

Fiscal Year 2025

Rural County Transportation Program (RCTP)



Guidelines

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Dubuque County Rural County Transportation Program (RCTP) provides funding to small cities to help implement non-federal aid transportation projects.

The Dubuque County Board of Supervisors approves the amount of funding for the RCTP program each year. The amount of funding is subject to change each year. The Dubuque County Board of Supervisors has approved \$70,000 in county funds for fiscal year 2025.

The county distributes RCTP funds to small cities through a competitive application process. The county accepts RCTP applications once each year. The maximum annual award amount provided by the RCTP to a city is \$25,000.

The Regional Planning Affiliation 8 (RPA 8) staff will assist cities with the RCTP application process and write city RCTP applications.

This guidelines document provides instructions for how to apply for an RCTP grant and describes the ranking and process the county uses to determine which applications to fund. Information on the RCTP program can be found at https://eciitrans.org/grants_rfps/rctp.php.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following categories of activities are eligible for funding under the RCTP.

1. Flashing Warning Lights
2. Signals
3. Street Lights
4. Reconstruction of Road
5. Resurfacing of a Road
6. Crackfilling
7. Safety improvements
 - i. Intersection improvements
 - ii. Existing Sidewalks
 - iii. ADA ramps
 - iv. Crosswalks
8. Other*

*Applicants with projects categorized as ‘Other’, must contact the Dubuque County Engineer before submitting an application to verify the project’s eligibility.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PROJECT SPONSORS

The applicant is the project sponsor and will be the entity that enters into the funding agreement with Dubuque County. The project sponsor **MUST** be a municipal government established in Dubuque County through State of Iowa statutes. Municipalities currently receiving an annual sub-allocation of funds from RPA 8 are not eligible to apply for the RCTP. The following municipalities are eligible to apply: Balltown, Bankston, Bernard, Cascade (in Dubuque County), Centralia, Durango, Dyersville (in Dubuque County), Epworth, Farley, Graf, Holy Cross, Luxemburg, New Vienna, Peosta, Rickardsville, Sageville, Sherrill, Worthington, and Zwingle (in Dubuque County).

FUNDING

The RCTP will fund a maximum of eighty percent (80%) of the total project cost up to \$25,000. The project sponsor must secure funding for a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of total project cost. The RCTP ranking process awards more points to projects with a higher percentage of local funding.

APPLICATION

The Regional Planning Affiliation 8 (RPA 8) staff will assist cities with the RCTP application process and write city RCTP applications. RPA 8 staff will collect and analyze the required data for the application including: Iowa DOT Crash Data and Iowa DOT Traffic Counts. **The City will be responsible for completing the Online Questionnaire, and submitting the Authorization to Apply Resolution, the Priority Project Resolution, project cost estimate, and photos showing the existing condition of the project site by 5:00 p.m. on March 14, 2024.**

The Online Questionnaire, application guidelines, and other materials will be available at https://eciatrans.org/grants_rfps/rctp.php. Applicants should submit all required application documents and photos through the Online Questionnaire. Applicants may also submit additional supporting materials such as letters of support through the Online Questionnaire.

RPA 8 staff will complete the RCTP application by combining its data and analysis with the information provided by the city. RPA 8 staff will fill out the application form and create all necessary maps and visuals. RPA 8 staff will deliver the completed application to the city for final approval prior to submitting the project to the Project Ranking Committee for evaluation. The following sections provide an explanation of the information that the city is required to submit for their application.

Online Questionnaire

Applicants will fill out the Online Questionnaire provided by RPA 8. RPA 8 staff will use the information from the questionnaire to start working on the RCTP application and will work with the city to gather additional supporting information as needed. Cities are encouraged to complete the questionnaire as soon as possible so RPA 8 staff can begin working on the application. Applicants can access the Online Questionnaire at https://eciatrans.org/grants_rfps/rctp.php.

Priority Project List Resolution

Applicants will develop a list of priority transportation projects, adopt the list by resolution, and submit the adopted resolution to RPA 8 along with their completed application materials. The Priority Project List should contain at least three projects. A city may amend its Priority Project List by resolution annually. When amending the Priority Project List, the city should provide a brief explanation of why the city's priorities have changed. RPA 8 will keep the city's Priority Project List Resolution on file until the city replaces it with a new resolution. **Projects not listed in the most recently adopted Priority Project List will be eliminated from consideration for RCTP funding.** A sample Priority Project List Resolution is provided on page 8 of this document.

