U.S. Department of Transportation

RAISE GRANTS

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity

RAISE GRANT OVERVIEW: PROJECT PRIORITIES AND FUNDING SOURCES

JOHNSTOWN, PA

WHAT IS RAISE?

(**R**ebuilding **A**merican **I**nfrastructure with **S**ustainability and **E**quity)

- Grant Program administered by the Department of Transportation (**DOT**)
- Supports innovative projects aimed at **revitalizing infrastructure** in communities across the U.S., **emphasizing sustainability and equitable outcomes.**
- RAISE grants prioritize projects that **enhance transportation facilities, promote environmental sustainability, improve accessibility, and foster economic development**, **particularly in historically underserved areas.**

Project Requirements

Significant Local Impact:
Projects must improve transportation efficiency and accessibility

Environmental Sustainability:
Projects must address environmental justice and **climate change**.

Racial Equity:
Projects must address racial equity and work to reduce barriers to opportunity for underserved communities.



JOHNSTOWN'S PROJECT

ALIGNING WITH DOT'S STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

Safety

The project's focus on improving road conditions and integrating multimodal transportation options will enhance safety for all users.

Sustainability & Climate Justice

The inclusion of bike lanes aligns with DOT's commitment to promoting environmentally sustainable transportation solutions. A primary goal is to enhance the resilience of transportation infrastructure to withstand climate change.

Equity

By improving accessibility and connectivity, the project will help address transportation disparities and historical inequities in infrastructure investment. This will ensure that underserved and disadvantaged communities receive fair access to transportation improvements.

Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

The infrastructure improvements will support Johnstown's economic growth and competitiveness, attracting businesses and investments.



JOHNSTOWN'S PROJECT

ALIGNING WITH DOT'S STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

State of Good Repair

Investing in the maintenance and modernization of existing infrastructure to ensure it remains safe and functional, and preventing costly repairs and disruptions in the future.

Partnership

Encouraging collaboration between various stakeholders, including federal, state, local and private entities, and leveraging additional funding and resources to maximize project impact.

Innovation

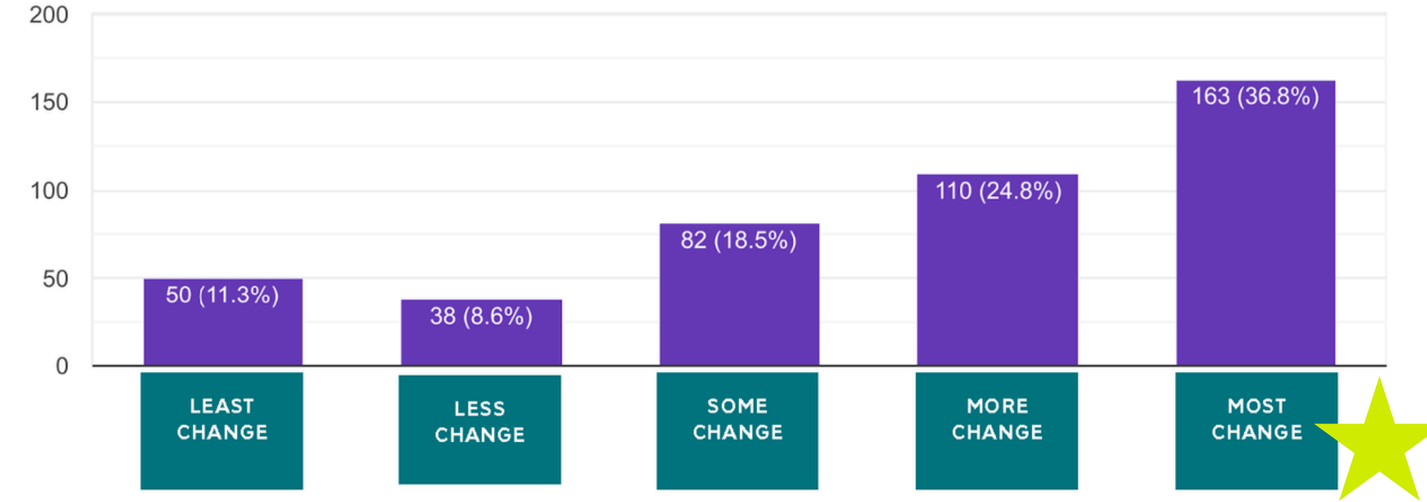
Supporting innovative solutions and technologies in transportation infrastructure.
Encouraging the adoption of advanced materials, construction techniques, and sustainable practices.

