VTrans TA Program Fall 2021

By
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Today’s Workshop will cover.....

- Introduction
- Federal Aid Essentials Website & VTrans Website
- Eligible Applicants
- Eligible Projects
- Project Development Process Overview
- Typical Project Costs Example
- Project Selection Timeline
- Project Development Timeline
- Some Technical Points
- Questions
Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies

Federal-aid Simplified. Understanding the Essentials.

More and more, transportation agencies must pursue better, faster and smarter ways of doing business. Federal-aid Essentials offers a central online library of informational videos and resources, designed specifically for local public agencies. Each video addresses a single topic-condensing the complex regulations and requirements of the Federal-aid Highway Program into easy-to-understand concepts and illustrated examples.

To learn more, view the video to the left.

Continuing the Conversation

The FHWA launched Federal-aid Essentials on August 27, 2012 at the American Public Works Association (APWA) International Public Works Congress and Exposition. In a conversation with APWA host Emilie Barta, FHWA Resource Center Director Bernetta Collins tells us more about this program, Federal-aid Essentials. View the video, Continuing the Conversation.
Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies

Federal-aid Program Overview

Stewardship and Oversight

Federal-aid stewardship and oversight are vital to maintaining public trust of LPA-administered projects.

Companion Resource (PDF, 3.418 KB): Includes the printable script for this video

Web Resources: Includes Web links to related Code of Federal Regulations and other links appropriate to this video module.
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

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The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) provides funding for projects defined as transportation alternatives (click here for additional FHWA guidance), including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhancing mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation, trails that serve a transportation purpose, and safe routes to school projects.

Note: in fiscal year 2022 and thereafter, $1,100,000.00 of Grant Program funds, or such lesser sum if all eligible applications amount to less than $1,100,000.00, shall be reserved for municipalities for environmental mitigation projects relating to stormwater and highways, including eligible salt and sand shed projects.

SFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program - Grant Materials
- SFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Application Guidebook
- SFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Grant Program Application (fillable)

- TAP Virtual Webinar, October 5th, 2021, from 10:00am-11:30am
  - Join webinar: Click here to join the meeting
  - Or call in (audio only):
    - +1 802-628-7667, 657386172# United States, Montpelier
    - Phone Conference ID: 657 386 172#
MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE - LOCAL PROJECTS

Municipal Assistance (MA) technical staff is assigned to work with, and support, the municipalities in the development of projects while providing oversight and guidance to ensure projects are developed in accordance with applicable design standards and federal and state regulations. Projects can reach into every area of transportation such as stormwater improvement projects, development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along with educational outreach, municipal park and ride facilities, bridge improvements, roadway and intersection improvements, and a variety of transportation enhancements. In addition, the Better Roads program offers municipalities the opportunity to work with experienced and qualified staff to improve and enhance local roads through grant opportunities in part to help meet their obligations under the Municipal Roads General Permit. Also included is information on grant awards through the Town Highway Grant Program.

Please take some time to look through the resources provided in the “Shared Documents and Templates” section as well as the “FHWA Federal-Aid Essentials”.

- **MA Grant Program Timelines**
- **MA Guidebook, Appendix, and Project Bid Documents**
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Program**
- **Transportation Alternatives**
- **Park-and-Rides**
- **Municipal Mitigation:**
  - **Better Roads**
  - **Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program**
  - **Grants In Aid Program**
- **FHWA Federal-aid Essentials (training videos and documents)**
- **Shared Documents and Templates**
Welcome to the Municipal Assistance Program SharePoint Site. Here you will find documents and templates available for the development of local projects.

References:
- MAB General Information - Municipal Assistance Program website.
- MAB Guidebook and Appendices - Municipal Assistance webpage with links to the Local Projects Guidebook and Appendices.
- MAB Process - Flowchart diagram of the Project Development process for local projects.
- FHWA Federal-Aid Essentials - Video library in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) website with guidance on the development of locally managed federal-aid projects. Each topic contains the video, a companion PDF and web links to resources.

