



**PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES:  
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE  
PROGRAM**

June 2021

## Background:

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This document will describe the questions and criteria used by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) to evaluate and select projects for SPC’s allocation of Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) funding for federal fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

SPC is the federally mandated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Southwestern Pennsylvania region, which encompasses the Counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington and Westmoreland. SPC receives a yearly sub-allocation of approximately \$1.8 million in federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding. **This funding is separate from, and in addition to, TA funding from PennDOT and also must be awarded using a competitive selection process.**

## Schedule

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The voting membership of the [Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission’s Transportation Technical Committee \(TTC\)](#), in consultation with the three PennDOT Districts and the three Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), will act as the TA project selection committee. The table below illustrates the TA process timeline.

TA Process Timeline for the 2021-2024 TIP	
May 13 <sup>th</sup> TTC Meeting	Program Guidance reviewed
June 1, 2021	Program Guidance finalized
June 28, 2021	TA application period opens (Region & State)
August 2021	Local Project Delivery Workshop
August 16, 2021	Pre-application due (Region & State)
September 16 <sup>th</sup> TTC Meeting	Program Status Update
October 15, 2021	TA application period closes (Region & State)
October 18 – November 17	Application review and technical scoring by SPC staff
October 21 <sup>st</sup> TTC Meeting	Candidate project applications reviewed
October 22 - November 29	Project deliverability scoring
November 18 <sup>th</sup> TTC Meeting	Project technical scoring discussed and finalized
December TTC Meeting	Deliverability scoring discussed and finalized and TA projects recommended by TTC as part of draft 2023-2026 TIP

## Project Sponsor Eligibility

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The FAST Act carries forward the eligible sponsors for the TA in MAP-21 and adds “nonprofit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs” as eligible sponsors. **Non-profit organizations (other than the one new addition described in item #7 below), State DOTs, and MPOs/RPOs are not eligible project sponsors; however, they’re encouraged to work with eligible sponsors to advance projects where there is a shared interest.** Eligible TA Set-Aside project sponsors include:

1. Local governments;
2. Regional transportation authorities;
3. Transit agencies;
4. Natural resource or public land agencies, including Federal agencies;
5. School districts, local education agencies, or schools;
6. Tribal governments;
7. A nonprofit entity responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs;
8. Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a State agency) that the State determines to be eligible, consistent with the goals of subsection (c) of section 213 of title 23.

To date, PennDOT has deemed entities as eligible TA Set-Aside project sponsors if they meet the criteria above and are not registered as a 501(c) organization (with the exception of item #7 above).

As State DOTs are responsible for interpreting sponsor eligibility beyond those entities clearly defined in the FAST Act, PennDOT has determined that the following entities are eligible to sponsor a TA Set-Aside project:

1. County Recreational Trails Authorities
2. County Recreational Authorities
3. Urban Redevelopment Authorities

In addition to the authorities noted above, PennDOT recognizes “municipal authorities” as eligible sponsors, but only when the authority’s establishing document specifically cites transportation or recreation as a stated purpose. Industrial development authorities, for instance, would not be eligible.

It is incumbent upon each project sponsor to read this guidance and become familiar with the application, selection, and implementation procedures associated with the TA Set-Aside. 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 August 31, 2026 may be subject to forfeiture of awarded funds and project cancellation.

## Funding and Eligible Activities

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### Available Funding

The FAST Act, which has provided funding for the TA Set-Aside since December 2015, expired September 30, 2020 but was extended until September 30, 2021 with a continuing resolution. While it is possible that the FAST Act will be re-extended or a new bill will be enacted on October 1<sup>st</sup>, there is no absolute assurance that the TA Set-Aside will continue or that more funding will be available after that date. Funds made available through the bill prior to that date would still be available for use after September 30, 2021; however, new funds designated after this date, including this round of 2023 TA Funding, would not.

The funding breakdown below describes how the funding is currently allocated to the SPC region; again, subject to change beyond September 30, 2021.

The SPC Region receives a yearly, direct sub-allocation of approximately \$1,813,000 in federal TA funds from PennDOT.

TA funds must be obligated within two years of award. Failure to obligate the funds will result in loss of the funding. The funds will revert back to SPC's TA line item in the TIP for re-allocation at the regional level.