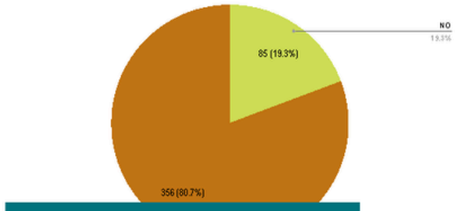


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT -

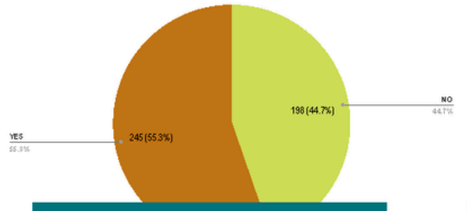
WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC WANT TO SEE AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT?

WHERE DO YOU LAND ON THIS SCALE? (443 RESPONSES)

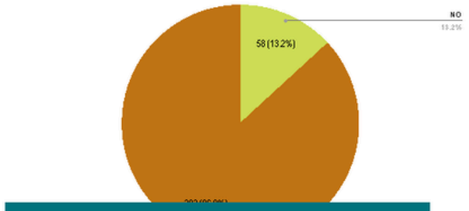




81% WANT MORE NATURE



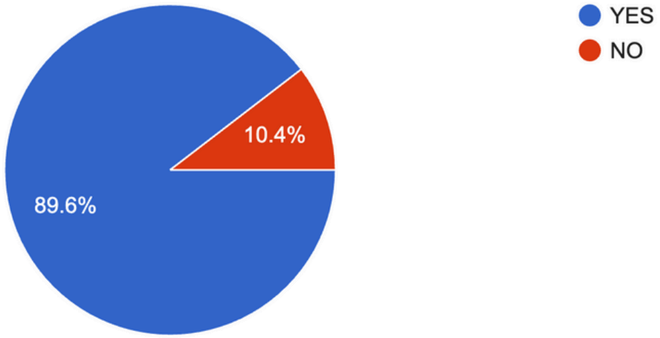
55% WANT A BIKE LANE



87% WANT MORE PARK ACTIVITIES

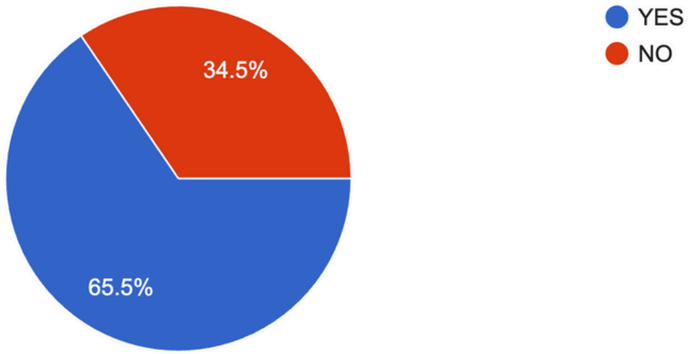
DO YOU WANT A MORE ACTIVE CENTRAL PARK?

192 responses



DO YOU WANT A BIKE LANE ON MAIN STREET

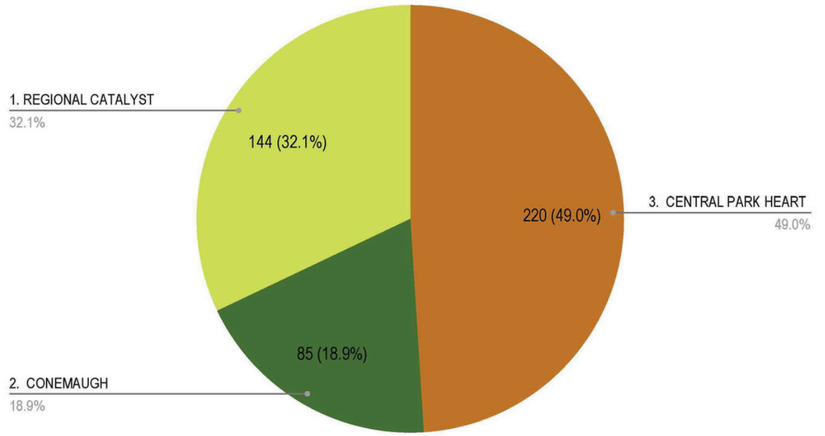
197 responses



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT -

WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC WANT TO SEE AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT?

