



# Transportation Alternatives Program Guidelines and Application

# **Transportation Alternatives Program Guidance**

## **The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):**

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) partners with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in facilitating and providing an opportunity for local governments to pursue non-traditional transportation-related activities such as pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian streetscaping projects. TAP improves the quality of life for citizens in communities across the state by providing local governments the means to pursue projects that might not otherwise be possible. The Federal Transportation Funding Act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), that was signed into law on July 6, 2012, authorized the program. TAP builds upon the legacy of the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program by expanding travel choices, strengthening the local economy, improving the quality of life, and protecting the environment. The most recent Transportation Funding Act, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, continues funding TAP.

## **GDOT Awards TAP Funds to Local Governments in two (2) population categories:**

This call for projects is limited to two (2) population areas of the state of Georgia, as outlined below:

- For TAP funds sub-allocated to small urban areas (i.e., areas with populations of 5,001 to 200,000), the GDOT is responsible for selecting TAP projects through a competitive process. The State may make these funds available for projects anywhere within the metropolitan planning area boundaries of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving an urbanized area with a population less than or equal to 200,000.
- For TAP funds sub-allocated to smaller areas (i.e., areas with populations below 5,000), the GDOT is responsible for selecting TAP projects through a competitive process. Projects are only approved up to the funds available in the population area on an annual basis.
- MPOs with populations greater than 200,000 are designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Potential project sponsors within the TMAs must seek TAP funding through their local MPO.

## **Authorized Applicants:**

- 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 an MPO or a State agency that the State determines to be eligible)

State DOTs and MPOs are not eligible entities as defined under 213(c)(4)(B) to sponsor TAP project funding. However, State DOTs and MPOs may partner with an eligible entity project sponsor to carry out a project.

Non-Governmental Organizations are eligible to partner with a government entity when applying for funding.

Local government entities include any unit of local government below a State government agency, except for MPOs. Examples include city, town, or county agencies.

Transit agencies include any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Natural resource or public land agencies include any Federal, Tribal, State, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land administration. Examples include: State or local park or forest agencies, State or local fish and game or wildlife agencies, Department of the Interior Land Management Agencies and U.S. Forest Service.

### **Funding Requirements for This Call for Projects:**

- This call for projects is limited to areas of the state with a population greater than 5,000, but less than 200,000 and areas of the state with a population of less than 5,000 (two separate areas with a defined amount of funding available for each area).
- The minimum amount of funding requested for each project is \$1,000,000. The maximum amount is the pool limit. The minimum amount can be the sum of preliminary engineering (PE) cost, right of way (ROW) cost, and construction (CST) cost.
- At least one phase of the project must be ready for funding to be federally authorized in the state fiscal year 2022. The state fiscal year begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> and continues through June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. The funding authorized in the fiscal year can be for any project phase.
- Project sponsors should be Local Administered Project (LAP) certified through GDOT.

### **Eligible Projects as Authorized by TAP:**

**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 GDOT, county, or regional non-motorized transportation plans
- Address documented pedestrian/bike deficiencies
- Are part of a broader non-TAP funded non-motorized system

**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 human environment
- Accomplish multiple goals such as the following but not limited to: traffic calming, enhancement, aesthetics, pedestrian safety, tied with other initiatives
- Receives input and support from the public such as but not limited to citizens, local businesses, economic developers, traffic engineers

**Safe Routes to School Program, that:**

- Meet the requirements under section 1404 of the SAFETEA-LU

For TAP, a pedestrian is not only defined as a person traveling by foot but also “any mobility impaired person using a wheelchair.” 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.

**TAP funds cannot be used for:**

- State or MPO administrative purposes
- Grant administration
- Promotional activities
- General recreation and park facilities, playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, etc.
- Routine maintenance and operations
- Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites (including historic battlefields), and scenic or historic highway programs (including tourist and welcome center facilities). *Exceptions:* A few specific activities under this category are eligible for funding as TAP projects, including construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas; historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Landscaping and scenic enhancement as an independent project. However, landscaping is eligible as part of the construction of any TAP funded project. In these cases, details for long term maintenance must be provided along with details for the installation of an irrigation system if deemed necessary.
- Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings, structures, or facilities Historic preservation activities now are limited to preservation and rehabilitation activities relating to a historic transportation facility. See section 101(a)(29)(E). Operation of historic transportation facilities is not eligible under TAP.
- Archaeological planning and research. Under TAP, archaeological activities must relate to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under title 23.
- Establishment of transportation museums. There is no eligibility for this activity under TAP.

