

BLOOMINGTON • MONROE COUNTY



TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), the transportation bill that went into effect in 2012, authorized a new funding program called the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). In broad terms, TAP is a consolidation of three previously existing federal programs which were not independently authorized in MAP-21: Transportation Enhancements (TE), Safe Routes to School (SRTS), and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). This packet contains general information about the process used to award TAP grants to eligible projects within the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPO).

The Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPO) is responsible for reviewing and awarding eligible Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant applications that fall within the BMCMPO Urbanized Area. MAP-21 does not establish minimum standards or procedures for competitive TAP processes. MPOs are given discretion to establish project priorities and to decide whether to fund (or not fund) eligible project categories.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will provide technical assistance and review to ensure that any submitted TAP application meets federal eligibility requirements. INDOT will also administer TAP funds and all subsequent project management aspects (e.g. engineering design reviews, contract bids, contract awards, etc.) once the BMCMPO has awarded TAP funds to a Local Public Agency (LPA) project.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Eligible activities to be considered for TAP awards in the BMCMPO are described as follows:

- Sidewalks
- On-street or off-street bicycle infrastructure
- Pedestrian and bicycle signals
- Maintenance or construction of recreational trail or trailhead facilities
- Traffic calming techniques
- Lighting and other infrastructure that improves bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Infrastructure projects that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs
- Safe Routes to School programming (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation)

LIMITATIONS

TAP grant awards are based upon a grant formula where no more than 80% of the eligible costs will be reimbursed; which in turn requires a minimum of a 20% local match to be paid by the applicant. The BMCMPO will get estimated amounts to award annually for the local TAP program. The BMCMPO will have the ability to rollover or bank any previous TAP funds allocated to the local TAP program that were not awarded. These funds can be used any subsequent year or TAP grant award cycle in addition to the annual allocation. For the most current estimate available for the local TAP Program, contact the BMCMPO staff. The following are guidelines and limitations to the TAP Program:

- No limitation on the number of applications an LPA can submit for consideration;
- New projects, components of existing projects, and multiple phased projects are eligible;
- Application requests cannot exceed the estimated amount of TAP funds available, and are capped at \$1,000,000 under any scenario.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

A TAP Selection Committee will review and score all applications received during the TAP call for projects and will provide their recommendation to the BMCMPPO committees. At a minimum, the TAP Selection Committee shall be comprised of at least one, but not more than two, member(s) from each of the BMCMPPO committees: the Policy Committee (PC), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Members that are chosen to serve on the TAP Selection Committee may do so provided the following conditions are met:

- The member is in good standing with the BMCMPPO;
- The member is nominated by their respective BMCMPPO committee to serve on the TAP Selection Committee; and
- The member understands that, in a good faith pledge, their role is to serve in the best interest of the BMCMPPO and not to any subordinate agency, group, or association where a perceived or real advantage may come to being through their association by serving this committee.

In addition to the BMCMPPO members serving on the TAP Selection Committee, up to three at-large members may also be selected to serve on the TAP Selection Committee if the MPO staff finds that the composition of the committee could benefit from additional expertise outside of the BMCMPPO committee membership. These at-large members may be asked to serve by the MPO staff provided the following conditions are met:

- The individual resides within the BMCMPPO Urbanized Area, with the exception of representatives of the Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and other pertinent state agencies; and
- At least one of the at large members is directly associated with one of the following: Bloomington and Monroe County Visitors Bureau, Downtown Bloomington Inc., Bloomington Bicycle Club; Indiana Department of Natural Resource; Council of Neighborhood Associations, a local bicycle or pedestrian advocacy or safety group, a local historic preservation group (HPC, Monroe County Historical Society), a licensed engineer, architect, landscape architect, or planner, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, or Indiana Department of Transportation.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA, REVIEW, AND AWARD PROCESS

The TAP Selection Committee shall review all applications and score them on a 100 point system as prescribed in these guidelines. This scoring system evaluates the level of community support, overall utility, safety, and project readiness, based on the criteria below. Note that the points listed for each question are the maximum possible, and that a range of 0 to the maximum could be awarded by the committee members evaluating TAP applications.

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
Community Support	20 points
Is the project supported by local planning documents?	10
Has the project received letters of support from community organizations?	5
Has the project been presented at public meetings?	5
Safety	25 points
Does the project location occur on any of the lists in the MPO's crash reports from the previous 3 years?	10
How many total crashes occurred within ¼ mile of the proposed project in the previous 3 years?	5
How many fatal or incapacitating injury crashes occurred within ¼ mile of the proposed project in the previous 3 years?	5
Does the proposed project improve safety for multiple user groups?	5
Utility	25 points
Does the project connect to destinations such as parks, schools, libraries, retail centers, employment centers?	10
Does the project enhance bicycle and pedestrian access for traditionally underserved populations, as identified in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan?	5
How many transit routes and transit stops are located within the proposed project, or are located within ¼ mile of the proposed project?	5
Does the project connect to existing bicycling and walking networks?	5
Project Readiness	30 points
What percentage of design work is currently completed for the project?	10
What percentage of the project right-of-way is owned by the project sponsor at the time of this application?	10
Is this project eligible for a categorical exclusion from NEPA reviews?	5
With the funds requested, will the project be fully funded, or a phase of the project fully funded?	5
TOTAL:	100 points

Each application shall be scored as described above by each TAP Selection Committee member. Once the applications have been scored by each member, the average of their respective scores will determine the rank order of the applications. The TAP Selection Committee members will make funding recommendations based

upon the estimated amount of available TAP funds, the project rank scores, and the funding requests for each application/project.

The results of the TAP Selection Committee review process will be a recommendation for which application(s) to award and how much TAP funding the application(s) should receive. Their recommendations will be sent to the CAC and TAC for consideration and subsequent recommendation. The PC will consider all of these recommendations and make the final award determination.

APPLICATION

All TAP project applications must be submitted by a Local Public Agency (a unit of government with authority to levy taxes) and by the deadline established by the call for projects. Generally, the following conditions apply:

- Limit each application's scope to one single project;
- A complete BMCMPO TAP application form must be submitted;
- Limit each application to a total of 35 pages in length;
- Include additional information pages, maps, pictures, letters of commitment/public support etc.;
- Include a detailed project budget for your total project with itemized cost estimates;
- Indicate whether some of the project could be completed if only part of the requested funds are awarded;
- Include a cover letter signed by the highest local elected official as well as the highest financial official of the LPA;
- Provide an electronic copy of the application to the BMCMPO; and
- Re-submissions for future cycles will be accepted; however, the application must be updated and meet any new guidance or requirements.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The TAP program requirements will be reviewed by BMCMPO staff and Committees after each funding cycle.

RESOURCES

The following list provides pertinent information related to various aspects of the TAP program and materials needed to submit an application to the BMCMPO:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Final TAP Guidance
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>
- TAP project evaluation form, score sheets and other BMCMPO information [website location to be determined following approval]