Authorization to Apply Resolution

Applicants will submit a resolution authorizing the submittal of the RCTP application. In the resolution, the city council will authorize filing the application, accept maintenance of the project for its lifetime, and certify that the city has funding available to cover the required local match. Once approved, the city will submit the application to RPA 8 for evaluation. A sample Authorization to Apply Resolution is available on page 7 of this document.

Project Cost Estimate

Applicants will provide a project cost estimate such as an estimate prepared by an engineer or a quote from a contractor or vendor. The cost estimate should match up with the project cost information provided in the Online Questionnaire.

Photos

Applicants will provide photos showing the existing conditions of the existing infrastructure and project area.

Optional Supporting Information

Applicants may also submit optional supporting information including, but not limited to: letters of support from community members, businesses, schools, churches, or other organizations, signed petitions, meeting minutes, newspaper articles, or other relevant documentation.

Deadline

Applicants will complete the Online Project Questionnaire and submit the Authorization to Apply Resolution, the Priority Project Resolution, project cost estimate, and photos showing the existing condition of the project site by **5:00 p.m. on March 14, 2024.**

PROJECT SELECTION

A subcommittee formed by RPA 8 policy board will review and evaluate the applications submitted by project sponsors. The Project Ranking Subcommittee will evaluate and rank the eligible RCTP applications based on the established project evaluation criteria and submit the results of the project ranking to the Dubuque County Board of supervisors for final approval.

PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award points in five categories: Traffic, Safety, Local Match, Community Support, and Existing Conditions. Each category is worth up to twenty points. Points in each category will be combined for a total possible score of 100 points. The Subcommittee will also deduct points from applicants who have received RCTP awards in the last five years. Applications will be ranked from highest total score to lowest total score with the highest score being the most favored evaluation.

Before subcommittee members meet to evaluate and rank the applications, ECIA staff will provide a technical evaluation of each proposed project. ECIA staff will provide scores in the Traffic, Safety, Local Match categories. ECIA staff will also provide the point deduction for each applicant based on RCTP funding awarded in previous years.

ECIA staff will provide members of the Subcommittee with all application materials and recommended scores prior to the ranking meeting. The Subcommittee will then meet and award points in each category based on their evaluation of all the information provided. The following section describes each of evaluation categories and criteria used by ECIA staff and the Subcommittee to calculate the scores.

Traffic (Maximum: 20 points)

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award 0 to 20 points in the traffic category based on the current level of use of the infrastructure being improved by the proposed project.

ECIA staff will assign a score to each application based on a traffic count to city population ratio. $(\text{Traffic Count}) / (\text{Population of the City}) = \text{Ratio}$. For calculation of traffic scores, ECIA staff will use

the most recent Iowa DOT traffic counts or estimates, or traffic counts produced by a third party using standard FHWA approved traffic count procedures. For population, ECIA will use the total city population from the most recent decennial census. ECIA staff will assign scores based on the evaluation criteria shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Traffic Evaluation Criteria

Ratio	Score
Greater than or equal to 0.25 and less than 0.45	5
Greater than or equal to 0.45 and less than 0.65	10
Greater than or equal to 0.65 and less than 0.85	15
Greater than or equal to 0.85	20

Safety (Maximum: 20 points)

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award 0 to 20 points in the Safety category based on the safety benefit created by the proposed project. The Subcommittee will evaluate each application based on the project’s estimated benefit in reducing transportation-related property damage, injuries, and fatalities. The committee will give special safety consideration to projects that will provide safe routes to school and improve safety for children.

ECIA staff will assign a score to each application based on a safety benefit/cost ratio. For calculation of the safety benefit/cost ratio, ECIA staff will use the Iowa DOT Benefit/Cost Safety Analysis Worksheet, Iowa DOT crash data, and crash reduction factors from the Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse. ECIA staff will assign recommended scores based on the evaluation criteria shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Safety Evaluation Criteria

Benefit Cost Ratio	Score
Greater than or equal to 0.5 and less than 0.75	5
Greater than or equal to 0.75 and less than 1	10
Greater than 1.0	15
Safe Routes to School¹	5

¹If the Subcommittee determines that a project is a safe routes to school project, it may award up to 5 additional points in the safety category.

Local Match (Maximum: 20 points)

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award 0 to 20 points in the Local Match category based on the proportion of the project that is funded by local sources. ECIA staff will assign a score to each application based on the percentage of local funding. To calculate the percentage, ECIA staff will divide the local funding provided in the project budget by the total project budget. ECIA staff will assign a score to each application based on the evaluation criteria shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Local Match Evaluation Criteria

Percentage	Score
Less than 20%	0
Greater than or equal to 20% and less than 25%	5
Greater than or equal to 25% and less than 35%	10
Greater than or equal to 35% and less than 45%	15
Greater than or equal to 45%	20

Community Support (Maximum: 20 points)

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award 0 to 20 points in the Community Support category based on the level in community support demonstrated in the application. Applicants can demonstrate community support by submitting letters of support from citizens, businesses, schools, churches, or other organizations, signed petitions, meeting minutes, newspaper articles, or other relevant documentation.

