

Having a County trail plan allowed Johnson County to pivot post-Helene to a larger regional approach.

Stay Flexible & Identify Ways to Address Crisis with Opportunity

Deep understanding of the ways trails benefit communities & regions allowed for an impactful pivot.

Collaboration, Collaboration

Engage with as many community and regional partners and projects as you can to find and give support.

Liz Thorstensen <u>liz@railstotrails.org</u> <u>www.railstotrails.org</u>



# PRIORITIZING WHAT MATTERS

Designing TA with Trust and Funding in Mind

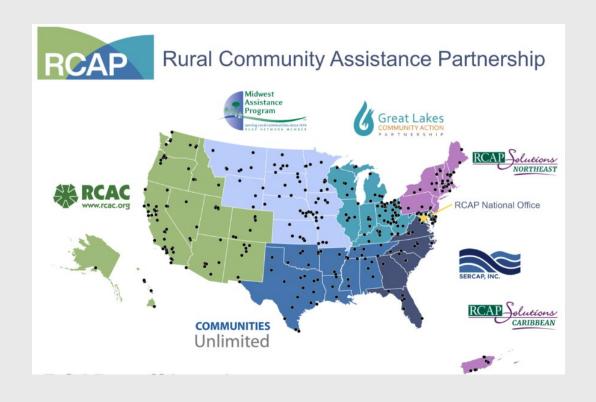
V Al-ag (RCAC), vernalou.al-ag@rcac.org

Carissa Patrone Maikuri (RCAC/ERC), cpatronemaikuri@rcac.org

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## RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP (RCAP)

- +RCAP is a partnership of seven Technical Assistance organizations.
- + Provides assistance with economic development, water, wastewater, and solid waste



## RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CORPORATION (RCAC)



- + Provides technical assistance and lending to Indigenous and rural communities in 13 western states
  - + Environment
  - + Housing
  - + Lending
  - + Economic Development Building Rural Economies (BRE)

#### WHY THE RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT GUIDE



- + Encourages learning and mindful consideration when working with tribes
- + Centers the importance of tribal sovereignty
- + Provides additional resources to further capacity building

#### BEST PRACTICES FOR RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH TRIBES



#### Main Sections:

- + Learn Tribal History & Context
- + Honor Protocol & Practice Repricocity
- + Build Trust Through Time & Consistency
- + Acknowledge Barriers & Foster Equitable Participation
- + Do's and Don'ts

