

# Call for Projects

## Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside

### Fiscal Years 2021-2023

#### **Program Description**

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area, announced the availability of Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding for transportation projects.

TA was initially authorized under Section 1122 of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21). The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act replaced the original Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) with Transportation Alternative set-aside funds under the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continued the Transportation Alternatives set-aside from the STBG program.

TA authorizes funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways.

#### **Funding Information**

Federal funding for TA is provided by the Transportation Alternatives set-aside of the STBG Program and is authorized by the FAST Act and reauthorized by the IIJA. The IIJA authorized five years of TA funding.

These funds come from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) serves as the administrator. As an MPO with an urbanized population over 200,000, TCRPC receives an annual allotment of TA funds to program. This is the second Call for Project for Fiscal Years (FY) 2021-2023. Of the available \$1,458,565, \$783,159 have been programmed because of the first Call for Projects. As a result, **a total of \$675,406 is available** for funding in this Call for Projects.

Below is an overview of the two projects awarded from the first Call for Projects.

- The Village of Germantown Hills received \$240,000 for Phase I and II Engineering for a 10-foot trail from the Village of Germantown Hills to the Village of Metamora.

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- Peoria County received \$543,159 for constructing a sidewalk on the west side of Maxwell Road from Charleston Road to Middle Road, a multi-use path on the east side of Maxwell Road from Charleston Road to Middle Road, and a multi-use path on the north side of Middle Road from Maxwell Road to Dirksen Parkway.

## **Eligibility Information**

An entity may not apply for a grant until the entity has registered and pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://gata.illinois.gov/>. Each entity should check with their county's or municipality's highest-level personnel (such as the treasurer, clerk, etc.) to see how they are currently registered in the GATA portal. Registration and pre-qualification are required annually. During pre-qualification, verifications are performed including a check of federal SAM.gov Exclusion List and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List. The Grantee Portal alerts the entity of "qualified" status or informs them how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., inactive UEI, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). Inclusion on the SAM.gov Exclusion List cannot be remediated.

## Eligible Applicants

All projects applying for TA funding must be sponsored by one or more member entities of the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area MPO. Other governmental entities within the MPO planning area are eligible only with co-sponsorship by one of the MPO member entities. A map of the MPO planning area may be found at the end of this document.

Examples of Non-MPO eligible project co-sponsors include:

- Local governments
- Transit agencies
- Natural resource or public land agencies
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools
- Tribal governments
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails

Sponsors assume responsibility and accountability for the use and expenditure of program funds. Applicants and/or implementing agencies must be able to comply with all the federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and procedures required to enter into project agreements.

## Federal Share and Matching Funds

**TA is a reimbursable program.** The Federal share for TA projects is as follows:

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- Preliminary engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering and construction are eligible for funding at an 80/20 match, i.e., 80% is TA matched by 20% sponsor share.
- Acquisition of right-of-way and easements are eligible for funding at a 50/50 match, i.e., 50% is TA funding matched by 50% sponsor share.
- Street lighting, unless in a designated historical area, also requires a 50% local match. In a designated historic area, street lighting may qualify for 80% TA with a 20% local match.

The local match does not necessarily have to be provided directly by the sponsor, but it must be a non-federal source to qualify as match. Submission of an application commits the applicant to the required match.

### **Application and Submission Information**

The application and all relevant materials will be posted on Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's website at <https://tricountyrpc.org/funding-programs/tap>, but may also be requested from TCRPC staff. To apply, applications must be completed digitally and submitted to [funding@tricountyrpc.org](mailto:funding@tricountyrpc.org) with all relevant materials in PDF format **by 3:30pm on Monday, July 31, 2023**. Applications are also accepted by mail and must be marked as TA Application. The mailing address is: 456 Fulton Street, Suite 401, Peoria, IL 61602.

Applications should include the following:

- TA Application Form
- Project Location Map
- Resolution to Commit Matching Funds
- Optional supporting documentation, such as letters of support, photographs, conceptual designs, etc.

Please direct any questions to Commission staff at (309) 673-9330 or by email at [funding@tricountyrpc.org](mailto:funding@tricountyrpc.org).

### **Submission Dates and Times**

The call for projects begins Wednesday, June 21, 2023, and ends at 3:30pm on Monday, July 31, 2023. Applications received after this date will be considered ineligible for TA funding.

### **Funding Restrictions**

All awarded funds must be used according to all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. TA funds lapse within three years if not obligated. Projects unable to meet these deadlines will be rescinded.

## Eligible Projects

A project must demonstrate a relationship to surface transportation to be eligible for TA funding. TA projects must enhance the transportation system either by serving a transportation need or providing a transportation use or benefit and not be solely for recreational use. Projects must be consistent with the goals of TCRPC's Long-Range Transportation Plan, the IIJA, and the BikeConnect HOI Regional Bicycle Plan. In addition, projects need to be constructed in reasonable, useable segments and provide logical termini.

Activities are not eligible if they are routine maintenance projects such as re-stripping a trail, cleaning up debris, or repairing a broken curb. Please be advised – if your project involves sidewalk work, you most likely will be required to update the facility to meet current ADA Accessibility Standards. That would include, but not be limited to, curb cuts and handicapped ramps at intersections and corrective measures to fix cross slopes that exceed the ADA standards.

The MPO follows guidance from the FHWA. The FHWA has prepared a document, [Transportation Alternatives Guidance](#), which outlines all eligible activities. Additionally, the FHWA has a [Transportation Alternative Fact Sheet](#). IDOT also offers TA guidance with their [Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program \(ITEP\)](#).

**23 U.S.C. 133(h)(3)(A):** Projects or Activities described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) or 23 U.S.C. 213 as in effect prior to the enactment of the FAST Act. Those sections contained the following eligible projects:

Under 23 U.S.C. 213(b), eligible activities under the TA program consists of:

1. Transportation Alternatives as defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) (MAP-21 §1103):
  - A. Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.).
  - B. Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
  - C. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
  - D. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.

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- E. Community improvement activities, which include but are not limited to:
- i. inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising
  - ii. historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
  - iii. vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control
  - iv. archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under title 23
- F. Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:
- i. address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329 of title 23; or
  - ii. reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
2. The recreational trails program under section 206 of title 23.
3. The safe routes to school program eligible projects and activities listed at section 1404(f) of the SAFETEA-LU: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe\\_routes\\_to\\_school/overview/legislation.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/overview/legislation.cfm)
- Safe Routes to School was formerly a stand-alone program, but is now one of the eligible activities under TA:
- A. Infrastructure-related projects.
  - B. Non-infrastructure-related activities.
  - C. Safe Routes to School coordinator.
4. Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.
5. An urbanized area with a population of more than 200,000 to use up to 50% of its suballocated TA funds for any STBG-eligible purpose (but still subject to the TA-wide requirement for competitive selection of projects); and [23 U.S.C. 133(h)(6)(B)]

TA funds cannot be used for:

- Promotional activities, except as permitted under the SRTS.

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- General recreation and park facilities, playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, etc.
- Routine maintenance and operations.

### Eligible Project Phases and Costs

The sponsor must prepare (or have prepared by an engineering or architectural firm) an accurate cost estimate for all types of work involved with the TA project. Agencies or their consultants should be knowledgeable about estimating these types of project costs and the requirements of utilizing Federal funds.

- The costs eligible for reimbursement are:
  - Preliminary engineering
  - Utility relocations
  - Right-of-way and easements
  - Construction engineering
  - Construction

Preliminary engineering is divided into two phases. Phase I Engineering (PE I) is the design and environmental study that determines the best overall approach to and the location of a project, addresses environmental concerns, prepares a cost estimate, and defines the scope of work. Phase II Engineering (PE II) consists of preparation of final construction plans, summary of quantities, specifications, and final cost estimate.

Utility relocations include any costs not covered in an existing utility agreement for relocation of power lines, telephone lines, gas lines, and other utilities affected by the TA project. Rights-of-way (ROWS) or easements include acquiring land or rights necessary for the construction of the project. Buildings cannot be purchased with enhancement funds. Construction Engineering (CE) involves the supervision of construction. Construction includes all materials and labor costs necessary to complete the construction of the project.

Any costs associated with the project that are necessary for implementing the TA project are eligible. For example, costs for environmental mitigation required for the project would be eligible costs of a project.

Feasibility and planning studies are not project-specific and therefore are ineligible costs. Projects can have enhancement eligible items and ineligible items implemented in the same project if the project elements are similar in construction procedures. The eligible and ineligible project elements must be separated in the local or interagency agreements, summary of quantities, plans, and contracts.

The project sponsor is responsible for 100% of any ineligible costs.

## **Application Review Information**

All TA project applications submitted by the deadline will be evaluated for funding using the project scoring and evaluation criteria, selection process, and anticipated scheduled reviews in this section of the Call for Projects.

### Project Scoring and Evaluation Criteria

The scoring and evaluation criteria included in the TA application is below.

Criterion	Maximum Points Available
<i>Self-Scored on Application</i>	
Consistency with LRTP 2045: TCRPC’s Long Range Transportation Plan	10
Jurisdiction’s Long Range or Comprehensive Plan	10
Co-Sponsorship	10
Documented Public Involvement	10
Documented Community Support	10
Intermodal Connections	10
Infrastructure and Facilities	10
Safety Factors	10
Project Schedule and Readiness	5
<i>Determined by Subcommittee</i>	
Public Benefits – Usage	10
Public Benefits – Value	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

### Project Review and Selection Process

TCRPC staff will review all TA project application submittals to ensure project eligibility and application completeness and accuracy. Staff will verify all relevant documentation, such as the LRTP or local comprehensive plans. When developing the proposed program, timely implementation will be considered as a major factor in project selection, as TA funds lapse within three years. For example, the FY 2021 TA funds must be obligated by September 30, 2024. Staff may request to have discussions with sponsors to verify project details and assess complications that might affect project readiness.

A TA subcommittee consisting of selected Technical Committee members will evaluate each application and assign scores to the “Public Benefits” section of the application, for a maximum of fifteen points total. **IMPORTANT:** The total point scores are a guide for programming decisions. The subcommittee may recommend funding a lower-scoring project over a higher-scoring project. It is at the discretion of the subcommittee to determine their reasoning for a recommendation, if not solely relying on point totals. However, any reasoning

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must be clearly documented and articulated in the final recommendation to the Technical Committee.

Additional TA funds will not be available beyond the initial programmed amounts without approval of the Commission; any increases in project costs will be the responsibility of the sponsors. Likewise, if a jurisdiction changes the scope of a project, after the funds are awarded, the project must be reviewed again and approved by the Commission before previously awarded funds are used for activities not included in the original scope of work.

### Anticipated Schedule and Programming Date

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>June 21, 2023</b>	Issue call for projects and publish applications on website
<b>July 31, 2023</b>	TA applications due to TCRPC staff by 3:30 pm
<b>Week of August 1, 2023</b>	Staff reviews applications, ensuring completeness and validity
<b>August 16, 2023</b>	Project proposals presented during Technical Committee meeting
<b>August 16, 2023</b>	Establish TA Subcommittee during Technical Committee meeting
<b>August 29, 2023 (est.)</b>	TA Subcommittee convenes, reviews applications, assigns “Public Benefits” scores, and makes recommendation to Technical Committee
<b>September 20, 2023</b>	Technical Committee considers TA Subcommittee recommendation
<b>October 4, 2023</b>	Commission considers Technical Committee recommendation and programs TA funding

### **Award Administration Information**

The TA project selection process is transparent at the MPO level. Project presentations and the formation of a TA Subcommittee occur at the Technical Committee meeting following the application due date. The TA Subcommittee’s scoring results and recommendations are presented to the Technical Committee for the members to review and recommend to the Commission. The Commission members will in turn review and program the funding allotments.

#### Award notices

Following program approval, all applicants are notified, and successful sponsor(s) are requested to work with IDOT and TCRPC staff to initiate the awarded projects.

#### Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Federal: 23 USC 133(h), IIJA 1109; State: 20 ILCS 2701/615



## Reporting

The Uniform Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and the Uniform Periodic Financial Report (PFR) have been combined into IDOT's BoBS1 2832 Reporting Form. Quarterly reporting will be required unless more frequent reporting is required pursuant to specific award conditions.

These reports will describe the expenditure(s) of the funds and performance measures related thereto. The first BoBS 2832 report shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Quarterly reports must be submitted no later than thirty (30) calendar days following the three-month period covered by the report. Failure to submit the required BoBS 2832 report may cause a delay or suspension of funding.

The FHWA is responsible for generating a report on the status of TA and project details. IDOT works with the FHWA on this report, which is submitted annually to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and made available to the public. Additional reporting for individual projects may be necessary for projects not moving to completion in a timely manner.

## **Awarding Agency Contact**

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission  
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401  
Peoria, IL 61602

Phone: (309) 673-9330

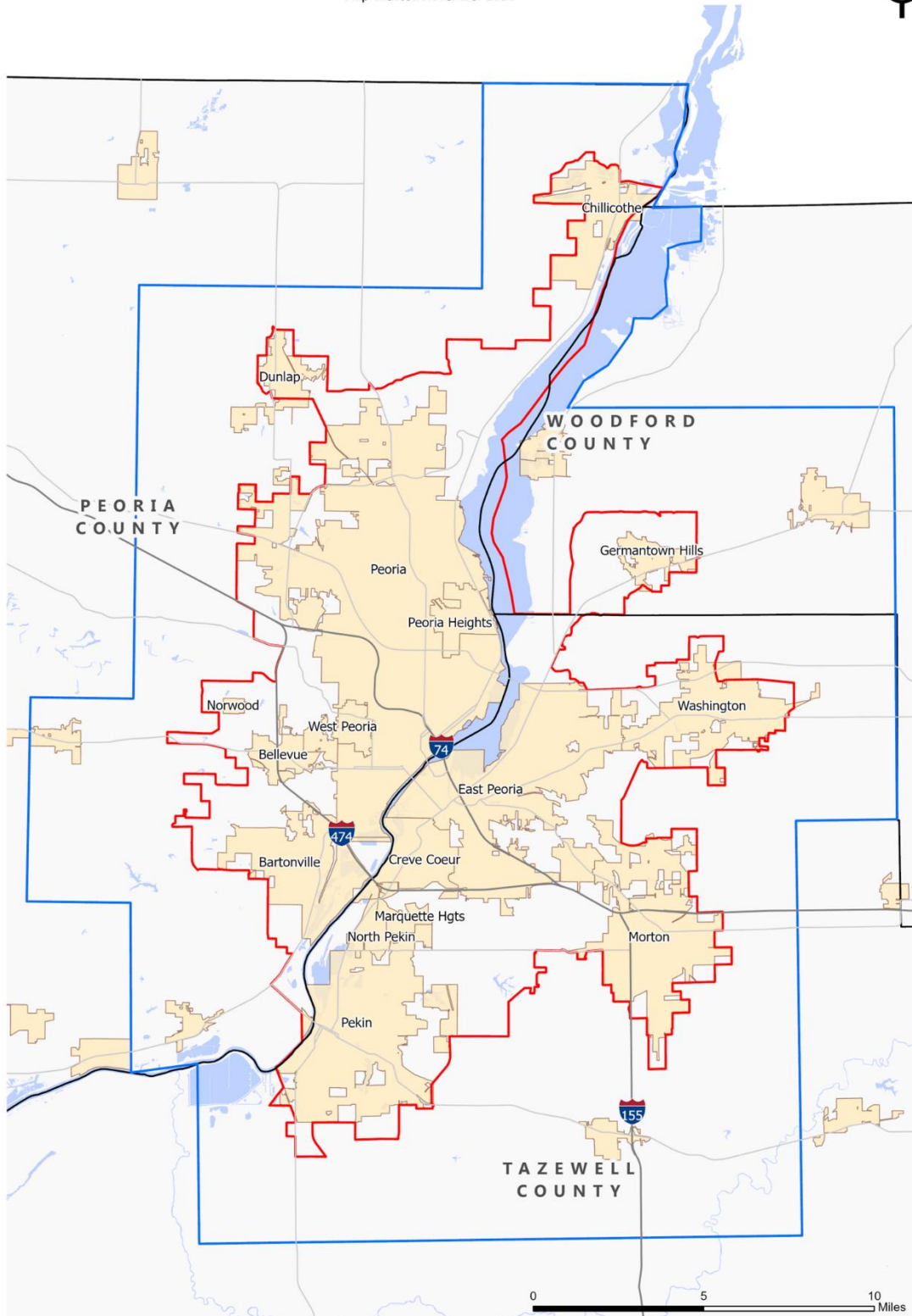
Email: [funding@tricityrpc.org](mailto:funding@tricityrpc.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Business Services

# 2010 Urbanized Area and 20-Year Planning Boundary

Approved by PPUATS Policy Committee May 7th, 2014  
Map Created November 2021



- Interstate
- Other Highways
- ▭ 20 Year Planning Boundary
- ▭ Tri-County Boundaries
- ▭ Urbanized Area
- ▭ Municipal Boundary
- ▭ Hydrology