Careful consideration should be given to whether an activity falls within the eligibilities created under TAP. For more information regarding definitions of eligible activities, please refer to: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/guidance/guidance\\_2016.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm)

### **Project Competitive Factors:**

#### 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 issues
- 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 an existing network
- Completes planned corridors; fills gaps in existing networks
- 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 TE and TAP funding

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

GDOT has developed criteria to evaluate and rank proposed TAP projects. Qualified projects meeting the mandatory requirements are evaluated, scored, and ranked. As funding is available, projects are awarded to those applicants receiving the highest scores. Applicants not receiving funding during the year may resubmit their project the following year for consideration.

## **Applicant Responsibilities:**

### **Application Submission:**

Applications are accepted by GDOT's Office of Program Delivery until the close of business July 31, 2021 to the following email address: [TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov](mailto:TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov). Those projects meeting the state and federal requirements will be prioritized, evaluated, scored, and ranked.

## **Regulatory Requirements:**

The applicant must certify it complies or will comply with:

- All federally mandated requirements (such as FHWA, environmental, civil rights, debarment and fiscal management standards)
- All mandatory codes and technical standards apply to the project, such as, but not limited to, USDOT, AASHTO, and GDOT
- Any other standards that may apply to the project to include, but are not limited to, state and federal procurement procedures

## **Applicants Must Demonstrate:**

- That the project is financially feasible
- That they are capable of providing the required matching funds in cash, completing the project and planning for its ongoing maintenance of required items
- That they will indemnify GDOT of liability for the project or its maintenance and certify that there are no known or foreseeable legal impediments to the project

## **Project Administration:**

Because the TAP is a reimbursement program, applicants performing the project administration as a Local Public Agency (LPA) should be prepared to pay for the project's completion. However, successful applicants may submit invoices for reimbursement as work is completed. Any work (PE, advertising, ROW, design, or CST) started or completed before the applicant receives an executed contract with Notice to Proceed shall not be reimbursed with Federal-aid funds and will not count towards the program matching fund requirements.

LPAs may request to manage the project provided the following minimum conditions are met:

- The LPA must be adequately staffed and suitably equipped to undertake and satisfactorily complete the project.
- The LPA must provide a full-time employee to be in responsible charge of the project.
- The LPA must be LAP certified by GDOT according to Departmental policies and FHWA Guidelines.
- All applicable federal and state requirements shall be completed and documented.
- The LPA will be responsible for providing the matching funds at the time the initial project development stage begins.
- A "soft match" is not allowed.

If GDOT determines the LPA is not qualified to manage the project, GDOT may manage the project through the Plan Development Process (PDP) or applicable standard and published guidelines. The LPA will be responsible for providing the matching funds at the time the initial project development stage begins.

### **Local Administered Project (LAP) Manual and Certification:**

The main purpose of the GDOT LAP Manual is to assist Local Agency personnel (a public agency, local public agency, established public owned organization, or private interest that can legally enter into an agreement with GDOT for a transportation project) involved in the design, construction, and management of state and federally funded projects. The following is a link to the GDOT LAP page: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Local/LAP>.

### **Project Requirements:**

Applicants for TAP funds must provide at least 20% of the total project costs in matching funds. The minimum request for total project award is \$1,000,000 and the maximum request is the pool limit. The local match must be a “hard match” (cash).

GDOT encourages matching funds in excess of the minimum 20% required under federal code. At the same time, it is recognized that the capacity to raise matching funds varies among communities. Availability of matching funds is evaluated during the project review stage as well as the percentage of the match to the overall project cost. A “soft match” is not allowed as part of the sponsor’s match. The applicant must provide a hard match (cash) as their required participation due to stringent mandatory federal reporting requirements. Any design, labor, or work on a proposed project performed prior to receipt of an executed participation agreement and a formal Notice to Proceed from GDOT is ineligible for reimbursement from the program and any federal transportation funds.

