



## **TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report documents the Transportation Alternatives Program process used by the Fairbanks MPO to establish a TAP methodology, identify candidate projects, solicit stakeholder feedback, and determine project funding recommendations.

### **1. TAP Overview Process (Page 1)**

This document provides the overview for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) process including the schedule of the activities.

### **2. TAP Instruction (Page 3)**

This document provides the background of the TAP including eligible/ ineligible projects and activities, eligible sponsors, selection criteria, selection process, process timeline, submission instruction, and public involvement.

# **1. TAP OVERVIEW PROCESS**

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM OVERVIEW  
PROCESS**

➤ Call for Projects	June 15, 2016
➤ Project Submittal Due	July 18, 2016 at Noon
➤ Evaluation Committee Conducts the Analysis and Scoring	July 19, 2016
➤ Public Meeting to view and comment on the proposed projects	July 20, 2016
➤ Public can view the process and proposed projects on the website at <a href="http://fmats.us/tap/">http://fmats.us/tap/</a> and send comments to <a href="mailto:web@fmats.us">web@fmats.us</a>	May, 2016 – July 20, 2016
➤ Notification of Intent to Award	July 20, 2016
➤ Funding agreement between ADOT&PF and the Sponsor	August 15, 2016
➤ Fully executed agreement between ADOT&PF and the Sponsor	August 15, 2016
➤ Obligate the project(s)	September 2016

## **2. TAP INSTRUCTION**

## TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) INSTRUCTION

### I. Introduction

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) created the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to replace former federal highway funding programs such as Safe Routes to School, Recreational Trails Program and Transportation Enhancements. MAP-21 apportioned funding distributions to MPOs with greater than 200,000 urbanized area populations to direct to MPO area projects.

The State of Alaska has offered and FMATS has accepted the opportunity to hold a TAP solicitation for the metropolitan planning area. Due to the timing of the notification of the availability of the TAP, FMATS has elected to conduct an abbreviated Call for Projects with release of only FFY13 funds, or \$227,744. This is because if these funds are not obligated with the Federal Highway Administration by mid-August 2016, FMATS and the community, will lose the availability of this funding. Therefore, the Project Sponsor (Sponsor) must demonstrate the project(s) can be programmed by August 15, 2016. Please note that requesting design funding for projects with longer construction timeframes will be considered. Eligible project types are discussed in Section III.

***FMATS plans to create a more thoughtful and robust application process for the funds available in FFY14 – FFY17 in the Fall of 2016.***

### II. Available Funding

MAP-21 authorized funding for FY 2013 and FY 2014. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act authorizes the TAP through FFY19. A local match of 9.03% is required for all TAP projects.

The annual FMATS TAP federal allocation is as follows:

FFY13	\$227,744
FFY14	\$232,319
FFY15	\$232,319
FFY16	\$232,319
FFY17	\$232,319 (estimated)

MAP-21 requires MPOs to use a competitive project selection process for TAP funds. FHWA is responsible for reviewing MPO processes and ensuring they comply with MAP-21. FHWA also requires the MPO use a public review process prior to finalizing its TAP project selection methodology.

Submittal of individual project phases is encouraged, however this requires a commitment by the Sponsor to carry the project forward to completion using local funds if necessary (future phases would also be able to compete for additional federal funding awards). Sponsors can submit requests for partial funding for existing projects or project phases if needed, where TAP funding is needed to complete project funding.

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Please note that the TAP is a reimbursable grant program.

### III. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects are bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, safe routes to school (Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education Program for Grades K-8), recreational trails, environmental mitigation, historic preservation if related to a transportation facility, and archaeological activities related to transportation impacts. Ineligible projects include roadway capacity, transit, landscaping, and resurfacing or reconstruction (*see Appendix A for a detailed list of Eligible Projects*).

### IV. Eligible Project Sponsors

The eligible entities to receive TAP funds are: local governments, school districts, public land agencies, transit agencies, natural resource agencies, local education agencies or schools, tribal governments and any other local or regional government entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a state agency). The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) and FMATS are not eligible Sponsors for TAP funds but may partner with eligible Sponsors to carry out a project.

Non-profit organizations are not eligible as direct Sponsors unless they qualify through one of the eligible categories but are eligible to partner with any eligible entity on a TAP project.

### V. Treatment of Projects

The “treatment of projects” requirement (23 U.S.C. 213(e)) means that all projects carried out using TAP funds must comply with applicable provisions in title 23, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (Davis-Bacon), Buy America, competitive bidding and other contracting requirements, regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

FMATS is taking this opportunity to inform all Sponsors that these Federal requirements apply to all projects under the TAP. Sponsors may wish to seek a lead sponsor that has experience with Federal construction contracts in general, and title 23 in particular. A link has been provided for your information: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/docs/title23usc.pdf>.

To ensure compliance with 23 U.S.C., ADOT&PF will require funding under the project to oversee the project development process. Estimates will be verified by the ADOT&PF and may be adjusted as appropriate.

