

February 28, 2013

Transportation Enhancement/Alternative Program

The Department is providing guidance to the Regional Planning Organizations (RPO) in Connecticut as a result of changes under the recent federal transportation legislation, MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century). The Department remains committed to continuing the Transportation Enhancement/Alternative Program via funds available under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) of MAP-21.

The administration of new municipal projects under the previous Transportation Enhancement Program solicitation lost some of its momentum following the enactment of MAP-21 due to the limited available information on the new Transportation Alternative Program rules. It should be noted that MAP-21 is a two-year bill, which has new sub allocation constraints on TAP funds along with take downs for the Safe Routes to School and the Recreational Trails Program.

These new sub allocation rules are a divergence from what has been done historically for the enhancement type projects. In the past, monies were allocated by the Department based on population and the fifteen Regional Planning Organizations (RPO's). This allowed the Department and RPO's great latitude in funding projects. MAP-21 now requires that monies be distributed similar to STP funds, by urbanized area. This is a significant change in the funding allocation for TAP projects and makes it much more difficult for the Department to manage a very small source of funds distributed by urbanized area. As a result, the Department will move forward with each RPO's top priority from the recent solicitation and work towards a reasonable funding scenario to program their project.

The breakout of funding for the TAP program can be found in FHWA Notice 4510.761 and on the [CTDOT Map-21 webpage](#). The RPO's should begin coordination with others in their urbanized area to determine how they would like to move forward with projects, to re-assess, if needed, their Number 1 priority projects and determine if the new funding allocations are still sufficient. To assist with this review, the Department's Local Roads Unit will be meeting with the RPO's to determine how to move forward with the Number 1 projects. Please reference the TAP chart of potential funding scenarios for Connecticut on page 3.

Prioritization and Split Funding

- RPO's are reminded that available resources, including time, finances and staff, are limited. As such, the Department will focus on implementing the ***first project priority*** selected by each region. It may not be possible to fund multiple priorities in a region. Each region should relay this message to its Project Sponsors. It is in the best interest of all parties for projects to be delivered in a timely manner consistent with the focus of the program. RPO's are expected to fully support their first

priority project through continued technical input and adequate RPO Allocation funds. The Department will be working with the RPO's during the design of their first priority project to consider split funding with other available sources, such as urban area Surface Transportation Program (STP-urban) funds should the need arise.

- Where balances are anticipated following implementation of the region's first priority or in the event that a Project Sponsor no longer has the resources to pursue a project, RPO's are strongly encouraged to consider split funding planned or ongoing roadway and bridge initiatives that are locally supported **to achieve access and safety improvements for non-motorized transportation**. This will reduce the administrative costs and time associated with mobilizing a new project. It will also assist municipalities in achieving Complete Street goals.

Eligibility

- At first glance, the definitions contained in MAP-21 show a strong foundation in moving the enhancement categories (ECs) forward. There were, however, modifications that equate to expansions as well as scale backs on previously allowed activities. As such, eligibility of the proposed individual projects and specific activities have and will continue to be reexamined during the project scoping process.
- Non-motorized forms of transportation, including on-road and off-road trail facilities and infrastructure projects/systems, and non-drivers remain a focus. Additionally, the new legislation appears to better support implementation of activities to address National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requirements, safety related improvements and other federal regulations. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliancy is also more actively cited as eligible activities, thus bringing attention to needs and an available funding source.

Next Steps

The Department is in the process of meeting with the RPO's and Project Sponsors to discuss each region's first priority. During this process, the RPO's and Project Sponsors will need to review their funding target, any recommended scope changes to address eligibility, and the cost estimates provided by the Department's consultant. The Project Sponsor must be committed to project delivery, the required local fund match as well as the region's ability to support the project financially within available funds. Project Delivery should remain the first and foremost focus of the municipal Project Sponsor and associated RPO.

Some projects are straightforward and will likely have Recommended Project Memorandums (RPMs) developed in the near term, while others may need to be re-scoped to address eligibility or resource limitations. This is not unlike any other year of solicitation in that respect.

As always, successful implementation of projects under this program depends on your continued support and collaboration in this effort and we look forward to working with you.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT/ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM
\$4.4 MILLION ORIGINAL TARGET PRIOR TO MAP 21 FOR MUNICIPALITIES

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE FUNDS