TA is not a grant program and no money is provided upfront. Approved costs will be reimbursed only after a reimbursement agreement between PennDOT and the project sponsor is signed and a Federal Form 4232 is authorized for the project. Since the TA funds are for construction, in order to get an approved Form 4232, the project will have to have obtained the following PennDOT clearances: right-of-way clearance, utility clearance, railroad clearance, environmental (NEPA) clearance, and have an approved PS&E package. No activities performed prior to this federal clearance are reimbursable through the awarded funding. The maximum a project can receive in TA funds is \$1,000,000. The minimum project award is \$50,000 for non-infrastructure projects and \$200,000 for infrastructure construction projects.

Once a project is authorized to advance and begins to incur costs, the project sponsor will receive invoices from the selected contractor (through a PennDOT approved process) to construct the project. The project sponsor then reviews and approves these invoices before submitting them to PennDOT for payment. PennDOT processes the payment and provides payment to the sponsor, who in turn pays the service provider. The sponsor will only be reimbursed for actual approved project expenses, up to the amount approved for the project.

## Eligible Activities

The SPC TA Program is a construction only program. The local project sponsor is responsible for completing all pre-construction activities (design, environmental clearance, right-of-way and utility relocation/coordination) with local funds. TA funds can then be used for 100% of the construction phase by being paid from the federal share, up to the awarded amount. Construction inspection and construction management activities associated with approved projects, are eligible uses of TA funds. Any costs exceeding the amount of funds awarded through the TA process are the responsibility of the project sponsor. Please consult the [PennDOT Publication 740: Local Project Delivery Manual](#) for a detailed description of the requirements and procedures to utilize federal transportation funding. Also, see [Appendix A](#) for a list of other regulatory requirements associated with the TA Program.

## Project Eligibility

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Project sponsors must become familiar with the 11 projects and activities that PennDOT considers eligible for funding through the TA Set-Aside.

The list below describes the 11 general project categories eligible for funding through the application process.

### 1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian projects allow communities to make non-motorized transportation safe, convenient, and appealing. Projects may include on-road and off-road trail facilities that serve to meet transportation needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of other non-motorized forms of transportation. These active transportation projects encourage healthful physical activity, keep air clean by decreasing reliance on fossil fuels, and enrich local economies with recreational assets.

Eligible Projects:

- New or reconstructed sidewalks or walkways
- Pedestrian and bicycle signs or signals
- Lighting that primarily benefits cyclists and pedestrians (Lighting Plan Requirements)
- Transportation projects that achieve ADA compliance, such as curb ramps
- New or reconstructed off-road trails that serve a transportation need, such as trails that provide connections to schools, parks, or other public places
- Crosswalks, bicycle lanes or sharrow pavement markings
- Widening or paving shoulders
- Bicycle parking facilities, such as bicycle lockers and bicycle racks (including those on buses)
- Bicycle share programs (including the purchase of bicycles)
- Shared use paths, side paths, and trails that serve a transportation purpose
- Bicycle and pedestrian bridges and underpasses
- Crossing improvements that shorten crossing distance, provide access, and/or primarily improve bicycle and pedestrian safety

- Traffic realignments, road diets, or intersection changes that improve bicycle and pedestrian access or safety
- Rails with trails projects, which are adjacent to active (not abandoned) lines

## 2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Education (grades K-8 only)

Non-infrastructure projects that educate or encourage children in kindergarten through the eighth grade to safely walk or bike to school are defined as eligible in Section 1404(f)(2)(A) of SAFETEA-LU.

Eligible Projects:

- Public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders
- Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools
- Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment
- Funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs

## 3. Conversion of Abandoned Railway Corridors to Trails

Rail-trails help to expand travel and recreational opportunities within communities. Converted rail corridors make ideal trails because of their flat grade, long length, and intact right-of-way. Rail-trails, as these types of trails are called, help to encourage physical activity and reduce air pollution.

TA Set-Aside funds can be used only for abandoned, rail banked or currently inactive rail lines; funds cannot be used to move or perform construction on active rail corridors. Funding for this category may also be used solely for purchase of railroad right-of-way or property, as long as future development of a public facility is planned.

Eligible Projects:

- Construction of multi-use trails within a railroad right-of-way
- Major reconstructions of multi-use trails within a railroad right-of-way
- Developing rail-with-trail projects, where there is an adjacent line that is no longer active
- Purchasing and converting unused railroad property for reuse as a trail

## 4. Construction of Turnouts, Overlooks, and Viewing Areas

By developing turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas, communities can enhance the travel experience and supply an educational element that attracts tourists to local roads that are of scenic, historic, natural, cultural, archeological, and recreational significance.

Under this category, special attention should be considered in those areas that are designated as PA Byways by PennDOT, designated Heritage Areas by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), as well as those areas that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and those areas affiliated with the National Park Service.

TA Set-Aside funds may not be used for the construction of visitor or welcome centers, or the staffing, operating, and maintenance associated those facilities. Marketing or promotion of such facilities is also ineligible.

Eligible Projects:

- Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
- Interpretive signage or kiosks explaining site significance
- Right-of-way acquisition for such facilities may be considered

## 5. Outdoor Advertising Management

The control and removal of outdoor advertising activity allows communities to preserve the scenic character of their roads by tracking and removing illegal and non-conforming billboards. Non-conforming signs are those signs that were lawfully erected but do not now comply with the Highway Beautification Act of 1965.

Eligible Projects:

- Billboard inventories, including those done with GIS/GPS
- Removal of illegal and non-conforming billboards

## 6. Historic Preservation and Rehab of Historic Transportation Facilities

The Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation of Historic Transportation Facilities category allows communities to rehabilitate and restore transportation facilities of historic significance. These rehabilitated facilities serve to educate the public and to provide communities with a unique sense of character that attracts tourists and generates a vibrant economic life.

Eligible projects must rehabilitate, restore or improve interpretation of a historic transportation facility. The addition of new items to the facility, such as desks, cabinets, furniture or other amenities that would improve building aesthetics or operations, are not eligible. Similarly, improvements that merely enhance operations (such as adding heating or cooling systems) are not eligible; however, in some cases, heating or cooling systems may be added, but only when deemed necessary for preservation of the historic structure; not for the comfort of guests or staff.

TA Set-Aside funds may not be used for the sole purpose of replicating a historic building, nor can they be used for the operation of historic sites, including transportation museums. The staffing, operating, and maintenance associated with such facilities is also ineligible.

Historic transportation facilities must be listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

(<http://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation/Pages/default.aspx>) can help determine which areas or structures are listed. Contact Cheryl Nagle at 717-772-4519 or [chnagle@pa.gov](mailto:chnagle@pa.gov) for assistance.

Eligible Projects:

- Restoration and reuse of historic buildings with strong link to transportation history
- Restoration and reuse of historic buildings for transportation related purposes
- Interpretive displays at historic sites
- Access improvements to historic sites and buildings
- Restoration of railroad depots, bus stations, and lighthouses
- Rehabilitation of rail trestles, tunnels, bridges, and canals
- Increasing building accessibility, in accordance with ADA guidelines

## 7. Vegetation Management

Through the Vegetation Management activity, communities improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control along transportation corridors.

Eligible Projects:

- Clearing of low-hanging branches or other vegetation encroaching on a travel corridor
- Landscaping to improve sightlines or other safety considerations
- Removal of invasive species
- Planting grasses or wildflowers to manage erosion along transportation corridors

## 8. Archaeological Activities

The Archaeological Activities category allows communities to explore the history in America with archaeological excavations and surveys in conjunction with highway construction projects.

Only projects related to the impacts of implementing a transportation project are eligible for funding under this category.

Eligible Projects:

- Research, preservation planning, and interpretation
- Developing interpretive signs, exhibits, and guides
- Inventories and surveys

## 9. Stormwater Management

Stormwater Management projects allow communities to decrease the negative impact of roads on the natural environment. Storm runoff over road surfaces carries pollutants into water, upsetting the ecological balance of local waterways and degrading water resources for humans and animal populations. Additionally, stormwater runoff may also erode soil, potentially reducing structural stability, augmenting flood events, and stripping soil from sensitive agricultural areas. Projects funded in this category seek to reduce these environmental impacts.



Eligible Projects:

- Detention and sediment basins
- Stream channel stabilization
- Storm drain stenciling and river clean-ups
- Water pollution studies

## 10. Wildlife Mortality Mitigation

Wildlife Mortality Mitigation allows communities to decrease the negative impact of roads on the natural environment. Roads can harm wildlife through habitat fragmentation and vehicle-caused wildlife mortality.

Eligible Projects:

- Wetlands acquisition and restoration
- Stream channel stabilization
- Wildlife underpasses or overpasses which may include bridge extensions to provide or improve wildlife passage and wildlife habitat connectivity
- Monitoring and data collection on habitat fragmentation and vehicle-caused wildlife mortality

## 11. Safe Routes to School

Infrastructure Projects — SRTS projects enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school. Infrastructure projects must be within two miles of a Kindergarten through 8th grade school and must primarily benefit walking or biking students. Eligible infrastructure projects include, but are not limited to, the projects listed below.

Eligible Projects:

- Sidewalk improvements
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
- On-street bicycle facilities
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Secure bicycle parking facilities
- Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

## Ineligible Activities

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Per MAP-21, and as continued in the FAST Act, some items previously eligible under the Transportation Enhancements program are no longer eligible. Notably, formerly eligible projects such as the creation and operation of transportation museums, and tourist and welcome centers are no longer eligible.

While general education programs for bicyclists and pedestrians are no longer eligible, active transportation safety and education programs for students in kindergarten through the eighth grade remain eligible. The eligibility of these programs and activities is preserved through provisions in MAP-21 (and subsequently the FAST Act) that extend eligibility for SRTS non-infrastructure items defined in SAFETEA-LU.

## Project Eligibility Determinations

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Project sponsors should design projects that clearly fit into the eligible categories defined in this document. SPC staff in consultation with PennDOT Central Office and FHWA will make the final determination on project eligibility and will disallow any project that is not clearly eligible. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to present how the project aligns with the guidelines for eligible project activities.

## Application Process

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### Project Applications

A complete TA candidate project application will consist of several components. These include:

- Candidate Pre-Application form (required for all projects)
- Candidate Project Application form (required for all projects)
- Additional Information forms (as many as needed to fully describe the project)
- Supporting information (maps, drawings, photographs, reports, etc)

It should be noted that letters of support from elected officials will have no influence on the selection of projects. While we encourage that project sponsors inform and collaborate with their elected leadership, letters of support are not necessary unless they are committing funds (matching or additional, non-traditional funding) to the project.

Project sponsors should download needed forms from the [SPC website](#), enter appropriate information about the candidate project on each form, and follow the described submittal process. If supporting information is part of the project application package, the project sponsor should identify each piece of supporting information on an Additional Information form. The application forms are interactive files and completed forms must be saved as interactive files. Handwritten paper copies, or electronic copies

without the interactive features cannot be accepted. **All fields in the TA Candidate Project Applications are required to be completed.**

Completed forms and all supporting documents must be submitted electronically. Electronic submissions of all application material are required via SPC's SharePoint site. The applicant for the proposed project will be responsible for uploading the preapplication and final application zip files to a secure folder on SPC's SharePoint site. The SPC SharePoint site requires a username and password. **The project sponsor contact must contact Lillian Gabreski at [lgabreski@spcregion.org](mailto:lgabreski@spcregion.org) on or before August 15, 2021 to indicate intent to submit a regional TA pre-application to obtain a temporary username and password.**

The applicant will be provided with a secure folder in which the application zip files are to be uploaded prior to the submission deadlines. Any technical difficulties using SPC's SharePoint site should be directed to Lillian Gabreski at the email address listed above.

## Application Review

SPC staff will review pre-applications submitted by the August 16, 2021 deadline for eligibility and notify applicants of any ineligible submittals. The deadline for the full application is October 15, 2021. Applicants will be notified if the applications are incomplete and will be given one week to submit missing or incomplete information.

## Project Prescreening

Screening criteria addresses provisions of FAST Act, and assesses consistency with SPC's current Long Range Plan *SmartMoves for a Changing Region* and local comprehensive plans. Projects must be shown to be consistent with FAST Act eligibility requirements, *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*, and the local or county comprehensive plan or they will not be considered further.

## Project Evaluation Criteria

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All of the candidate projects will be evaluated on six TA Technical Analysis Factors which evaluate the projects benefits in terms of connecting existing facilities, connections and access to activity centers and transit facilities, community improvements, environmental impacts, and to Environmental Justice communities. There are also four Ancillary Factors that rate each project on consistency with the SPC Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Congestion Management Process, contributions toward improving safety, and funding. Lastly, each project will be scored in terms of its readiness and deliverability.

SPC staff and the deliverability committee will evaluate each project based on the identified factors. A composite of all of the candidate projects and their ratings will then be presented to the TTC for final approval.

A majority of the factors rely heavily on outcome-driven, performance-based metrics. The increased focus on performance based planning and programming is a result of FAST Act (2015), which aims to

create a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian programs and policies originally established in ISTEA (1991). MAP-21 created seven national performance goals for federal highway programs. The seven goals are:

- **Safety** - To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
- **Infrastructure Condition** - To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
- **Congestion Reduction** - To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
- **System Reliability** - To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
- **Freight Movement and Economic Vitality** - To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development
- **Environmental Sustainability** - To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
- **Reduced Project Delivery Delays** - To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices

These national goals are reflected in SPC's current Long Range Plan *SmartMoves for a Changing Region* through the plan performance measures, which are ultimately implemented through the TIP and programs like TA.