The LPA shall submit a letter indicating the LPA's Financial Commitment for the required Local Match. The letter shall list the source for matching funds and the amounts.

The LPA must have the project let to construction within five (5) years from the date the Notice to Proceed with PE is issued to the LPA. Missing this deadline could jeopardize the federal funding for the project.

### **Limitations:**

Funding can be approved for PE, utility relocation, or property acquisition only when the applicant can demonstrate that the funds, combined with other existing resources, will result in a completed and fully funded project. The total amount requested must be at least \$1,000,000 including all phases of the project (PE, utility relocation, ROW, and CST). The applicant acknowledges the Department’s resurfacing program does not account for the costs of protecting and/or replacement of enhancements. The above costs are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

Federal funding for selected projects is capped at the amount awarded for the project. Additional funding requested for the same project will not be considered.

## **GDOT Contact Information:**

Electronic mailbox for application submittal: [TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov](mailto:TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov)

TAP Website: [www.dot.ga.gov/InvestSmart/Funding/Pages/TAP.aspx](http://www.dot.ga.gov/InvestSmart/Funding/Pages/TAP.aspx)

## **Application Checklist:**

The below list of items can be helpful as a guide, however, make sure that all parts of the application process have been completed.

- Review eligibility requirements for the type of applicant.
- For projects on GDOT ROW, obtain a letter indicating your project is feasible in concept from appropriate GDOT local officials. Please provide as much detail about your project as possible and allow sufficient time to receive a letter.
- Verify project's conformance to disability regulations.
- Provide location maps, project boundary maps, site plan, and photographs of existing site or facility.
- Prepare an itemized list of all project elements and their costs, including quantity, unit prices, and so on. If the project is located in close proximity to a railroad crossing that does not have automatic gates with flashing light signals (within 500' along the mainline roadway, and within 200' of the mainline roadway on intersection roads), project funds to upgrade the railroad signals may be required pursuant to federal regulations.
- Identify ownership of all property and if property is to be acquired, in addition to the values of the property.
- Obtain documentation showing local support (letters, etc.).
- Provide description of plans for maintenance and management of the project including costs of maintenance and the sources of funding
- Provide any previously prepared environmental assessments of the impact of the project. If none have been prepared but are required, these impact assessments, such as environmental, archaeological, and so on, must be completed before the project is implemented.
- Provide a list of the source for matching funds and amounts along with letters of commitments from these sources.
- Provide certification with a signature of an individual authorized to commit the applicant to a contract.
- Sponsor's that are LAP certified through GDOT will receive higher consideration
- Projects having no ROW and no Utility Impacts will receive higher consideration
- Project readiness will be considered
- Project must have a phase (PE, ROW, CST, etc.) ready for funding authorization in the current Fiscal Year
- Submit applications to the following electronic mailbox: [TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov](mailto:TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov)

## **Appendix A – Reference and Source Guides for the Transportation Alternatives Program**

US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) FAST Act Website  
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/>

US Department of Transportation, FHWA TAP Guidance  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/guidance/guidance\\_2016.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm)

US Department of Transportation, FHWA TAP Fact Sheet  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/tap.cfm>

US Department of Transportation, FHWA TAP Questions & Answers  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/qandas/qatap.cfm>

Georgia Department of Transportation TAP Website  
[www.dot.ga.gov/InvestSmart/Funding/Pages/TAP.aspx](http://www.dot.ga.gov/InvestSmart/Funding/Pages/TAP.aspx)

GDOT Local Administered Project Website  
<http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Local/LAP>

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) APPLICATION**

APPLICANT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT INFORMATION:**

NAME OF PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

PROJECT LOCATION:

LENGTH & TERMINI (i.e. where does project begin & end) (IF APPLICABLE): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_ HOUSE DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_

SENATE DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT CATEGORY AND LOCATION OF PROJECT:**

(CHECK ONLY THOSE APPLICABLE ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS)

Provisions of facilities for bicycles

- Provisions for pedestrians
- Provisions for streetscaping
- In areas of the State with a population greater than 5,000 but less than 200,000
- In areas of the State with a population less than 5,000

**Submit applications to the following TAP electronic mailbox: [TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov](mailto:TAPapplications@dot.ga.gov)**

(PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING IN SPACES PROVIDED.)