### VI. Selection Criteria

MPO staff will review the projects to check for eligibility based on the following five criteria.

#### Eligibility Check

***IF THE PROJECT DOES NOT MEET THESE FIVE CRITERIA, IT WILL NOT BE EVALUATED ANY FURTHER.***

1. Are the Sponsor and Project eligible under the TAP guidelines?

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2. Has the source of the non-federal share of the project been secured? Can the non-federal funds be delivered by August 15, 2016?
3. Is there a commitment to maintenance of the project after it is completed?
4. Does the Sponsor understand that the project has to be developed under 23 USC?
5. Will the match agreement and the maintenance agreement with the ADOT&PF be in place by August 15, 2016?

FMATS will use the following criteria in evaluating eligible projects. The Evaluation Committee will rank and score the projects based on the following criteria.

- 1) Is the project a part of an existing plan or project (10 pts)
- 2) Does it address existing gaps to essential services (10 pts)
- 3) Does the project extend an existing facility, plans for or creates an ADA-compliant facility (10 pts)

**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 30 points**

#### **VII. Project Selection Process**

- Eligible sponsors submit projects to FMATS **by 12pm on July 18, 2016**
- MPO staff performs an Eligibility Check as described in Section VI
- Evaluation Committee scores the projects against the criteria described in Section VI
- MPO releases the scores to the applicants
- The Policy Committee approves the project list **on July 20, 2016**.
- ADOT&PF and Sponsor execute match and maintenance agreements, as required.
- Submit the projects to ADOT&PF for obligation by **August 18, 2016**.
- Sponsor follows all ADOT&PF and Federal requirements for consultant selection, right-of-way acquisition, environmental clearance, and project letting.

#### **VIII. Submission Instruction**

Submit the Submittal Form and all attachments to Donna Gardino **by 12pm on July 18, 2016** electronically at [donna.gardino@fmats.us](mailto:donna.gardino@fmats.us) or by mail to:

Attn: FMATS TAP Process  
800 Cushman Street  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

#### **IX. Public Involvement**

FMATS will discuss the TAP process at its regularly scheduled Technical Committee meeting on June 1, 2016. At its June 15, 2016 Policy Committee meeting, FMATS will again discuss the TAP program and answer any questions potential project sponsors may have regarding the program. The meeting is held at noon at the City of Fairbanks Council Chambers. The FMATS Policy Committee will

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approve the program to be released to the public. The proposed projects and funding recommendations will be brought to the Policy Committee on July 20, 2016 for approval. The selected projects will be posted on the FMATS website upon approval.

In determining the amount of public involvement necessary for the development of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), MPO staff followed the following public involvement process:

- Advertised in the Fairbanks Daily Newsminer the public meeting to discuss the creation of the TAP program
- Advertised the Technical and Policy Committee meetings where the program was vetted and approved as follows:
  - Newspaper advertisements (2 for each meeting)
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Online Public Notices posted at the ADOT&PF and the FNSB
  - Public service announcements
- Conducted a TAP Pre-proposal Workshop on July 7, 2016 to answer any questions from potential project Sponsors
- E-mails sent to the Public to announce the Transportation Alternatives Program and the workshop information.

## APPENDIX A

### Eligible projects

1. Transportation Alternatives as defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) (MAP-21 1103):
  - A. Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
  - 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.
  - E. Community improvement activities, including inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
    - ii. Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
    - iii. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and
    - iv. Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of transportation project eligible under title 23.
  - F. Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329 of title 23; or
    - ii. Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
2. The recreational trails program under section 206 of title 23.
3. The safe routes to school program under section 1404 of the SAFETEA-LU.
  - A. Infrastructure-related projects.-planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects on any public road or any bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail in the vicinity of schools that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including sidewalk improvements, traffic calming and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities, secure bicycle parking facilities, and traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools.

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B. Non-infrastructure related activities to encourage walking and bicycling to school, including public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders, traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools, student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs.

C. Safe Routes to School coordinator.

4. Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

### **Ineligible Activities**

Section 1103 of MAP-21 eliminated the definition of transportation enhancement activities in section 104 of title 23 and inserted in its place a definition of transportation alternatives, which does not include eligibility for certain activities that were previously eligible as transportation enhancements:

A. Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles.

**Exception:** Activities targeting children in Kindergarten through 8th grade are eligible under SRTS (an eligible activity under the TAP funding).

**Note:** Some of these activities may be eligible under HSIP. Non-construction projects for bicycle safety remain broadly eligible for STP funds.

B. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.

C. Scenic or historic highway programs (including visitor and welcome centers).

**Note:** A few specific activities under this category (construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas) remain eligible under section 101(a)(29)(D) of title 23.

D. Historic preservation as an independent activity unrelated to historic transportation facilities.

**Note:** Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities are permitted as one type of community improvement activity.