Federal Aid Projects

Project Definition and Design Phase
(This section also includes documents used for Scoping Projects)
- Getting and Project Administration - This page contains the Project Commitments Form, Force Account Guidance, Invoices, Project Acceptance Memo, Municipal Consultant Performance Evaluation, etc.
- Municipal Project Manager Procurement - Examples and Forms used for the MPM selection (RFP, RFP, SOW, etc.)
- Design and Scoping Consultant Procurement - Examples and Forms used for the Design and Scoping Consultant selection (RFP, RFP, SOW, etc.)
- Environmental - Programmatic Agreement Categorical Exclusion Letter and Analysis (PACE), Categorical Exclusion Letter and Analysis (CE), NEPA submittal, Natural Resources Review Memo, 4(f) Environmental Plans and Tables, etc.
- Utilities and Permitting - Highway Access Permit (S. 1111), Utility Relocation Agreements, Utility and Railroad Clearance, etc.
- Final Plans, Specifications and Estimate - Bid documents

Right of Way Phase
- ROW Plans - Examples of Plans, ROW Details Sheet, ROW Plans Submittals Checklist, and Title Abstract
- Appraisals - Appraisal, and Waiver Valuations
- Acquisitions - Donation Letter, Negotiation Letter, Deed of Easement, Fee Simple, Description Clause, Grant of Temporary Rights, and Mortgage Release.
- Certifications - Attorney Certification Letter, Town Self-Certification Letter

Construction Phase
- Construction Inspector Procurement - Duties of the RE, Examples and Forms used for the selection of the Construction Inspector (RFP, RFP, etc.)
- Construction Inspection - Training materials, Duties of the RE
- Contractor Procurement - Bid opening, Bid Analysis, Bid Award, Notice to Proceed, Construction Contract, etc.
- Pre-Construction Meeting - Pre-Construction Package, and Pre-Construction Checklist
- Civil Rights - Contacts and Notes Form, Certified Payroll, Prompt Pay, Labor Compliance, and Additional Certification
- Construction and Sub-Contracts - Sub-Contract Instructions and Checklist Sheets, Sub-Contractor Agreement, Labor and Truck Rates, EEO Certification, Certification for Federal-Aid Contracts, DBE Policy, EEO Specifications, Worker's Compensation Coverage, Federal Contract Provisions, Title 19/99 Discrimination, and Worker Classification Compliance
- Off-Site Activity - Submittal Form, Exemption Form, and FAQs
- Work Zones, Emergency Contact and A111 Information - Daily Traffic Control Form, Work Zone guidance, Emergency Contact for 511 Form, Roadway Restrictions Form
- Daily Work Reports - Form
- Change Orders and Written Orders - Forms, Damages During Construction Guidance
- Invoices - Form for Requisitions with Materials Acceptance Requirements

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FAST Act

- Funding opportunities for the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program are specified in the FAST Act ("Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act") which has replaced MAP-21 legislation.

- These changes, however, do not effectively change VTrans’ program or criteria.

- Approximately $2.2 million in federal dollars to be awarded.
Eligible Applicants

- Local Governments - City, Town, Village
- State Natural Resource or Public Land Agency
- Federal Natural Resource or Public Land Agency
- Regional Transportation Authority
- Transit Agencies
- A tribal government
- A school district, local education agency or school
- Regional Planning Commissions
TAP Opportunities for Stormwater Mitigation Funding!!

Half of SFY 2022 TAP funding (roughly $1.1 mil.) is reserved for applications addressing Environmental Mitigation efforts relating to stormwater and highways.

Sand/salt shed construction projects are eligible.

Potential project ideas may include, but not be limited to:

- Bio-filters
- Ditching
- Stormwater Planning Studies
- Bank Stabilization
- Phosphorous control plans
- Salt Sheds
- Bio-Retention Systems
- Culvert replacement / re-sizing
- Infiltration Basins
- Check Dams
- Swirl Separators
- Phosphorus Control Studies
- Permeable Pavers
- Gravel Wetlands

http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/transport-alt
Eligible Projects

A) Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation.

- Sidewalks
- Bicycle and Pedestrian infrastructure
- Pedestrian and bicycle signals
- Traffic calming techniques
- Lighting and other safety-related infrastructure
- Transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
Eligible Projects (continued)

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 as described in 23CFR 752.6.
Eligible Projects (continued)

E) Community improvement activities, including:

(i) Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.

(ii) Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control.

