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A. SUMMARY OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Transportation Alternatives (TA) is a key program for helping build Complete Streets that are safe for all users and achieve safe, connected, and equitable on-and off-road networks. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021), provides funding to for TA activities as a set-aside of funds from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP). In Texas, sixty percent of TA funding is suballocated by population.

A portion of suballocated funds is administered to MPOs in urbanized areas (200,000 or more in population) that are TMAs, such as the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO). In consultation with the TxDOT, the RGVMPO is responsible for selecting projects, for TA funding, through a competitive process (23 U.S.C. 133(h)(4)(C)). TxDOT has developed new technical assistance tools that will assist applicants in creating and sharing a Google Map and developing construction cost estimates, which are linked to the application. In addition, applicants will find in Table 1 a deadline for requesting Technical Assistance from RGVMPO Staff. The deadline to submit the request is in advance of the deadline to submit the application as RGVMPO Staff needs to ensure there is enough time to process and complete all requests.

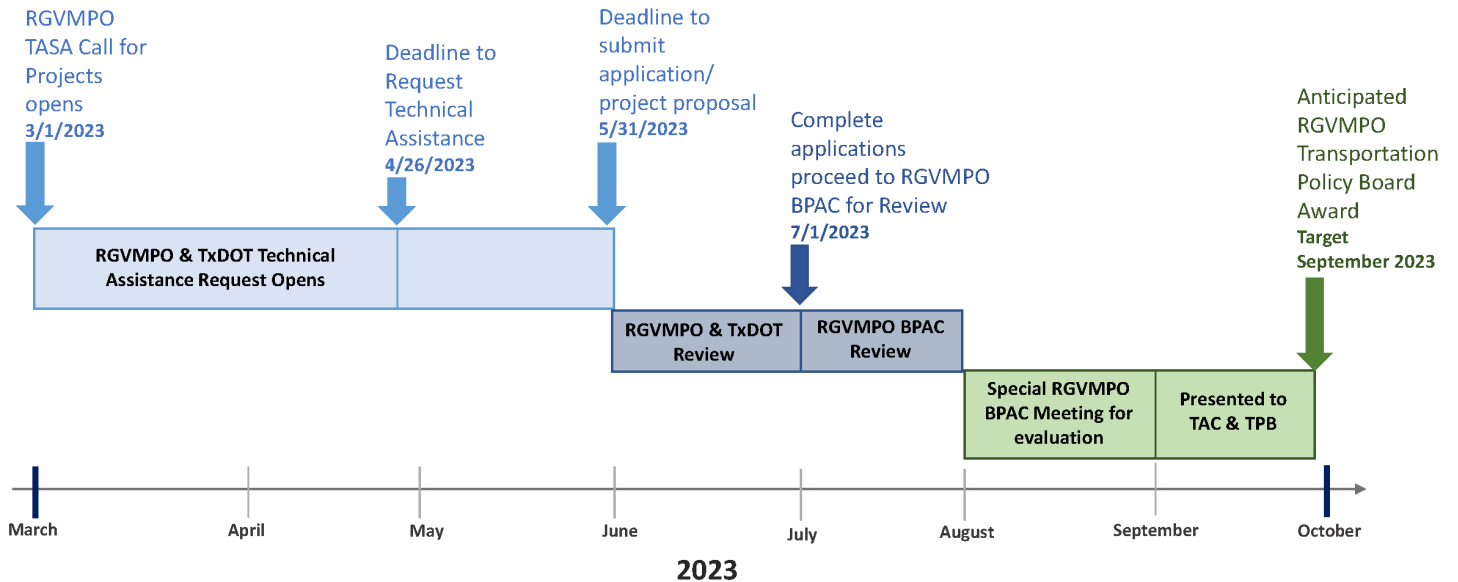
On March 1, 2023, the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO) announced the FY2023-2024 Call for Projects for the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) program for bicyclist and pedestrian infrastructure and planning. The RGVMPO’s FY2023-2024 TASA Program Guide outlines the requirements of TASA funds and the evaluation and selection processes for this competitive Call for Projects.

Table 1: RGVMPO’s FY2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects Important Dates

Date	Milestones
March 1, 2023	RGVMPO FY2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects Opens (12 p.m.).
March 15, 2023	RGVMPO TASA Program Virtual Workshop (Microsoft Teams).
March 22, 2023	RGVMPO TASA Program Virtual Workshop (Microsoft Teams).
March 31, 2023*	Responses to TASA Workshop questions posted.
April 26, 2023	Deadline to request Technical Assistance (5 p.m., more info. on page #12).
May 31, 2023	Deadline to submit application/project proposals (5 p.m.).
June 2023	RGVMPO & TxDOT Staff application review (may seek clarification).
July 2023	Complete applications proceed to RGVMPO BPAC Voting Members for review.
August 2, 2023	Presentations to the RGVMPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).
August 2023	Special RGVMPO BPAC Meeting for application evaluation and project scoring.
September 14, 2023	Recommendations presented to RGVMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
September 27, 2023*	RGVMPO Transportation Policy Board (TPB) awards/programs TASA funds.

*Target dates

Figure 1: RGVMPPO FY2023-2024 TASA Program Call Timeline



RGVMPO Focus Areas

For the FY2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects, the RGVMPPO is particularly interested in projects that reflect a high degree of collaboration and community consensus while directly contributing to the RGVMPPO’s Active Transportation Plan (ATP) connectivity, accessibility, and community health goals. Project sponsors are strongly encouraged to submit projects that:

- Connect transit with active transportation; connecting the first and last mile of public transit trips to create a realistic and comprehensive network.
- Establish a regional hike and bike network; linking existing routes, increasing connectivity, and increasing user comfort via a system of safe facilities.
- Ensure equity; enhancing travel choices for underserved people while increasing access to basic needs, services, and employment.
- Develop connections to key destinations; promoting more frequent participation in active transportation and allowing users of all ages and abilities to access resources across the region.
- Improve system safety; enhancing crosswalks and minimizing conflicts with motorized vehicles increases safety for all vulnerable road users.
- Promote active transportation modes for public health; integrating physical activity to lower the effects of obesity, heart disease, mental health issues, and other chronic conditions.
- Support local economies through active tourism; building a world class, regional network would support job creation and local spending.

Proposed projects may be located on state-maintained roadway right-of-way (on-system) or along on- or off-street property owned by the project sponsor (off-system). RGVMPPO Staff will analyze property ownership upon submittal for all construction projects. If the proposed project is located on land not-owed by the project sponsor or the state, an agreement between the project sponsor and property owner should be provided with the application submittal. For the purposes of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program, the RGVMPPO region is Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr counties in Texas. The RGVMPPO may use these funds for projects anywhere within the boundaries of the applicable MPO area (23 U.S.C. 133(d)(2)). (See the [Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Area Boundary \(MAB\)](#) for reference)

TA Funding Availability

Through this Call for Projects, the RGVMPPO intends to program (award) approximately \$9,000,000 in TASA funds. Table 2 provides an overview of TASA funding available for technical assistance, planning projects, and construction. All or some portion of these funds may be awarded as a result of this Call, depending on the actual amount of funding available and the number of suitable TA project applications received by the RGVMPPO.

