

KANSAS★

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES



KDOT Transportation Alternatives Program Guide

This document is intended to be used as a guide for potential Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program applicants, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and all other transportation planning partners. This document includes information on Kansas' TA Program structure, project scoring and selection process, eligibility requirements, and application process. Please use this guide as a supplement to the 2024 webinar slides available on the [TA webpage](#). If you have any questions about the contents within this document, please contact:

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1. Program Description

The federally funded Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program was originally established by Congress in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act of 2012 (MAP-21). The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) continues the program beginning Federal Fiscal Year 2022 with greater investments in active transportation infrastructure and planning.

TA provides funding for surface transportation projects and programs defined as transportation alternatives, such as on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; Safe Routes to School projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

In Kansas, the TA Program is administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). All states are required to develop a competitive process specifically for the TA Program project selection process. The development of a competitive process for TA funds is an opportunity to develop transparent project solicitation, prioritization and selection processes and increase transportation equity. KDOT expects this method to deliver high project quality and infrastructure improvements that are supported by local, regional and state transportation goals.

Participating expenses under TA include construction, construction engineering (CE) and, new in 2024, preliminary engineering (PE)/design. Please note for PE, [Qualification Based Selection \(QBS\)](#) procedures must be followed when procuring engineering and design related services using federal or state funds where those services are directly related to a construction project.

2. Program Structure

Included in the following information is a summary of the FHWA TA Program Guidance. For more information, please visit FHWA's *Transportation Alternatives* [webpage](#). For information on updates related to BIL, see the FHWA [BIL-TA fact sheet](#).

a. Eligible Applicants*

Entities that are eligible to apply for TA funds for construction projects are:

- Local governments
- Regional Transportation Authorities
- Transit agencies
- Natural resource or public lands agencies
- Schools/School Districts
- Tribal governments
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails that the State determines to be eligible
- Non-urbanized communities within the WAMPO and MARC MPO regions are eligible to apply.
- Small MPO's may now develop and submit an application on behalf of a community within that area. These MPOs include Flint Hills, Metro Topeka, Lawrence Douglas County MPOs and St. Joseph Area Transportation Study Organization.

***Please note**, a Federal Employer ID Number (FEIN) is required to accept federal funds.

b. Ineligible Applicants

Entities that are not eligible to apply for TA funds are:

- KDOT, Urbanized portions of MARC and WAMPO MPOs.

c. Eligible Projects and Activities

To be eligible for TA funds, a project must meet one or more of the TA project definitions listed below and must relate directly to surface transportation.

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle/Non-Motorized Transportation
 - a. [Pedestrian/Bicycle/Non-motorized Transportation 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.
 - b. [Infrastructure Related Projects to Provide Safe Routes for Non-Drivers](#) – infrastructure and accommodations for children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
 - c. [Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails](#) – acquisition of railroad rights-of-way; planning, design, and construction of multiuse trails and rail-with-trail projects.
 2. Safe Routes to School (SRTS)*
 - [Construction](#)
 1. Sidewalk improvements
 2. Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
 3. Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
 4. On-street bicycle facilities
 5. Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 6. Secure bicycle parking and facilities
 7. Traffic diversion improvements within the vicinity of schools
- *Please note: A community must have a completed and approved SRTS Master Plan to be eligible for this category.
3. Historic/Archeological Transportation Activities
 - a. [Historic Preservation & Rehabilitation of Historic Transportation Facilities](#) – preservation of buildings and facades in historic districts; restoration of historic buildings for transportation-related purposes; access improvements to historic sites.
 - b. [Archaeological Activities](#) – projects related to impacts from implementation of highway construction projects.
 4. Scenic and Environmental
 - a. [Scenic Turnouts and Overlooks](#) – construction of scenic turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.
 - b. [Outdoor Advertising Management](#) – billboard inventories and removal of illegal and non-conforming billboards.
 - c. [Vegetation Management](#) – improvement of roadway safety; prevention of invasive species; providing erosion control.
 - d. [Stormwater Mitigation](#) – pollution prevention and abatement activities to address stormwater management; water pollution prevention related to highway construction or due to highway runoff.
 - e. [Wildlife Management](#) – reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality; restoration and maintenance of connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

Project proposals must be for a complete, identifiable, and usable facility or activity. Funds will not be awarded for partial projects that cannot function as a complete and useful facility or activity. However, funding may be awarded to a specific phase of a project if that phase, when completed,

can function as a stand-alone project. Proposals with multi-phase projects must clearly identify each phase and funding needs for each of the phases.

d. **Ineligible Projects and Activities**

Below are some of the activities that will not be funded with federal dollars. It is the Project Sponsors' responsibility to cover the costs incurred with the associated activities. Items that are ineligible for funding by the TA Program can be included in the construction contract as non-participating items with the funding provided by the sponsor.