E. Operation of historic transportation 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.

**EXAMPLE OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES ELIGIBILITIES**

Activity	Eligible	Not Eligible
<p><u>Activity #1:</u></p> <p>Construction, planning and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails on and off road</li> <li>• New sidewalks</li> <li>• Rehabilitating existing sidewalks to comply with ADA standards and to improve pedestrian access</li> <li>• Other ADA pedestrian improvements including curb ramps and truncated domes</li> <li>• Bicycle lanes</li> <li>• Bicycle parking and bus racks</li> <li>• Bicycle and pedestrian bridges and underpasses</li> <li>• Rails-with-Trails</li> <li>• Equestrian trails when built along with a shared use path</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidewalk repair, drainage improvements or other maintenance activities</li> <li>• Circular trails / sidewalks</li> <li>• Facilities located wholly on one site or property that do not provide a connection to existing trails or sidewalks outside the site or property</li> <li>• Trails for equestrian use only</li> <li>• Recreational facilities</li> <li>• Any non-ADA compliant trail / sidewalk facility</li> <li>• Way-finding signage / program as a stand-alone project</li> <li>• Preliminary work including feasibility / location studies and master plans</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #2:</u></p> <p>Construction, planning and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide <b>safe routes for non-drivers</b> including children, older adults and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian and bicycle signals and crosswalks</li> <li>• Pedestrian lighting and other safety-related infrastructure</li> <li>• Safe connections to public transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bicycle and pedestrian safety / educational programs (see SRTS eligibilities for K-8)</li> <li>• Lighting fixtures intended for aesthetic purposes only (instances where adequate lighting already exists)</li> <li>• Roadway lighting</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #3:</u></p> <p>Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rails-to-Trails facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects solely to preserve abandoned railroad right of way</li> <li>• Trail facilities for motorized vehicles (ATVs, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, etc)</li> <li>• Maintenance and/or upkeep of trails (including the purchase of equipment)</li> </ul>

Activity	Eligible	Not Eligible
other non-motorized transportation users		
<p><u>Activity #4:</u></p> <p>Construction of turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas that interpret a scenic or historic site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation and other amenities installed without construction of a turnout, overlook or viewing area</li> <li>• Safety rest areas</li> <li>• Visitor / welcome centers</li> <li>• Farmers markets, entertainment pavilions, etc.</li> <li>• Staffing, operating or maintenance costs of the pull off</li> <li>• Marketing and promotional activities</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #5:</u></p> <p>Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billboard inventories including those done with GIS/GPS</li> <li>• Removal of illegal and non-conforming billboards (non-conforming signs are those lawfully erected but that no longer comply with the Highway Beautification Act of 1965)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration or operating expenses involved in State outdoor advertising program activities.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #6:</u></p> <p>Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation and /or restoration of historic transportation facilities including: train depots, rail trestles, bridges, lighthouses, bus terminals, tunnels, canals, locks and tow paths</li> <li>• Properties previously owned and operated by the railroad (example - railway offices and station master's house)</li> <li>• Historic toll facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic buildings that are not part of the historic transportation infrastructure (for example: inns and taverns, gas stations and carriage houses)</li> <li>• Projects that do not intend to comply with Secretary of the Interior Standards for Restoration and Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Improvements that will not maintain the historic integrity of the structure</li> <li>• Operation of historic transportation facilities</li> <li>• Spaces not open / accessible to the public</li> <li>• Spaces used in for-profit enterprises</li> <li>• Constructing a replica of an historic transportation facility</li> <li>• Construction of new rail / passenger stations</li> </ul>

Activity	Eligible	Not Eligible
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation infrastructure not related to surface transportation (i.e. air and space travel)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #7:</u></p> <p>Vegetation management practices in transportation rights of way</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation to improve transportation safety (could include removal of vegetation to improve sight distance)</li> <li>• Removal / management of invasive species</li> <li>• Planting of grasses or wildflowers to manage / prevent erosion along transportation corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscaping as scenic beautification / stand-alone landscaping project</li> <li>• Landscaping off transportation rights of way</li> <li>• Gateway signage</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #8:</u></p> <p>Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archeological excavations and surveys related to a transportation project</li> <li>• Archeological activities required as part of a MAP-21 eligible project</li> <li>• Interpretation and display of artifacts discovered as part of a transportation project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archeological activities not related to a transportation project eligible under federal Title 23</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #9:</u></p> <p>Environmental mitigation activities to decrease the negative impacts of roads on the natural environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stormwater management activities related to highway run-off that address water pollution and improve the ecological balance of local streams and rivers</li> <li>• Detention and sediment basins</li> <li>• Stream channel stabilization</li> <li>• Storm drain stenciling and river / stream clean-ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drainage improvements related to poor maintenance</li> <li>• Stormwater management activities not related to highway run-off and water pollution</li> </ul>
<p><u>Activity #10:</u></p> <p>Wildlife mortality mitigation activities to decrease the negative impacts of roads on the natural environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetlands acquisition and restoration</li> <li>• Wildlife underpasses and overpasses to improve wildlife passage and habitat connectivity</li> <li>• Improvements to decrease vehicle-caused wildlife mortality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects not related to the negative impacts of highway construction</li> </ul>