(iii) Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.
Eligible Projects (continued)

• F) Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation. Potential project ideas may include, but not be limited 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 23 USC 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329

  (ii) reduce *vehicle-caused* wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
Salt Sheds:

- Construction of **salt sheds** is potentially eligible under the environmental mitigation category.
  
  - Case by case basis
  - Based on proximity to a major water body (generally within 50 ft.)
  - Recommend reviewing with VTrans prior to application
Projects That Are No Longer Eligible

• Historic preservation of something not considered a historic *transportation* facility or structure.

• Operation of historic transportation facilities

• Stand-alone landscaping projects other than for vegetation management nor those considered “beautification”

• Archaeological activities not addressing impacts from a transportation project
Projects That Are No Longer Eligible

- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Visitor and Welcome Centers
- Transportation Museums
- General safety and educational activities
Program Overview

• Can apply for either *Scoping* or *Design & Construction*

• 20% local match required for scoping

• 20% local match required for design/construction

• Maximum award $300,000 federal dollars

• Award amount is capped

• If *Design/Construction* project does not advance, payback may be required.

• TAP application available at:
TAP is a Reimbursement Program

- NOT a block grant
- Project sponsor pays contractor
- Project sponsor submits invoice to VTrans
- VTrans reimburses project sponsor federal portion of eligible costs
Program requires...

- Compliance with State and Federal Regulations
- Compliance with Agency and National Design Standards
- Municipal Project Management
- Maintenance of the improvement by sponsor
Project Development Process

Your project will be developed according to a specific development process which includes:

• A public involvement process
• Environmental resource considerations
• Development and selection of a Preferred Alternative
• Designing the facility
• Acquiring the necessary property rights
• Procuring and executing construction
Three Phases of a Federal-Aid Project

• PE  - Preliminary Engineering
• ROW - Right of Way
• Construction
Preliminary Engineering (PE)

• Designate or procure a Municipal Project Manager (MPM)

• Procure a design consultant

• Identify and clear natural and historical resources. Obtain NEPA document.

• Design the project (including erosion and stormwater control if needed).
Application Scoring Criteria

• Give a brief description of the project
  – Indicate the primary facility type being applied for
  – 10 points max.

• What is the feasibility of this project?
  – Scoping study applications - not scored on this criterion.
  – Describe the extent of project development completed to date.
  – 10 points max.

• Does this project address a need identified in a local or regional planning document?
  – 5 points max.
• Does this project benefit a municipality that falls under The Department of Housing and Community Development - State Designation Programs (i.e., Downtowns, Village Centers, New Town Centers, Growth Centers, and Neighborhood Development Areas per the link below?

http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/designation-programs

• 10 points max
• Provide a project cost estimate (total)
  • Project costs include both federal dollars and local dollars.
  • For scoping studies, use PE and Municipal Project Management lines only on the application form
  • Include supporting information
  • 10 points max.
Select the eligibility category below (A, B, C or D) that best fits your project and answer the corresponding questions for that category (choose only one category).

A. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
B. Community Improvement Activities
C. Environmental Mitigation-Stormwater
D. Environmental Mitigation - Wildlife
A. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

(i) Will the project contribute to a system of pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities? (10 points max.)

(ii) Will the project provide access to likely generators of pedestrian and/or bicyclist activity? (10 points max.)

(iii) Will the project address a known, documented safety concern? (10 points max.)

*10 bonus points will be awarded for projects that are primarily Bicycle or Pedestrian facilities.*
B. Community Improvement Activities

(i) Explain how the project improves the economic wellbeing of the community and/or provides a benefit to state tourism? (10 points max.)

(ii) Describe the anticipated impact to the public; degree of visibility, public exposure and/or public use. (10 points max.)
B. Community Improvement Activities

(iii) Answer *only one* of the following based on the type of project:

a) Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas as related to scenic or historic sites.

   To what extent will the project provide a view of a highly unique and scenic area? (10 points max.)

b) Preservation or rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.

   Describe the historic significance of the historic transportation facility and the importance of the facility to the State. (10 points max.)

c) Archeological planning and research related to impacts from a transportation project.

   Describe the associated transportation project and benefit of the proposed activities. (10 points max.)

d) Vegetation management in transportation rights of way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control.