- Signing, landscaping, lighting and other scenic enhancements as independent projects, however, landscaping and scenic enhancements could be eligible as part of the construction of any Federal-aid highway project under 23 U.S.C. 319, including TA-funded projects.
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.
- Administrative costs – Some examples of actions considered to be administrative are application preparation; consultant selection and management; coordination with KDOT, etc.
- Public art – Items of public art include, but are not limited to: statuary, decorative banners, flag displays (including flagpoles), murals, fountains, clock towers, etc.
- Standard roadway or bridge infrastructure items, such as roadway paving or structural work, will not be considered for funding unless incidental to the TA project.
- Parking – Exceptions to this is if the parking facility is related to a bicycle trailhead, or to access a turnout, overlook, viewing area, or at/within an historic transportation facility project. Another exception is if the parking facility is related to a Safe Routes to School project that addresses student pick-up/drop-off zones that prioritize or significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle access in and around the area.
- Mitigation – A work item that serves to mitigate (compensate for) an environmental impact (including historic, natural, or cultural).
- Operation of historic transportation facilities.
- Transportation Museums.

*This is not a comprehensive list. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator.

e. **Funding**

There are two general allocations of TA funds administered by KDOT: statewide or “any area” and by populations less than 200,000. Based on the new guidelines in BIL, states are expected to suballocate approximately 41% of funds to projects in “any area” and 59% “by population”. In total, KDOT expects to be responsible for administering a combined total of \$30 million in TA funds. The two largest Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the Wichita and Kansas City Region receive their own apportionment of TA funds and run separate competitive cycles to fund communities in their region. The funding amounts are explained below.

Areas >200,000 Urbanized Population

TA funding is directly allocated to urbanized areas with a population greater than 200,000. These MPO's are responsible for awarding their allocated funds to projects within their MPO boundaries through a competitive selection process. KDOT does not administer TA projects in these areas. If your project is in the Kansas City or Wichita areas, please contact the MPO responsible for your area.

- [Mid-America Regional Council](#) (MARC) – serves the nine-county Kansas City metropolitan area, which includes 119 separate city governments as [members of MARC](#).
- [Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Agency](#) (WAMPO) – serves several cities in the Wichita metropolitan [area](#).

[Areas <200,000 Population](#)

KDOT is responsible for funding allocated to areas of less than 200,000 population.

- Approximately \$18 million is anticipated to be available
- KDOT administers funding through a statewide competitive process
- KDOT will conduct one statewide call for projects for areas with populations of 5,001-200,000 and other areas with populations <5,001

[Statewide/Any Area](#)

KDOT is also responsible for allocated funding for statewide projects.

- Approximately \$12 million is anticipated to be available
- Funding can be awarded to eligible sponsors in any area administered by KDOT
- KDOT administers funding through a single competitive process combined with the areas with populations less than 200,000

[Recreational Trails Program](#)

Additionally, Kansas has also elected to continue the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), which is administered by the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks (KDWP). The RTP is a set-aside amount of Kansas' TA allocation. For more information on RTP, please visit KDWP's [Grants webpage](#).

[Local Match](#)

At the program level, TA funds may pay for up to 80% of participating costs. A cash match is required to pay for 20% or more of the participating costs. This match requirement also applies to all Safe Routes to School projects. Federal funds cannot be used as matching funds, unless expressly permitted by law. State funds are eligible for use as match.

New in 2024! The [Kansas Vulnerable Road User Assessment](#) (VRUA) was published at the end of 2023 complete with recommendations and the identification of high risk and high injury networks. In response, the Bureau of Transportation Safety has committed \$3M of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to support up to 20% match on pedestrian and bicycle TA projects that include countermeasures identified in the VRUA. Projects will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Project is in community with populations under 5,000.
- Project is identified a disadvantaged based on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening [Tool](#).
- Project is located on corridors identified as the state's VRU high risk/injury networks.
- Project includes safety countermeasures identified in the [VRUA](#) and FHWA [STEP Guide](#)

Project sponsors are responsible for 100% of ineligible expenses and non-participating items. Sponsors and consultants should attempt to design projects to stay under the award amount and are typically responsible for costs that exceed the award amount. Contact your project manager if the costs of the project significantly exceed initial estimates.