Existing Conditions (Maximum: 20 points)

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will award 0 to 20 points in the Existing Conditions category based on conditions of the existing infrastructure and project area. The committee will also consider how effective the proposed project will be in addressing the deficiencies in the existing infrastructure. Applicants can demonstrate existing conditions through photographs, an engineer’s evaluation, or other relevant documentation.

Point Deduction Based on Previous Approved RCTP Funding Award

The Project Ranking Subcommittee will deduct points from applications where the applicant has received RCTP funding in the past five years. ECIA staff will assign recommended score deductions based on the evaluation criteria shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Previous RCTP funding Evaluation Criteria

Year RCTP Funds Awarded	Score Deduction
Awarded one year ago	-75 points
Awarded two years ago	-50 points
Awarded three years ago	-25 points
Awarded four years ago	-10 points
Awarded five or more years ago	No deduction

PROJECT APPROVAL

RPA 8 Staff and the Project Ranking Subcommittee will submit their project ranking to the Dubuque County Engineer for consideration. Funds will be awarded to projects based on their ranking until all available funds have been committed. In the event two or more projects rank equally, priority shall be given to the project located on the higher Federal Function Classification (FFC) route. In the event two or more projects ranked equally and are on routes with the same FFC class, funding shall be awarded based on project readiness. Cities will be required to submit the bid tab or quotes received along with the scope of the work for review before funds will be awarded. The Dubuque County Engineer will submit funding awards to the Dubuque County Board of supervisors for final approval.

TIMELINE FOR APPLICATION PROCESS AND APPROVAL

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
January to February	RPA 8 staff conducts city clerk workshop
January to March 14	Cities submit the Online Questionnaire, the Priority Project List Resolution, the Supporting Information, and the Authorization to Apply Resolution by 5:00 p.m. on March 14, 2024
January to April	RPA 8 writes applications
April to May	RPA 8 forms ranking committee and assists the committee with ranking applications
1 st week of June	County Board of Supervisors approves projects
End of June	Draft 28E agreements between county and cities receiving funding
Prior to August 1	Update RPA balance sheets

TIMELINE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Following the County Board of Supervisors’ approval of the funding awards, RPA 8 staff will send out a draft funding agreement to the cities that were awarded funding. A sample agreement is included starting on page 9 of this document. **The city should not start work on the project until the funding agreement has been approved by the City Council and County Board of Supervisors.** Based on past years, the County Supervisors will likely approve the agreements sometime in June. The city will have two years from the day the funding agreement is approved by the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors to get project let. The project sponsor may apply for a one-year extension from Dubuque County Supervisors with a valid explanation for project delays. Projects that are not let within the time period will lose funding. The funding will be returned to Dubuque County.

DUBUQUE COUNTY RCTP FUNDING HISTORY

Table 5 lists the Dubuque County RCTP funds awarded to cities each year since Fiscal Year 2017.

Table 5. Dubuque County Funding History

City \ Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Balltown					\$7,118				\$7,118
Bankston									\$0
Bernard			\$9,933						\$9,933
Cascade (in Dubuque Co.)	\$7,316							\$25,000	\$32,316
Centralia				\$4,613				\$13,783	\$18,396
Durango	\$8,000								\$8,000
Dyersville (in Dubuque Co.)								\$25,000	\$25,000
Epworth	\$25,000	\$18,448	\$25,000		\$20,403				\$88,851
Farley		\$25,000	\$5,000				\$25,000		\$55,000
Graf				\$22,712		\$20,000			\$42,712
Holy Cross					\$17,479				\$17,479
Luxemburg	\$5,495					\$25,000			\$30,495
New Vienna	\$25,000		\$8,592			\$25,000			\$58,592
Peosta		\$10,750		\$15,246					\$25,996
Rickardsville				\$24,000			\$20,000		\$44,000
Sageville		\$25,000							\$25,000
Sherrill				\$11,048			\$25,000		\$36,048
Worthington				\$13,856					\$13,856
Zwingle (in Dubuque Co)					\$25,000				\$25,000
Other*								\$6,217	\$6,217
Total	\$70,811	\$79,198	\$48,525	\$91,475	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$570,009

* \$6,217 in FY 2024 RCTP funding was used to match the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) safety planning grant.

