

RPCGB BUILDING COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM

WHAT IS IT AND WHAT LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES ARE ELIGIBLE?

The RPCGB's Building Communities Grant Program is designed to provide RPCGB local governments with technical assistance as it relates to planning services that strengthen the relationship between land use and transportation.

Municipalities are eligible if they are located within the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area (shown to the right), which includes all of Jefferson and Shelby Counties and portions of St. Clair and Walker Counties.

The primary service of the Building Communities Grant Program is preparing long-range planning documents (typically covering 5 to 15 years) that are intended to serve as policy guides with specific recommended actions for implementation. The range of topics include future land use, housing, community renewal, transportation mobility, green systems, public services and infrastructure, etc.

Tools utilized by the RPCGB when creating planning and regulatory documents:

- GIS mapping
- In-person public meetings, open houses, pop-up events, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, online surveys
- Adobe Indesign, Illustrator, Photoshop
- SketchUp 3D software



Map showing the limits of the Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Area.

WHY WOULD MY MUNICIPALITY WANT TO USE THE PROGRAM?

The Building Communities Grant Program is the perfect tool for municipalities that want to utilize robust public input, data analyses and best practices to create policy documents that municipal leaders, business owners, developers and residents can use in order to:



Guide public and private decisions that will affect future land use, growth management and capital improvements.



Guide the form, intensity, and placement of new development and redevelopment. How and where future growth should occur.



Address existing and future needs related to multi-modal transportation, community facilities, public services and infrastructure.



Formulate goals and recommended actions projects that can be incorporated into an annual work program or new fiscal year budget.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible to leverage the 80% federal funding to offset the total project cost (read more to the right), planning projects must include a transportation element.

Citywide Comprehensive Plans and Master Plans must be at least 6 years old to be eligible for updates using the Building Communities Grant Program.

Zoning Ordinance updates and City Strategic Plans are not eligible types of projects under this grant program.

Since 2015, the following projects have been developed using the RPCGB's Building Communities Grant Program:

Citywide Plans:

- Alabaster Comprehensive Plan
- Argo Comprehensive Plan
- Calera Comprehensive Plan
- Center Point Comprehensive Plan
- Chelsea Comprehensive Plan
- Fairfield Master Plan
- Fultondale Comprehensive Plan
- Harpersville Master Plan
- Helena Comprehensive Plan
- Irondale Comprehensive Plan
- Montevallo Comprehensive Plan
- Moody Comprehensive Plan
- Morris Master Plan
- Mulga Master Plan
- Pelham Comprehensive Plan

Other Plans:

- Birmingham Framework Plans
- Birmingham City Center Master Plan
- Birmingham Built Environment and Health Project (Shape Bham)
- Homewood Downtown Master Plan
- Shelby County Comprehensive Plan

HOW MUCH IS THE GRANT FUNDING AND HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The RPCGB offers an 80/20 funding match through its Building Communities Grant Program for eligible projects. That means that a RPCGB local municipality only pays for 20% of the total project cost. For example, if a new Comprehensive Plan costs \$200,000, then the municipality would only have to pay \$40,000 to the RPCGB as the 20% local match for the project. The Building Communities Grant Program would provide the 80% funding for the project utilizing a pool of federal transportation dollars that have already been approved for the program.

After a project is deemed eligible, a scope of work and fee will be negotiated between the RPCGB and the local government and an agreement will be signed by both entities.

Throughout the process of the planning project, the RPCGB Community Planning team will develop and manage the project with direction from the local elected officials and related city staff. As needed, a third party on-call consultant will be utilized to develop plans. The RPCGB will actively engage the general public and key stakeholder groups to ensure that the plan reflects the community's aspirations, vision and desires.



TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$200,000
80% FEDERAL FUNDING	\$160,000

20% LOCAL MATCH BY THE MUNICIPALITY	\$40,000
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HOW SHOULD A MUNICIPALITY APPLY TO USE THE GRANT PROGRAM?

Local governments should contact the RPCGB to discuss opportunities to utilize the grant program. Funding for projects can only be used for planning projects and not for construction projects. Projects are subject to funding availability.

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