[Cost Reimbursement](#)

KDOT's TA Program acts as a cost-reimbursement program on a limited basis. Since most TA projects will be administered by KDOT, Project Sponsors will be responsible for paying their portion in the form of a one-time lump sum after accepting a contractor's bid to construct the project. KDOT will pay the federal share through the construction of the project..

Please note that if your agency's application is selected for funding, the agency will enter into a City/State Agreement with KDOT and serve as the official sponsoring agency. As the official sponsoring agency, you will be responsible for submitting payments.

Limitations and Availability

TA funds will be available for the FFYs they're awarded and agencies must have their projects obligated/approved for letting by September 30 of that FFY or risk forfeiture of project funds. Please note that the obligation of funds is contingent upon completion of the design phase of a construction project; therefore, you must complete your design phase within the appropriate timeframe to obligate your construction funds. It is highly recommended that you begin the project consultant selection and design process as soon as you receive a Notice to Proceed following the KDOT [Consultant Selection Guide](#) and establish a Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) goal (see #5 under Compliance with Federal and State Requirements in the following section).

3. Expectations and Requirements

It is the duty of each Project Sponsor to read this guidance and become familiar with KDOT's TA process. Applying for federal funds begins a significant undertaking, which must be led by the Project Sponsor from start to finish. Projects that are not able to navigate the federal requirements and be ready to be advertised for construction by the end of their awarded FFY may be subject to forfeiture of awarded funds and project cancellation.

a. Compliance with Federal and State Requirements

The following is a list of the basic eligibility requirements that all KDOT TA projects must meet.

1. Involvement of the public, including the adjacent property owners, in the development of the project.
2. Compliance with the Uniform Relocation Property Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act ([the Uniform Act](#)) for the acquisition of easements or the purchase of land in fee simple. This includes fair treatment practices and may include the completion of an appraisal on parcels to be acquired. This requirement applies whether or not federal funds will be used for the acquisition costs.
3. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This requires verification the project is not harmful to the environment in the following areas:
 - Noise - impacts of noise during and after construction
 - Air Quality – impacts to air quality
 - Cultural Resources - disturbances to areas of archaeological or historical significance. Properties proposed for rehabilitation or preservation must be eligible for or on the list of the National Register of Historic Places. (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act)
 - Water Quality - impacts to water quality
 - Wetlands - impacts to wetlands
 - Floodplains - impacts to regulatory floodways or to a 110-year floodplain
 - Farmland Protection - impacts to surrounding farmland
 - Hazardous Waste Sites - location of and impacts to hazardous waste sites

4. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Projects must conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act, which allows for reasonable access to the project for persons with disabilities.
5. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). Verification must be received that efforts have been made to solicit bids from disadvantaged business enterprises. DBE goals are set by KDOT's Bureau of Contract Compliance. Any DBE vendor must be on the KDOT-approved list. To check a vendor's status, please contact Contract Compliance at 785-296-7940.
6. Other required federal special provisions.
7. Davis-Bacon Wage Requirements. Projects will be required to comply with Davis-Bacon wage requirements which state that contractors will conform to federal minimum wage requirements. A project that qualifies as a trail project and is locally let may be exempt from this requirement,
8. Competitive bidding requirements. Construction projects are required to be let through KDOT unless otherwise approved.
9. Permits or Other Approvals. It is the project owner/sponsor's responsibility to obtain all permits, inspections, or other approvals that may be required as a result of the activities proposed as part of the project.

b. Minimum Project Requirements

In addition to the above requirements, applicants for TA funds must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Application must be complete. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**
2. The Project Sponsor and the proposed activity or project must meet the program's eligibility requirements.
3. The Project Sponsor must provide a Resolution of Support indicating proof of local match (no less than 20% unless eligible for HSIP match support), commitment to operating and maintaining the proposed project for the useful life of the project, and availability of funds in the agency's budget to pay all project costs up front.
4. After awards are announced, all selected TA projects must be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), as well as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for their respective MPO, if applicable.

