RECREATIONAL TRAILS

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE GRANT

Terms and Conditions

2026 - 2027

HALIFAX

RECREATIONAL TRAILS OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE GRANT

Purpose and objectives

This Program is directed by the **Administrative Order Number 2020 -011-ADM Respecting HRM's Grant Programs for Active Transportation and Recreational Trails**.

Recreational Trails Operations and Maintenance Grants, with a maximum of $10,000 per eligible Applicant are awarded to assist with the costs associated with maintaining existing eligible Recreational Trails and their associated infrastructure and amenities to an appropriate accessible and safe standard for public use. These funds are intended to address the day to day maintenance needed to sustain the existing infrastructure by repairing normal wear and tear.

- HRM will evaluate necessary funding based on application submitted for maintenance of Recreational trails located on HRM land
- Applicants applying for a Recreational Trails Grant and/or an AT Maintenance Grant are also eligible for up to $2,000 for operational expenses directly related to trail maintenance responsibilities as described in Section Eligible Proposals and Expenses for AT Maintenance and Operations Grants

Timelines

March 9, 2026	• HRM issues a 'Call for Proposals' for fiscal year ahead with a Proposal Submission Deadline; • Q&A session scheduled in advance to the Submission Deadline
April 17, 2026	• Maintenance Proposal Submission Deadline
April - May 2026	• Maintenance Proposals evaluations by HRM staff
Mid-April – May, 2026	• HRM Council approves the operational budget for maintenance projects and approved Grant amount is confirmed by HRM;
After evaluations and HRM Council's approval of 2026-2027 budget • An Award Letter Notification with terms and conditions is sent to successful applicants who are awarded grants up to $5,000 • A Contribution Agreement is signed between HRM and successful applicants who are awarded grants over $5,001. • A letter declining funding is sent to those applicants whose proposals do not meet Grant requirements	
Upon execution of awarding documents	Successful applicants will receive payments as per schedule included in the section Procedures for Award Recipients- Transfer of Payment
January 31, 2027	• Applicants who received an award above $5,000 and show a need of the remainder of 30% can fill out an interim report
March 1, 2027	• All applicants must submit a final report on or before this date.

Eligible Applicants

There are hereby established eligibility criteria for an Applicant pursuing a Grant application listed in this Recreational Trails Grants Program. To be eligible, the applicants must meet all conditions outlined below:

- The applicant has written permission from the land owners for use of the land which grants public access and sets construction and maintenance roles and responsibilities for a safe and recreational trail aligned with conditions outlined in By-Law P- 600 and other By-Laws as applicable: 1) a valid License Agreement for use of municipal land from HRM; 2) a valid Letter of Agreement (or Management Plan) for use of provincial land from The Province of Nova Scotia 3) registered public easement from the landowner for any corridor traversing in part private land
- Applicant is a member of Nova Scotia Trails, eligible for their Group Trail Insurance Coverage, or has obtained an equivalent Commercial General Liability Insurance Coverage of at least $5,000,000.
- Applicant is demonstrating broad/ diverse mandate and by-laws aligned with all clauses outlined in the HRM By-Law P 600 Respecting Municipal Parks[1] and other By-Laws as applicable
- Applicant demonstrates commitment to construct and maintain the facilities managed at a standard that is safe to all users permitted on the trail. An operational plan and budget for maintenance beyond construction are highly recommended to prove commitment.
- Applicant demonstrates recent (within the past year) local community engagement and consultations (e.g. Annual General Meetings with membership and public participation, community open houses, or public engagement opportunities) where members of the community and board members have provided input regarding the proposed project; and
- Applicant has not defaulted/ breached Grant(s)' requirements in the past years by:
    - Failing to send project final report and invoices for the grant received
    - Failing to deliver projects as per scope proposed at the standard requested
    - Failing to deliver projects at the standards required for accessibility and safety of all users

Eligible Proposals for Recreational Trails Operations and Maintenance Grants

To be eligible, the proposals must meet all conditions outlined below:

1. Project proposal is received by HRM before the set deadline to be considered for the Maintenance Grant Program.
2. The scope of the projects is for a recreational trail located in HRM with the following conditions:

- The recreational trail user permits restrict vehicle use and has similar restrictions and permits as those outlined in the By-Law P600 and other By-laws as applicable
- the recreational trail is located on land owned by HRM OR
- the recreational trail connects from HRM lands to other lands with established agreements, other lands designated as active transportation or recreational and/or historical/ cultural destination (e.g. other trails, bike lanes, sidewalks, parks, recreation centers);

3. The scope of the maintenance project (s) proposed for the AT Facility and amenities support a standard that ensures accessible, safe, and enjoyable experience to all users of all abilities; eligible expenses are listed below:

- Snow Removal
- Refuse/ Garbage Collections/ Outhouse cleaning services

[1] https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/By-law%20P-600.pdf

- Surfacing, Treadway maintenance (surface repairs- potholes; asphalt, crusher dust; slopes and sub - base)
- Side of trail maintenance (mowing, shrub, veg removal, tree removal, blowdowns, leaners; sand, seeds & sods and plants to control erosion)
- Drainage maintenance (culverts repairs/ adjustments; ditching repairs, erosion control measures)
- Bridge Maintenance (inspection; board repairs, minor bridge repairs)
- Railing Maintenance (inspection and repairs of railings, fencing)
- Trail Amenities Inspection and Maintenance (benches, picnic tables, kiosks, maps; garbage bins - cleaning/ repairs; graffiti removal, gates, bollards, outhouse repairs /cleaning services etc.)
- Signage Maintenance (include all types of signage repaired/ ordered at a sign maker; no new added signage is eligible, unless regulatory signage)
- Parking lot repairs (potholes filling only, not re-surfacing)
- Equipment Repair and Maintenance
- Equipment Rental

4. If some/all work is done by volunteers and supplies are needed, the following purchases are eligible:

- Stone and Gravel
- Lumber
- Salt/ Sand/ Sal-Sand- Mix
- Seeds, plants; sods; topsoil
- Cleaning Supplies (toilet paper, dog bags)
- Other Materials (lubricants, hardware, paint)
- Small Tools
- Personal Protection Equipment for volunteers (gloves, masks, vests)

5. Operational expenses that enable the organization to deliver maintenance projects can include:

- Trail Insurance (including Commercial G/L, Volunteers)
- Membership Dues (including RSJC, NS Trails, HRTA)
- Travel – Local (for meetings related to maintenance)
- Computer Software/License (including mapping, website)
- Office expenses (including office rental, PO Box rental)
- Training (relevant to trail maintenance/stewardship/ first aid)

Evaluation Criteria for Recreational Trails Operations and Maintenance Grants

The documents requested along with the information provided in the application will form the basis of the HRM's evaluation and recommendation for funding.

Criteria 1: Eligibility
• All documents required by the application and a Maintenance Budget Report were received before the deadline and approved as eligible • The applicant meets eligibility criteria as listed in the Administrative Order Number 2020-011-ADM Respecting HRM's Grant Programs for Active Transportation and Recreational Trails • The applicant meets eligibility criteria as listed in the **Recreational Trails Grants Program** – **Eligible Applicants section**

• The proposal received meets eligibility criteria as listed in the Program Description – **Section 3.1. - Eligible Proposals for Recreational Trails Operational and Maintenance Grants**
Criteria 2: Quality of Recreational Trail–Safety Standards
• Maintenance (routine) work is required along the recreational trail or sections of it and/or infrastructure to maintain safety standard for walking and mobility devices users and/ or cycling, as appropriate
Criteria 3: Maintenance Project Planning
Option 1: Trail/ Amenities Maintenance Project Readiness • Trails surface, infrastructure, and amenities repairs are identified during scheduled inspection (s) and are included in an operational plan with budget estimates for each type of work based on pre-existing quote (s) • Land authorizations, construction and environmental permits (if needed), and insurance are secured and valid for the project scope • The maintenance proposal is planned to minimize negative impacts on the adjacent land owners and the environment (vegetation, slopes, wetlands, water systems, drainage, rivers, shorelines and wildlife habitats) and its timed to minimize impact on users' safety access to the recreational trail • All constraints have been or can be addressed by the applicant prior to HRM's final approval
Resources available • The proposed project was approved by the applicant's board and volunteers have accumulated knowledge and/or experience with inspecting and managing maintenance contract projects
Project Delivery timelines • Project deliverables trails surface, infrastructure, and amenities repairs are aligned with funding timelines and expected to complete on or before end of HRM fiscal year (currently March 31)
Project Integration • Applicant has investigated the opportunity to partner with another applicant along a recreational trail in the same region to take advantage of economies of scale
Criteria 4: Funding available
• Evidence of intention to secure funding is presented during the application process • Funding has been approved from other sources, such as Trans Canada Trail, Provincial or Federal grant programs, trusts, corporate, private • Funding was not approved by the other potential sources of funding

Procedures for Award Recipients

Estimating and reporting costs:

- HST must be already included in the estimated costs as part of the total and not as a separate amount
- If the group chooses to hire contractor services to deliver some, or all projects, the amounts should include both labour or consultant hours and materials
- If volunteers are engaged to deliver the projects, the amounts listed should include only costs for supplies as related to their projects within the eligible categories
- Only eligible expenses listed in the Grant category must be included

Transfer of Payment

HRM staff shall review and confirm that terms and conditions are met as per Awarding document for every Recipient's Grant Disbursement Request.

- Any surplus reported on March 31 end of year Final Report will be deducted from any of the subsequent year the applicant applies for the AT Maintenance Grant
- HRM Operating and Maintenance Funding Grant can only be applied to expenses approved and listed in the Awarding documents, unless written approval to change is received from HRM contact.

Grant awarded is under $5,000: a one - time payment up to the Grant amount awarded value is transferred by direct deposit to the Grant recipient upon accepting the Awarding Letter and its terms and conditions and meeting those terms related to grant disbursement.

Grant awarded is over $5,001: two disbursements, one of up to 70% and one of up to 30% of Grant amount awarded value is transferred to the Grant recipient by direct deposit upon executing the Contribution Agreement and meeting its term and conditions as related to grant disbursements.

Reporting

Reporting templates can be found here: https://www.halifax.ca/parks-recreation/parks-trails-gardens/recreational-trails-grants-program

- **Awards over $5,001: An interim report** is due January 31, 2027 only if more funds are needed prior to March 1, 2027;
- **All awards: A final report** is due 30 days after the projects end and no later than March 1, 2027 or 30 days after the awarding is terminated, either by Recipient or HRM;
- **All awards: Proof of payment of all invoices** is due 15 days after the project ends or the awarding is terminated, either by Recipient or HRM