



1. What is the SUN Trail Program?

The SUN Trail program provides funding for the development of a statewide system of paved multi-use trails (SUN Trail network) for bicyclists and pedestrians, physically separated from the road. The SUN Trail network is a refined version of the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) Plan’s Land Trail Priority network. SUN Trail funded projects will improve the intermodal connectors by closing gaps in the statewide paved trail system to increase the reliability of Florida’s transportation system. To learn more, visit: www.FloridaSunTrail.com.

2. How is the SUN Trail program administered?

Administration of the SUN Trail program is by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT or Department), Strategic Development Division, Systems Implementation Office (SIO), namely the SUN Trail Program Manager. This manager collaborates with stakeholders to develop and implement the SUN Trail program and to provide input for other trails developed by FDOT. In addition to the statewide SUN Trail Program Manager, there is a Trail Coordinator at each of FDOT’s seven Districts and the Turnpike Enterprise (collectively referred to as the Districts). The District Trail Coordinators are the primary points-of-contact for SUN Trail planning and implementation. They help with identification, evaluation, prioritization, programming, and mapping SUN Trail projects. To identify District Trail Coordinators or the Statewide Program Manager, visit: www.FloridaSunTrail.com and select “Contacts”.

3. Under what authority does the SUN Trail program operate?

[Section 339.81, Florida Statutes](#) (F.S.) established the SUN Trail program.

4. What is the authorization for funding the SUN Trail program?

[Section 335.065, F.S.](#), bicycle and pedestrian ways along state roads and transportation facilities, authorizes FDOT to use the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) to support the establishment of a statewide system of interconnected multi-use trails for bicyclists and pedestrians in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

5. What is the funding source for the SUN Trail program?

FDOT receives an annual allocation from the redistribution of new vehicle tag revenues pursuant to [Section 320.072, F.S.](#), Motor Vehicle Licenses. These “Wheels on Road” revenues will be deposited into the STTF for programming in the FDOT Work Program (WP). The code for projects with SUN Trail funding is TLWR.

6. What is the FDOT Five-Year Work Program?

The Five-Year WP is the result of an ongoing process that prioritizes and funds transportation system improvements. It is prepared in accordance with [Section 339.135, F.S.](#) Development of the WP involves extensive coordination with Metropolitan/Transportation Planning Organizations (MPO), municipalities, counties, and stakeholders. The first year of the adopted work program (AWP) authorizes FDOT to expend funds to complete activities and projects. The last four years of the AWP are included for planning purposes. The AWP provides clear direction on where, when, and how FDOT will build and fund projects. To learn more, visit: www.fdot.gov/workprogram/aboutOWP.shtm.



7. What project phases are eligible for SUN Trail funding?

SUN Trail legislation allows for the programming of TLWR funds to all phases of project development including: preliminary and environmental planning; design; acquisition of real property/land/right-of-way (ROW); new construction, reconstruction or resurfacing of trail surfaces or bridges and maintenance (e.g. obligations for pavement, drainage, land stabilization and safety controls).

8. Are there minimum eligibility requirements to receive SUN Trail program funding?

Yes. To receive consideration for SUN Trail funding FDOT must receive a completed “Request for Funding” with applicable project information including required signatures by the announced deadline. Projects must satisfy the four Eligibility Criteria listed below:

1. Documentation that the project will be developed as a paved multi-use trail within the [SUN Trail network](#): at minimum this will include transmittal of a map illustrating the project limits within the SUN Trail network, the typical section schematic, and applicable information must be provided in the “Request for Funding”.
2. Documentation provided that the project is a priority of the applicable authority: at minimum this will include transmittal of an adopted prioritization list of projects/supporting resolution and other applicable information provided in the “Request for Funding”.
 - a. If the project is within a boundary of a [MPO](#), it must be a MPO priority.
 - b. If outside of MPO boundaries, the project must be a priority of the county (inclusive of their municipalities), tribal government, federal or state agency.
3. Documentation that a non-FDOT governmental agency is formally committed to the operation and maintenance of the project (long-term trail manager): this will include transmittal of applicable “Request for Funding” information.
4. Documentation that the project is consistent with the applicable comprehensive plan(s), transportation plan(s), or the long-term management plan(s): this will include applicable project concurrency information.

9. How do I verify if an existing or planned trail is within the SUN Trail network?

Visit www.FloridaSunTrail.com and select “SUN Trail Mapping Information” or for assistance, contact your [District Trail Coordinator](#).

10. What should I do if I notice an inaccuracy in SUN Trail Mapping tools?

Contact the FDOT, SIO, Transportation Planner by calling 850-414-4928.

