

CHANGEMAKERS FOR TRAILS SERIES



# **Changemakers for Trails Training: How Federal Decisions Affect Trails**

Dec. 4 and 5, 2024



# Technical Support

**In the event you run into technical difficulties, here's how to troubleshoot:**

- Log out and back into the webinar
- Listen by phone:+1 309 205 3325; meeting ID: 827 7729 2956
- Browse Zoom Customer Support topics & contact Customer Support:  
<https://support.zoom.us>

**Live transcription is enabled for this webinar**

# Why We're Here

1. **Understanding** that decisions at the federal level directly affect what gets built in your community
2. **Learning** what federal advocacy looks like
3. **Getting comfortable** bridging the gap between your love for trails and advocacy that can shape federal outcomes

# What Is Advocacy?

- Taking a position on an issue (big or small)
- Supporting a cause
- Growing community support
- Working with local, regional, state and federal decision makers to support your cause
- Telling your story





# RTC's Advocacy Role

- Federal, state, regional and local: Funding and policy changes
- Advocating for connectivity, access for everyone, safety, sustainability
- Celebrating leaders prioritizing trails as essential infrastructure nationwide
- Elevating policies, programs and impact to make the case for trail networks
- More than rail-trails—we advocate for all active transportation with an emphasis on connectivity



RTC's Board in DC

# Federal Decisions : Funding and Policy Changes

- Federal decision makers impact trails in many ways
  - Funding for planning, building and maintaining trails
  - Policy changes that prioritize trails and active transportation
- Consequential active transportation policy and funding changes in most recent federal transportation law
- Other funds and policies come from different federal decision-making bodies



*Bike lanes in Washington, D.C.*



# Where We Are Now

- Federal transportation bill signed in 2021
  - Historic funding for active transportation
  - Focus on safety, climate and equity
  - Policy changes related to trails and active transportation
- Recent federal, state and local elections impact trails
  - Establishing voter enthusiasm for trails
  - Setting policy priorities
  - Determining funding levels



*Trail in Washington, D.C.*

# Transportation Funding Programs

- Transportation Alternatives
- Recreational Trails Program
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
- Highway Safety Improvement Program
- RAISE (formerly TIGER/BUILD)
- Reconnecting Communities Program
- Safe Street and Roads for All
- Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program
- **And many more....**

RAILS TO  
Learn more **Trails** [railstotrails.org/funding](https://www.railstotrails.org/funding)  
conservancy



California's Ohlone Greenway | David Joel Lee



## FUNDING

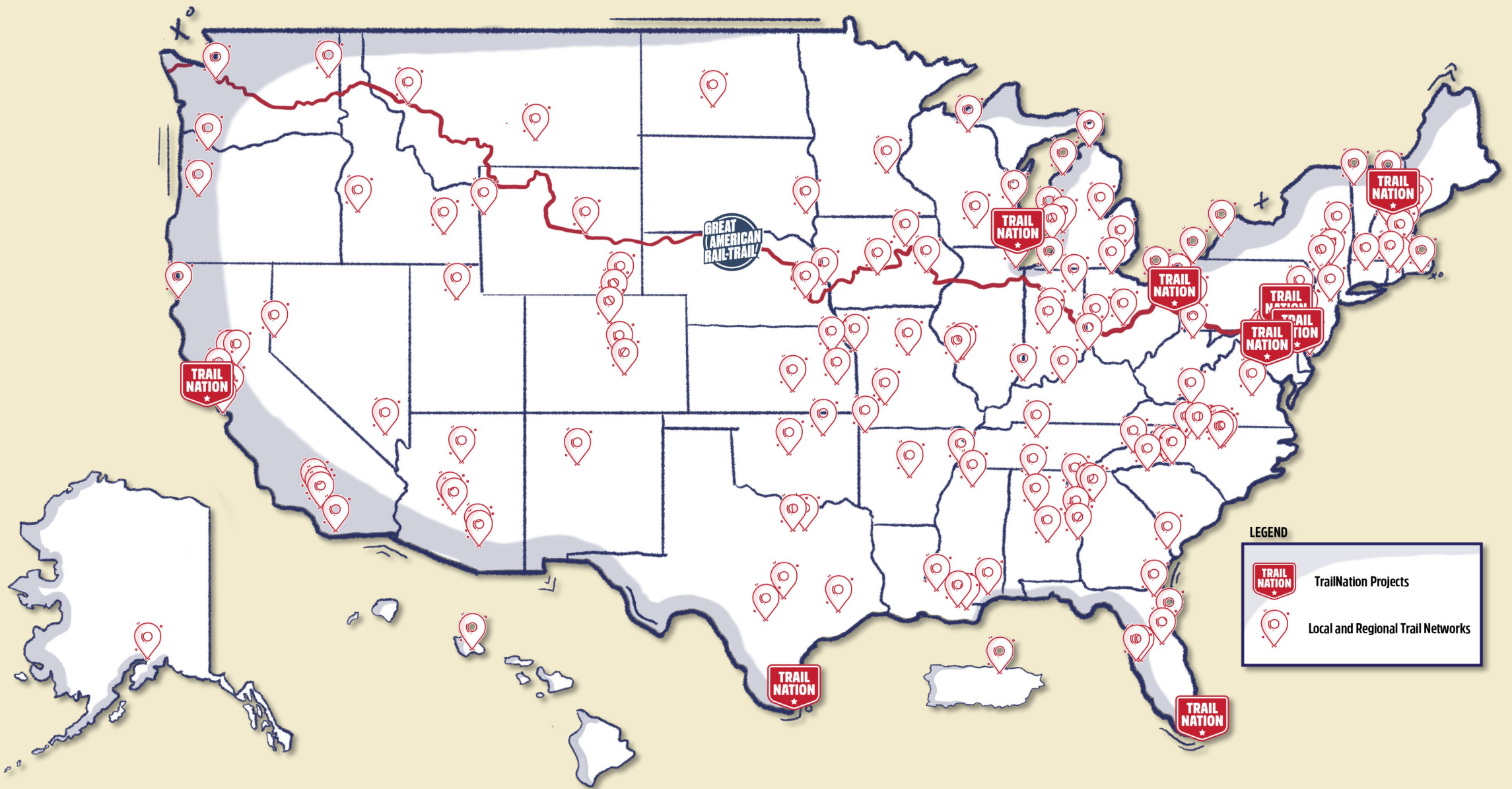
# Other Funding Sources

Transportation is only one funding source for trails. Consider opportunities like:

- Congressional Earmarks
- Housing and Urban Development
- National Park Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Public Health
- Different motivations but all impacting trails



*Indiana's Governor Eric Holcomb on the Big-4 Rail Trail*



[railstotrails.org/trailnation/#map](http://railstotrails.org/trailnation/#map)





The vision of the Circuit Trails network is to complete 800







# What's Next?

## Take Action Today:

- Using social media (tag @railstotrails)
- Letters to the editor
- Attend community meetings
- Organize events on the trail
- Meeting with elected officials and leaders

## Changemakers for Trails:

- Additional trainings and action touch points this year
- Case studies of success

## Resources:

- Webinars
- Blogs
- Advocating for Trails Site
- New Advocacy How To Guide
- [Railstotrails.org/advocate](https://railstotrails.org/advocate)



Thank You!