FEEDBACK FROM COMMENT CARD AND ON-LINE SURVEY













ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ENHANCED PUBLIC SPACES & ACTIVATED DOWNTOWNS

The enhancement of inclusive and accessible public spaces is crucial for promoting the **health and quality of communities.** Through fostering physical activity, encouraging social interaction, and addressing health disparities, these spaces play a vital role in improving overall community well-being. By prioritizing **inclusive design**, communities can create environments that benefit all residents, **ultimately leading to healthier and more vibrant neighborhoods.**

Access to high quality park space and bike infrastructure has been proven to support healthier communities. Johnstown already has a great downtown for walking and biking, but these improvements will encourage more people to spend more time outdoors.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ENHANCED PUBLIC SPACES & ACTIVATED DOWNTOWNS

Cities benefit greatly from activated and enhanced public spaces in downtowns for several reasons:

- **Community gathering space**: An inclusive and accessible Central Park serves as a focal point for community events, gatherings, and recreational activities, fostering social interaction and a sense of belonging among residents.
- **Economic boost**: A vibrant downtown with well-maintained streetscapes and a Central Park attracts tourists and encourages spending at local businesses, boosting the local economy and creating job opportunities.
- **Quality of life**: Access to green spaces and recreational amenities like those offered in a Central Park enhances the overall quality of life for residents, promoting physical and mental well-being.
- **Cultural enrichment**: Programming in the Central Park, such as concerts, festivals, and art exhibitions, adds cultural vibrancy to the downtown area, enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike.
- **Sustainable urban development**: An activated downtown with updated streetscapes encourages walking, cycling, and the use of public transportation, reducing traffic congestion and promoting environmental sustainability.
- **Enhanced attractiveness:** A well-designed downtown with a Central Park becomes a destination in itself, drawing people from surrounding areas and increasing the city's attractiveness for both residents and businesses.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ENHANCED PUBLIC SPACES & ACTIVATED DOWNTOWNS

Activated downtowns with **enhanced streetscapes** and **public parks** have a catalytic effect on the **growth** and **development** of the entire city. As the downtown area becomes more attractive and vibrant, it often becomes a focal point for investment, leading to increased property values, development, and job opportunities.

This growth in the central business district can trigger a ripple effect, spreading outward to the surrounding neighborhoods and suburbs. As businesses and residents seek proximity to the vibrant downtown core, they may choose to locate in adjacent areas, leading to revitalization and positive changes beyond downtown.

The effects of this **outward spread** include:

- **Neighborhood revitalization**: Surrounding neighborhoods and districts may experience renewed interest and investment, leading to improvements in infrastructure, amenities, and housing stock.
- **Increased property values**: The desirability of living or operating businesses near an activated downtown can lead to appreciation in property values throughout the city, benefiting homeowners and attracting investors.
- **Expanded economic opportunities**: As businesses expand or relocate to areas near the downtown core, job opportunities increase, benefiting residents and promoting economic diversity.
- **Enhanced connectivity**: Investments in transportation infrastructure, such as improved public transit and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, can improve connectivity between downtown and surrounding areas, facilitating movement and accessibility for residents and visitors alike.

RAISE GRANTS

EMPHASIS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



Energy Efficiency

The RAISE program encourages projects that optimize energy efficiency in transportation systems. This includes investments in energy-efficient vehicles, building materials, and lighting systems. By reducing energy consumption, the program helps mitigate climate change and minimize environmental impact.

Promoting Green Infrastructure

The RAISE program encourages the use of green infrastructure solutions in transportation projects. This includes projects that incorporate green stormwater infrastructure and permeable pavement, which help manage runoff, improve air quality, and enhance the aesthetics of our communities.

