

## Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization Transportation Alternatives

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) provides federal funds for community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by integrating modes and improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure.

The TA program is a federal cost reimbursement program. Only after a Local Agency Agreement has been approved by WSDOT can project costs become eligible for reimbursement. This means project sponsors must incur the cost of the project prior to being repaid. Any work conducted prior to a signed Local Agency Agreement is not eligible for reimbursement. A local match of 13.5 percent is required for all TA projects. All projects must follow federal and state regulations, including environmental, right-of-way, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### Funding Levels

TA funding is sub-allocated to the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) for distribution to the five-county (Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific, and Wahkiakum) Southwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SWRTPO) based on population, with varying amounts being allocated to US census defined urbanized and rural areas. In addition, a portion of the funds are flexible and can be programmed within either the urbanized or rural areas. The 2016 five-county SWRTPO regional estimated sub-allocation is \$321,979: 33 percent can be spent in the region's cities with over 5,000 population, 32 percent can be spent in the region's cities with less than 5,000 population, and the remaining 35 percent can be spent anywhere across the region. The TA funding estimate of \$1,287,916 for 2017-2020 is based on the assumption that funding allocation will remain constant with the current estimated allocation.

	<b>Urban Areas &gt; 5,000</b>	<b>Rural Areas &lt; 5,000</b>	<b>Any Area</b>	<b>Total Available to SWRTPO</b>
<i>FFY 2017</i>	\$106,253	\$103,033	\$112,693	\$321,979
<i>FFY 2018</i>	\$106,253	\$103,033	\$112,693	\$321,979
<i>FFY 2019</i>	\$106,253	\$103,033	\$112,693	\$321,979
<i>FFY 2020</i>	\$106,253	\$103,033	\$112,693	\$321,979
	<b>\$425,012</b>	<b>\$412,132</b>	<b>\$450,772</b>	<b>\$1,287,916</b>
	33%	32%	35%	

### Screening Requirements

- Project must be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan goals and policies;
- Project proposal includes a local match of 13.5 percent. Agencies that receive TA funding are responsible for providing the required matching funds;
- Project is open to public access; and

- Applicant is an eligible agency. All projects must be administered by a certification acceptance (CA) agency. Non-CA agencies can apply for TA funds but must have a CA agency sponsor for the project. The sponsorship must be in place prior to project selection.

Please note that TA funds cannot be used to supplement the construction of an existing project. For example, TA funds cannot be used to pay for the sidewalk portion on an existing road project.

### **Eligible Applicants**

- Local governments;
- Regional transportation authorities;
- Transit agencies;
- Natural resources or public land agencies;
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools;
- Tribal governments; and
- Non-profits.

### **Eligible Activities**

Eligible activities to be considered for TA awards in the SWRTPO are described as follows:

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities – Sidewalks, walkways, or curb ramps; bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking, and bus racks; traffic calming; off-road trails; bike and pedestrian bridges and underpasses; ADA compliance; construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicycles, 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 (ADA) of 1990.
- Safe Routes for Non-Drivers – Access and accommodation for children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
- Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails – Acquisition of railroad rights-of-way; construction of multi-use trails and rail-with-trail projects; conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrian, bicyclists, or other non-authorized transportation users.
- Maintenance or construction of recreational trail or trailhead facilities.
- Traffic calming techniques, lighting, and other infrastructure that improves bicycle and pedestrian safety.

### **Project Selection Criteria, Review, and Award Process:**

The TA evaluation committee will review all applications and score them on a 100-point system as prescribed in the guidelines outlined below. This scoring system will evaluate projects based on the Regional Transportation Plan's third goal "to develop an integrated non-motorized transportation system." The criteria identified below focuses on those projects that promote the safety and connectivity priorities of this goal. Note that 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 TA applications.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Safety</b>	
1. Does the project address an existing safety concern? If yes, please indicate the existing safety concern(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities for user groups</li> <li>▪ Lack of safe bicycle and/or pedestrian crossing</li> <li>▪ High volumes/speeds on (or near) transportation corridor</li> <li>▪ Other safety concerns (please describe): _____</li> </ul>	20 points
2. Does project include improvements to separate bicycle and pedestrians from vehicular traffic?	20 points
<b>Mobility</b>	
3. Does project improve connection to park and ride lots, local bus routes, traffic generators (shopping, service, or recreational centers) or existing bicycle facilities?	20 points
4. Does project connect gaps in the existing bicycle and pedestrian system?	20 points
<b>Compliance</b>	
5. Please describe how the proposed project meets the Regional Transportation Plan's third goal: "to develop an integrated non-motorized transportation system."	20 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Each application will be scored as described above by each TA evaluation committee member. Once the application has been scored by each member, the average of their respective scores will determine the rank order of the applications. The TA evaluation committee members will make funding recommendations based upon the estimated amount of available TA funds, the project rank scores, and the funding requests for each application/project. All ranked projects will be forwarded to the SWRTPO Board for consideration. The SWRTPO Board will make the final funding selections. Recipients of TA funds will receive written notification of the funding approval within 30 days of the award. All projects funded with TA funds must be included or amended in to the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) to secure federal funding. These RTIP amendments are the responsibility of the applicant to provide to CWCOC. Selected projects will also need to enter into a local agreement (LAA) with WSDOT's Local Program office to access the funding. Agencies with selected projects will need to work with CWCOC staff to obligate the funds the year the funds are programmed.

**Timeline:**

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| March 22, 2017 | Call for TA Projects  |
| April 24, 2017 | TA Applications due to CWCOC                                      |
| May 17, 2017   | TA evaluation committee meets to review, score, and rank projects |
| June 16, 2017  | TA projects to SWRTPO   |