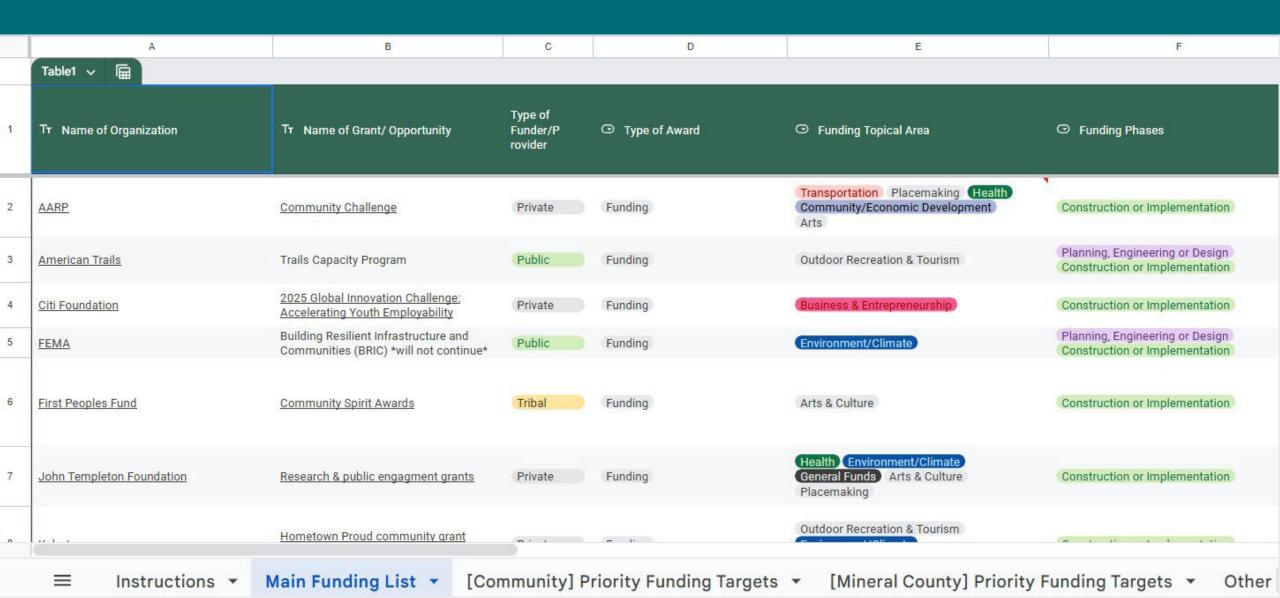


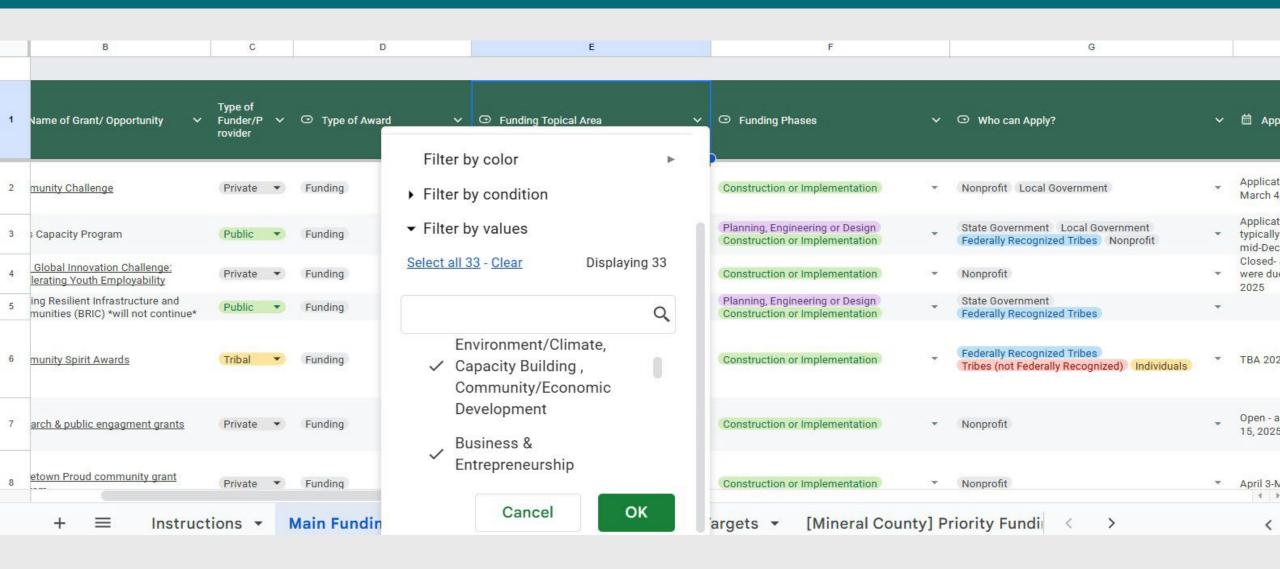
- + Learn about funding opportunities
- + Pair most pressing community needs with potential funding sources
- +Track opportunities applied for/awarded
- + Plan for the future



+ Toolkit DOT TCP Filterable Funding Sources Inventory .xlsx - Google Sheets

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5	Ty Name of Organization	Tr Name of Grant/ Opportunity	Type of Funder/P rovider		<ul> <li>Funding Topical Area</li> </ul>	○ Funding Phases	Who can Apply?	∰ Apply By		Recurring or Rolling	Requires Match (Yes if checked)	ir match is required, now	Min/Max Award Amount	Considerations before Applying
	AARP	Community Challenge	Private	Funding	Transportation Placemaking Health (Community/Economic Development) Arts	Construction or Implementation	Nonprofit Local Government	Application closed March 4, 2025		Recurring		n/a	\$2,500-\$25,000	Flagship grants \$10-12K to not e capacity-building microgrants \$2 \$10-20k to not exceet \$25k
	American Trails	Trails Capacity Program	Public	Funding	Outdoor Recreation & Tourism	Planning, Engineering or Design Construction or Implementation	State Government Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	Application portal typically opens mid-December	1 year later	Recurring		Not required but some match preferred		Funds used for stewardship train on state and local lands, and resi
	Citi Foundation	2025 Global Innovation Challenge: Accelerating Youth Employability	Private	Funding	(Business & Entrepreneurship.)	Construction or Implementation	Nonprofit	Closed-applications	2 years	Recurring			\$500,000	Funding supports young people t through technical/vocational train entrepreneurship programming, :
	FEMA	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) *will not continue*	Public	Funding	Environment/Climate	Planning, Engineering or Design Construction or Implementation	State Government Federally Recognized Tribes		36 months	Recurring		75% federal cost share/25% non-federal cost share funding		Funds may be used for capacity- activities, mitigation projects, an
E 9	First Peoples Fund	Community Spirit Awards	Tribal	Funding	Arts & Culture	Construction or Implementation	Federally Recognized Tribes Tribes (not Federally Recognized) Individuals	TBA 2026	n/a	Recurring			\$50,000	Program offers grants to 4-6 Nat worked throughout their lives to: knowledge and ancestral gifts wi designed support essential bear: to carry forward wisdom and hei heal and thrive
1 1000	John Templeton Foundation	Research & public engagment grants	Private	Funding	Health Environment/Climate General Funds Arts & Culture Placemaking	Construction or Implementation	Nonprofit	Open - apply by August 15, 2025	Up to three year	Recurring		n/a		Funding areas include: individua markets, religion, science and sc and physical sciences, life scienc development, public engagment,
	Kubota	Hometown Proud community grant program	Private	Funding	Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Environment/Glimate Infrastructure (including water, waste	Construction or Implementation	Nonprofit	April 3-May 9, 2025		Recurring		n/a	Valued at \$50,000 (\$25,000 cash and \$25,000	Examples include building an agroenter, revitalizing community ga
	Land and Water Conservation Fund	Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program	Public	Funding	Outdoor Recreation & Tourism	Planning, Engineering or Design	State Government	11/1/2029		Recurring	✓		\$300,000-\$15,000,0	Applicants must be a state lead and territories, sub-recipients car derally recognized Indian Tribe Corporations/Organizations, or N Communities, local units of gove purpose districts
100	Main Street America	GM on Main Street Grant Program	Private	Funding	Transportation Placemaking	Construction or Implementation Planning, Engineering or Design	Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	Application closed March 2, 2025	1 year	Recurring		n/a	\$50,00 <mark>0</mark>	Transportation projects that implacessibility and vibrancy of Mai
1	Mosaic	2025 Open Grant Cycle (currently	Private	Funding	Environment/Climate (Health)	Planning, Engineering or Design	Nonprofit Local Government	Yearly open grant		Recurring				Seed (single year \$50-150K), Cul multi-year \$200-300k), Harvest (socused on building bridges acro





# MINERAL COUNTY, NEVADA

- + Rich history of military presence
- + Growing emphasis on outdoor recreation
- + "Road Diet" needed to slow traffic
- + Patriots Plaza to Main Street Plaza
- + Downtown revitalization and small business growth



					77				
	А	В	С	D	Е	F	G	Н	
1		Mineral C							
2	Local Need to Pair with Opportunity	Tr Name of Organization	Tr Name of Grant	Type of Funder/P rovider	Type of Award	Funding Topical Area		☑ Who can Apply?	
3	Placemaking improvements for Main Street Plaza	T-Mobile	Hometown Grant	Private	Funding	Outdoor Recreation Community/Econo Placemaking Infrastructure (inclu	Construction or Implement	Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	
4	Art for Main Street Plaza	National Endowment for the Arts	Our Town	Public	Funding	Placemaking Arts & Culture	Construction or Implement	State Government Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	
5	Building and mapping out trails	American Trails	Trails Capacity Program	Public	Funding	Outdoor Recreation	Planning, Engineering or De Construction or Implement	State Government Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	
6	Building a plan for a recreation economy	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Recreation Economies for Rural Communities (RERC)	Public	Techni	Outdoor Recreation	Planning, Engineering or De	Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	
7	Main Street design	National Endowment for the Arts	Citizens' Institute on Rural Design	Public	Techni	Community/Econo Arts & Culture	Planning, Engineering or De	Local Government Federally Recognized Tribes Nonprofit	
		II C Department of	Cafe Otreate and Deade for All				Diagning Engineering or Do	Local Government	
	■ Instructions ▼	Main Funding L	ist • [Community	] Priority I	Funding Tar	gets • [Mineral	County] Priority Funding	Targets - Other	

#### THANK YOU!



# ECONOMIC RCAC RECOVERY CORPS

- + V Al-ag (RCAC), <a href="mailto:vernalou.al-ag@rcac.org">vernalou.al-ag@rcac.org</a>
- + Carissa Patrone Maikuri (RCAC/ERC), <a href="mailto:cpatronemaikuri@rcac.org">cpatronemaikuri@rcac.org</a>



# THRIVING COMMUNITIES TRANSPORTATION TOOLKIT

#### **COMING FALL 2025**

Over 25 topics relating to transportation projects, to help you make a difference!

Pro tips for local change-makers.

Tools and templates on the Main Street America Knowledge Hub.

Stories and wins from Main Street America's work in TCP communities.

#### THANKS TO OUR PANELISTS!

#### **Panelists**

Main Street America
Shane Hampton and Maggie Gillespie

CTL Engineering
Leigh Lane

Equiticity
Olatunji "Oboi" Reed

National Association of Development Organizations
Bret Allphin

Project for Public Spaces
Emily Putnam

Rails to Trails Conservancy Liz Thorstensen

Rural Community Assistance Partnership Verna Al-Ag and Carissa Patrone-Maikuri



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