4. Application Information and Support

The goal of KDOT's TA Program project selection process is to encourage and reward efforts that meet and exceed the minimum program requirements listed above. The following information is provided to assist applicants with preparing an eligible, competitive project application.

a. MPO Support

All projects located within the boundaries of an MPO will require a letter of support from MPO staff. The MPO may decide to route that letter to their policy body for formal action, but it is not required. If this situation applies to your project, please contact the appropriate MPO to discuss your project, the MPO's process of approval, and deadline information.

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)

<https://www.marc.org/>

Patrick Trouba, Transportation Planner

ptrouba@marc.org

Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO)

<https://www.wampo.org/>

Nick Flanders, Senior Transportation Planner
nicholas.flanders@wampo.org

Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (FHMPPO)

Jared Tremblay, Project Manager
tremblay@flinthillsmmpo.org

Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO)

Taylor Wolfe, Multi-Modal Transportation Planner 1
twolfe@Topeka.org

Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LDCMPO)

Jessica Mortinger, Senior Transportation Planner
jmortinger@lawrenceks.org

St. Joseph Area Transportation Study Organization (SJATSO)

www.stjoemo.info

Maximillian Scheiber, Transportation Planner, mschieber@stjosephmo.gov
Joshua Stevens, Transportation Planner, jstephens@stjosephmo.gov

b. Required Information

All applicants must be ready to provide the following information on the TA Program application:

- Primary and secondary contact information
- Countermeasures identified in project, if applicable
- Connection to an existing planning document and project attributes
- Project title, scope, description, design guidance used, if applicable, significance and need, benefits, and how project addresses equity. Please be concise but provide enough detail to give an accurate and complete picture of what is being proposed.
- Detailed map & photos that identify the project location, boundaries, and existing conditions. Show where and how proposed project will tie-in to existing facilities, side of street, crossings, other funded projects yet to be constructed, etc. where applicable.
- If available for project, sketches, plan/preliminary design – that illustrate the proposed project as completed, including cross-sections of proposed facility types.
- Cost estimates – an itemized breakdown of the total project costs. List costs that are expected to be “participating” and “non-participating” expenses.
- Project timeline – for the total duration of project development. Please base your schedule upon awards being announced in Summer 2024, followed by the design/project consultant selection process. See example RUPIS schedule.
- Resolution of support (with authorized signatures) – indicating proof of funds to cover the required matching funds, maintenance and budget responsibilities from Project Sponsor.
- Letters of support – from the public, community organizations or businesses, or regarding acquisition of Right-of-Way from property owners. When applicable, a Letter of Support *is* required from any historical society, scenic or historic byway board, or MPO that addresses the project’s impact related to the organization and the community it serves.
- A community active transportation, or equivalent plan

- All SRTS projects **must** provide a link to a corresponding approved SRTS Plan that supports the proposed project, with the exception of projects applying for funding to develop a SRTS Plan.
- Provide the section(s) from any planning document that supports the proposed project, e.g. Bicycle/Pedestrian/Active Transportation/SRTS Plans; Multi-modal Planning Studies; Economic Development Plans; Regional Transportation Plans; Corridor Studies; Road Safety Audits or Traffic Studies; Safety Management Plan, etc.

c. **Project Submission**

TA applications must be submitted on-line. The first step is to submit a Concept Paper for the proposed project. Concept Papers are due to KDOT by March 1, with reviews and feedback provided in March. Selected applicants will then receive notice and a link to complete a full application.

Incomplete application packets and email submissions will not be accepted. All applications must be received by Friday, May 17, 2024.

Consistent with other Federal-aid highway programs, TA funds must be used for eligible projects that are submitted by eligible entities and selected through a competitive process. The federal TA Program does not establish minimum standards or procedures for the competitive process. The project scoring and selection process is conducted by KDOT’s Project Scoring Committee (PSC) and Program Review Committee (PRC).

All applications submitted to KDOT for inclusion in the statewide competitive selection process will be rated and ranked by the PSC in accordance with the criteria listed in this guide. All projects will be ranked and presented to the PRC for their consideration to receive TA funding. However, since funding is limited by the total TA Program allocation, as well as the sub-allocations to the population areas, which KDOT is required by FHWA to meet, the PRC may adjust the projects selected to program funds in a geographically equitable manner.