**A. ELIGIBILITY DEMONSTRATION: “SEE ATTACHED” IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

1. Does the project meet the requirements outlined within the **FAST Act**?

YES     NO

2. Does project conform to applicable requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act and any other state or federal laws concerning accessibility?

YES     NO

EXPLAIN BRIEFLY:

**B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION: "SEE ATTACHED" IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

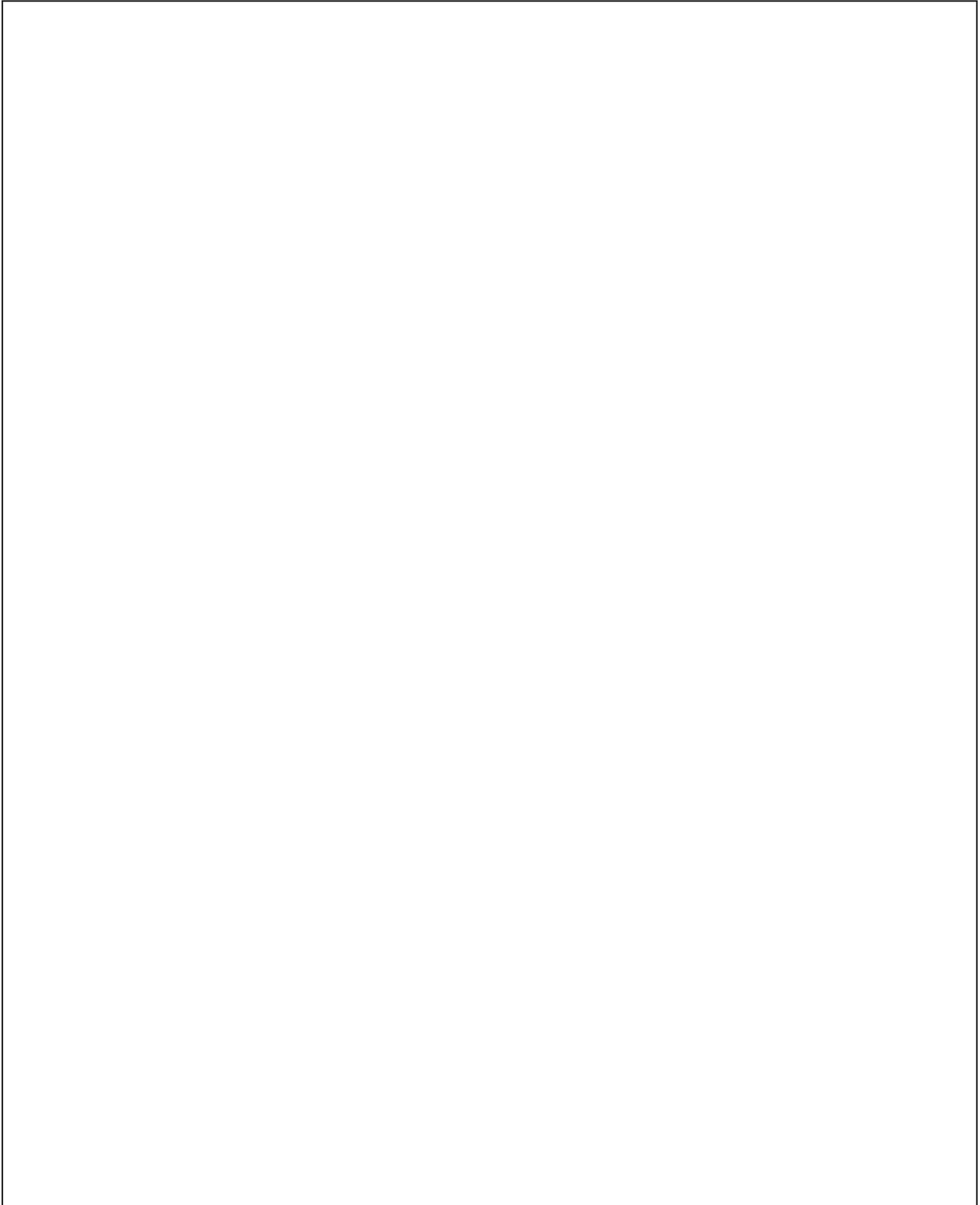
Does the applicant intend to apply to perform the administration and management functions for the project through the Local Public Agency (LPA) process?