11. What is the definition of a multi-use trail?

FDOT defines a multi-use trail as a paved shared-use path which is typically 12 feet wide but may vary from 10 feet to 14 feet wide (or larger), depending upon physical or environmental constraints or usage. In some areas of extreme constraints (such as at bridges or in environmentally sensitive lands) a multi-use trail may be as narrow as eight feet wide.

12. How is a multi-use trail different from a sidewalk?

Design for a sidewalk is primarily for pedestrians; they are routinely built as part of the normal accommodations within a roadway project, and they serve a local need (e.g. between residential areas, businesses, transit, or park lands). Multi-use trails support travel by various users, most often people that walk or ride bicycles. Trails are typically part of a regional connection; people may travel to use them, and they may serve as a destination. Multi-use trails could be near natural areas, parks, roadways or other linear facilities. In addition to meeting the design requirements of sidewalks to ensure accessibility for pedestrians, the bicycle's operational characteristics and travel speeds influence the design criteria (e.g. width, buffer, lateral off sets, curvature, protection from drop offs and traffic control) of multi-use trails. Differentiating the two is not a matter of the entity that provides the day-to-day maintenance of the facility (e.g. parks, public works, recreation or transportation departments).

13. What is ineligible for SUN Trail program funding?

Pursuant to the legislation, [Section 339.81, F.S.](#), components funded through the SUN Trail program will not include:

- Sidewalks, nature trails, or loop trails wholly within a single park or natural area; or
- On-road facilities (such as bicycle lanes of routes other than on-road facilities that are no longer than one-half mile connecting two or more nonmotorized trails) if the provision of non-road facilities is infeasible and if such on-road facilities are signed and marked for nonmotorized use; an exception is made for on-road components of the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail.

SUN Trail funds are for the transportation element of the trail. Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Benches, trail furniture, seating areas, or tables;
- Bicycle racks or lockers, bicycle air or repair stations;
- Buildings or enclosed structures, restrooms, bathhouses, comfort stations, wayside structures, shade structures, concession stands, overlooks, fishing platforms, transit facilities, shelters, gazebos, or picnic pavilions;
- Kiosks, interpretive panels, or placemaking signs (safety controls are an allowable cost);
- Landscaping (trail stabilization is an allowable cost);
- Litter or recycle receptacles, or doggie bag dispensers;
- Parking areas, trailheads, or camping areas;
- Playgrounds, fitness equipment, or structures;
- Promotional, marketing, or educational materials;
- Sculptures, monuments, or art; and
- Water fountains, splash zones, spigots, showers, water features, or irrigation equipment.

14. What is the role of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT)?

OGT is a bureau within FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks. OGT has the responsibility of leading, planning and facilitating the development of an interconnected FGTS. They provide statewide leadership and work with public and private partners to establish, expand, and promote the FGTS, pursuant to [Chapter 260, F.S.](#), the Florida Greenways and Trails Act. For more information, visit: www.FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com.

15. What is the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS)?

The FGTS Plan outlines the vision for the state’s Greenways and Trails System both on land and water. It defines the role of the System in advancing Florida’s economy, tourism, health, transportation choices, recreation, conservation and quality of life. This statewide System includes ecological greenways, and the combination of existing, planned and conceptual multiple and single-use trails for a variety of visitors. The FGTS Land Trail Opportunity network is the state companion to community greenways and trails and bicycle – pedestrian master plans; it is a synthesis of trail-planning efforts conducted by municipalities, counties, transportation planning organizations, non-profits and other agencies throughout Florida. It does not include all existing, proposed and conceptual trails in Florida but focuses on trails of statewide significance that can form a comprehensive connected system when complete. The FGTS Priority network are the most important Opportunity corridors. For more information, visit: www.FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com.

16. Do the FGTS maps change?

Yes. OGT works with stakeholders to update the maps and seek adoption from the Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC) on a regular cycle. However, as projects progress from preconstruction to construction, corridors may be refined to reflect the final alignment. Likewise, as funding becomes available the trail status will change as the “gaps” are developed into active/existing trails available for public use. These administrative changes are ongoing. Non-administrative changes (such as the addition or removal of corridors) require FGTC approval.

17. Why must projects be on the FGTS Priority Land Trail network to be eligible for funding through the SUN Trail program?

Similar to the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), the FGTS Priority Land Trails is the statewide network of high-priority (strategic) corridors and connections. The combined legislation from 2014 and 2015 directs FDOT, among other charges, to focus on FGTS priorities and to develop the SUN Trail network.

