

2014
LEGISLATIVE REPORT
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM



2014 Legislative Report for the Transportation Alternatives Program

Introduction:

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) was authorized by the most recent Federal transportation funding Act - the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) that was signed into law on July 6, 2012, and went into effect at the beginning of the 2013 federal fiscal year. The Transportation Alternatives Program redefines the former Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities and consolidates these eligibilities with the Safe Routes to School and the Recreational Trails Programs. It provides an opportunity for local governments to pursue non-traditional transportation related activities such as pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian streetscaping projects. Furthermore, the program improves the quality of life in communities across the state by allowing citizens the means to take on projects that might not otherwise be possible. Since 1992, the SCDOT Commission has elected to allocate a portion of available funds for the TE Program and has continued this practice through TAP.

In July of 2007, the South Carolina General Assembly passed Act 114. Section 57-1-370 of the Act authorizes the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission to award federal transportation enhancement funds. Annually, the Commission is required to submit a report to the Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House of Representative Ways and Means Committee, and Chairman of the House of Representative Education and Public Works Committee describing the number of federal transportation enhancement grants that were awarded and the recipients of the grants. Although Section 57-1-370 refers to them as “grants”, these project awards are actually authorizations for reimbursement of eligible transportation enhancement project expenditures.

SCDOT’s TAP Committee:

The TAP Committee is composed of two SCDOT Commissioners and is responsible for recommending to the full Commission the appropriate eligible projects to be funded with federal TAP funds. Also, the Committee reviews and recommends program policies. The current members of the Committee are:

1. Commissioner Samuel Glover – Committee Chairman,
Sixth Congressional District
2. Commissioner Woodrow Willard Jr. – Fourth Congressional District

Project Qualifications:

The following eligibilities are authorized in MAP-21 for the Transportation Alternatives Program:

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including non-motorized paths, that:

- Connect and develop documented regional or statewide non-motorized transportation networks.
- Are appropriate for the need and user types targeted.
- Benefit state tourism or economic development initiatives.
- If locally significant, have strong transportation connection and involve planning efforts or serve as connectors to regional networks.
- Are a priority on SCDOT, county or regional non-motorized transportation plans.
- Address documented safety deficiencies.
- Are part of a broader non-TAP funded non-motorized system.

For the Transportation Alternatives Program, a pedestrian is not only defined as a person traveling by foot but also “any mobility impaired person using a wheel chair.” The definition of a bicycle transportation facility is “a new or improved lane, path, or shoulder for use by bicyclists and a traffic control device, shelter, or parking facility for bicycles.” Bicycle and pedestrian projects must be “principally for transportation, rather than recreation purposes.” It must also demonstrate a logical sense of connectivity.

Streetscape Improvements, that:

- Are located in established traditional downtowns or historic districts.
- Use a creative design approach that enhances pedestrian safety and takes into account the community identity, history, context, and the human environment.
- Accomplish multiple goals (traffic calming, pedestrian safety, tied with other initiatives, etc.).
- Receive input and support from citizens, local businesses, economic developers, traffic engineers, etc.

Safe Routes To School Program, that:

- Meet the requirements under section 1404 of the previous Federal Transportation Act, SAFETEA-LU.

Project Competitive Factors:

The Federal Transportation funding Act, MAP-21, stipulates all eligible projects would be selected through a competitive selection process. The factors associated with this process are as follows:

Financial factors

- Realistic expectations and cost
- A high level of local match funding and ability to pay
- Non-participating work that is determined to be a benefit to the TAP project

Public input

- Consistency with adopted plans, policies, or other investments
- Opportunity and evidence of public involvement

Safety and Livability

- Addresses safety
- Enhances livability, demonstrates quality of experience, improves quality of life, and improves population health
- Total population served and level of exposure or access including the amount or density of nearby population or employment

Coordinated efforts

- Project supporting a community's Complete Streets policy, is on a designated state or national bicycle trail, or is part of a statewide initiative, provides connectivity among other facilities or regions of activity, adds to or enhances existing network
- Completes planned corridors, fills gaps
- Paired with other infrastructure work
- Part of an economic development or community improvement initiative

Constructability

- Technical Merit including feasibility, meeting design standards, realistic scope/schedule/budget and project readiness

Maintenance factors

- Evidence of a strong maintenance plan that includes tasks, schedule, cost, source of maintenance funding, and responsible parties

Previous Transportation Enhancement (TE) and TAP funding

- Number and scale of previously awarded projects
- Timely implementation and appropriate maintenance on previous projects

Applicants:

MAP-21 authorizes the following entities to apply for TAP Funding:

- Local governments
- Regional Transportation Authorities
- Transit Agencies
- Natural Resources or public lands 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 (other than a Transportation Metropolitan Area or a State agency that the State determines to be eligible)

Funding:

*The divisions for the population-based suballocation are:

- \$2.940 Million - In urbanized areas of the State with an urbanized area population of over 200,000, also known as a Transportation Management Area
- \$1.798 Million - In areas of the State other than urban areas with a population greater than 5,000
- \$2.549 Million - In areas of the state with a population less than 5,000

*These 2014 suballocation amounts are available through Federal Fiscal Year 2017 for obligations

Project Awards:

TAP funds are provided to local governments through two segments:

- **Transportation Management Areas** - Urbanized areas of the State with an area population greater than 200,000 are known as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). The policy committees for the state's six TMAs determine how the funds are distributed among the projects throughout their Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning area through a competitive selection process in consultation with SCDOT. The amount of funding allocated to each MPO in these urban areas is based on proportion of population and specifically identified in the federal regulations. Applications for TAP funding located in an urbanized area should be submitted to the MPO, and are considered separately from other statewide applications. MPOs in a TMA will submit the application to the SCDOT's Local Program Office for final approval. The proposed project would be identified in the area's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document. Once placed in the TIP, applications for TAP funds would be used to verify eligibility and prepare contracts.
- **Non-Transportation Management Areas** – Governmental bodies located within an MPO planning area not designated as a TMA, and all other applicants not located within an MPO planning area would be eligible for funding under the statewide allocation through a competitive selection process. All applications would be reviewed by SCDOT's staff to ensure eligibility under the Federal Highway Administration's guidelines for TAP Projects. Proposed projects under the statewide program are approved by the SCDOT Commission and limited to a maximum of \$400,000 for each project. SCDOT's Commission would determine how the funds are distributed. Governmental bodies located within MPO areas that are not designated Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) would coordinate through their respective MPO prior to submitting an application to SCDOT, and if the project is awarded, it would then be incorporated in the MPO's TIP. If an applicant has an existing project that is less than 50% complete then submittal of another application is not allowable. Projects would only be approved up to the funds available on an annual basis.

SCDOT Commission approved funding for the following Transportation Alternatives Projects for FY 2014:

Transportation Management Areas Projects

In urbanized areas of the state with an urbanized area population of over 200,000

<i>CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</i>	<i>COUNTY</i>	<i>APPLICANT</i>	<i>PROJECT NAME</i>	<i>FEDERAL FUNDS</i>
2	Aiken	City of North Augusta	Greenway-Bergen Road Tunnel Crossing	\$321,408.00
2	Lexington	City of Cayce	Riverland Drive Sidewalk Improvements Phase II	\$80,395.12
2	Lexington	Town of Irmo	Church Street Sidewalk Improvements	\$72,747.00
2	Lexington	Town of Irmo	Eastview Drive Sidewalk Improvements	\$45,864.00
2	Lexington	Town of Lexington	Augusta Highway Sidewalk Improvements Phase II	\$145,000.00
2	Lexington	Town of Lexington	South Church Street Sidewalk Improvements Phase II	\$145,000.00
2	Lexington	Lexington County	Buck Corley Road Sidewalk Improvements	\$145,000.00
2	Lexington	Town of Springdale	Kitty Hawk Drive Sidewalks Improvements	\$142,170.00
5	York	City of Rock Hill	White Street Pedestrian Safety Phase I	\$139,000.00

TOTAL

\$1,236,584.12



Non- Transportation Management Area Projects:

In areas of the state other than urban areas with a population of 5,000 or more

<i>CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</i>	<i>COUNTY</i>	<i>APPLICANT</i>	<i>PROJECT NAME</i>	<i>FEDERAL FUNDS</i>
2	Lexington	Town of Batesburg-Leesville	Pedestrian Improvements	\$400,000.00
7	Florence	Florence School District One	Pedestrian Improvements	\$154,651.00
5	Cherokee	City of Gaffney	T-Bridge Improvements	\$400,000.00
7	Darlington	City of Hartsville	Fourth Street Pedestrian Safety	\$398,739.00
TOTAL				\$1,353,390.00

In areas of the state with a population less than 5,000

<i>CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</i>	<i>COUNTY</i>	<i>APPLICANT</i>	<i>PROJECT NAME</i>	<i>FEDERAL FUNDS</i>
2	Aiken	Town of New Ellenton	Main Street (SC 19) Pedestrian Walkways	\$400,000.00
2	Lexington	Town of Summit	Pedestrian Improvements	\$216,270.00
4	Spartanburg	Town of Lyman	Lyman Livability Connections	\$400,000.00
5	Cherokee	Town on Blacksburg	Pedestrian Improvements	\$140,000.00
6	Bamberg	Town of Ehrhardt	Sidewalks Improvements along US 601	\$86,160.00
6	Hampton	Town of Hampton	Lee Avenue Pedestrian Streetscape Improvements	\$400,000.00
6	Clarendon	City of Manning	Millstreet Streetscape	\$400,000.00
TOTAL				\$2,042,430.00



SCDOT's TAP Office:

SCDOT partners with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to administer fiscal activities and program compliance for the Federal Transportation Alternatives Program. The TAP Office is responsible for reviewing and administering the program, assisting Local Public Agency's (LPAs) in project applications, monitoring project budgets and supporting the SCDOT Commission in program activities.

The mission of the SCDOT TAP Office is to facilitate and provide an opportunity for local governments to pursue expanding travel choices, strengthening the local economy, improving the quality of life, and protecting the environment. The TAP Office works with LPAs during the developmental stages of projects to ensure that proposed projects are in compliance with federal and state guidelines mandated for the program.

Questions regarding the Transportation Alternatives Program can be directed to the SCDOT Transportation Alternatives Office at (803) 737-1952.

