

FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

PROGRAM (TAP)

INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) PROJECT
APPLICATION**

1. Conception
 - a. Determine a project scope of work. Thorough planning efforts are necessary to avoid changes in scope, which will be rarely considered.
 - b. Review the project for eligibility. The project must comply with at least one of the eligible activities and must have a relationship to surface transportation.
 - c. Determine project location. The project must be located within the Mobile Metropolitan Organization Study Area Boundary.
 - d. Sponsor must include a public involvement meeting as part of the project determination process. A summary of this meeting must be included in the narrative section of the application.

2. Complete the Project Application
 - a. The order of the application should be as follows: 1) Cover Letter, 2) Application Cover Page, 3) General Information, 4) Project Description Information, 5) Project Budget, and 6) Attachments.
 - b. Explanations should be thorough and concise. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
 - c. If a section is not applicable to your proposed project, mark "NA" in the appropriate space.
 - d. Do not alter the application format.
 - e. Attachments larger than 8 ½" x 11" must be folded to the 8 ½" x 11" format so that they can be accessed when stapled in the upper left corner.

3. Prepare ten original applications. Keep a copy for your files.

4. Staple each application in the upper left corner. Please do not send a bound project application.

5. Send or deliver the applications to:
Transportation Planning Department
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
110 Beauregard Street, Suite 207
Mobile, Alabama 36602

By 12:00 p.m., Friday, June 2, 2017

NOTE: Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for funding. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. Due to the limited amount of TAP funds available, not all applications may be able to be approved.

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)
ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE PROJECT SPONSORS**

Eligible Entities: the eligible entities to receive TAP funds are:

- A. Local Governments;
- B. Any other local or regional Government entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation (other than a Metropolitan Planning Organization or State Agency) that is determined to be eligible.

Ineligible Entities: In addition, the State of Alabama, at its discretion, declared the following entities not eligible to receive TAP funds:

- A. Nonprofits are not eligible as direct grant recipients of TAP funds. Nonprofits are eligible to partner with any eligible entity;
- B. Regional Transportation Authorities;
- C. Transit Agencies;
- D. Natural Resource or Public Land Agencies;
- E. School District, Local education Agencies, or Schools;
- F. Universities and Colleges;
- G. Tribal Governments.

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)
ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

NOTE: There is no requirement that TAP projects be located along federal-aid highways.

Eligible Activities:

- A. Construction of on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, transportation related trails, streetscapes (combination of sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, and landscaping) and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- B. Construction 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 including
 - o Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
 - o Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
 - o Vegetation management practices in transportation right-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and;
 - o 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-
 - o Address storm water management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff.
 - o Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

Ineligible Activities:

- A. Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- B. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
- C. Scenic or historic highway programs (including visitor and welcome centers);
- D. Historic preservation as an independent activity unrelated to historic transportation facilities;

- E. Operation of historic preservation facilities;
- F. Archaeological planning and research undertaken for proactive planning. This category now must be used only as mitigation for highway projects;
- G. Transportation museums;
- H. Landscaping and scenic enhancements as an independent project;
- I. Pedestrian and bicycle signals;
- J. Traffic calming techniques;
- K. Roadway lighting;
- L. Safety-related infrastructure;
- M. Planning and design of TAP projects.

PROJECT APPLICATION ANALYSIS AND SELECTION

The following steps are utilized to analyze the project applications and to determine which applications get selected for funding:

Step 1. The first review, conducted by the Mobile MPO Transportation Planning Staff, is to determine project eligibility. An application must meet the following criteria for eligibility to be considered for funding:

- Application is submitted on time.
- Proposed work complies with one or more of the eligible activities.
- The project is related to the surface transportation system.
- Project budget was completed by a Professional Engineer that is certified by the State of Alabama.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

Step 2. The second review, conducted by the Project Selection Committee, rates the application.

Step 3. The applications are then selected for funding by the Project Selection Committee

Step 4. The Project Selection Committee notifies the sponsor, in writing, that the application has been approved for funding.

Step 5. The Project Selection Committee notifies the sponsor of nonselection and of applications that have been deemed not eligible.

NOTE: A letter, as stated in Steps 4 and 5, will be written to sponsors of the projects that are funded, as soon as the selections are made, and sponsors of projects not funded will be notified also.

REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

1. Transportation Alternative Program funds are federal funds, all applicable federal regulations apply. Failure to follow federal regulations will jeopardize funding.
2. The project sponsor must be a local or regional Government entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation (other than a Metropolitan Planning Organization or State Agency).
3. Sponsor must include a public involvement meeting as part of the project determination process. A summary of this meeting must be included in the narrative section of the application.
4. The project application must be submitted by the government sponsor. Applications submitted by private non-profit agencies, coalitions, consultants, or grant writers will not be accepted.
5. The project sponsor must have the fiscal, managerial and engineering capabilities to manage a project consistent with federal and state requirements.
 - a. Sponsor is responsible for developing plans, specifications and cost estimate (all preliminary engineering activities) in accordance with the newly approved ALDOT Local Public Agency (LPA) manual.
 - b. Sponsor is responsible for compliance with all federal design regulations applicable for the type project (i.e. AASHTO Guide for Bicycle Facilities, ADA, Architectural Guidelines, etc.).
 - c. Sponsor is responsible for compliance with the environmental review process and meeting Davis Bacon reporting requirements.
 - d. Sponsor is responsible for 20 percent of the project cost (there is no allowance for use of donated property or in-kind service as the local share).
 - e. Sponsor is responsible for any environmental assessments which may be required.
 - f. Sponsor is responsible for professional project oversight (construction engineering and inspection) and it is eligible for federal reimbursement.
 - g. Any cost incurred relating to this project which is determined to be not eligible will be paid by the sponsor.
6. The planned intent of the project must be for public use.
7. Project budgets should be itemized and completed by a Professional Engineer that is certified by the State of Alabama.
8. **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requirements and USDOT regulations must be met. The project sponsor is responsible for insuring that the project is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and USDOT regulations. If the project is found to be not in compliance, the federal funds used to complete the project may have to be repaid to the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization.**

9. The maximum amount of federal funds that your agency may apply for is \$200,000.
10. The federal share of the project cost is 80%. Sponsor's share is 20%.
11. Only property acquisition, actual construction costs and construction engineering and inspection are eligible for federal participation.
12. Professional fees (architectural, engineering, landscaping, etc.) for preliminary engineering are not eligible for reimbursement. Also, administration costs for the project are not eligible for reimbursement.
13. The program is a cost reimbursement program, not a grant. The sponsor must pay the project expenses and request reimbursement for eligible expenditures from ALDOT.
14. Any cost incurred prior to written authorization is not eligible for reimbursement. Sponsor must receive approval, in writing, prior to advertising for bids. Sponsor must also receive approval, in writing, prior to awarding the contract.
15. Project must be let to competitive bid unless prior approval is obtained from ALDOT and FHWA to use another method of construction, such as force account.
16. Construction must begin within two years from the date of execution of the project agreement. **If** the sponsor does not meet this requirement, then the project funds will be withdrawn and the funds will then be used for other projects.
17. The Mobile MPO endorses, but does not require, the use of Xeriscaping techniques and the use of native plants for projects that include landscaping in their proposed scope of work. Xeriscaping is the application of sound horticultural practices in the development of quality landscapes using native and drought tolerant plants that conserve water and protect the environment.
18. Project oversight (construction engineering and inspection) is an eligible activity. **If** the sponsor chooses to hire a consultant for project oversight and pay for the consultant with federal funds through the project, then they must follow ALDOT's latest consultant selection procedures.
19. Entities are welcome to submit more than one application per funding year.

ELIGIBLE ITEMS

Streetscape Improvements are eligible and should include items such as sidewalk replacement, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, etc. These enhancements must be located in the downtown area (central business district in front of store fronts). This is the only instance where replacement of deteriorated sidewalks is an eligible item.

Curb Cut -to achieve ADA compliance.

Lighting when it is decorative landscape or pedestrian lighting. **Lighting is limited to 30% of the project cost.**

Landscaping as included in a streetscape project.

Signs if there is a direct relationship to the project: Examples include historic interpretation or destination/distance/direction signs.

Fencing for safety purposes only.

Paving is approved on a case-by-case basis for repair of a street that may have been unavoidably damaged in the course of the enhancement project. Historic streets may be restored or preserved.

Drainage is approved on a case-by-case basis where it is required for construction of the project. Drainage is limited to a small percentage of the overall project.

Project Oversight- Construction engineering and inspection: Examples include: certified concrete, architectural, landscaping, and construction inspection, etc. **Oversight is limited to 15% of the project cost.** If the sponsor chooses to hire a consultant for project oversight, they must follow ALDOT's latest consultant selection procedures.

INELIGIBLE ITEMS

Hardscapes (e.g. signs at entrances to cities, fencing, water fountains, towers, flag poles, statues, etc.)

Landscaping along minor roads/streets (residential areas)

Enhancements such as sidewalks, landscaping and lighting on the interior of educational institutions.

Street lighting, traffic signals, flashers

Parking lots (stand alone)

Amphitheaters

Pavilions

Walking tracks and circular paths. The project should move users from point A to point B.

Enhancements to parks, playgrounds, and installation of exercise equipment

Curb and gutter (unless absolutely necessary for sidewalk construction or as an integral part of a streetscape.

Preliminary Engineering and design. (Consultation engineering fees, architectural fees, etc.)

Curb and gutter islands

Sidewalks along dirt roads

Sidewalks in residential areas (unless the sidewalks lead to business, schools, public use facilities)

Sidewalk rehabilitation

Operations or maintenance activities

Annual plants

Highway and Bridge construction (resurfacing, milling, concrete islands, etc.)

Utilized as matching funds for other federal transportation funded projects

Enhancements on proposed projects, streets, roads, bridges, etc.

In-Kind Services cannot be used for local match requirement

Profit, overhead and taxes

Workmanship warranties