18. Who are the Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC)?

Among its duties the FGTC serves to advise the FDEP on greenway and trail-related issues, promote intergovernmental cooperation and private partnerships for developing the greenways and trails system, and recommends priorities for critical links in the system. Among other public agencies and private stakeholders, membership on FGTC includes FDOT (currently the SUN Trail Program Manager).



19. What actions did FGTC take to identify and make recommendations for funding Regional Trail Systems through the SUN Trail program?

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|-------------------|--|
| December 15, 2015 | Selection of the Coast-to-Coast (C2C) as the first Regional Trail System |
| January 25, 2016 | Adoption of criteria for the evaluation of Regional Trail systems |
| February 29, 2016 | Recommendation of seven Regional Trail Systems for analysis by OGT |
| March 31, 2016 | Selection and prioritization of additional Regional Trail Systems, in priority order they are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop (SJR2C) [selected as second regional trail system for SUN Trail funding] 2. Capital City to Sea Trails (CC2S) 3. Southwest Coastal Regional Trail (SWCC) 4. Heart of Florida Loop (HOFL) 5. East Coast Greenway - Southeast (ECG-SE) |

20. Will FDOT only fund Regional Trail Systems prioritized by the FGTC?

No. FDOT uses a two-tier funding structure to implement SUN Trail program funds. One tier provides funding to Individual Trail segments that meet program eligibility requirements and close gaps in the SUN Trail network. The other tier provides funding to projects that meet program eligibility requirements, within the top two Regional Trail Systems ([C2C](#) and the [SJR2C](#)) identified by the FGTC.

21. How should entities identify and prioritize potential trail projects for funding through the SUN Trail program?

The planning, evaluation, and prioritization process for creating a multi-use trail varies depending upon the needs, policies, procedures, substantial goals, and values of the organization’s representation. The identification of priorities may require the coordination of planning efforts from the local to the federal level. Community involvement is essential to planning and implementing successful projects. Identification of stakeholders, proponents of the project, and potential concerns of implementing the project are important aspects of the planning process. Strong local leadership that fosters support and helps maintain momentum, is essential for successful projects. The FGTS Plan offers guidance for communities initializing and prioritizing their trail vision.

22. How should entities submit project proposals for SUN Trail funding?

To receive consideration for SUN Trail funding FDOT must receive a separate, complete “Request for Funding” for each eligible Regional or Individual Trail project proposed for SUN Trail funding, with applicable information, including the prioritization and the required signatures during a solicitation period by the announced deadline.



23. When will FDOT announce projects that are receiving SUN Trail funding?

Annually FDOT conducts public hearings to give stakeholders an opportunity to learn about and comment on the Tentative Work Program (TWP). After adoption of the WP in July, FDOT announces the projects. To learn about SUN Trail projects included in the AWP, visit www.FloridaSunTrail.com and select “Plans & Projects” or visit: www.fdot.gov/workprogram.

24. Are all phases of the top two Regional Trail Systems programmed for completion?

No. The AWP is through fiscal years 2023/2024. The developing TWP is through fiscal years 2024/2025. FDOT is committed to completing the C2C and the SJR2C and will continue to program project phases that are ready for funding and meet the Eligibility Criteria.

25. If SUN Trail funds are identified in the AWP for one phase of an Individual Trail project, should an agency continue to pursue other funding sources for the remaining phases?

Yes. Like other types of transportation systems, the needs for the development and improvements of multi-use trails exceed available funding. Therefore, in the Individual Trail category an allocation to one project phase is not a guarantee of commitment to allocations for future project phases.

26. Is there an annual solicitation period for new project proposals?

No. There is not an annual solicitation. However, during the annual revision cycle, projects in the AWP are considered for advancement or deferral, a new fifth year is added, and the first year drops off as projects are completed. The annual revision is known as the development of the tentative work program (TWP).

27. Why is there not an annual solicitation for new funding proposals?

The allocation of funding in Fiscal Year 2024/2025 will continue project phases of earlier SUN Trail investments and the unfunded needs under consideration from past solicitations.

28. I understand that SUN Trail funds are through state allocations but federal funds are also within our funded project area. Does this federalize the project?

Yes. Although SUN Trail is a state allocation, if any part of the funded individual trail project (which includes projects in the Regional Trail Systems and the Individual Trail funding categories) utilizes federal funds, then that entire individual project is federalized. This requires adherence to federal requirements including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Buy America for actions such as the acquisition of real property/land/ROW. Regardless of funding source, if a project has received federal funds or is eligible to receive federal funds for future phases it must comply with federal requirements. The project would require NEPA review and approval by the FDOT District or the Office of Environmental Management as described in the FDOT Project Development and Environment Manual and pursuant to the NEPA Assignment Memorandum of Agreement signed between FDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) effective December 14, 2016. For more information, visit: www.fdot.gov/environment/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm.



29. Can SUN Trail allocations be mixed with other allocations?

Other applicable allocations from federal, state, local, and private sources may fund improvements in tandem with the SUN Trail funded aspects. However, SUN Trail funds do not qualify as match requirements for other funding programs.

30. Will FDOT oversee SUN Trail funded project phases, or will other agencies oversee them?

Generally, FDOT will administer allocations on projects within the existing FDOT ROW (on-system) for phases funded through the AWP. As such, the district office will assign a project manager for funded project phases. Administration of the funded project phases may occur by another agency if it would be more practical, expeditious, and economical for them to perform the project. This may also occur on projects outside of FDOT ROW (off-system).

31. What happens if FDOT is not administrating the funded project phases?

For non-FDOT managed projects the local agency (subrecipient) will act as the administering body and serve as the project manager with the District providing necessary oversight. The District will facilitate execution of the Florida Department of Financial Services Catalog of State Financial Assistance (CSFA) [Number 55.038](#) cost-reimbursement (grant) agreement with another government entity. This legal instrument will describe intergovernmental tasks to be accomplished and funds to be paid between government agencies. All state agreements are subject to the Florida Single Audit Act (FSAA) and [Section 215.97, F.S.](#) The District will assign a point of contact to provide necessary oversight, assist recipients and sub-recipients in complying with the FSAA, and ensure that its duties as a pass-through entity (as defined in the FSAA) are accomplished for the successful implementation of the awarded funds.

32. Is the SUN Trail Cost-Reimbursement (Grant) Agreement Standardized?

Yes. To review it click here: <http://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/SUNTrail/guidance.shtm> and select “SUN Trail Reimbursement/Grant Agreement”.

33. What is the minimum advertising period for locally administered projects funded through the SUN Trail program?

Pursuant to [Section 255.0525, F.S.](#), projects that cost more than \$200,000 shall be publicly advertised at least once in a local newspaper 21 days prior to the established bid opening and at least five days prior to any scheduled pre-bid conference. Funded projects that cost more than \$500,000 shall be published at least 30 days prior to the established bid opening and five days prior to any scheduled pre-bid conference.

34. FDOT and our governmental agency entered into a CSFA [No 55.038](#) (grant) agreement for a project. Are vendor negotiations required to be performed in a public meeting?

Although FDOT performs negotiations in public meetings, local agencies are not required to conduct vendor negotiations in a public meeting. If vendor negotiations are not performed in a public meeting, they are required to be recorded and adhere to [Section 286.0113, F.S.](#)

35. What design criteria applies to my project?

FDOT publishes design criteria for multi-use trails (shared-use paths) in both the FDOT Design Manual (FDM) and the Manual of Uniform Minimum Standards for Design, Construction and Maintenance for Streets and Highways (Florida Greenbook).

Projects in FDOTs ROW must follow the FDM design criteria along with FDOTs Standard Plans and Specifications. Projects located along non-FDOT owned ROW will follow design criteria found in the Florida Greenbook. At times the combination of funds used for a project, nature of work, or location along federally classified routes (such as the National Highway System) may trigger additional design requirements.

For more information about the FDM, click here:

<https://www.fdot.gov/roadway/fdm/Default.shtm>.

For more information about the Florida Greenbook, click here:

<http://www.fdot.gov/roadway/FloridaGreenbook/FGB.shtm>.

For more information about FDOTs Standard Plans and Specifications, click here:

<https://www.fdot.gov/design/standardplans/Default.shtm>.

36. What are traffic control devices?

They include signs, signals, markings, and other devices used to regulate, warn, or guide traffic; placed on, over, or adjacent to streets, highways, pedestrian facilities, and bikeways.

37. Are trail traffic control devices standardized?

Yes. FDOT adopted FHWA's Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) 2009 edition with Revisions 1 and 2, May 2012. The entire MUTCD applies to SUN Trail projects. Sections that are of particular value in designing multi-use trails include: See: Chapter 9B—shared use paths; Chapter 3B—pavement markings; Chapter 4F—pedestrian hybrid beacons; Section 4L.03—warning beacons (of a pedestrian's presence); Section 4N.02—in-roadway warning lights at crosswalks; and Part 6 Temporary Traffic Control. For more information, visit:

https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm.

FDOTs Traffic Engineering Manual (TEM) contains additional requirements for traffic control devices along the state highway system. For more information, visit:

<https://www.fdot.gov/traffic/TrafficServices/Studies/TEM/TEM.shtm>

38. Are there statewide traffic control laws for bicyclists or pedestrians?

Yes, state laws are in [Chapter 316, F.S.](#)

39. What happens if FDOT acquires new property/land/right-of-way (ROW) for a trail?

If the land acquired expands ROW along a FDOT maintained facility, the Department may maintain ownership. Otherwise FDOT may buy land on behalf of the managing agency or transfer title upon completion of construction.



40. Who operates the trails funded through the SUN Trail program?

Long-term trail managers are typically local or regional governmental entities, tribal governments, or other public agencies with the responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails. Projects traversing multiple jurisdictional boundaries may have multiple managers. For example, two counties and one municipality manage the East Central Regional Rail Trail.

41. When is the trail manager responsible for the maintenance identified?

It is important to identify the party responsible for trail operation and maintenance early in development of a project. This ensures that the agency is aware of their responsibilities, has authority to support the project over the long-term, and is involved in development of the project. Communication of this willingness occurs upon submittal of the “Request for Funding” to the District; it is an eligibility requirement for funding through the SUN Trail program.

42. What are the expectations for managing entities as it relates to maintenance obligations?

All SUN Trail funded projects require a non-FDOT governmental entity to enter into an agreement or other form of documented commitment with FDOT and to serve as the long-term trail manager that handles the day-to-day upkeep and operations, protects trail users, reduces safety hazards that occur, and ensures a quality level of service (LOS) is maintained on the facility. Activities may consist of litter pick-up, trash removal, debris removal, soil and weed control, graffiti removal, mowing, sweeping, sign replacement, shrub trimming, maintenance of drainage, and other regularly scheduled maintenance activities; they may also promote or market the trail.

For trails constructed in the FDOT ROW (on-system), FDOT will provide remedial maintenance which involves repairing, replacing, or restoring major components that may have been damaged or destroyed. Minor repairs such as sealing asphalt pavement or repainting may occur every five to ten years, while major repairs may occur every 20 to 25 years. All other maintenance will be the responsibility of the non-FDOT governmental entity.

43. What is Level-of-Service (LOS) and are there tools to calculate it for trails?

LOS is a scoring system that ranks a given roadway’s ability to handle current traffic volume (usage). If a roadway’s current traffic volume exceeds its carrying capacity, traffic flow may be impeded and unsafe, and that roadway’s LOS score will be low. Conversely, if a roadway’s carrying capacity is greater than the roadway’s current usage (thereby allowing traffic to flow freely and safely), then the LOS score for that roadway will be high. LOS scores are typically awarded on an ordinal “letter grade” scale of A through F, with A standing for the highest/best LOS score possible.

In July 2006, FHWA released a report on how to calculate LOS for “shared use paths” (multi-use trails). The centerpiece of the report was a spreadsheet calculation tool that can determine the LOS for a given trail based on basic input data from the trail manager.



According to FHWA, a trail's carrying capacity (and thus LOS) is primarily a function of trail width and user type (e.g. cyclists, inline skaters, and pedestrians). Largely influenced by trail width, trail user conflicts typically occur during passing (opposite direction meetings and same direction over-takings). Length is not a factor in determining trail carrying capacity.

Using the FHWA trail LOS calculation tool, a standard 12-foot wide paved multi-use trail with an hourly one-way trail user volume of 55-164 (passing a single, precise point on the trail) will receive an LOS score of B. User volume below 55 receives an LOS score of A, while user volume above 164 receives a C or lower.

Carrying capacity in the SUN Trail network is defined as “the trail user volume which will allow a trail to retain an LOS score of B or better”. Consequently, all:

14-foot wide trails with standard use have a one-way hourly carrying capacity of 195 (or a daily carrying capacity of 4,680 [195 x 2 (two-way traffic) x 12 (daily number of hours of operation)]).

12-foot wide trails with standard use have a one-way hourly carrying capacity of 164 (or a daily two-way carrying capacity of 3,936 [164 x 2 (two-way traffic) x 12 (daily number of hours of operation)]).

10-foot wide trails with standard use have a one-way hourly carrying capacity of 70 (or a daily carrying capacity of 1,680 [70 x 2 (two-way traffic) x 12 (daily number of hours of operation)]).

For additional information, visit:

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/pedbike/05138/>. To download the LOS Calculator click here: [Microsoft® Excel® LOS Calculator](#).