After projects are selected, official award letters will be sent to the Project Sponsors. Award recipients within MPO boundaries must contact their respective MPOs with information on the selected projects. MPOs will then need to add the selected projects to their TIP.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Date	Activity
February 1, 2024	Call for Project Concepts Released
March 1, 2024	Project Concept Forms due on Qualtrics
March	Project Concept Reviews, technical assistance and feedback period
By March 31, 2024	Application link emailed to eligible sponsors who completed the Project Concept Form and were determined to be eligible
May 17, 2024	Applications are due
May 20 to June 30, 2024	Application review period.
Summer 2024	Project selections and public announcement of awards.

5. KDOT Contacts and Resources

a. **Internal and External Contacts**

For more information on KDOT's TA Program, interested applicants should contact:

Transportation Planning

Jenny Kramer, Active Transportation Manager
Jenny.Kramer@ks.gov, Phone: (785) 296-5186

Bureau of Local Projects

Bill Legge, Road Team Leader
Bill.Legge@ks.gov, Phone: (785) 296-0415

Historic Preservation

Patrick Zollner, Division Director & Cultural Resources,
pzollner@kshs.org, Phone: (785) 272-8681

b. KDOT Resources

- [Bureau of Local Projects webpage](#)
 - Form 1302 – Request for Project (use for all construction projects)
 - Form 1312 – Request for Non-infrastructure Project (use for SRTS Non-construction projects)
- [Local Public Authority \(LPA\) Administered Projects](#)
 - Form 1313 – Request for Payment
 - Form 1314 – Change Order Form
- [KDOT LPA Project Development Manual](#)
- [Federal](#) and [State](#) Requirements

6. Project Selection Criteria

Application Review Process

a. Initial Review

An initial review of applications will be completed based on the criteria listed below. Any missing documents or information will be requested. Upon notice of missing items, applicant will have three (3) business days to submit.

To pass the initial review, applications must meet all of the following **minimum requirements**:

- The application is submitted on Qualtrics by the application deadline.
- The applicant is an eligible entity to receive TA funding and has the authority to enter into a contract with the State.
- The application form is filled out correctly, signed, and includes all required attachments.
- The applicant demonstrates how the project is one or more of the eligible projects or activities.
- The proposed project is directly related to surface transportation.
- The application demonstrates that the required 20% minimum local cash match is available to support the participating phases of the project.
- The applicant demonstrates responsibility for 100% of non-participating items, ineligible expenses, and all costs exceeding the award amount.
- The application includes a signed Resolution of Support that commits to long-term maintenance and operation of the completed project.

- The applicant does not currently have any other projects with KDOT that are on FHWA's inactive project report.
- The completed project will be open to the general public and meets the accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The application demonstrates that the completed project fulfills a public need, directly addresses a safety issue, or makes an important connection to the local/regional/state transportation system.
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to meet applicable federal, state, and local requirements.

b. Comprehensive and Categorical Technical Review

- Complete applications that are determined to qualify for TA funding go through a rigorous review and scoring process that includes a comprehensive and categorical review process.
- Applications will be arranged by Project Category and distributed to the Project Scoring Committee (PSC) for review and initial evaluation. The committee will be made up of representatives from KDOT's Division of Planning and Development and Bureau of Local Projects, a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representative, and professionals who specialize in the fields of project categories.
- Additional information or clarification may be requested by TA Program Coordinator at this time. For example, applicants may be asked to provide clarity and additional information on proposals via conference call, site visits, submission of clarifying information such as google earth images, photos, plans, etc.
- Scoring is derived from information in the application materials submitted, including proposed budget, illustrations, and text narrative.
- Points will be awarded on both technical aspects as well as category-specific criteria to determine the need and quality of the project and its potential to strengthen the transportation system for users of all ages and abilities.
- This assessment evaluates projects based upon perceived strengths and weaknesses, project readiness, accuracy of estimate and schedule, appropriateness of scope, potential obstacles, experience with the Project Sponsors, and Project Sponsors' financial status with KDOT.
- Project Sponsor's past performance on the delivery and maintenance of KDOT projects, if applicable, will be considered throughout the scoring and evaluation process.
- The PSC will determine recommended list of projects to present to the Program Review Committee (PRC).

c. Program Review Committee deliberations and recommendations

Final recommendations will be presented to the PRC for additional review and discussion. Final project selection highly considers overall scores, but also considers merit, availability and geographical distribution of funding. KDOT will officially announce the list of funded projects Summer 2024.

7. References and Resources

- Example [Resolution of Support](#)
- KDOT District [Map](#) and Area Office [contacts](#)
- [Planning Resources for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities](#)