

Community Investment Program (CIP)

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

What is the CIP?

The CIP is a key component of the overall B&P Tunnel Replacement Program. It is a \$50 million planned investment along the new Frederick Douglass Tunnel alignment that will coincide with construction over the next decade. When the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved the B&P Tunnel Replacement Program's Preferred Alternative in March 2017, it issued a Record of Decision (ROD) outlining mitigation measures that must be implemented during design and construction. These ROD requirements included the CIP. What are the CIP eligibility requirements?

In order to be eligible to receive CIP funds, organizations must:

- Be a not-for-profit organization as defined by IRS code 501 (c) or a city or state government agency with projects directly related to the CIP mission;
- Serve residents and propose projects within ¼ mi of the Program alignment (1/2 mi for Transportation projects); and
- Propose a project within one of the six CIP categories: Community Development, Parks and Recreation, Open Space, Transportation, Workforce Development, and Historic Preservation.

Please see the CIP Guide for more details on each of the eligibility requirements.

How will the \$50M be spent?

CIP funds will be awarded via community grants and direct investments to eligible organizations and planned projects along the Program alignment. The CIP also includes \$5 million dedicated to a Workforce Hub and \$2.75 million towards a Historic Preservation Grant Fund for rehabilitation projects in the Midtown Edmondson and Edmondson Avenue Historic Districts. For more information on the Historic Preservation Grant Fund, please visit the [Cultural Resources Mitigation](#) page.

Can you explain direct investments in more detail?

In instances where organizations and projects meet all the CIP eligibility criteria but are unable to directly manage grant funds, or if an organization is not eligible to receive a community grant but has a project that meets all the other CIP criteria, Amtrak may directly procure the items or services necessary to complete the proposed project. Organizations can indicate their desire to be considered for a direct investment via the community grants application process.

What is the purpose of the \$3.5M for “contingency”?

We have set aside a portion of the funds for contingency, which allows us to be flexible in different funding categories in the event of unexpected changes or needs over the life of the program. As a condition of the ROD, all CIP funds will be invested by the end of Program construction, including contingency funds.

Why did the CIP not launch sooner?

Amtrak has been diligently working over the past several years to ensure that the CIP terms and conditions were such that the funds were awarded in compliance with federal requirements and could do the greatest good. Amtrak will ensure that as funds are awarded, feedback from the community and elected officials will help drive the execution of a conscientious, objective, and transparent program that all parties - FRA, Amtrak, and the public - will share pride in partnership.

How has the money been spent to date?

To date, none of the CIP funds have been spent. However, Amtrak has made two required commitments for portions of the CIP funds: the Workforce Hub in Baltimore and the Historic Preservation Grant Fund for the Midtown Edmondson and Edmondson Avenue Historic Districts.

Are any CIP funds being set aside for government agency projects? Or are nonprofit organizations competing with government agencies for the same funding?

Amtrak has committed to awarding a minimum of 75% of CIP funds in any given award cycle to not-for-profit organizations. Up to 25% of CIP funds in any award cycle can go to city or State government agencies, including quasi-governmental entities.

Is Amtrak open to including an opportunity for community input?

As part of the CIP application process, Amtrak is requiring that proposed projects demonstrate community support. Additionally, Amtrak considered community input and comments when developing the CIP. For example, instead of Amtrak identifying projects to invest in without community involvement, Amtrak developed a competitive grant program to solicit project applications from community and state/local government organizations.

Eligibility Requirements

How were the six CIP project categories selected?

The categories are identified in the [ROD](#).

How was the geographic eligibility determined?

The ROD established geographic eligibility such that it directs benefits to areas along the new Program alignment that may be most impacted by Program construction.

For the Historic Preservation Grant Fund, the [Programmatic Agreement \(PA\)](#) specifies the geographic eligibility.

For the Workforce Hub, priority in referral and hiring will go to residents of targeted Baltimore City zip codes.

How can I determine the geographic eligibility of my project?

Please view a map of our geographic boundaries on the [CIP webpage](#). Pink is the ¼ mi boundary for all projects except transportation related projects, and blue is the ½ mi boundary for transportation related projects. You can also use the MapBox tool on the same page to search for addresses within the boundaries.

Why is the Historic Preservation Grant Fund only for two historic districts when there are other ones along the Program alignment?

The ROD and Programmatic Agreement (PA) require that \$2.75M be set aside for historic preservation projects in the two historic districts most directly impacted by our activities. In this instance, Midtown Edmondson and Edmondson Avenue Historic Districts experienced the greatest percentage of properties demolished for the Program. However, organizations with projects outside of those two districts can still apply for historic preservation projects through the community grants process.

Can organizations ask in advance if they are eligible to apply?

Amtrak has provided the eligibility criteria on the [CIP website](#) and in the CIP Notice of Funding Opportunity. It is up to all applying organizations to provide the required documentation proving eligibility as part of their application. Amtrak will not review applications prior to the due date.

Are 501(c)3 Community Development Organizations the only type of nonprofit organizations that can apply for CIP funds?

Any organization with valid 501(c) status per IRS guidelines can apply for CIP funds. Description of all 501(c) organizations can be found on [IRS.gov](#).

Can an organization that has received funds in one CIP funding cycle apply for additional funds in subsequent CIP funding cycles?

Yes, so long as an organization has met all the requirements of the grant agreement for previously awarded funds, they can continue applying for funds in subsequent cycles. This can be for similar projects as well as different projects.

CIP Application Process

Will Amtrak provide any sort of technical assistance to applicants?

Yes, Amtrak will be hosting at least three workshops in October 2025 to walk applicants through the application process, requirements, and submission process. We also have a dedicated CIP email address (cip.bptunnel@amtrak.com) and Program phone number (443-423-1115) where organizations can ask questions. Please understand that we will only answer questions about the application and submission process and cannot answer questions about a specific application and/or project.

Why isn't there an online version of the application workshops planned? What if I cannot make one of the in-person ones?

Amtrak is considering an online workshop to complement the in-person meetings, and will communicate any updates through our Program communications channels. We will also post the workshop presentation and Q&A on the CIP webpage for public access.

Will there be a paper version of the CIP application that organizations can use to apply?

Only complete applications submitted electronically through the Amtrak Grants Portal will be accepted. However, applicants may print the application from the Grants Portal to help them prepare to submit. If internet and computer access is a concern, Baltimore's public libraries and recreation/community centers offer free resources.

Can organizations submit more than one application per grant cycle?

Yes, eligible organizations can submit more than one application per funding cycle across the six funding categories.

Award Selection and Funding Distribution Processes

How will Amtrak ensure the evaluation process is fair and transparent?

Amtrak has developed a standardized, objective evaluation criteria and score card, both of which are shared for transparency and awareness in the CIP Notice of Funding Opportunity. Amtrak will announce selected awardees at the end of each NOFO process. By request, Amtrak will conduct debriefs with individual applicants to provide insight into why they were or were not selected.

Who will evaluate the applications?

Amtrak has assembled an internal review committee comprised of Amtrak employees who will review and rate applications. Employees are subject matter experts in various departments and have experience on other infrastructure projects in the region.

How will Amtrak ensure that smaller and/or leaner organizations will not be crowded out of the CIP selection process?

Amtrak has taken several steps to make the award selection process open to the greatest variety of organization types. We have committed a minimum of 75% of funds in any given NOFO cycle will be awarded to not-for-profit community organizations. All qualified applications will be judged equally, regardless of the size or type of organization based on the same evaluation criteria and scoring system.

Funds are to be spent in one year, but what happens if that is not possible?

Amtrak will evaluate each application in part on the actual proposed project timeline and scope. We encourage applicants to seriously assess what can be accomplished in 12 months and prepare accordingly so the funds can be spent within one year.

The funds must be spent within one year of distribution. Must organizations seeking reimbursement do so within that same timeframe? Also, do all project activities have to occur within one year?

Yes, organizations seeking reimbursement must submit the appropriate documentation and forms within a year's time. Awardees will also be required to submit a formal 12-month scope of work at the outset as part of the grant agreement which must be executed to receive funds.

Will Amtrak provide any sort of technical support for awardees?

Amtrak is in the process of hiring a CIP Administrator dedicated to providing technical assistance to awardees throughout the life of the grant cycle. For those awardees needing internet access or technological support, we encourage use of local resources such as the computer labs at public libraries and community centers.