YES     NO

Describe all necessary work needed to complete the proposed project. Description should reflect only activities checked under project category:

**C. MAPS, PLANS, & PHOTOGRAPHS:**

Attach project location map(s), project boundary map and site plan. Include photographs of the existing site and/or facility if applicable. COMMENTS:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the submission of project location maps, boundary maps, site plans, photographs, and comments.

**D. PROJECT COST: "SEE ATTACHED" IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

Itemize all project elements and costs. List item, description, quantity, unit price, amount, etc. Ensure costs shown are accurate and sufficient to satisfactorily complete all work anticipated in accordance with federal requirements. If the project is located in close proximity to a railroad crossing that does not have automatic gates with flashing light signals (within 500' along the mainline roadway, and within 200' of the mainline roadway on intersecting roads), project funds to upgrade the railroad signals may be required pursuant to federal regulations. All budget item costs for project administration and management to adequately accomplish the work must be shown. These expenses are to include engineering, inspection, and testing in accordance with state and federal requirements. Applicants MUST show a 10% contingency fee for the project. (Enter total project cost in Section I – Line 1, Page 9.) Itemize below:

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**E. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP:**

Identify ownership of all property involved in the project. If additional property must be acquired to complete the project, identify ownership and value of property, either purchased or donated.

**F. LOCAL SUPPORT**

Describe the level of local support for the proposed project. Attach letters from donors or sponsors committing non-federal share of project costs, commitment or support from sponsors, local government officials and regional organizations. Document the opportunities for public participation in the development of this project.

**G. PROJECT MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT PLANS:**

Describe maintenance and management of the project, including the yearly amount of funds to support activities: Provide details for long-term maintenance of the project with project yearly maintenance costs.

**H. DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBER (DUNS NUMBER):** \_\_\_\_\_ (The federal government requires that all applications for Federal grants and cooperative agreements with the exception of individuals other than sole proprietors have DUNS number. The Federal government will use the DUNS number to better identify related organizations that are receiving funding under grants and cooperative agreements, and to provide consistent name of address data for electronic grant application systems. If an applicant needs to obtain a DUNS Number, please call the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line a 1-866-705-5711).

**I. ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT:**

Attach any previously prepared environmental documentation to this application. If no previously approved environmental documentation is available, the applicant must complete necessary studies if any, and have them approved prior to project implementation. This requirement does not apply if the application is for planning or feasibility studies only. Indicate below any impact the project is expected to cause.

	<u>IMPACT</u>	
	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Displacement of residences or business .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disruption of neighborhoods.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impacts agricultural or recreational lands.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impacts historical/archaeological sites .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impacts wetlands, streams/lakes, floodplains .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within coastal zone .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Endangered species .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air/water quality .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous waste site.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any county, state, and/or federal permits required will have to be secured by the applicant prior to contract signing. These may include Army Corps of Engineers, Office of Coastal Resource Management, Coast Guard, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, County Sediment and Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance, or State Budget and Control Board.

**Comments:**

**J. FUNDS REQUESTED, LOCAL MATCH AND SOURCE**

LINE 1 – Total project cost (From Section D; Page #5) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

LINE 2 – Funds requested by applicant \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(80%) of line 1

LINE 3 – Local Match (Must be at least 20 % of Line 1 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
List source of match and amount from each source

**LIST SOURCES (Be Specific)**

**Amount**

A - \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

B - \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

C - \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

D - \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

E - \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF MATCH** (Should be equal to Line #3 above.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Is project within a non-TMA MPO boundary?  YES  NO

If yes, is the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?  YES  NO

List MPO \_\_\_\_\_ Amount in TIP for project: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**K. CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned has authority to sign on behalf of the applicant and certifies that the applicant has legal authority to enter into contract to implement this project and that all information provided is complete and accurate to their best knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE DATE .

\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE PHONE NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME