



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB1791

Introduced 2/5/2025, by Sen. Laura Ellman

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

20 ILCS 2705/2705-630 new

Amends the Department of Transportation Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois. Requires the Secretary of Transportation to establish a program through which the Secretary shall award grants to eligible entities for projects that facilitate travel by public transportation to public outdoor recreation sites for outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, boating, picnicking, hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, or other nature-based activities. Provides that the Secretary shall offer grants through the Transit-to-Trails program on an annual basis. Requires the Department of Transportation to adopt rules necessary to implement and administer the program. Provides that, in considering grant applications, the Department shall prioritize projects with demonstrated intent to enhance access to outdoor recreation opportunities for populations in greatest need of improved access to outdoor nature-based recreation. Requires the Department to provide technical assistance in preparing grant applications to applicants upon request. Provides that implementation of the grant program is subject to appropriation by the General Assembly.

LRB104 10925 LNS 21007 b

1 AN ACT concerning transportation.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Department of Transportation Law of the
5 Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by adding
6 Section 2705-630 as follows:

7 (20 ILCS 2705/2705-630 new)

8 Sec. 2705-630. Transit-to-Trails Grant Program.

9 (a) The Secretary of Transportation shall establish a
10 grant program, to be known as the "Transit-to-Trails Grant
11 Program", under which the Secretary shall award grants to
12 eligible entities for projects that facilitate travel by
13 public transportation to public outdoor recreation sites for
14 outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, boating,
15 picnicking, hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, or other
16 nature-based activities. Projects that may receive funding
17 through the grant program include, but are not limited to,
18 projects that lead to:

19 (1) altered or expanded operation of existing transit
20 service to accommodate increased access by the public to
21 outdoor recreation activities;

22 (2) new or improved infrastructure to facilitate safe,
23 convenient access to outdoor recreation sites, including,

1 but not limited to, stations, stops, shelters, bikeshare,
2 and bicycle infrastructure; and

3 (3) public outreach, education, and engagement efforts
4 to inform the public and encourage use of transit and
5 access to outdoor recreation.

6 (b) The Secretary shall offer grants through the Transit
7 -to-Trails program on an annual basis. The Department of
8 Transportation shall adopt rules necessary to implement and
9 administer the program.

10 (c) Eligible recipients of grants under the program shall
11 include:

12 (1) public transit agencies;

13 (2) owners of outdoor recreation lands accessible by
14 the general public, including parks districts,
15 conservation districts, forest preserve districts;

16 (3) units of local government, State agencies, and
17 nonprofit organizations engaged in facilitating outdoor
18 recreation opportunities.

19 (d) In considering grant applications, the Department
20 shall prioritize projects with demonstrated intent to enhance
21 access to outdoor recreation opportunities for populations in
22 greatest need of improved access to outdoor nature-based
23 recreation. These populations shall be defined as residents
24 of:

25 (1) R3 Areas, as established under Section 10-40 of
26 the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, where residents have

1 historically been excluded from economic opportunities;

2 (2) environmental justice communities, as defined by
3 the Illinois Power Agency under the Illinois Power Agency
4 Act, where residents have historically been subject to
5 disproportionate burdens of pollution; and

6 (3) a community that can demonstrate to the Secretary
7 that the community has inadequate, insufficient, or no
8 park space or recreation facilities, including by
9 demonstrating:

10 (A) quality concerns relating to the available
11 park space or recreation facilities;

12 (B) the presence of recreational facilities that
13 do not serve the needs of the community;

14 (C) the inequitable distribution of park space for
15 high-need populations based on income, age, or other
16 measures of vulnerability and need; or

17 (D) at least 50% of the population is not located
18 within 1/2 mile of park space.

19 (e) Upon request, the Department shall provide technical
20 assistance in preparing grant applications under this Section.
21 Implementation of this Section is subject to appropriation by
22 the General Assembly.