



FY2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM INSTRUCTION BOOKLET



Downtown Revitalization – Phases 1 & 2

Tullahoma, Coffee County

*Example of Transportation Alternatives Program Activity One (1):
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities*

**Deadline for 2021 submittals:
October 2, 2020**

Submit applications electronically via eGrants

<https://tdot.intelligrants.com/Login2.aspx?APPTHEME=TNDOT&ReturnURL=/Module/TNDOT/TabSearch.aspx?NavItemID1=65692>

TDOT - Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Office
Suite 600 James K. Polk Building
505 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0341
Phone: 615-741-5314

2021 Transportation Alternatives Updates

1. **Please note that all applicants must formally submit through the eGrants system only.**
2. A Local Agency shall use TDOT's prequalified consultants for every phase and follow TDOT's approved Local Version of TDOT Consultant Selection Policy [Form 1-2](#). In addition, a consultant advertisement template, [Form 1-3](#) must be reviewed by the TAP Office prior to any solicitation.
3. 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) awards must be authorized for construction on or before July 1, 2024 or the funds will be withdrawn. No contract extensions can be provided by TDOT to secure the funding.
4. All TAP projects, regardless of scope or complexity, must be designed per TDOT Standards for Roadway Design and Bridge Construction and be submitted in the required TDOT format, and all detectable warning systems/truncated domes must be universal safety yellow only.
5. All bicycle & pedestrian facilities must be hard-surfaced, ADA compliant and provide adequate linear connectivity to existing facilities. Funding may not be used for spot improvements, repairs or maintenance unless a component of an approved ADA Transition Plan. All sidewalks must be a minimum of 5-feet wide and shared-use facilities must be a minimum of 10-feet wide.
6. Newly constructed and altered facilities covered by Titles II and III of the ADA, including all TAP-type projects, must be readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities per the Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
7. The 20% minimum non-federal construction share of the proposed project must be provided as a hard cash match. All preliminary engineering (NEPA and Design) and right-of-way expenditures are solely the responsibility of the local agency.
8. Prior to submitting a 2021 application, all applicants must hold an application public involvement meeting to notify the local community of the intended project scope. The date(s) and time(s) of public meetings that were held as well as the sign-in sheet, the record of all public comments received and the disposition of said comments must be included with the completed application.
9. If the proposed application is selected for project funding, only the specific description and approved budget items will be eligible for construction. TAP funding cannot be transferred nor is it eligible for major project scope changes. All unused federal funds will revert to TDOT for re-distribution in the next funding cycle.
10. Applications and proposed design plans selected for award have not been fully vetted, reviewed or approved by TDOT and may require further modification.

Please access <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/local-programs> for *The Local Government Guidelines for the Management of Federal and State Funded Transportation Projects* manual, which provides State and Local Agencies with the procedures that are required by law, regulation, rule, policy and standards for the use of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) transportation projects.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES: GENERAL INFORMATION

Applications will be accepted through October 2, 2020. Applications received after than October 2, 2020 will not be considered for funding in the current funding cycle. **PLEASE NOTE, TDOT WILL NOT AUTMOMATICALLY ROLL OVER PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS THAT WERE NOT SELECTED FOR FUNDING.**

Applications must be submitted by local agency (cities or counties) or state natural resource or public land agencies. A local agency may work with other public agencies or private organizations, but TDOT will only contract with a local agency or applicable state agency.

Projects that are within an MPO/TPO will require the endorsement of the appropriate MPO/TPO before they can be implemented. MPO/TPO endorsement is not necessary for application; however, correspondence must be sent to the appropriate MPO/TPO or Rural Planning Organization (RPO) describing the proposed activity and inviting input regarding the project.

Applicants must follow all procedures that are required by law, regulation, rule, policies and standard for the use of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and State Highway funds for transportation projects, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and PROWAG. If these procedures are not followed, all federal funding will be withdrawn from the project.

TAP activities can be separate projects in and of themselves or they can be a part of any transportation project being developed. In either case, the transportation alternatives activity must relate to the surface transportation system in function, proximity or impact, exclusive of aviation. In addition, all bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be hard-surfaced, ADA compliant and provide adequate linear connectivity to existing accessible facilities. Funding may not be used for spot improvements, repairs or maintenance and all new construction for sidewalks must be a minimum of 5-foot wide and all shared-use facilities must be a minimum of 10-foot wide.

Please Note: Federal-aid transportation alternatives projects must be competitively bid.