Table 2: RGVMPPO’s FY2023-2024 TASA Program Funding Availability

Amount Available	Funding Category
\$900,000	Planning Projects (minimum 10%)
\$8,100,000	Construction Projects (maximum 90%)
\$9,000,000	Total RGVMPPO TASA Funds Available

A portion of the funds are available as soon as FY2025 (September 2024). All funds must be obligated by FY2027 (August 2026). The amount of funds for this round, and the year a project is to be funded, will be based on funding availability and is subject to change.

Application Process

Through this Call for Projects, the project sponsor must submit a three-part application with supplemental materials and backup documentation, if needed. The three-part application includes:

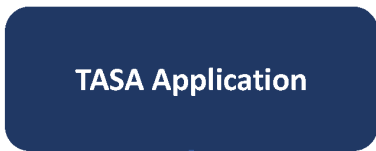
- Part A: project proposal and evaluation questions
- Part B: project information form (including budget breakdown)
- Part C: SPA form (to determine project leads and oversight levels)

After the application deadline, RGVMPPO will coordinate with TxDOT staff to review project eligibility and supportive materials prior to sending applications to the RGVMPPO BPAC (see Figure 1).

Figure 2: 2023 RGVMPPO TA Program Call – Process

Submit Application

Project Sponsors submit fillable PDF application



- RGVMPPO + TxDOT Technical Assistance

RGVMPO + TxDOT Review

Staff reviews submittals and may seek clarification on information or request additional documentation.



Funding Award

Policy Board action expected Fall 2023



- BPAC presentations evaluation & scoring
- TAC approval of recommendation
- TPB approval of resolution

B. TASA ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

The TASA Program, as administered by the RGVMPPO, provides funding to plan for and construct a variety of alternative transportation projects that improve safety and mobility for non-motorized travelers and mitigate congestion by providing safe alternatives to motor vehicle transport. TA Program funding has increased through FY 2026 under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”. This continues the TA Program established under previous federal transportation funding bills. The TA Program provides funding for a variety of alternative transportation projects. The TA Program is codified in 23 U.S.C.§133(h). It provides opportunities to expand transportation choices and enhance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and planning.

Each state department of transportation reviews the guidance provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and develops rules to administer their TA Program according to that state’s priorities. In Texas, the RGVMPPO’s TASA Program operates under rules adopted by the Texas Transportation Commission, which may be found in 43 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§11.400 - 11.418 and §§16.153 - 16.154.³

Eligible TA Project Sponsors

The RGVMPPO administers TASA Program funds that are available for projects anywhere within the

boundaries of the [Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Area Boundary \(MAB\)](#). Eligible Project Sponsors include local governments, transit agencies, a natural resource or public land agency, a school district, nonprofit, or any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for, or oversight of, transportation or recreational trails. Refer to 23 U.S.C.§133(h) for further details/descriptions of the above entities. A project sponsor may need to provide the department a reference to its enabling legislation for review to determine eligibility.

Entities with limited federally funded construction experience and entities without ROW ownership are strongly encouraged to partner with local governments (city, county, etc.) on construction-related projects. Only one entity is permitted to serve as a project sponsor and enter into an agreement for project implementation with TxDOT. The project sponsor is 100% responsible for the local match and project development. According to 23 U.S.C.§133(h)(4)(B), state departments of transportation (DOTs) and MPOs of any size may provide assistance with applications or carry out a TA project once it is awarded funds even if the state DOT or MPO was not involved in the application for the project. For more information, see Section H. Project Implementation.

Typically, a local government serves as the project sponsor because the majority of the improvements are located on property maintained by the local government. When a third party, such as a school district or nonprofit entity, partners on a project or agrees to provide a portion of the local funding match, it would be the project sponsor's responsibility to execute an agreement with the third party for any funding commitments and secure any right-of-entry for project construction while remaining the sole project sponsor.

Additionally, project sponsors may partner with transit agencies on projects that support safe, accessible connections to transit. TA funds may be transferred to a compatible Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant program for implementation when a project has a transit nexus and when all project components are eligible under the receiving FTA Program rules. A transit nexus is defined as providing connecting pedestrian facilities within ½ mile of transit service or providing connecting bicycle facilities within 3 miles of transit service.

[Eligible TA Project Activities](#)

Consistent with federal guidance outlined in 23 USC 217, TxDOT-selected TA projects must contribute to a safe, contiguous, accessible, integrated walking and bicycling network that provides travelers with a real choice of transportation modes. See eligible project activities below.

Planning Projects are eligible for reimbursement for costs related to planning documents that assist communities develop non-motorized transportation networks. Including:

- Feasibility studies
- Environmental assessments
- Surveying and schematics
- Detailed design plans
- ADA transition plans

Construction Projects are eligible for reimbursement for costs related to:

- Sidewalk improvements
- Bicycle infrastructure improvements
- Trails or shared use paths
- Infrastructure-related projects to improve safety for non-motorized transportation (Such as ADA upgrades, high visibility crosswalk installations, converting existing bike lanes into separated bike lanes, curb extensions/bulb-outs, and refuge islands).
- Construction of boulevards and other roadways that are located primarily in the right-of-way of divided highways and that improve access for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. For more information about boulevards related to TA projects please reference [FHWA's definition and guidance](#).

For additional details about the above eligible project activities, refer to *43 TAC §11.404(a)*. Whether proposed as an independent project or as an element of a larger transportation project, the project must be limited to a logical unit of work and be constructible as an independent project.

Local Match for TA Projects

TA funding provides 80% federal funds with a 20% minimum local match required. The local funding match may be provided in one of the following ways:

- Cash provided by the project sponsor, or
- State funds in limited circumstance

Projects selected will include the addition of a 15% TxDOT administrative fee (based on the total estimated project construction cost) for TxDOT's direct state cost associated with the department's administration and oversight of the project. The department's administrative fee will be 80% federally funded with a 20% local match. The 20% local match for TxDOT's administrative cost can be provided utilizing the local match options outlined above.

Funds from other federal programs may be used as local funding match only when specifically authorized by federal law or regulation. Donated services may not be accepted as local funding match but may help reduce the overall cost of the project to the sponsor and would not be included in the project budget or scope of work. Third party cash donations paid to the project sponsor for use as the local match may be acceptable, if authorized by law.

TxDOT may in certain circumstances apply state funds to local match for projects that are on-system or fulfill ADA Transition Plan recommendations or meet eligibility requirements for Economically Disadvantaged Counties (EDC) Program funds. This will be at the discretion of the TxDOT Pharr District Office.

TA is a reimbursement program. After a project is authorized to proceed, allowable expenses are incurred by the project sponsor and reimbursement must be requested from the department. If a project selected the project sponsor must provide the local funding match prior to the

commencement of project activities for each phase of work as outlined in the local agreement (i.e., Advance Funding Agreement).