SAMPLE AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF A DUBUQUE COUNTY RURAL COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (RCTP) GRANT APPLICATION TO ASSIST WITH THE FUNDING FOR THE _____ PROJECT IN THE CITY OF _____, IOWA.

WHEREAS the City recognized the need to improve the infrastructure by _____; and

WHEREAS the City is requesting Dubuque County RCTP funding in the amount of _____ in Fiscal Year 2025 to assist with the improvements; and

WHEREAS the City will be responsible for maintenance of the project for the project’s life time; and

WHEREAS the City has sufficient funds available to cover the local funding in the amount of _____.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____, IOWA, THAT:

THE CITY HEREBY SUPPORTS AND AUTHORIZES THE GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTAL FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 DUBUQUE COUNTY RURAL COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM TO ASSIST WITH THE _____ PROJECT.

Passed, approved and adopted this _____ (Date)

Name, Mayor

Name, City Clerk

SAMPLE PRIORITY PROJECT RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING PROJECT PRIORITIES FOR RURAL COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM APPLICATION

RESOLUTION PROVIDING A LIST OF TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES WITHIN THE CITY OF _____ FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE DUBUQUE COUNTY RURAL COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (RCTP) FUNDING

WHEREAS The Dubuque County Rural County Transportation Program (RCTP) is designed to help small cities implement non-federal aid transportation projects. Dubuque County awards RCTP funds to cities annually through a competitive application process; and

WHEREAS the City developed a list of priority transportation projects that need to be addressed to provide a safe and efficient transportation system; and

WHEREAS the City will be requesting RCTP funds to address these improvements; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____, IOWA, THAT:

THE PROJECTS LISTED BELOW REPRESENT THE CITY’S TOP TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS:

NAME	LOCATION	IMPROVEMENT	REASON FOR IMPROVEMENT

THE CITY HEREBY SUPPORTS AND AUTHORIZES THE PROJECT PRIORITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE RCTP FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

Passed, approved and adopted this _____ (Date)

 Name, Mayor

 Name, City Clerk

**SAMPLE FUNDING AGREEMENT
DUBUQUE COUNTY**

**Agreement for a
Rural County Transportation Program (RCTP) Project**

RECIPIENT: **The City of XXXX**

PROJECT NO: _____

Dubuque County

AGREEMENT NO.: _____

This is an agreement between the **City of XXXX** (hereinafter referred to as **RECIPIENT**) and Dubuque County (hereinafter referred to as the **COUNTY**)

Pursuant to the terms of this agreement, applicable statutes, administrative rules, and programming by Dubuque County and the **City of XXXXX**, the County agrees to provide funding to the Recipient for the authorized and approved costs for eligible items associated with the development of the **XXXXXXXXX Project**.

In consideration of the foregoing and the mutual promises contained in this agreement, the parties agree as follows:

1. The Recipient shall be the lead organization for carrying out the provisions of this agreement.

All notices required under this agreement shall be made in writing to the County and/or the Recipient's contact person. The County's contact person shall be the Dubuque County Engineer, 1225 Seippel Rd, Dubuque, IA 52002, 563-557-7283. The Recipient's contact person shall be XXXXX, Address: XXXXXXXXXXXX, Ph: XXX-XXX-XXXX

2. The Recipient shall be responsible for the development and completion of the following described project:

<i>Description of Project Element</i>	<i>RCTP Aid Ceiling</i>	<i>% Funding</i>
		<i>Participation</i>
Project name	Funding approved by County	Percentage

3. Eligible project costs for the project described in Section 2 of this agreement, listed above, which are incurred after the date of Dubuque County approval shall be paid as follows:

RCTP Funds (Grant):	\$XXXXXX
Local Contribution:	<u>\$XXXXXX</u>
Project Total:	\$XXXXXX

4. The local contribution stated above should not include cash to the project.
5. The **RECIPIENT** understands and agrees that it shall be responsible for any cost overruns above the RCTP grant caps of \$25,000 or 80% of the total cost of the eligible item, whichever is smaller.

Activities or costs eligible should follow statement of work set out in Application.