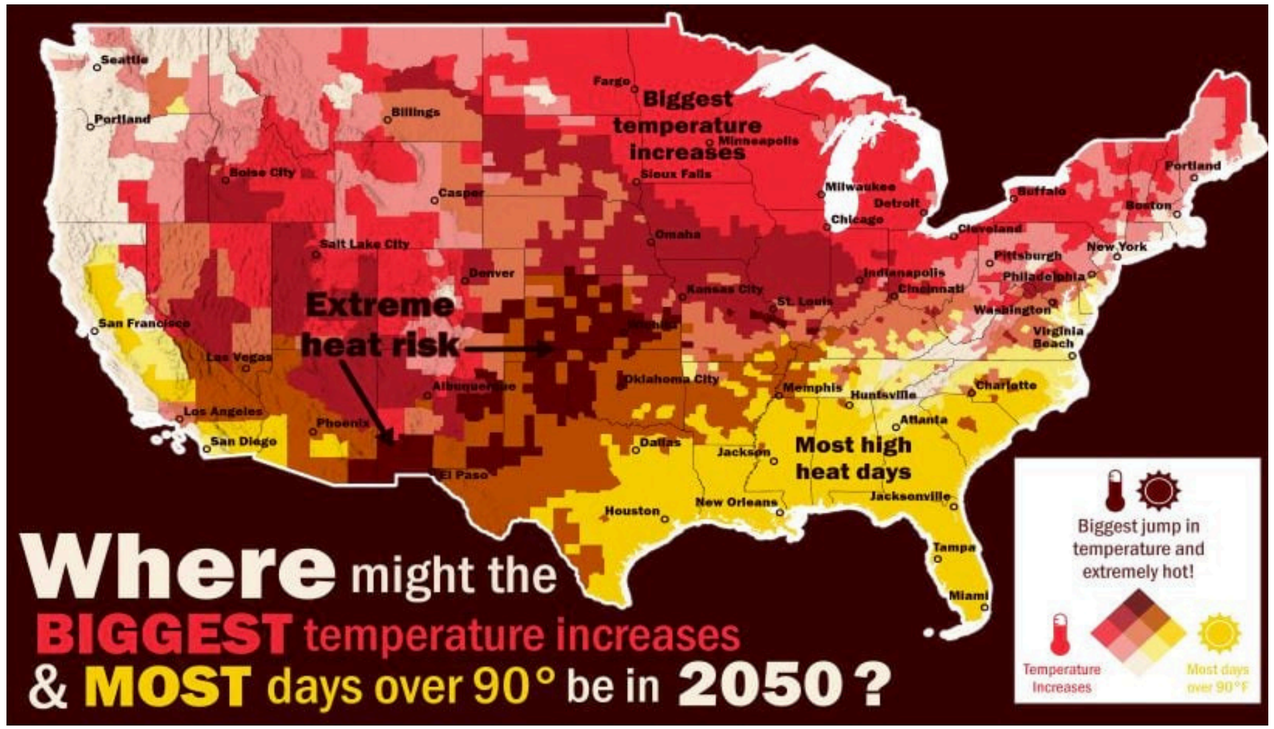
Waste Reduction

The program supports projects that promote waste reduction and recycling in transportation infrastructure projects. This includes using recycled materials in construction, implementing waste management programs at transit facilities, and promoting composting initiatives. By reducing waste, the program contributes to a more sustainable and environmentally conscious approach to infrastructure development.

Water Conservation

The RAISE program prioritizes projects that incorporate water conservation measures. This includes using drought-tolerant landscaping, water-efficient irrigation systems, and minimizing water consumption in transportation facilities. By conserving water resources, the program contributes to a more sustainable and environmentally responsible approach to transportation.

PROMOTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE



The climate data from ESRI highlights significant warming trends in Western Pennsylvania, with projected increases in average temperatures, seasonal shifts, and greater weather variability by 2050. These changes will have implications for public health, local ecosystems, and community planning efforts to adapt to a changing climate. It underscores the importance of proactive measures to mitigate these impacts and enhance resilience within the region.



WATER FEATURES: CLIMATE MITIGATION AND BENEFITS

Water features naturally cool the surrounding air through evaporation. This helps lower temperatures, providing relief during heatwaves and creating comfortable outdoor spaces for residents.

Water features can enhance air quality by increasing humidity levels, which can help mitigate the effects of dry air and dust. This contributes to a healthier environment for the community, especially for individuals with respiratory issues.

Water features create inviting spaces for social interaction and recreational activities. They encourage community engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and enhancing overall well-being.

RAISE GRANTS

ADVANCING EQUITY



Accessibility for All

The RAISE program prioritizes projects that make transportation accessible to all users, regardless of ability, age, or income level. This includes investments in accessible infrastructure, such as curb ramps, wheelchair-accessible buses, and universal design features that benefit everyone.

Connecting Underserved Communities

The RAISE program supports projects that connect underserved communities to transportation opportunities. This includes investments in transit services that reach areas with limited transportation options, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in low-income neighborhoods, and transportation planning processes that prioritize equity.

Promoting Economic Opportunity

The RAISE program supports projects that create economic opportunities for all communities. This includes investments in transportation infrastructure that facilitates job growth, reduces transportation costs, and enhances access to employment opportunities for residents in underserved areas.

Strengthening Communities

The program supports projects that strengthen the social fabric of communities. This includes investments in transportation infrastructure that improves connectivity between neighborhoods, promotes walkable communities, and supports community-based transportation initiatives.

BENEFITING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES



Investing in Rural Communities

The RAISE program recognizes the unique transportation needs of rural communities and supports projects that improve transportation infrastructure in these areas. This includes investments in roads, bridges, and public transit systems that provide access to essential services and economic opportunities for rural residents.

