

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

BACKGROUND



As a result of the **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)** signed into law in 2021, funding allocated to Texas for planning and building safe walking and bicycling networks has **increased substantially**.

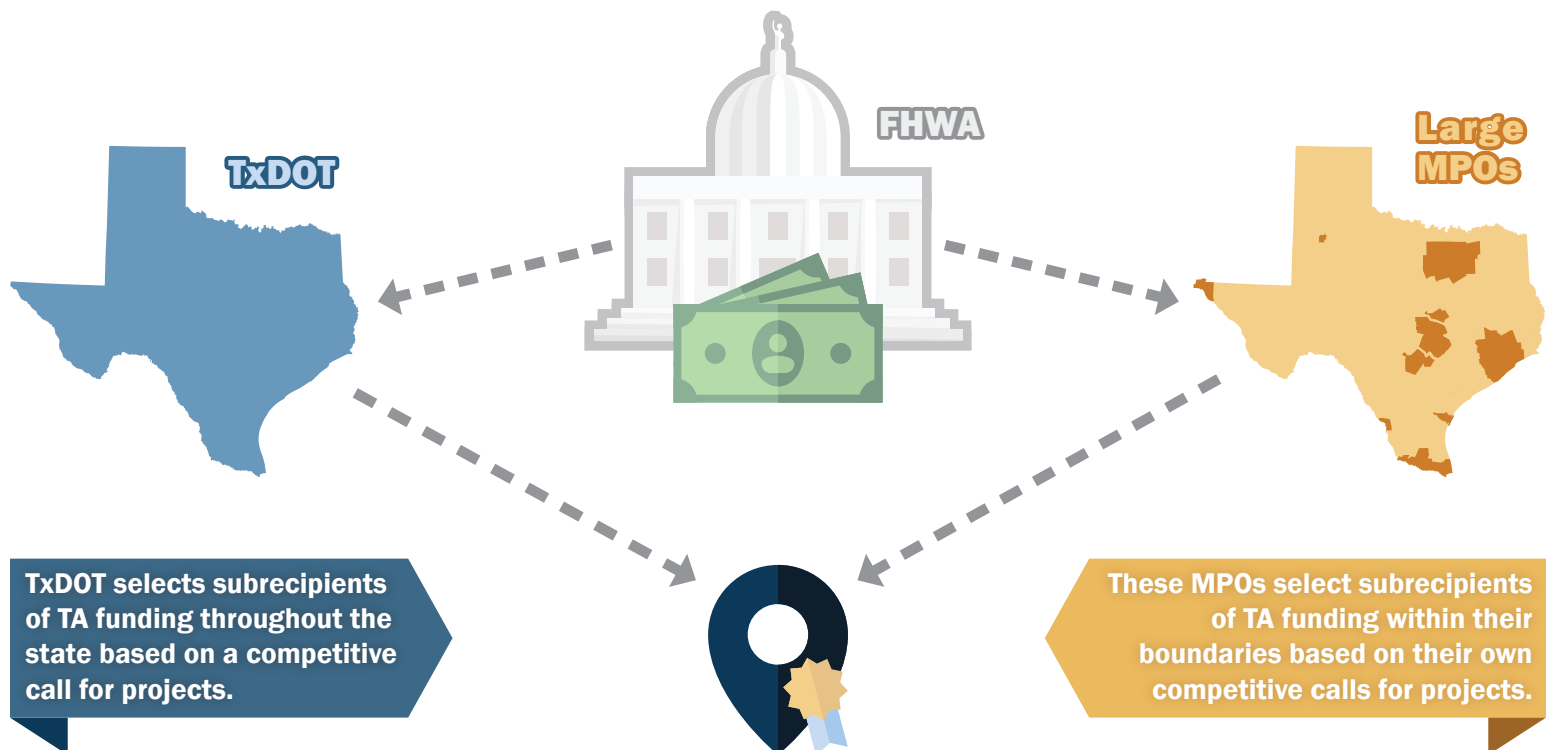
This federal funding program is called the **Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program**. TA funds are unique when compared to other federal funding programs. This brochure helps explain some of the **unique aspects** that local cities, counties, their consultants, and other eligible entities should know so they can apply for these funds.



ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

DISTRIBUTION

FHWA distributes TA funds to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and 10 large metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Texas.



ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

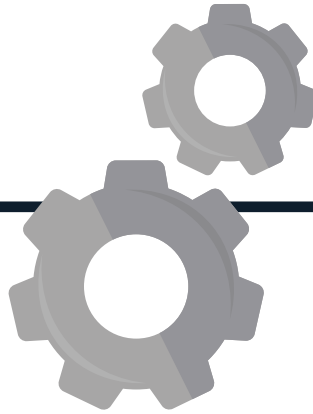
Federal rules require MPOs and TxDOT to develop transparent evaluation processes to competitively select projects for Transportation Alternatives (TA) awards. These funds must be awarded only to projects which are:

1 Related to bicycle, pedestrian, and/or micromobility modes

2 Principally for transportation rather than recreation

3 Direct relationship to the surface transportation system

4 Creates benefit to the general public and is publicly accessible



PROJECT EVALUATION



TA funding requires a match from the local project sponsor, but the local match amount will depend on the program rules of the state or the MPO hosting the call for projects.

ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES IS A **REIMBURSEMENT** PROGRAM.

Once a project is authorized to proceed, the project sponsor will pay for all project expenses and then must request reimbursement from TxDOT, usually on a monthly basis. TxDOT will review all project expenses to confirm they are eligible, after which reimbursement will be issued to the project sponsor.



Any expenses incurred prior to the authorization to proceed, including grant writing, are not reimbursable expenses for the Transportation Alternatives program.

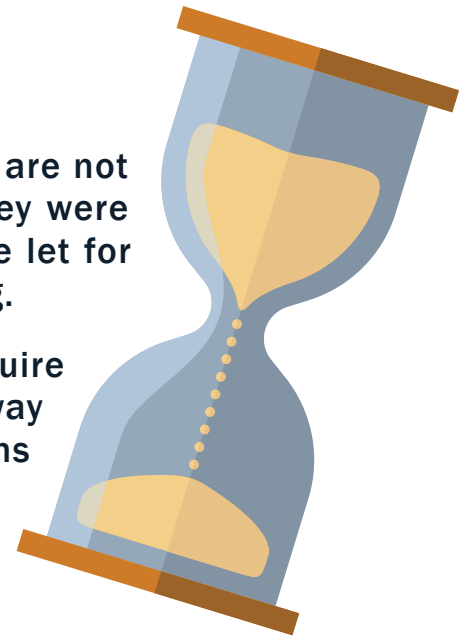


ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

TIME SENSITIVITY

TA funds will be returned to the federal government if they are not obligated for construction letting 3 years after the year they were authorized to the state. This means all TA projects must be let for construction within **3 YEARS** of award or risk losing funding.

This timing constraint also affects projects that require coordination with outside agencies or require right-of-way (ROW) acquisition, discussed further in the Considerations section below.

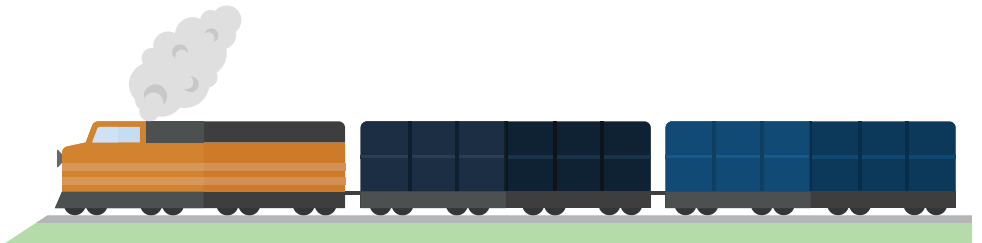


ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

CONSIDERATIONS

Local governments interested in applying are encouraged to plan ahead for time-consuming tasks before submitting a project for funding consideration. Examples of such tasks include:

- *Railroad coordination if a project is within 100 ft. of railroad ROW*
- *Utility coordination*
- *Environmental issues*
- *Right-of-way acquisition*
- *Public involvement*



This unique quality of TA funding means bundling projects with other funding streams for larger roadway improvements projects can be challenging.

ELEMENTS OF FUNDING

WORKING WITH FEDERAL FUNDING

Projects are required to meet federal and state design standards and contracting regulations and requirements. All project sponsors awarded funding under the TA programs 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
at the QR code
below.



RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying for these federal funds, contact TxDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program or your local MPO to better understand the timing of their competitive selection process.

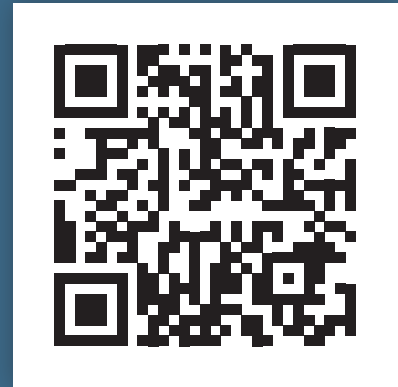


TxDOT hosts Calls for Projects every other year while each MPO maintains their own consistent schedule.

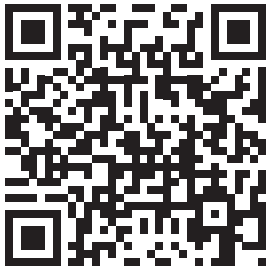
Contact TxDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program using the QR code below:



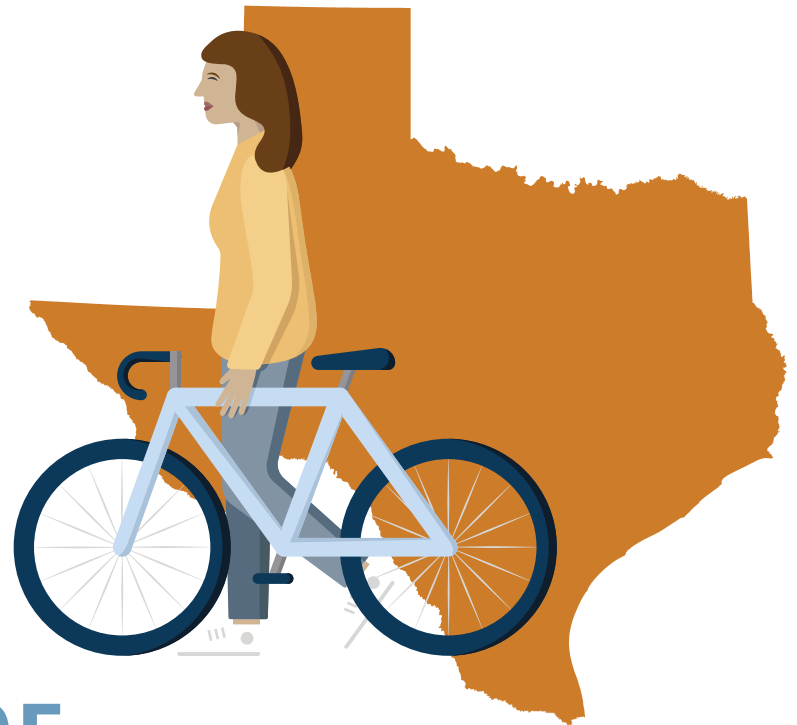
You can identify and contact your local MPO using the QR code below:



TxDOT and Texas MPOs invite you to take advantage of historic levels of funding for safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure!



To view a companion video describing these unique aspects of the TA program, please scan the QR code to the left.



UNIQUE ASPECTS OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES