

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Solicitation for FY 2021

What is the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program?

The TA Program was formed under the new federal transportation bill referred to as FAST Act. TA is intended to fund community-based projects for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic preservation, Safe Routes to School and more.

Who can apply for TA funding?

Eligible sponsoring agencies that can receive TA funding include counties, cities with a population over 5,000, tribal units of government, natural resource or public land agencies, transit agencies, Regional Development Commissions, and school districts or educational agencies. If a non-State Aid City (City population under 5,000) would like to apply for funding, they would need to have their project sponsored, likely by their County.

Is there a local match required?

Yes, all TA funded projects require a minimum 20% local match of the eligible project costs.



How does the funding cycle work?

The solicitation taking place through the fall 2016 and winter 2017 is for projects that will be ready for construction in Federal Fiscal Year 2021.

Who reviews and evaluates the applications?

The central Minnesota ATP 3 incorporates a competitive process in selecting eligible projects. The ATP integrates recommendations from the four regions within it, including Region 5 Development Commission, East Central Regional Development Commission, Region 7W Joint Powers, and St. Cloud Area Planning Organization. The ATP also utilizes a Subcommittee that reviews and suggests TA projects to the ATP. www.mndot.gov/d3/atp/

Will the review process be competitive?

Yes - \$1.6 million is the anticipated programmable amount of funding for Fiscal Year 2021 in central Minnesota which includes the counties of:

- Benton
- Cass
- Crow Wing
- Isanti
- Kanabec
- Mille Lacs
- Morrison
- Sherburne
- Stearns
- Todd
- Wadena
- Wright

Learn more at a TA workshop

The Central Minnesota ATP 3 will host two workshops for potential 2021 TA applicants who want to learn about the program and its requirements

Baxter

Thursday, Oct. 6

1:30-3:30 pm

MnDOT Baxter Office
7694 Industrial Park Road

St. Cloud

Wednesday, Oct. 12

1:30-3:30 pm

MnDOT St. Cloud Office
3725-12th Street North

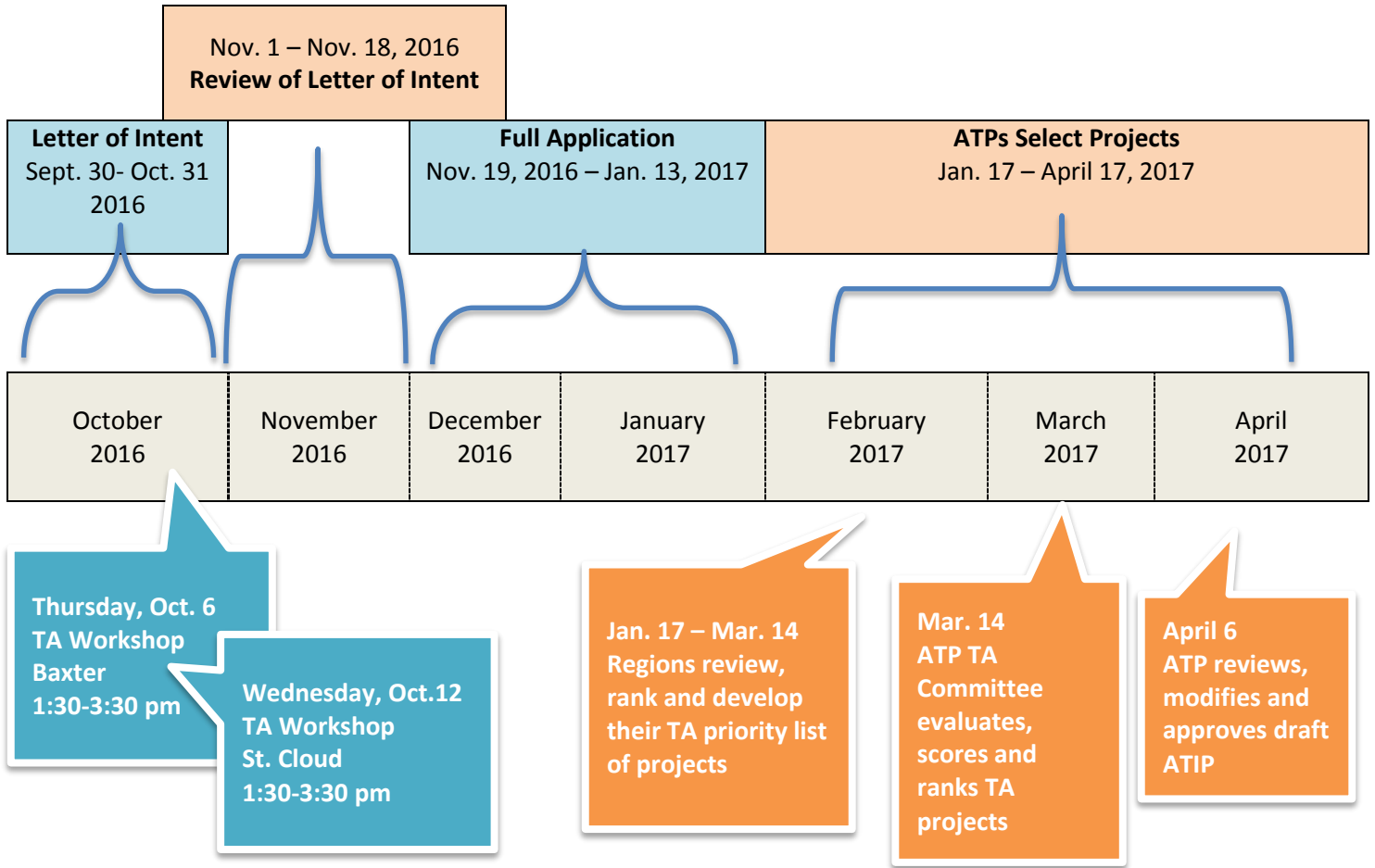
**Applicants needing a
sponsoring agency for
their project are strongly
encouraged to attend.**


RSVP - Contact

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TA Solicitation for FY 2021

Application schedule

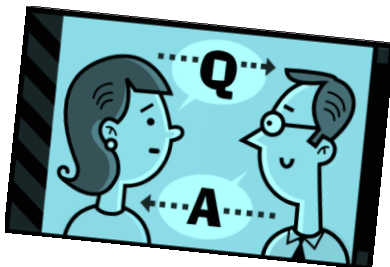


| Key Dates | | |
|---|----------------|--|
|  | Sept. 31, 2016 | Announce Solicitation / Begin process |
| | Oct. 31, 2016 | Deadline to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) online through the fillable form |
| | Nov. 18, 2016 | Applicant will be provided the full TA application by their Region if project meets eligibility requirements |
| | Jan. 13, 2017 | Deadline to submit full TA Application to ATP 3 staff |
| | April 17, 2017 | Applicant will be notified by ATP 3 staff and selected project(s) will be included in the Draft Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) |

Frequently asked Q&As

When can construction begin and end?

Fiscal Year 2021 is from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Since federal funds are not released for reimbursement until after October 1st, applicants typically wait until the second half of the fiscal year for which they are programmed for funding to start construction. In other words, for a FY 2021 project, applicants would complete their project development requirements by April 15, 2021 and then authorize, let, and award the project before June 30, 2021. Applicants can begin construction in the first half of the fiscal year, but would need to upfront these costs until they can be reimbursed for their costs after October 1st.



If awarded, can we move up fiscal years to complete early?

If an agency wishes to “Advance Construct (AC)” their project, they can do so, but the local funds need to be in place and the project needs to be ready. An agency that wishes to AC their project would be doing so at their own risk of reimbursement in the original year of programmed funding from the federal government. An agreement would also need to be signed stating that they are taking that risk.

Could we delay construction?

Agencies are highly discouraged from delaying their project from the programmed funding year because there is a risk the funds will go away. Instances such as wetland impacts, right of way issues, and local funding often play a role in an agency's inability to complete a project on schedule. Deliverability plays a significant role in TA project selection.

Could we divert funds to pay for another project?

TA projects that are selected and programmed for TA funding have been done so based on the application contents through the ATP 3 competitive process. Alterations to the scope of a project, once programmed, are highly discouraged as funding reimbursement could be jeopardized.

What's the minimum and maximum request?

The minimum project cost (eligible work) is \$100,000 and the maximum TA amount that can be requested through ATP 3 this solicitation is \$800,000. Example: If an applicant had eligible work totaling \$1,200,000, a traditional 80% federal/20% local cost split would be \$960,000 (federal) and \$240,000 (local). Since the maximum amount of federal funds that can be requested is \$800,000, the applicant cannot request the full \$960,000 based on the 80/20 formula, they could only request \$800,000. In this case the applicant would need to increase their local share from \$240,000 to \$400,000 to make up the difference.

Can the local match be provided over multiple years?

The only requirement is that the local matching funds need to be available in the fiscal year for which the project is programmed. How the funds are secured and managed is a local responsibility. Since federal funds are available upon reimbursement, it is necessary for the local agency to have local funds available initially for the project's construction.

Can engineering costs, right of way acquisition, or in-kind time or labor count towards match?

Funding under the TA is competitive. In-kind or “soft” matches affect your overall project cost and in-turn, the federal reimbursable amount of funding. This type of match is discouraged as it is cumbersome to manage and document and has been known to cause deliverability issues at the time of construction.

Are letters of support taken into consideration with the application?

The letters are not considered as part of the evaluation criteria. However, letters do show community support for the project and it is good to include them as it demonstrates the importance of the project to the community and the coordination of your application.

Contacts, resources



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Web

MnDOT TA program

www.dot.state.mn.us/ta/

Central Minnesota ATP 3

www.dot.state.mn.us/d3/atp/

MnDOT State Aid

www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/

Minnesota County Engineer

www.mncountyengineers.org/counties