C. PROJECT EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria for the RGVMPPO's TASA Program were developed to support the [RGVMPPO Active Transportation Plan](#)'s Key Principles and Supporting Goals:

1. Connectivity – Increasing mobility across active transportation modes, while creating an integrated regional transportation network.
2. Accessibility – Establishing a comprehensive system of transportation options and allowing users of all ages and abilities to access resources across the region.
3. Community Health – Promoting active transportation modes that improve public health and support local economies.

To ensure input from the public and stakeholders, the RGVMPPO provided all working drafts of the FY2023-2024 TASA Program Call guide, application and scoring criteria online. Additionally, the RGVMPPO hosted three TASA Working Group meetings to present revisions/changes and solicit specific feedback for establishing evaluation criteria. The summary of each TASA Working Group meeting was presented for discussion by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

Table 3 outlines the criteria categories and measures that will be used to evaluate all eligible projects. The table includes a brief description of each evaluation criterion and a list of measures for each category. Table 4 provides the criteria category weights by project category. In the Application, project sponsors will address the criteria categories by responding to questions targeted toward specific evaluation criteria. [An application form](#) will be available for download on the RGVMPPO webpage on or around March 1, 2023.

Table 3: Criteria Descriptions and Measures for Construction & Planning Projects

Construction & Planning Scoring Criteria			
Evaluation Criteria	Description/Factors	Evaluation Method	Evaluation Details
Project Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Demonstrates planning/construction project funds obligating on time. •Demonstrates the ability to advance the project to construction immediately, if selected for funding •Identifies comprehensive, detailed construction/planning cost estimate. •Meets and/or exceeds design criteria established by UD Access Board, FHWA, AASHTO, TxDOT, and/or NACTO. 	Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E)	Analysis of application responses
		Environmental Documentation	Analysis of application responses
		Right-of-Way (ROW)	Analysis of application responses
		Railroad Impacts & Utility Coordination	Analysis of application responses
Safety Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Demonstrated need for safety improvement and appropriate safety countermeasures. •Provides safer and/or less intimidating accommodations for walking, bicycling, and other non-motorized travel. 	Non-motorized crash count/rate	RGVMPO GIS analysis
		Proposed safety countermeasures	Analysis of application responses
		Proposed infrastructure elements	Analysis of application responses
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Enhances livability by improving active transportation access and improves modes choice in underserved communities. •Provides health and environmental benefits by incorporating landscaping, sidewalk design, crossing treatments, street furniture, bike racks, or lighting to encourage pedestrian and cyclists to utilize the area. •New BIL requirements state the competitive process used by MPOs must prioritize project location & impact in high-need areas as defined by the State, such as low-income, transit dependent, rural or other areas (23 U.S.C. 133 (h)(4)(D)). 	Average percent elderly	RGVMPO GIS analysis
		Average percent disabled	RGVMPO GIS analysis
		Average percent zero car household	RGVMPO GIS analysis
		Percentage living below the poverty line	RGVMPO GIS analysis
		Within a historically disadvantaged tract	RGVMPO GIS analysis
Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improves active transportation access to destinations of interest such as business districts, downtown, centers of business activity, high density residential, and/or employment centers •Supports multi-modal connections. •Eliminates barriers to pedestrians, bicycle riders, and wheelchair users. •Supports investments in local/interregional tourism, especially Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails 	Implements local/regional active transportation plans.	Analysis of application responses
		Connects to existing transportation systems (Bike/Ped/Transit)	Analysis of application responses
		Connects to public buildings, schools, and parks	Analysis of application responses
		Multi-jurisdictional connections or 10+ miles in length	Analysis of application responses

Table 4: Criteria Categories Weights by Project Category

Criteria Category	Criteria Category Weights	
	Planning	Construction
Project Readiness	25%	25%
Safety Benefits	25%	25%
Equity	20%	20%
Connectivity	30%	30%
Total	100%	100%

Evaluation Process

The RGVMPPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) voting members will oversee an evaluation process that will result in a recommended list of projects submitted during this Call for Projects to receive funding. RGVMPPO staff will review, evaluate, and recommend projects submitted during the RGVMPPO's 2023 TA Call for Projects. RGVMPPO in conjunction with TxDOT staff will screen each proposed project to determine whether it is eligible for funding under applicable federal and state law and determine whether the proposed project would meet technical standards established by applicable law and acceptable professional practice.

This Call for Projects features a three-part application followed by a review process. RGVMPPO staff will verify the eligibility determination subject to TA Program rules based on responses from the project sponsor, the proposed construction activity, and the project location. The RGVMPPO may request supplemental information, as needed, to conduct project screening and evaluation. If a project sponsor is nonresponsive or fails to adequately address requests for supplemental information, their application will be considered incomplete and may not be considered by funding.

At the end of the RGVMPPO + TxDOT review, eligible project sponsors will be notified of their eligibility and be asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation for the August RGVMPPO BPAC Meeting (Wednesday, August 2nd at 11 AM) and their application will be sent to RGVMPPO BPAC Voting Members to begin their review. If the project sponsor, construction activity, or location is determined to be ineligible at any time during the application process, then the project sponsor will be notified that the project will not be further considered for funding under this program.

Following Project/Applicant presentations at the August RGVMPPO BPAC Meeting, a Special Meeting will be held for Voting Members to score based on the criteria weighted by category (project readiness, safety benefits, equity, and connectivity) for construction and planning projects as provided above in Tables 4 and 5.

During project evaluation, TxDOT may identify potential constructability concerns (e.g., drainage issues, limited ROW, substantially inadequate budget, etc.). In this situation, TxDOT may recommend a project be phased and advanced for preliminary engineering (i.e., PS&E and environmental documentation) only. If a project is awarded preliminary engineering funding only, the project must be resubmitted in a future call for projects to be considered for construction funding.

D. ALLOWABLE COSTS

For RGVMPPO's 2023 TA Program call, the RGVMPPO's TA funds are available for:

- Project construction
- Preliminary engineering and design, including preparation of construction plans, specification, and estimates (PS&E), and associated survey work
- Environmental documentation
- Planning activities associated with development of planning documents to assist communities develop non-motorized transportation networks
- Right-of-way acquisition on a case-by-case basis as approved by TxDOT. ROW acquisition must facilitate project execution within TA Program obligation requirements and be supported by affected property owners.

Any project costs incurred prior to the full execution of an Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) will not be eligible for reimbursement. The RGVMPPO Transportation Policy Board (Policy Board) will specify an amount of federal TA funds for each project. See Section F for details.

Projects funded under 23 U.S.C.§133, including TA projects, shall be treated as projects on a federal-aid highway (23 U.S.C.§133(i)). This subjects all TA projects to various federal-aid requirements (e.g., Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements, Buy America, planning, environmental review, procurement and letting, etc.). Guidance regarding such requirements is found in the TxDOT Local Government Projects Toolkit (LGP Toolkit) at <https://www.txdot.gov/government/processes-procedures/lgp-toolkit.html>. The LGP Toolkit provides specific information regarding the applicable laws (see Project Policy Manual), procedures (see Project Management Guide), and best practices (see Best Practices Workbook) that must be adhered to regarding some or all phases of a TA project. Relevant portions of the LGP Toolkit are referenced in this guide.