TDOT will only accept applications through the eGrants system via <https://tdot.intelligrants.com/Login2.aspx?APPTHEME=TNDOT&ReturnURL=/Module/TNDOT/TabSearch.aspx?NavItemID1=65692> . The submission must still include the necessary budget, detailed, maps, photographs, preliminary sketches and support letters.

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ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

In order to be considered for project funding, the application must fall into one or more of the following specific categories as defined by federal legislation and relate to surface transportation (see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/> for more detailed information)

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities & Safe Routes for Non-Drivers

All facilities must be hard-surfaced, ADA compliant and provide adequate connectivity and separation from vehicular traffic. Sidewalk facilities must be a minimum of 5-feet wide and shared-use facilities must be a minimum of 10-feet wide. TAP funds can be used for sidewalks, walkways or curb ramps, bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking and bus racks, traffic calming for the safety of bike/ped traffic, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges/underpasses and ADA compliance.

2. Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails

Construction of hard-surfaced pedestrian or shared-use ADA accessible trails and rails-with-trails projects.

3. Scenic Turnouts and Overlooks

Construction of scenic turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas.

4. Historic Preservation & Rehab of Historic Transportation Facilities

Preservation of transportation buildings and facades in historical districts, restoration of historic buildings for transportation-related purposes, access improvements to historic sites, restoration of railroad depots, bus stations and rehabilitation of rail trestles, tunnels and bridges.

5. Archaeological Activities

Projects related to archaeological assessments from the implementation of current highway construction projects.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Section 1: Transportation Alternatives Activities

Please check all the project categories that apply to the proposed project.

Section 2: Project Description including Purpose and Need

Include project name, project location and scope of work. The project location should run from west to east or south to north and must include State and Federal routes as well as local road names. You must include a color-coded map that clearly delineates the project (with road names, a north arrow and the project location highlighted) and any photographs, drawings and applicable preliminary sketches. You must also provide a photograph of the beginning and ending termini if you are submitting for an Activity 1 or Activity 2 project. Please do not submit any documents larger than 8.5" x 11".

Federal regulations require that a project must have a surface transportation link to be eligible. Please refer to http://trade.railstotrails.org/relate_stp for more information pertaining to surface transportation links.

If this is a continuation of an existing project, include the original projects applicable Project Identification Number (PIN), project description, current status and estimated completion date.

If this is a bike/pedestrian facility, you must provide distinct and connecting termini (logical destination points such as federal/county/city offices, historic sites, schools, libraries, vehicular trailheads, etc.). Future unbuilt phases do not qualify as eligible destination points. Note that inadequate connectivity may affect TDOT design plan review and approval as well as the projected costs for construction.

Five-foot wide sidewalks are for pedestrian use only. Shared-use facilities must accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle traffic at a minimum of 10-feet wide. Connecting facilities, both proposed and existing, must accommodate both modes of transportation if applicable or connect to an approved trailhead (with adequate ADA parking) or terminate at an eligible

destination point. All bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be ADA compliant and provide adequate linear connectivity to existing accessible facilities. Pedestrians cannot utilize bike lanes, and all pedestrian facilities must provide adequate separation from vehicular traffic based on TDOT Design Standards.

Funding may not be used for spot improvements, repairs or maintenance unless a component of an approved ADA Transition Plan. Address any questions concerning connectivity to the Transportation Alternatives Office at TDOT.Enhancements@tn.gov.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

FHWA requires a clear statement of identified objectives for improving alternative transportation conditions.

Connectivity: Provide a brief description of how the proposed project will increase connectivity among a mixture of land uses and activity centers such as transit, residential neighborhoods, low-income housing, medical facilities, schools, retail, parks, employment centers, etc.

Social and Economic Impact: How will this project serve economically disadvantaged populations or aid economic development in the community?

Safety: Provide a brief description of how the proposed project will improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other transportation users.

Section 3: Project Budget

The 20% non-federal construction share of the proposed project must be provided as a hard cash match, and all preliminary engineering, design and right-of-way expenditures are solely the responsibility of the local agency. No retainage can be withheld and all TA projects must be competitively bid and awarded to the lowest responsive bidder. **No additive alternates or deductions will be allowed in the final construction cost estimate or bid documents.**

Standardized budget templates are available as a link in eGrants and located on the TAP website. Line items can be added or deleted as needed for any stage utilizing TDOT line item numbers when available; however, the TAP budget template **must** be used. Note: the structural template tab is for **Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation of Historic Transportation Facilities** only.

Access TDOT Line Item Numbers at <https://www.tdot.tn.gov/APPLICATIONS/RoadwayItems>

Pending applications will not be selected for funding until the following year with most projects not proceeding to construction for an additional two to three years. Please adjust your budget for inflation and verify your calculations.

Verify the source of the matching funds that will be provided by the Local Agency: these funds cannot be from another FHWA surface transportation source. The funding award total cannot be increased by the Department and **cost overruns are the responsibility of the Local Agency**. All figures must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Section 4: Investment of Public Funds

The project being developed must be maintained by the applicant and remain open to the public for a sufficient time commensurate with the federal investment as shown below:

| Federal Amount | Lease |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| \$1.00 - \$199,999 | 5 years from Federal close-out date |
| >\$200,000 - \$499,999 | 10 years from Federal close-out date |
| >\$500,000 - \$1,000,000 | 20 years from Federal close-out date |

Projects over \$1,000,000 carry a minimum 25 year lease and will be subject to individual review.

Section 5: Support and Public Involvement

Include the local, statewide, and legislative support for the proposed project and provide the legislative districts corresponding to the proposed project location, NOT the applicants address.

Prior to submitting an application, all applicants must hold a design public involvement meeting to notify the local community of the intended project scope. In addition, correspondence must be sent to the appropriate MPO/TPO or Rural Planning Organization (RPO) describing the proposed activity and inviting input regarding the project. The date(s) and time(s) of public meetings that were held as well as the sign-in sheet, the record of all public comments received and the disposition of said comments must be included with the completed application

Please provide all the legislative district numbers and legislator names that correspond to the proposed project location, NOT the address of the applicant.

Section 6: Right-of-Way Impact

Indicate whether all the land required for the project falls within public ownership or lease. All land required for the project must be acquired in accordance with the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs*, or 49CFR24. If the project falls within State highway right-of-way and is chosen for funding, you will be required to submit a set of plans to the TDOT Regional Traffic Engineer in order to obtain approval for the use of State highway right-of-way, and you may be required to obtain a State license agreement. This approval and agreement must be received **before** we can authorize you to proceed with the construction phase, including advertising for bids.

FHWA and the State of Tennessee, in compliance with the Supreme Court Shanklin judgment, require that any railway that may be impacted by a federally-funded transportation project, including all TAP projects and parallel pedestrian facilities, be mitigated to provide adequate protective devices (see *Chapter 6: Procedures for Dealing with RR Involvement on a Locally Managed Federally-Funded Project* of the TDOT's *Local Government Guidelines for the Management of Federal and State Funded Transportation Projects* for detailed information). The identification of those rail-highway crossing locations is the responsibility of the local agency. The cost of the protection must be included in the application budget for it to be a reimbursable element of the project scope.

Please indicate whether the application will include a pedestrian/bike bridge or tunnel or impact any existing TDOT structure.

PROJECT FUNDING

Up to eighty percent (80%) of eligible construction expenditures of a TAP project can be financed with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) must come from sources other than FHWA surface transportation funds. **TDOT no longer allows the value of preliminary engineering, right-of-way donations and donated services, material or equipment to be used toward the 20% matching share** and all preliminary engineering (PE), design and right-of-way expenditures are solely the responsibility of the local agency. Please note that the consulting firm procured for PE/Design services must be TDOT pre-qualified. This list is located on TDOT's website at <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/business-redirect/consultantinfo>.

Reimbursement: The Transportation Alternatives Program is a reimbursable program for competitively bid construction eligible related expenses and does not provide funding for preliminary engineering, design or right-of-way acquisition. Local agencies are required to pay 100% of all project invoices up-front prior to seeking reimbursement for the federal share (80%) of all eligible construction-related expenses. The preliminary engineering, design, right-of-way, twenty percent (20%) construction match and all items deemed ineligible for construction reimbursement are the sole responsibility of the local agency.

When construction is complete, the local agency shall complete (along with a TDOT representative and the local agency's construction inspector) a final inspection of the project to determine the quality, completeness, and acceptability of the work and to assure that the authorized project was constructed in accordance with the contract requirements before the final reimbursement payment will be made. The End of Job Certificate, along with other applicable close-out documents as referenced in Chapter 8 of the *Local Government Guidelines for the Management of Federal and State Funded Transportation Projects*, must be submitted for TDOT to close the project.

Cost Increases: The local agency is responsible for any cost in excess of the initial award. The local agency should carefully monitor cost increases and overruns as they may jeopardize completion of the project. If a local agency does not complete a project, they will be required to reimburse all applicable expenditures to TDOT.

Changes in Project Scope: The project is to be constructed as originally submitted in the application. Changes to the original project scope or the redirection of awarded funding are prohibited. Change orders cannot be used to reduce the construction bid once TDOT has provided concurrence of the lowest responsive bid. All change orders must be reviewed and pre-approved by TDOT and unapproved changes may prohibit the reimbursement of funding.

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Transportation Alternatives Office will evaluate all applications for completeness based on the following criteria:

- Relationship of the proposed project to surface transportation
- Verification that the project meets one or more of the 10 eligible activities
- Maps provided illustrate how the project will enhance local transportation infrastructure
- Relationship of the project to existing, proposed or future state and local transportation plans
- Detailed project budget template prepared per the instructions.

Application award goals and considerations include:

- Increase safety for all project users
- Improve access to jobs, education, services, public transit and community amenities
- Increase accessibility and mobility options
- Upgrade existing facilities to current ADA requirements
- Complete coordinating links of previously awarded multi-phase projects
- Emphasize the development of rural areas
- Concentrate on distressed and at-risk counties
- Support and enhancement of the economic vitality of the area

Please note:

- The projects proximity to a road or transportation facility does not in itself establish eligibility. Additional discussion beyond proximity is needed in the TAP project proposal to establish the relationship to transportation.
- The funded activities must be accessible to the general public at little or no charge.
- TAP funds may not be used for routine maintenance activities including the repair or replacement of non-maintained sidewalk or pedestrian facilities unless it is a component of an approved ADA Transition Plan.

PROJECT SELECTION AND ADMINISTRATION

TDOT staff reviews all applications for eligibility and provides a final report to the Commissioner of Transportation. Once final project selections are made, the TAP Coordinator will provide written confirmation of the funds awarded along with instructions in completing the Project Initiation Forms in eGrants. This notification usually occurs in the following summer prior to the next application deadline. The recipient will be responsible for administration of the project in eGrants accordance with all federal and state requirements and any other special conditions as set forth in the contract.

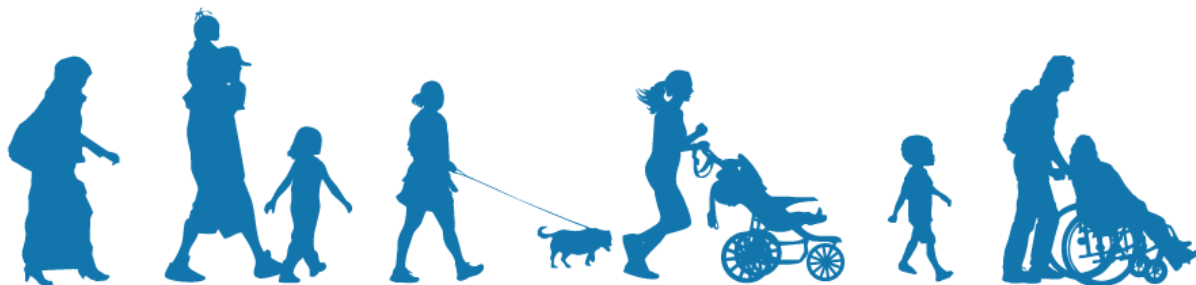
TAP is federally funded and requires the completion of many activities prior to the actual initiation of construction. **Local agencies must not proceed with any phase of project development until they complete the Project Initiation Forms, receive the fully executed contract and until issuance of the appropriate Notice to Proceed from the Transportation Alternatives Program Office.** These activities include but are not limited to:

- Approved environmental clearance (NEPA);
- TDOT Certification that the property was acquired according to Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs (49CFR24);
- Utility Certification;
- Permit application review;
- Review and concurrence by TDOT of Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E);
- Title VI Compliance;
- DBE goal, if applicable;
- Inclusion of the project in the appropriate TIP (for projects under the jurisdiction of a MPO/TPO);
- Building Commission Review (for projects in which the state has real-property interest)
- Review and approval of bid advertisement and
- Copy of design consultant/engineering contract.

All applications which are awarded federal funding will be subject to Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) goals during the construction phase. Total project costs equal to or greater than \$500,000 are required to assess a goal and submit it to TDOT for review and approval. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to assign the goal and ensure goals are met or

exceeded. For assistance in this matter, you may contact the TDOT Civil Rights Division, Small Business Development Program at (615) 741-3681 or visit the website at: <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/civil-rights/small-business-development-program>

When the local agency has completed all the requirements contained within the *Local Government Guidelines for the Management of Federal and State Funded Transportation Projects*, the TAP Office will send the Local Agency a Notice to Proceed (NTP) to Construction informing the agency that they are to advertise the project for construction. **Any work done prior to the Construction NTP, including the advertisement for bids, will not be eligible for reimbursement and may jeopardize funding for the remainder of the project.**



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