

# **Paving the Way – from Blazing Trails to Building Community**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. How does the match portion of the grant program work?**

Match is not required to apply for or receive grant funds. Match comes into play only if a grantee intends to use up to 50% of its grant funds for a trail-based project (eligible expenses are listed in the RFP).

Sunflower is not requiring exact dollar or percentage matching based on the cost of each item; we only request that Sunflower funds are not the ONLY funds used for these purchases. We understand that grant dollars for tangible items can be helpful in encouraging other dollars, whether public or private. Please think of these funds as a strategy to engage key stakeholders and community members, rather than simply covering the purchase of needed items.

### **2. Can more than one person from a community participate in the learning sessions?**

Yes. This is not only allowed but also encouraged. Sunflower would love communities to participate as a team, either in real time or watching recordings later. As a reminder, a minimum of one dedicated person must attend all virtual learning sessions in real time. The interaction among participants is an important part of the program.

### **3. Can a nonprofit trail group and a city both apply for grants if they are working on the same trail?**

Yes, both a city and a nonprofit trail group may apply, as long as they are pursuing different project goals. For example, we would expect one entity to apply for Trail Towns and the other to apply for Trail Stewards, with each focusing on distinct objectives. A city might work toward Trail Town certification, focusing on the community development components that support the trail, while the nonprofit trail group might focus on developing or improving trail connections and increasing volunteers.

**4. Oftentimes, rail trails run through or close to several towns along their route. Can multiple towns apply for a Trail Towns grant if they are along the same rail trail?**

Yes. Each town has its own unique connection to the trail and their own unique goals and aspirations. Towns can support each other's applications (e.g., providing a letter of support, describing ways to collaborate). However, each application should have just one primary town that will be the focus of work to achieve Trail Town certification.

**5. If a city does not hold the NITU (Notice of Interim Use) for the rail trail that goes through its community, can it still apply for Trail Towns?**

Yes. Please include information about which entity holds the NITU and which entity is responsible for trail management. Ideally, a Trail Town project will be the city and trail group working together. This can be described in the application and Letters of Support.

**6. If a city or organization is approved for this grant and receives funding, will that disqualify it from receiving future Sunflower Foundation Trail Builder funds?**

No. Organizations that are successful applicants in the Paving the Way grant program would remain eligible for future Sunflower Foundation trail funding opportunities. In fact, participation in, and completion of, the Paving the Way learning series would strengthen a future application. It demonstrates a community's commitment to the project, dedication to planning and capacity building, and that meaningful steps have already been taken to support a well-designed, successful trail project.