The following costs are not eligible for federal reimbursement under this program call with RGVMPPO's TA funds:

- Environmental mitigation
- Utility adjustments (unless incidental to the project and approved as part of the project scope)
- Landscape improvements (unless incidental to the project and approved as part of the project scope)

- Acquisition of right-of-way and other property purchases that are not approved by TxDOT

The total amount for incidental construction activities (such as minor utility adjustment, minor drainage improvements, roadway repair, etc.) should not exceed 30% and amenities are allowed up to 10% of the project's construction budget.

If any element in a project application fails to meet federal and state requirements (e.g., warrants or conditions for traffic signals), the item will not be considered an eligible expense for reimbursement. A project construction budget must have a minimum of 75% of its cost items eligible for reimbursement in order to remain in competition. Ineligible items will not be funded. The project sponsor will need to demonstrate a willingness and ability to pay ineligible costs and/or demonstrate that the TA project is constructible as an independent project without the ineligible items.

Project overruns will be evaluated by the responsible division administering the program, in coordination with the project sponsor, on a case-by-case basis to determine if the project will continue and how the additional costs will be covered. The criteria for determining if the project may receive additional federal funding to cover overruns were established in 43 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §11.411(d) and are outlined below.

If program funds remain or are returned to the program due to cost underruns, the responsible division may apply additional TA Set-Aside funds, on a need's basis, for project overruns based on:

1. Justification of overruns,
2. Timing of request,
3. Availability of funds;
4. A reasonable expectation of the ability of the project sponsor to complete the project; and
5. If overrun requests exceed available funds, application of additional funds will be based on the economic criteria outlined below:
 - a. Project is located in an economically disadvantaged county (EDC) certified by commission for FY 2023, or
 - b. Project is located in a city/Census designated place (CDP) that meets the following criteria:
 - i. Population less than 200,000
 - ii. Below state average per capita taxable property value⁸
 - iii. Below state average per capita income⁹, and
 - iv. Above state average unemployment¹⁰

⁸ Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts; 2020 City Rates and Levies, Total Property Market Value and U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 Decennial Census, Total Population

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 5-Year Community Survey, Table DP03, Per Capita Income

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 5-Year Community Survey, Table DP03, Civilian Unemployment Rate

E. 2023 PROJECT SPONSOR WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

The RGVMPPO will host project sponsor workshops virtually to provide information and guidance on The RGVMPPO's 2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects. Potential project sponsors, consultants, and others interested in the program are invited to attend any scheduled workshop listed below. Registration is required for virtual meetings. Recordings of these virtual workshops will be available for review on the RGVMPPO webpage (<https://www.rgvmpo.org/projects/active-transportation-implementation/transportation-alternatives-set-aside-program>) in the weeks following the workshops. Questions submitted during the workshops or received by March 22, 2023 will be reviewed and responses posted on the program webpage on or around March 31, 2023.

March 15, 2023 (1:30PM – 3:00PM)
Virtual Workshop
[More Information Here](#)

March 22, 2023 (1:30PM – 3:00PM)
Virtual Workshop
[More Information Here](#)

Technical Assistance may be requested for consultation with RGVMPPO Staff regarding how to respond to application questions, budgetary details, supplemental materials, and backup documentation attachments. The deadline to request this type of Technical Assistance is April 26, 2023. Requests should be submitted via email to Eva Garcia at egarcia@rgvmpo.org **AND** Melany Rodriguez at mrodriguez@rgvmpo.org . Staff will respond to the email request to coordinate a date/time to provide the technical assistance as needed. It would be helpful to outline which areas assistance is needed so Staff may be more prepared to address and resolve concerns.

F. SELECTION OF TA PROJECTS BY TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

The Transportation Policy Board will select TA projects through a competitive process administered by the RGVMPPO.

The Policy Board will select projects for funding under the TA Program based on:

1. Recommendations from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
2. Recommendations from The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
3. The project's potential benefit to the region
4. Funding availability

The Policy Board is not bound by project recommendations provided by the MPO. The RGVMPPO will notify the sponsors of selected projects.

The Policy Board will specify an amount of federal TA funds for each project selected. Refer to Section D. Allowable Costs for information on project cost overruns.

The number of project applications and individual project complexity may result in the Transportation Policy Board action over one or more meetings to expedite project implementation.

G. PROJECT ELIMINATION

A project will be eliminated from participation in the TASA Program if, prior to the execution of the local agreement, the governing body of a municipality or county in which project activities are proposed, by resolution, order, or other official action, notifies the RGVMPPO of its opposition to the project.

RGVMPPO's executive director may eliminate a project or a portion of a project from participation in the TA Program if:

- The project sponsor fails to meet requirements established in the RGVMPPO's rules
- Implementation of the project would involve significant deviation from the activities proposed in the application package and approved by the transportation policy board
- The project sponsor withdraws from participation in the project
- A local agreement (i.e., Advance Funding Agreement) is not executed between the local entity and the department within one year after the date that the commission selected the project
- A construction contract has not been awarded or construction has not been initiated within three years after the date that the commission selected the project
- The executive director determines that federal funding may be lost because the project has not been advanced, implemented, or completed in a timely manner

H. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project sponsor shall implement or arrange for implementation of each project selected by the commission in accordance with statutory requisites and contracting procedures applicable to the type and character of the project. In accordance with 23 CFR §635.105, TxDOT ensures that a project sponsor “is adequately staffed and suitably equipped to undertake and satisfactorily complete” a project, and therefore, the department, in its sole discretion, may decide to perform certain phases or otherwise complete a project on behalf of a project sponsor. All projects shall be developed to current standards and specifications established or recognized by the federal government, the department, and the TA rules.

Local Government Project Requirements

All project sponsors awarded funding under the TA Program who propose to manage and perform any work on the project will be required to designate a “Responsible Person in Charge” (RPIC), a “Project Manager” (PM), and a “Qualified” person in accordance with TxDOT’s Local Government Project Program (LGPP). Refer to the TxDOT Local Government Projects Toolkit for requirements: <https://www.txdot.gov/government/processes-procedures/lgp-toolkit.html>.

Through its LGPP Qualification Program, the department offers a 12-hour course (LGP101) to train and qualify individuals working on state or federally funded projects. Training is complete when at least one individual who is working actively and directly on the project successfully completes and receives a certificate for the LGP101 course. The individual who completes this training is designated as the project sponsor’s “Qualified” person. The “Qualified” person may be an employee of the local government or an employee of a firm that has been contracted by the local government to perform oversight of the project. The department requires all persons “Qualified” through this program to successfully complete the LGPP qualification course at least once every three years. For local government project guidance and training visit the department’s LGPP website: <http://www.txdot.gov/government/programs/local-government-projects.html>. It is recommended that the project sponsor’s “Qualified” person complete the LGPP training as soon after project selection as possible.

In order for the department to authorize a local entity to manage elements of a project with FHWA or state funds, the department MUST perform a Local Government Risk Assessment. This assessment allows the department to evaluate the project sponsor’s qualifications to perform one or more elements of the project development process for an FHWA- or state-funded project and set an appropriate level of department oversight. Refer to the department’s guidance for Local Government Risk Assessment and Participation/Responsibilities in AFAs at: <http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot/lgp/funding/guidance.pdf>.

Adding Projects to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

TA projects may be grouped in the TIP/STIP unless the project doesn't meet the definition of a grouped project, is considered regionally significant, or is required to be individually listed in accordance with MPO policy. If a project selected by the commission is to be implemented in a metropolitan area, the department will request that the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for that area immediately begin the process required to include the selected project in its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as appropriate; however, *it is the project sponsor's responsibility to make sure the project is included in the MPO's local TIP*. Early coordination with the MPO is strongly recommended. For projects in population areas outside the boundaries of an MPO, the department will immediately begin the process to include projects in its rural TIP and STIP, as appropriate. Projects that are individually listed must be identified in the MPO's TIP or in the department's rural TIP before the project can be added to the STIP. The STIP is updated quarterly and requires FHWA approval.

Execution of Local Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

All TA project sponsors must enter into a local agreement (e.g., Advance Funding Agreement) with the department and comply with all federal and state procedures applicable to development of federal-aid transportation projects. The local agreement must be executed by the project sponsor within one year of the date of selection by the commission or risk loss of federal funding.

Development of the local agreement for TA projects can begin immediately after project selection. As part of the agreement process, a determination will be made as to whether the project's federally participating preliminary engineering and construction letting (advertisement for bids and contract management) will be performed by the department or by the project sponsor. At the department's discretion, TA projects may be developed and/or let for construction by the department. Alternatively, project sponsors may seek department authorization for local project development and/or construction letting of their project(s).

In accordance with federal and state rules, the department will perform a Local Government Risk Assessment to determine the project sponsor's qualifications to perform one or more elements of the project development process. For additional information refer to *Local Government Project Requirements*, above, and: <http://www.txdot.gov/government/programs/local-government-projects.html>. This determination dictates many subsequent steps in the project development process. A project sponsor requesting local responsibility for project development or construction letting will need to demonstrate adequate cash flow to accommodate the payment of 100% of costs pending reimbursement of the federal and/or state share of allowable costs for TA projects. The department's local district office will make the final determination after consultation with division staff and the project sponsor. See *Construction Letting by the Project Sponsor* and *Construction Letting by the Department* below.

Regardless of whether the project is developed and let for construction by the department or by the project sponsor, the department will have oversight responsibility and will incur direct state costs associated with project development, plan review (generally conducted at 30%, 60%, 90%, and 100% complete), and construction oversight. The detailed application will automatically apply a 15% fee to the project budget for the department's direct state costs, based on the total estimated cost for construction. The department's direct state costs are eligible for federal reimbursement in accordance with the program rules.

Example 1:

A TA project with an estimated construction cost of \$1,000,000 will have a 15% administration cost of \$150,000, which will be added to the total project cost. TA project costs are 80% federally reimbursable with a 20% local match. The 20% local match for a \$150,000 direct state cost would be \$30,000.

As outlined in the local agreement, the project sponsor will be required to advance the local match for preliminary engineering phase activities including the associated direct state costs in cash within 30 days of signing the local agreement. The department will not begin project reviews until the local match is received. The project sponsor would subsequently provide the remaining local match for construction and construction oversight, plus any estimated overruns within 60 days prior to the Construction contract being advertised for bids.

Federal Project Authorization and Agreement (FPAA)

The department is responsible for securing the federal funding for each phase of work. The environmental documentation must be cleared, all property must be acquired, any major utility adjustments must be completed, and the construction plans must be completed before the department requests an FPAA from FHWA to obligate the federal funding for construction.

It is critical for project sponsors to accurately estimate the time it will take to have the project ready to let. A project timeline is required as part of the Detailed Application. The timeline will be used to identify project funding and establish the year for construction letting.

TA funding is time-sensitive; TA funds are available for obligation for a period of three years after the last day of the fiscal year for which the funds are apportioned to the state. Due to the limited period of availability of TA funds, approval to adjust the letting date of a TA project must be obtained from the TA Program Manager in the TxDOT division responsible for administering the program.

Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E)

The project sponsor is responsible for plan preparation, environmental documentation, and other design-related activities including required reviews. All bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure design must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and meet or exceed the minimum design requirements identified in the latest edition of TxDOT's [Roadway Design Manual](#). Pedestrian

facilities must conform to the [Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines](#) (latest edition) as published by the US Access Board or the 2010 ADA Standards and Texas Accessibility Standards, as applicable. All design criteria for on-road and off-road bicycle facilities must comply with the *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* (latest edition) as published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). When selecting bicycle infrastructure design elements, it is advisable to refer to FHWA's [Bikeway Selection Guide](#) and [Small Town and Rural Design Guide](#). When constructing projects along transit routes or connecting pedestrians and bicyclists to transit, it is advisable to refer to FHWA's [Improving Safety for Pedestrians and Bicyclists Accessing Transit](#). For projects proposing to construct a segment of the Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails Network, refer to recommended design guidelines and routes on TxDOT's webpage: <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/modes-of-travel/bicycle/plan-design/tourism-study.html>. Project sponsors may propose a locally preferred alternative route to a route identified on the Texas Bicycle Tourism Trails Example Network.

For costs associated with consultant services to be eligible for reimbursement, the project sponsor's consultant selection procedures will need to be approved by TxDOT to ensure they meet all federal and state requirements for selection of professional engineering services. These requirements are outlined in the department's Local Government Project Management Guide (<http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot/lgp/procedures/guide.pdf>).

If reimbursements for engineering/environmental services are authorized, the project sponsor is required to submit plans to the department for review at progressive stages of development to ensure that state and federal standards are met (e.g., 30%, 60%, 90%, and 100% completion). For all other projects, design reviews occur at agreed-upon stages of development. Contact your local TxDOT district office to establish expectations.

If the estimated construction cost of pedestrian elements in the project is \$50,000 or greater, the project must be reviewed by a Registered Accessibility Specialist (RAS) licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). This may require an additional two months in the review process. As a result, include a minimum of three months for TxDOT's final plan review.

Environmental Documentation

The level of documentation required for TA project activities generally falls under a Categorical Exclusion (CE); however, with any action, impacts may occur whereby more substantial environmental documentation could be required (Environmental Assessment [EA] or Environmental Impact Statement [EIS]).

CEs are defined in 40 CFR §1501.4 as projects that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect.

A project sponsor is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Review the proposed project activities to determine if they meet the criteria outlined in 23

CFR §771.117 to be classified as a CE; preparation of an EA or EIS may be required for projects that don't meet the criteria for a CE.

- Determine the required environmental compliance tasks.
- Collaborate with the department representative (typically the department's local district environmental coordinator) to prepare the project scope that outlines the required environmental tasks and associated responsibilities.
- Ensure that any required environmental studies, resource agency coordination, and public participation are completed.
- As agreed to in the scope, prepare all required documentation that supports the environmental determination (CE, EA, or EIS).
- Maintain the project file for submittal to the department.
- Document and implement any environmental permits, issues, or commitments.

If the project is selected for funding, the department's environmental staff will be responsible for coordinating the required environmental studies with the appropriate resource specialists, including relevant specialists at other state and federal agencies, as applicable. For example, impacts to historic properties will be coordinated through the department as part of the project's environmental documentation process. Depending on the nature of the historic property, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) coordination can take several months to complete.

For more information on the department's environmental processes, please refer to the following resources:

- Categorical Exclusions for transportation projects in Texas Administrative Code: *Title 43, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter D, Rule §2.81*:
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=43&pt=1&ch=2&rl=81](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=43&pt=1&ch=2&rl=81)
- *TxDOT's Environmental Compliance Toolkits*:
<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/environmental/compliance-toolkits.html>
- *TxDOT's LGP Management Guide Chapter 5*:
<http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot/lgp/procedures/guide.pdf>

Environmental approval is a required step in the project development process. A Renewed Memorandum of Understanding between FHWA and TxDOT entitled Concerning State Of Texas' Participation in the Project Delivery Program Pursuant To 23 U.S.C. 327 (December 2019) assigned authority to TxDOT to make FHWA project decisions for assigned projects. Therefore, in most cases, the department (rather than FHWA) will provide the final environmental review and project decision for 2023 TA projects.

The project sponsor is encouraged to work closely with the department's local district environmental coordinator on project scope and environmental documentation requirements. This will significantly facilitate the development and approval of environmental documentation. Once a

project sponsor submits required environmental documentation to TxDOT, the department's review, resource agency coordination, and the environmental decision process can take as little as a few days or as long as several months. The length of this process depends on the project location, the complexity of the project, and the completeness and accuracy of information submitted.

Public/Stakeholder Involvement

An appropriate level of public/stakeholder involvement is required for each project submitted under RGVMP's 2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects.

Current TxDOT environmental rules require a public hearing be held for a project that "substantially changes the layout or function of a connecting roadway or existing facility." Based on current state environmental rules, the addition of bicycle lanes is included in the definition of a "substantial change in function of a roadway." For the purposes of this requirement, "bicycle lane" means a portion of a roadway that is designated by striping, signing, or pavement markings for the exclusive use of bicyclists. Shared-use paths and wide shoulders are not considered "bicycle lanes" for the purposes of this requirement. Also, none of the following situations regarding bicycle lanes are treated as "substantially changing the layout or function of a connecting roadway or an existing facility or facilities:"

- Striping bicycle lanes when the pre-existing roadway already accommodated bicycles;
- Striping one or more non-continuous bicycle lanes approaching or through intersections, driveways, or other conflict areas; or
- Striping bicycle lanes not along, but across a roadway at an intersection to allow the continuation of planned or existing bicycle lanes on crossing local streets or other bicycle facilities.

The public hearing requirement for the addition of bicycle lanes may be satisfied if the project is addressed in a local hearing held under 43 TAC §25.55, "Comment Solicitation on Bicycle Road Use." For any such project, the environmental review project file must contain a statement (e.g., Environmental Compliance and Oversight System [ECOS] Journal entry) indicating that the project was addressed in a local hearing held under 43 TAC §25.55 and the date of that local hearing. Not all of the requirements of TxDOT's Environmental Handbook for Public Involvement apply to a local hearing held under 43 TAC §25.55. Work with your District TA Coordinator to understand public involvement requirements related to your project. For more information about TxDOT's public involvement practices, refer to <http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/env/toolkit/760-01-gui.pdf>.

SRTS-type projects require coordination between the local jurisdictions responsible for the roadways/sidewalks/paths leading to schools and the school districts responsible for affected school campuses. Additional interagency coordination may be necessary. Most agencies request a minimum of 30 days to review a project proposal and provide a letter of support. Contact agencies early to allow sufficient time to acquire any supporting documentation that may be required/desired as part of a proposed project.

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Proposed improvements may be located on state-maintained roadway ROW (on-system) or on property owned by the project sponsor (off-system). Projects may be constructed on private property if the proper easement is obtained. Projects that include state-maintained ROW or have a direct effect on an existing state-maintained roadway must have a recent letter of consent, addressed to the project sponsor, and signed by the current TxDOT District Engineer of the TxDOT district in which the project is located. This consent cannot be delegated. If a project is proposed on state right-of-way, the project sponsor is responsible for securing permission/access from the department prior to construction.

A project that will require the acquisition of real property must comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act. The exercise of eminent domain or condemnation is not allowed for the department's 2023 TA Call for Projects. For requirements and information on how to acquire ROW and accommodate utilities, refer to the department's Local Government Project (LGP) Management Guide, Chapter 6 *Right of Way and Utilities*.

Railroad Impacts and Coordination

Advanced railroad coordination is strongly recommended and may be essential for funding consideration. Obtaining railroad approval can take in some instances several years if the project construction is occurring within a railroad right of way. Coordination with a railroad is a requirement for all projects that are within 100 feet of railroad right-of-way (including grade-separated crossings) and/or all projects that begin or end within 500 feet from an at-grade highway-rail crossing to ensure traffic control and construction do not interfere with an active crossing.

For projects that meet the threshold for railroad coordination, documentation of railroad coordination must be included as an attachment to the detailed application. At a minimum, this documentation should demonstrate that coordination with the railroad has been initiated and the railroad is in support of the project. Projects with completed railroad coordination documentation or written agreements in place demonstrate a stronger level of project readiness, and these documents should be attached, if available.

Cost can vary depending on railroad owner and elements of a project, so it is important to communicate with the railroad early to understand the full magnitude of associated costs. Railroad crossings of bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure must incorporate appropriate, ADA-compliant pedestrian and bicycle elements, such as planks, crossing arms, etc., to allow for safe crossing of the railroad by non-motorized users. Estimated costs may also include flaggers, permits, insurance, and oversight by the railroad, or costs for the railroad to construct the work on behalf of the project sponsor. Additionally, the railroad may require a fee to conduct plan reviews in advance of issuing an agreement. If the project sponsor has not been in contact with the affected railroad regarding the proposed project, then the project may not be ready for funding consideration.

Construction Letting by the Project Sponsor

If the project sponsor is authorized for a local construction letting, the project sponsor will be required to pay 100% of the construction costs as the work is done and request reimbursement of allowable costs incurred up to the percentage applicable. Before the project sponsor can advertise for construction bids, the project must have environmental clearance (in accordance with current department procedures) and the project sponsor MUST have a State Letter of Authority (SLOA) from the department to proceed to the construction phase of work.

Construction Letting by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

If the project is let for construction by the department, the outstanding local match (if any) and 100% of any estimated cost overages will be due to the department 60 days prior to advertising for construction.

Contractor for Construction

The construction contractor must be chosen through a competitive bidding process approved by the department. The construction contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, in accordance with *23 CFR Part 635*.

Note: The department has oversight and monitoring responsibilities for transportation projects when project costs are wholly or partially paid using FHWA or state funds.

Scope Modifications

Projects must be developed as described in the 2023 TA Detailed Application and approved by the commission. Any change to the scope of work specified in the application package and approved by the commission must have advance written approval. Changes in items of work or project scope that occur without advance departmental approval will not be reimbursed.

Payment of Costs

If the project sponsor is authorized for a local construction letting, the project sponsor will be required to pay 100% of the construction costs as the work is done and request reimbursement of the allowable costs incurred up to the percentage applicable. A project sponsor must use the forms and procedures specified by the department to request reimbursement of allowable costs incurred. The department will submit all requests for reimbursement of allowable costs to FHWA. For locally developed and let projects, the entire project cost is borne by the project sponsor until reimbursement can be obtained from FHWA for eligible activities.

Costs incurred prior to the inclusion of the project in the STIP, execution of the local agreement, or prior to federal and state approval and authorization to proceed are not eligible for federal reimbursement.

Project Inspection and Acceptance

Upon completion of construction, the project sponsor must have a Professional Engineer registered in Texas certify that the project was constructed in substantial compliance with project specifications and requirements. The department is responsible for the inspection and final acceptance of all TA projects selected by the commission and for certification of project completion. If the project sponsor does not complete the project as originally approved by the commission, the department may seek reimbursement of the expended federal funds from the sponsor.

Period of Performance End Date

The period of performance end date must be included in the local agreement, after which time additional costs incurred are not eligible for federal reimbursement. Recipients are required to submit all eligible incurred costs and required performance and financial reports or project records specified in the local agreement or stewardship and oversight procedures within 90 days after the agreement end date. The project should be closed within one year after receipt and acceptance of all required final reports.

Maintenance and Operation

A project selected by the commission shall be maintained and operated by the project sponsor for the purpose for which it was approved and funded, and for a period of time that is commensurate with the amount of federal investment in the project. A project selected by the commission shall be dedicated for public use for the greater of (1) a period that is commensurate with the amount of federal investment in the project; or (2):

- 10 years, if the amount of federal investment in the project is \$1 million or less
- 20 years, if the amount of federal investment is more than \$1 million.

If at any time the project sponsor can no longer maintain and operate the project for its intended purpose, the project sponsor shall consult with the department and FHWA as to disposal or alternate uses consistent with the project's original intent.

I. BIKEWAY TERMINOLOGY

Shared Use Paths and Sidepaths

Can be located adjacent to roadways and physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by a landscaped buffer or a barrier or along an independent alignment. Shared use paths are generally design for two-way travel and may also be used by pedestrians (including users of manual and motorized wheelchairs, and joggers) and other authorized motorized and non-motorized users such as skaters and eScooters. Conflict points occur between motorists and path users at intersections and driveways.



Separated and Raised Bicycle Lanes

A bicycle lane that is physically separated from the adjacent motor vehicle traffic by vertical elements in the street buffer. They are designed to operate one-way but may also operate two-way. Vertical elements separating the bike lane from the travel lane may include continuous raised medians, flexible posts, intermittent concrete curbing, or parked vehicles. Raised bicycle lanes are distinct from the sidewalk but may be at sidewalk level.



Bike Lane and Buffered Bike Lane

Bike lanes are one-way facilities on a roadway that typically carry bicycle traffic in the same direction as adjacent motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes are provided for the exclusive use of bicyclists and are identified through signage, striping, or other pavement markings.

A buffered bike lane is a one-way bike lane that is separated from the adjacent motor vehicle lane or parking lane by a striped buffer area that may include chevrons, diagonal lines, or wide pavement marking stripes. When sufficient roadway width is present, or if the number of travel lanes is reduced, a buffer may be striped between a bike lane and travel lane to provide additional comfort for both bicyclists and motorists.



Bicycle Accessible Shoulder (rural)

Bike accessible shoulders are one-way facilities on a roadway that carry bicycle traffic in the same direction as adjacent motor vehicle traffic. A bike accessible shoulder is one that is at least as wide or wider than a bike lane (5-ft min) to accommodate bicyclists and paved to provide a smooth, solid surface across its width. Bike accessible shoulders are not solely for bicycle use and typically do not have bike lane markings, but they may include signage indicating the presence of bicyclists



Shared Lane

Shared lanes (wide outside lane) are lanes that allow compatibility of operation for both motorized vehicles and bicycles. Note that although marked shared lanes are allowed in the TMUTCD for certain conditions, TxDOT as a general policy does not recommend marked shared lanes for TxDOT roadways due to the higher speed nature of TxDOT roadways as compared to local jurisdictions. Shared wide outside lanes in urbanized applications should only be used in locations with low volumes (3,000 ADT or lower) and low speeds (35 mph or less). In a rural application, shared wide outside lanes should only be used in locations with low volumes (1,000 ADT or lower) and speeds of 45 mph or less.



J. ADDITIONAL WEBLINKS

Information about RGVMPO's 2023-2024 TASA Call for Projects, including the [Program Rules](#), [Program Guide](#), [Scoring Criteria](#), [Detailed Application](#), [Detailed Application Instructions](#), [workgroup presentations & feedback](#), and other program related downloads can be found at:

<https://www.rgvmpo.org/projects/active-transportation-implementation/transportation-alternatives-set-aside-program>

RGVMPO's Active Transportation Inventory Map:

<https://rgvmpo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fa1a603b77194af39a1ca0110d6c348f>

RGVMPO's Active Transportation Plan:

<https://rgvmpotx.prod.govaccess.org/home/showdocument?id=278>

RGVMPO's Committees:

<https://www.rgvmpo.org/committees>

RGVMPO's UMAP:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a21dc22ec10c4ccb96923ab55170e53>

TxDOT's 2023 TA Call for Projects

<https://www.txdot.gov/business/grants-and-funding/bicycle-pedestrian-local-federal-funding-programs.html>

TxDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Webpage:

<https://www.txdot.gov/projects/planning/bicycle-pedestrian-planning-designing.html>

TxDOT Environmental Resources:

Environmental Handbook for Public Involvement:

<http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/env/toolkit/760-01-gui.pdf>

Categorical Exclusions for transportation projects in Texas Administrative Code:

Title 43, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter D, Rule §2.81:

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=43&pt=1&ch=2&rl=81](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=43&pt=1&ch=2&rl=81)

Local Government Projects Program:

<http://www.txdot.gov/government/programs/local-government-projects.html>

TxDOT's Local Government Projects Toolkit:

<https://www.txdot.gov/government/processes-procedures/lgp-toolkit.html>

Local Government Project Management Guide:

<http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot/lgp/procedures/guide.pdf>

TxDOT's Right of Way Acquisition Manual:

<http://onlinemanuals.txdot.gov/txdotmanuals/acq/index.htm>

TxDOT's Average Low Bid Unit Prices:

<http://www.txdot.gov/business/letting-bids/average-low-bid-unit-prices.html>

TxDOT's Economically Disadvantaged Counties Program (EDCP):

<https://www.txdot.gov/about/programs/economically-disadvantaged-county-program.html>

TDCs and TMA Interactive Map:

<https://txdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=eb6b53d80aef46a3a9f5c28dd4248597>

TxDOT District Office Information:

<https://www.txdot.gov/about/districts.html>

U.S. Census TMA Designation:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/urbanized_areas_and_mpo_tma/;

U.S. Census Data Lookup:

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

Adventure Cycling Association, US Bicycle Route System (USBRS):

<https://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/us-bicycle-route-system/>

TxDOT Bicycle Tourism Example Network:

https://www.txdot.gov/apps/statewide_mapping/StatewidePlanningMap.html

Active Transportation Plan Inventory (ATPI):

<https://www.txdot.gov/projects/planning/bicycle-pedestrian-planning-designing/plan-inventory-tool.html>

TxDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Program:

<https://www.txdot.gov/data-maps/bicycle-pedestrian-count-program.html>

TA Set-Aside Program in Texas Administrative Code:

Title 43, Part 1, Chapter 11, Subchapter G:

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=43&pt=1&ch=11&sch=G&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=43&pt=1&ch=11&sch=G&rl=Y)

FHWA TA Set-Aside Guidance:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/

FHWA Safe Routes to Schools Guidance:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/guidance/

FHWA Complete Streets Guidance:

<https://highways.dot.gov/complete-streets>

Safe Routes to School National Partnership:

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

National Center for Safe Routes to School:

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

DESIGN GUIDANCE:

AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012):

<https://store.transportation.org/Item/CollectionDetail?ID=116>

TxDOT Roadway Design Manual:

<http://onlinemanuals.txdot.gov/txdotmanuals/rdw/rdw.pdf>

TxDOT Bicycle Accommodation Design Guidance:

<https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot-info/ptn/bike-acco-design-guide.pdf>

Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG):

<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way/proposed-rights-of-way-guidelines>

Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide (FHWA):

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/separated_bikelane_pdf/page00.cfm

Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks (FHWA):

<https://ruraldesignguide.com/>

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/

Incorporating On-Road Bicycle Networks into Resurfacing Projects (FHWA):

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/resurfacing/

NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide:

<http://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/>

FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide:

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/docs/fhwasa18077.pdf

Texas Accessibility Information - TDLR:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/>

ADA Standards for Accessible Design:

[Review Laws, Regulations & Standards | ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov/)

K. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

AFA – Advance Funding Agreement

AASHTO – American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

Bikeway terminology – See Section L of this guide.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) – The BPAC is a subcommittee of the RGVMPPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The BPAC addresses matters concerning bicycle and pedestrian mobility and presents its recommendations to TAC. Members include appointed TAC Members, bicycle advocates, pedestrian advocates, and organizations with a stake in bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

Bicycle Tourism Trails (BTT) – A network of bicycle tourism routes collaboratively developed to provide safe, non-motorized access to and connectivity between statewide/regional destinations and support economic development across Texas.

Boulevard - Walkable, low-speed (35 mph or less) divided arterial thoroughfare in urban environments designed to carry both through and local traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists. Boulevards may be long corridors, typically four lanes but sometimes wider, serve longer trips and provide pedestrian access to land. Boulevards may be high-ridership transit corridors. Boulevards are primary goods movement and emergency response routes and use vehicular and pedestrian access management techniques. Curb parking is encouraged on boulevards.

Census Urbanized Areas – Densely settled core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settled territory with the densely settled core.

DA – Detailed Application

Department – Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Executive director – The executive director of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization or his/her designee

EDCP – Economically Disadvantaged County Program

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

FPAA – Federal Project Authorization and Agreement

Local Agreement – An agreement between the project sponsor and the department which includes a commitment for the required local funding, describes the total scope and course of project activities, and outlines the responsibilities and duties of the participants.

Local Match – A cash match provided by/through the project sponsor or if the project sponsor is eligible for TDCs then 100% federal TA funds will be applied to the project in lieu of a local match.

Medium urban area – Areas located outside TMA boundaries with a population size between 50,000 and 199,999 as determined by the 2010 Census.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – The organization or policy board of an organization created and designated under 23 U.S.C. §134 and 49 U.S.C. §5303 to make transportation planning decisions for the metropolitan planning area and carry out the metropolitan planning process.

Micromobility - FHWA defines micromobility vehicles as any small, low speed, human or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles (ebikes), electric scooters (e-scooters) and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances.

Nonurban area – Areas located outside TMA boundaries with a population size of 5,000 or less as determined by the 2010 Census.

Project – An undertaking to implement or construct an eligible activity at a specific location or locations, or, if the context so implies, the particular activity so implemented or constructed.

Project sponsor – An eligible entity as described by 23 U.S.C. §133(h)(4)(b), that nominates a particular project for consideration, exercises jurisdiction over the geographic area in which the project is located, and commits to the project’s development, implementation, construction, maintenance, management, and finance.

PS&E - Plans, Specifications, and Estimates

The Rio Grande Valley MPO (RGVMPO) - The RGVMPO is a federally funded program that addresses the mobility goals of the communities within the urbanized area of the Rio Grande Valley. The RGVMPO works with Rio Grande Valley, cities within the region, transit providers, and the Texas Department of Transportation to plan for the future transportation needs of this metropolitan area. Every metropolitan area with a population of 50,000 or more must have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

SLOA – State Letter of Authority

SPA – Oversight level special approval form

Small urban areas – Area located outside TMA boundaries with a population size between 5,001 and 49,999 as determined by the 2010 Census.

SRTS – Safe Routes to School

State – The State of Texas or any of its political subdivisions

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) – A four-year short-range program developed by the department as a compilation of all metropolitan transportation improvement programs, together with rural transportation improvement programs, that include recommendations from rural planning organizations and department districts for the areas of the state that are outside of the boundaries of a metropolitan planning organization, including transportation between cities.

Surface transportation system – An interconnected surface transportation network for moving people and goods using various transportation modes

TDLR – Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

TASA – Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program

TA – Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – The TAC takes the recommendations from the subcommittees and approves their requests. The TAC was created for the purpose of making planning recommendations to the Policy Board regarding issues such as: MPO-generated documents, project selection criteria, special transportation planning studies and other issues for immediate action. The TAC Committee's membership consists of local officials, planners and engineers from the counties and cities within the MPO boundary.

Transportation Policy Board (TPB) – The TPB was created for the purpose of serving as spokespersons for the citizens of the counties as well as each respective city in the metropolitan area. The TPB is comprised of elected officials from each city of the MPO, as well as county representatives. The TPB is responsible for creating policies regarding transportation planning issues. TPB meets on the last Wednesday of every month at 1:30 PM at the LRGVDC Ken Jones Conference Room in Weslaco, TX.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – A short-range program developed by each metropolitan planning organization in cooperation with the department and public transportation operators. The TIP covers a four-year period and contains a prioritized listing of all projects proposed for federal funding, plus regionally significant projects proposed for state, federal, and local funding in a metropolitan area.

Transportation Management Area (TMA) – FHWA defines TMAs as “all urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations greater than 200,000 as determined by the 2010 Census.”

TxDOT – Texas Department of Transportation