6. The **RECIPIENT** shall submit to the **COUNTY**, no later than 30 days the **RECIPIENT'S** signature date on this agreement. Failure to do so by the **RECIPIENT** may be considered a default under this agreement.
7. If any part of this agreement is found to be void and unenforceable, the remaining provisions of this agreement shall remain in effect.
8. It is the intent of both parties that no third-party beneficiaries be created by this agreement.
9. This agreement shall be executed and delivered in two or more copies, each of which so executed and delivered shall be deemed to be an original and shall constitute but one and the same instrument.
10. This agreement is not assignable without the prior written consent of the **COUNTY**.
11. The **COUNTY** reserves the right to inspect project activities and to audit claims for funding reimbursement. The purpose of the inspection or audit is to determine substantial compliance with the terms of this agreement.
12. The Recipient shall maintain all books, documents, papers, accounting records, reports and other evidence pertaining to costs incurred for the project. The Recipient shall also make such materials available at all reasonable times during the construction period and for three years from the date of final reimbursement, for inspection by the **COUNTY**. Copies of said materials shall be furnished by the **RECIPIENT** if requested.
13. The **RECIPIENT** may submit to the **COUNTY** periodic itemized claims for reimbursement for eligible project costs. Reimbursement claims shall include certification that all eligible project costs, for which reimbursement is requested, have been completed in substantial compliance with the terms of this agreement.
14. The **COUNTY** will reimburse the **RECIPIENT** for properly documented and certified claims for eligible project costs. If, upon final audit or review, the **COUNTY** determines the **RECIPIENT** has been overpaid, the **RECIPIENT** shall reimburse the overpaid amount to the **COUNTY**.

15. Upon completion of the project described in this agreement, professionals from **RECIPIENT**, shall certify in writing to the **COUNTY** that the project activities were completed in substantial compliance with the plans and specifications set out in this agreement.
 - a. Final reimbursement of funds shall be made only after the **COUNTY** accepts the project as complete.
16. The **RECIPIENT** agrees to indemnify, defend and hold the **COUNTY** harmless from any action or liability arising out of development of the project or use of this project. This agreement to indemnify, defend and hold harmless applies to all aspects of the **COUNTY**'s application review and approval process, and funding participation.
17. This agreement may be declared to be in default by the **COUNTY** if the **COUNTY** determines that the **RECIPIENT'S** application for funding contained inaccuracies, omissions, errors or misrepresentations; or if the **COUNTY** determines that the project is not developed as described in the application.
18. If the **RECIPIENT** fails to perform any obligation under this agreement, the **COUNTY** shall have the right, after first giving thirty (30) days written notice to the **RECIPIENT** by certified mail return receipt requested, to declare any part or all of this agreement in default. The **RECIPIENT** shall have thirty (30) days from date of mailing of the notice to cure the default. If the **RECIPIENT** cures the default, the **RECIPIENT** shall notify **COUNTY** no later than five (5) days after cure or before the end of said thirty (30) day period given to cure the default. Within ten (10) working days of receipt of **RECIPIENT'S** notice of cure, the **COUNTY** shall issue either a notice of acceptance of cure or a notice of continued default.
19. In the event a default is not cured the **COUNTY** may revoke funding commitments and/or seek repayment of funds loaned or granted by this agreement. By signing this agreement, the **RECIPIENT** agrees to repay said funding if they are found to be in default. Repayment methods must be approved by the **DUBUQUE COUNTY SUPERVISORS** and may include cash repayment, installment repayments with negotiable interest rates, or other methods as approved by the **DUBUQUE COUNTY BOARD of SUPERVISORS**.
20. In case of dispute concerning the terms of this agreement, the parties shall submit the matter to arbitration pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 679A (2011). Either party has the right to submit the matter to arbitration after ten (10) days notice to the other party of their intent to seek arbitration. The written notice must include a precise statement of the disputed question. **COUNTY** and the **RECIPIENT** agree to be bound by the decision of the appointed arbitrator. Neither party may seek any remedy with the state or federal courts absent exhaustion of the provisions of this section for arbitration.
21. This agreement as set forth in sections 1 through 21 herein, including referenced exhibits, constitutes the entire agreement between the **COUNTY** and the **RECIPIENT** concerning this project. Representations made before the signing of this agreement are not binding, and neither party has relied upon conflicting representations in entering into this agreement. Any change or alteration to the terms of this agreement must be made in the form of an addendum to this agreement. Said addendum shall become effective only upon written approval of the **COUNTY** and **RECIPIENT**.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the parties hereto has executed Agreement No. **XXXXXXXX** as of the date shown opposite its signature below.

RECIPIENT: _____

By: _____ Date: _____, 20__

Title: _____

I, _____, certify that I am _____

_____, and that _____, who signed said Agreement for and on behalf of _____ was duly authorized to execute the same by virtue of a formal Resolution duly passed and adopted

by _____, on the _____ day of

_____, 20__.

Signed: _____ Date: _____, 20__

Address: _____

DUBUQUE COUNTY

By: _____ Date _____, 20__

CHAIR PERSON

DUBUQUE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS