



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Development

Director's Office
4201 E. Arkansas Ave. Room 262
Denver, CO 80222-3400

DATE: May 9, 2014
TO: Members of STAC
FROM: Debra Perkins-Smith, Director, Division of Transportation Development
SUBJECT: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Guidelines and Application

Purpose:

This memo serves to provide members of STAC with the new CDOT TAP Guidelines and Application.

Background:

The TAP program is a new program under MAP-21 that replaces the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program. TAP wraps pre-MAP-21 programs into a single, flexible funding source for alternatives to traditional highway construction. Eligible activities include: facilities for bike/ped, infrastructure projects to provide safe routes for non-drivers, overlooks and viewing areas, preservation of historic transportation facilities, and environmental mitigation/vegetation management/stormwater mitigation. The Recreational Trails Program is also funded by TAP, but is deducted off the top as a set aside. Most of the activities eligible under TE remain eligible under TAP with a few exceptions. Eligible and ineligible TAP activities are defined in detail in the TAP Guidelines and Application, attached with this memo. Unlike TE, State DOTs and MPOs are not eligible recipients of TAP funds. Projects must be selected through a competitive process administered by the State or, for funds suballocated to the TMAs, through a competitive process administered by the MPOs in consultation with the State.

Details:

The new TAP Guidelines and Application are similar to the former CDOT TE Guidelines and Application, but have been updated to meet the new federal TAP requirements. TAP applications from other state DOTs were also examined in developing the new guidelines and application. CDOT's intent was to develop a common application that would be used in each Region and a common process and timeline for calls for projects. The CDOT Regions will conduct the call for projects, with projects evaluated by a review panel at the Region level.

The application and evaluation criteria are organized around three categories of projects based on the language in federal statute: bicycle/pedestrian, environmental mitigation, and historic/scenic transportation activities. Each category of projects includes evaluation criteria applicable to the category. While each CDOT Region will use the same application, evaluation criteria, and scoring system, individual Regions may wish to weigh project categories differently. For example, one Region may want to emphasize bicycle / pedestrian projects, while another Region may want to emphasize stormwater projects. It is up to each CDOT Region to determine the process for TPR involvement in the application evaluation. The final project selection will be competitive, administered by the State, and conducted using the CDOT TAP Guidelines and Application attached.

TAP process in TMA areas:

Under MAP-21, the TMAs receive a TAP suballocation based on their relative share of population for the Urbanized Areas (UZAs) over 200,000 (see attached map). The result is a TAP suballocation that is significantly reduced from TE suballocation levels. The TMAs will select projects for their area and funds based on a competitive selection process, as they did with TE. Applicants within a TMA may apply for TAP funds either through the TMA application process or through the CDOT application process administered via the CDOT Region. This will require close coordination with the TMAs on calls for projects. **Since TMA applications are typically more detailed than what is being proposed for the**



CDOT TAP application process, the intention is that applicants within a TMA could complete a single TMA application that could compete in either the MPO or Region process.

Implementation Steps:

The CDOT Regions will each hold their call for projects beginning in the Spring/Summer of 2014. This call will cover projects to be funded in fiscal years 2015-2017. The upcoming call will make use of the new TAP guidelines, application, and evaluation criteria. Some modifications to the timeline and process may be necessary in some Regions for this initial call for projects.

In general, the goal is to have a two year call for projects cycle, recognizing that the TMAs will have calls that cover a minimum of four years. For this reason, Regions with TMAs will need to coordinate with the TMAs during calls for projects. FY2015-2017 will be a transition period of three years, instead of two, so that each Region may align their call cycles to be on a similar statewide schedule. MAP-21 requires that 50% of TAP funds be spent in areas on the basis of population (i.e. X% of funds in areas <5,000). Consistency and coordination will be important throughout this process to ensure these targets are met at the statewide level.

It is anticipated that CDOT Regions 2, 3 and 5 will begin their calls for projects in the Spring/Summer of 2014. CDOT Regions 1 and 4 will begin their calls in the Fall of 2014, in coordination with the DRCOG and NFRMPO calls for projects. Please contact your CDOT Region Planner for more information about when to apply and other important details.

