

Call for Projects

Fiscal Years 2018-2020 Transportation Alternatives (TAP) Funding

Introduction

The Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS)—the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area—announces the availability of Transportation Alternatives (TAP) funding for transportation projects. These funds come from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and are administered through the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). As an MPO with an urbanized population over 200,000, PPUATS receives an annual allotment of TAP funds to program. PPUATS' FY18 allotment is \$293,959, FY19 is estimated to be \$293,959, and FY20 is estimated to be \$293,959.

TAP funds projects that expand transportation options for non-drivers and that improve quality of life by enhancing the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of existing transportation infrastructure.

Background

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act replaced the former Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) with a set-aside of funds under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG). For reduce confusion, PPUATS will refer to the set-aside as TAP funds. TAP 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.

How to Apply

The call for projects begins July 18, 2018 and ends at 4:30pm on Friday, September 21, 2018. Applications received after this date will be considered ineligible for TAP funding.

The application and all relevant materials will be posted at <https://tricountyrpc.org/funding-programs/tap>. To apply, one must complete the application and submit it along with all relevant materials to rharms@tricountyrpc.org in PDF format. Applications are also accepted by mail. The mailing address is: 456 Fulton Street, Suite 401, Peoria, IL 61602.

Eligible Applicants

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

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

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

Eligible Projects

A project must demonstrate a relationship to surface transportation to be eligible for TAP funding. TAP 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 PPUATS' Long-Range Transportation Plan, the FAST Act, and *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-striping 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 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA has prepared a document, *Transportation Alternatives Guidance*, which may be publicly accessed at the website:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm. Included in this website are all the eligible activities. IDOT also offers TAP guidance on their website at <http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/ITEP>.

Under 23 U.S.C. 213(b), eligible activities under the TAP 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.
 - 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; and
 - 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

Safe Routes to School was formerly a stand-alone program, but is now one of the eligible activities under TAP:

- 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)]

TAP funds cannot be used for:

- Promotional activities, except as permitted under the SRTS.
- 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 TAP 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. The 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 an estimate of cost and defines the scope of work. The 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 TAP project. Right-of-way (ROW) 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 TAP 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 as long as 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 contract.

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

Federal Share and Matching Funds

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

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

Project Scoring and Evaluation Criteria

The scoring and evaluation criteria included in the TAP application are included below:

Criterion	Maximum Points Available
<i>Self-Scored on Application</i>	
Consistency with Envision HOI: Heart of Illinois 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
TOTAL	100

Programming Process

All TAP project applications submitted by the deadline will be evaluated for funding. All project submittals will be reviewed by staff to ensure project eligibility and application completeness and accuracy. Staff will verify all documentation for points, 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 TAP funds do lapse within three years. For example, the FY 2018 TAP funds must be obligated by September 30, 2021. Staff may request to have discussions with sponsors to verify project details and assess complications that might affect project readiness.

A TAP subcommittee consisting of selected Technical Committee members will evaluate each application and assigns scores to the "Public Benefits" section of the application, for a maximum of 15 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 must be clearly documented and articulated in the final recommendation to the Technical Committee.

Following program approval by the PPUATS Technical and Policy Committees, the sponsor(s) will then be requested to work with IDOT and PPUATS staff to initiate the projects.

Additional TAP funds will not be available beyond the initial programmed amounts without approval of the Policy Committee; 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 Policy Committee before previously awarded funds are used for activities not included in the original scope of work.

Programming Schedule

Date	Action
July 18, 2018	Issue call for projects and send applications to jurisdictions
August 15, 2018	Hold application informational session during Technical meeting
September 21, 2018	TAP applications due to TCRPC staff by 4:30pm
Week of Sept 24, 2018	Staff reviews applications, ensuring completeness and validity
October 17, 2018	Project proposals presented during Technical meeting
October 17, 2018	Establish subcommittee during Technical meeting
October 24, 2018 (est.)	Subcommittee convenes, reviews applications, assigns scores to 'Public Benefits' section and makes recommendation to Technical
November 21, 2018	Technical considers subcommittee recommendation
December 5, 2018	Policy considers Technical recommendation