Improving Access for Low-Income Communities

The program prioritizes projects that improve transportation access for low-income communities. This includes investments in affordable transportation options, such as subsidized transit fares, ride-sharing programs, and transportation assistance for individuals with disabilities.

Connecting Disadvantaged Communities

The RAISE program supports projects that connect disadvantaged communities to jobs, education, and healthcare. This includes investments in transportation infrastructure that provides access to employment centers, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities, reducing barriers to opportunity.

CLARIFICATION ON USE OF RAISE GRANT AND ARPA FUNDS$

The RAISE grant money awarded to the City of Johnstown is designated for the "Iron-to-Arts Corridor Project." This project includes several key components aimed at revitalizing and enhancing the city's **infrastructure and public spaces.**

The revitalization of Central Park is included in the scope of the Iron-to-Arts Corridor project funded by RAISE. The project aims to renovate Central Park and improve Main Street to enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity. These efforts are part of broader upgrades, including the Johnstown Train Station, Inclined Plane, and Intermodal Bus Transportation Center (Johnstown Vision).

The specific uses detailed in the **grant application** are laid out in the next slide.



IRON-TO-ARTS CORRIDOR PROJECT AWARDED IN 2021:

Johnstown Train Station Renovations

- Restoring the historic station to serve as a multimodal center.
- Adding daily Amtrak, regional rail, and bus transit services.
- Potential uses for now-vacant areas include a new Visitors' Center, a farmers market, retail transit-oriented development, and the headquarters of the Artist-Blacksmiths Association of North America.

Inclined Plane

- Upgrading the historic passenger and vehicle funicular system.
- Aiming to boost ridership by 300% annually, leveraging PennDOT investment.

Intermodal Bus Transportation Center

- Designing and constructing upgrades for passenger safety, station improvements, and enhanced mobility connections.

Connectivity and Walkability

- Implementing complete street upgrades on Main Street.
- Enhancing sidewalks, traffic calming measures, transit stops, ADA-accessibility, green infrastructure, and streetscape improvements.
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle trails, connecting key downtown segments of the Path of the Flood Trail and the Jim Mayer Riverwalk Trail.

CLARIFICATION ON USE OF RAISE GRANT AND ARPA FUNDS$

Budget Overview

Funding Source	Project Component	Amount (in million$)
RAISE Grant Funds	Demolition and Earthwork	1.1
	Electrical Infrastructure	1.5
	Hardscape & Softscape Improvements	5.7
	Site Utilities & Amenities	1.03
TOTAL RAISE		8.3
ARPA Funds	RAISE Grant overages	2.32
	Special Features	3.3
	Design Fees	1.61
	Public Art	0.4
	Pavilion	0.32
	Movable Furniture	0.05
TOTAL ARPA		8.0
Additional funding	RACP	2.0
Vision 2025 GRANT	Tree Purchasing	0.25

Budget Considerations

Please note that project budgets are subject to change due to factors beyond our control, such as economic conditions and unforeseen circumstances. Should costs exceed the allocated funds, we will actively seek additional financing through lobbying efforts and alternative funding sources to ensure project completion and success.

FUNDING DETAILS

RAISE Grant

Johnstown secured a $24.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

ARPA CONTRIBUTION

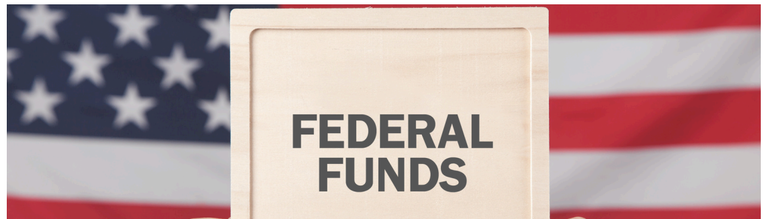
$8 million in ARPA funds were leveraged for Johnstown’s Main Street and Central Park project, used to complement the RAISE grant.

The ARPA funds for Johnstown's Main Street and Central Park project are leveraged to enhance downtown infrastructure and public spaces as integral parts of the Iron-to-Arts Corridor project, with strict allocation tied to the grant's specific projects.

Given their role as leveraged funds, these ARPA allocations were tied to the specific projects outlined in the RAISE grant application and thus could not be reallocated for other uses without impacting the grant agreement and project scope.

ALIGNMENT WITH ARPA GOALS

Utilizing ARPA funds to invest in infrastructure projects supports economic recovery and resilience, enhancing downtown revitalization through upgrades to public spaces, improved accessibility, and aesthetic enhancements. (U.S. Department of the Treasury).



CONTACT US

Do you have questions or want to learn more? Visit Johnstownpa.gov/raise-project