   Describe the extent of the current problem; impact on the site and surrounding area. (10 points max.)
C. Environmental Mitigation - Stormwater

(i) Please describe how this application provides environmental mitigation relating to stormwater and highways. (10 points max.)

(ii) What information or data is provided to substantiate the current stormwater problem and associated environmental impacts? (10 points max.)

(iii) What substantiating data or information is provided to show that the proposed application is an effective and manageable solution to the problem? (10 points max.)
(i) Please describe how this application provides environmental mitigation relating to wildlife mortality. (10 points max.)

(ii) What information or data is provided to substantiate the current wildlife problem and associated environmental impacts? (10 points max.)

(iii) What substantiating data or information is provided to show that the proposed application is an effective and manageable solution to the problem? (10 points max.)
If your project is funded:

- TAP Funding is competitive. If funded, you will be asked to complete and sign a *Project Commitment Letter* that includes:
  - Acknowledgement that you are responsible for providing the local share of the project funding and commit to doing so.
  - Commitment to move forward with this project and sign the Grant Agreement within one month of receiving the document.
Project Development Timeline Example

- February 2022 – Announcement of grant awards
- March 2022 – Grant agreement executed
- June 2022 – Engineering/MPM Procurement process complete
- March 2023 – Conceptual Plans and NEPA document secured
- September 2023 – Preliminary Plans completed
- June 2024 – Right of Way approved and cleared
- February 2025 – Final plans and bid documents completed
- May 2025 – Project goes out to bid for Construction
Scoping Study Timeline Example

- **February 2022** – Announcement of grant awards
- **March 2022** – Grant agreement executed
- **May 2022** – Consultant Procurement process complete
- **October 2022** – Draft Study/Alternatives Presentation
- **January 2023** – Scoping Study completed
Common Mistakes

• “We always know who to hire!”
• “We’ve got plans; let’s go to construction!”
• “I’m sure we can handle the MPM role internally.”
• “The guy from ANR said “no problem…”
• “We don’t need any Right-of-Way…”
• “Can’t we just rely on our contractor to know what needs to be done?”
Successful Projects

- Hire qualified professionals
- HAVE GOOD AND CONTINUAL COMMUNICATION WITH VTRANS
- Have realistic project cost estimates and schedules when applying
- Have the full support of the town
Technical Points
Stormwater Quality Improvement is the goal
Meet ADA requirements for universal design
Meet Sidewalk Design Requirements

• 5 feet wide is standard, 4-foot minimum
• Separate from road
• Greenstrips where possible
• Curb ramps at intersections
• Visible crosswalks
• Pedestrian Signals

Chester, VT
Narrow curbside sidewalks provide no buffer
Provide buffer from travel lanes

Green Strip
• 2 ft. min. – wider preferred
• 5 feet min. to plant trees

Bike Lanes

On-street Parking

Landscaping
Provide safe crossings

1. Determine where people should/want to cross

2. Minimize crossing distances

3. Use appropriate traffic controls
   - Marked crosswalks
   - Warning signs
   - Stop signs and traffic signals

4. Slow vehicle speeds
Curb extensions at crossings

- Reduce the crossing distance
- Allow better sight lines
- Improve visibility of pedestrians
- Narrower road reduces speed
Cut-through Medians or Islands Work Well

Guidance on use:
- AASHTO Pedestrian Guide – “crossing islands should be considered where the crossing distance exceeds 60 feet, but can be used at intersections with shorter crossing distances where a need has been recognized.”

Recommended by Federal Highway as a proven pedestrian safety countermeasure
Install High-Visibility Markings

**Lateral 12" Stripe**

- Crosswalk
- 0.002°
- 1' x 300'

**Longitudinal Marking**

- Crosswalk
- 0.021°
- 10' x 300'

**Block Style:** more visible than two parallel lines
Bicycle Lanes

- Intended for congested areas
- Minimum 4’ wide
- Pavement markings and signs

So. Burlington, VT

Springfield, VT

W. Brattleboro, VT
Shared use paths

- Standard width – 10’
- Multiple users
- On independent alignment

- Good when providing a short cut or alternative to high volume road
- Complements the street system
- Complex project development
QUESTIONS???

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