

# 2024-2029 Reconnecting Communities Pilot

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

US Department of Transportation



## PROJECT DETAILS

**DIFFICULTY:** Hard

**COST:** > \$500,000

**TIMEFRAME:** Five (5) Years

**DELIVERABLES:** Strategy, report, surveys, focus group summaries, etc.

### CORE COMPETENCIES:

- Planning
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Transportation Strategies
- Grants Management

**RESULTS:** An institute that provides communities nationwide technical support and meaningful public involvement to develop innovative strategies to reconnect communities.

## PROJECT TEAM

Vision Planning and Consulting  
Cadmus (Prime)

## CLIENT CONTACT

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The Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Grant Program was established by the US Department of Transportation (DOT) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and is dedicated to reconnecting communities that were cut off from opportunity and burdened by past transportation infrastructure decisions. The Program funds removing, retrofitting, or mitigating transportation facilities like highways or rail lines that create barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

VPC was selected to provide technical assistance to help stand up the Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI). The mission of the RCI is to serve as DOT's center for learning to restore and reconnect communities that have been harmed, isolated, and/or cut off from services and opportunity by transportation infrastructure. The RCI will provide training and technical assistance to build organizational or community capacity in transportation planning, and identify innovative strategies and solutions for reconnecting communities that are bifurcated by transportation infrastructure that create barriers to community wellbeing.

The RCI will provide capacity building through group and peer-based virtual leaning, and one-on-one assistance to participants. VPC is involved in the following areas:

- Project scoping and development, including meaningful public involvement and transportation planning;
- Equitable development and community-wealth building strategies; and
- Data collection and performance metrics to capture the impacts of various reconnecting projects.

VPC will provide stakeholder engagement and grant related services to State, local, and tribal governments, community and nonprofit groups, and metropolitan planning organizations who are eligible to apply for funding through the

Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP). Participants include economically disadvantaged communities, including rural and Tribal communities who are:

- RCP program planning grant recipients;
- RCP program capital construction grant recipients;
- Prospective grant applicants to the RCP program or other Federal grant programs that fund reconnecting activities;
- Unsuccessful RCP grant applicants; and
- Other eligible entities interested in building organizational or community capacity in transportation planning, to advance the restoration/reconnection of communities.

A variety of solutions to reconnect communities will be funded, which are rooted in communities' local visions. Projects that best address transportation barriers - highways, auto-centric boulevards, and railroad lines replaced with new acreage for parks, housing, and crossings by foot or bicycle, repurposing railroad tracks, removing elevated highways, and reconfiguring highway ramps - will be awarded grants.

Emphasis will be given to projects that physically remove barriers and: create opportunities to repurpose land for other uses; convert transportation barriers into Complete Streets with tree-lined medians, bike lanes, and sidewalks; and create new dedicated bicycle and pedestrian trails.