Details on how each of the six TA Technical Analysis Factors, the four Ancillary Factors and project delivery/readiness will be scored are presented below:

## TA Technical Analysis Factors

### 1. Connections to Existing Facilities or Network Expansion

The key to establishing an accessible, well connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is building off of existing infrastructure and providing connections where there currently are none. A continuous, consistent system is safer and more attractive to users. Fragmented and inconsistent systems can create conflict points and confusion among users.

Projects that connect two or more existing alternative transportation facilities will receive a **High (3)** rating. Projects that extend an existing facility will receive a **Medium (2)** rating, and projects that will construct a new, independent facility that does not connect to any existing facilities will receive a **Low (1)** rating.

## 2. Access to Public Transportation Facilities

Encouraging people to use alternative modes of transportation (public transportation, bicycling, walking) in both work and non-work trips supports the overall regional vision, goals, strategies, and performance measures adopted in the current SPC long range *plan (SmartMoves for a Changing Region)*. Providing “last mile” connections (sidewalks, bicycle lanes, etc) as well as enhancements to the transit facilities themselves (benches, bicycle parking, bicycle racks for transit vehicles, etc) make utilizing alternative transportation modes more attractive to all users.

Projects in this category will be awarded points based on their level of integration with existing public transportation facilities such as commuter parking lots, transit stops and their connections to the surrounding community. Projects that seek to connect to public transportation facilities, provide accommodations at public transportation facilities, and provide bicycle racks on transit vehicles will receive a **High (3)** rating, projects that integrate two of the features will receive a **Medium (2)** rating and projects that incorporate one of these features will receive a **Low (1)** rating. Projects that do not seek to integrate bicycle and/or pedestrian accommodations with public transportation will receive 0 points.

## 3. Connections to Local Activity Centers

The integration of transportation and land use planning is a critical component in developing sustainable, attractive communities. To achieve the regional vision, it is important to link local activity centers throughout the region with the residential areas in which they serve and support via multimodal travel options. Activity centers include areas such as commercial/retail and employment centers, as well as civic, institutional and healthcare, educational, and recreational facilities. These areas can be in the form of a central business district, or a town center; a municipal building or complex; medical or health care facilities; schools, universities, colleges; and state, regional or local parks.

Projects in this category will be scored on the level of connectivity between residential areas and local activity centers. Projects connecting three or more of the listed activity center types will receive a **High (3)** rating. Projects connecting residential areas to two of the listed activity center types will receive a **Medium (2)** rating, and project connecting only one type of activity center with the surrounding residential area(s) will receive a **Low (1)** rating. Projects not providing any type of access or connectivity to activity centers will receive 0 points.

## 4. Community Improvement

Eligible community improvement projects (other than improvements made from bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure) include bicycle and pedestrian education (grades K-8 only); streetscapes and corridor landscaping<sup>1</sup>; historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; outdoor advertising management; and the construction of turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas. These projects provide benefit to many aspects of the community from preserving historic, transportation related

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<sup>1</sup> While not expressly described under eligible activities, projects such as streetscaping and corridor landscaping may be eligible under TA if selected through the required competitive process. Landscaping and scenic enhancement may be eligible as part of the construction of any Federal-aid highway project under 23 U.S.C. 319, including TA-funded projects.

infrastructure for public use to educating children on how to safely navigate streets when bicycling or walking.

Projects in this category will be evaluated and scored based on the overall number of community improvement activities included in a candidate project. Projects solely focused on community improvements or projects that combine three or more community improvement elements in the scope of the project will receive a **High (3)** rating. Projects combining two community improvement elements will receive a **Medium (2)** rating and projects with one community improvement element will receive a **Low (1)** rating. Projects that do not address any community improvement elements will receive 0 points in this category.

## 5. Environmental Impacts

Mitigating the negative effects of transportation infrastructure on the environment (water, soils, vegetation, and wildlife) is an important consideration when developing new or reconstructing existing facilities.

Projects in this category will be scored based on the level of environmental mitigation being proposed as a component of the overall project. Projects that are solely focused on environmental mitigation or vegetation management will receive a **High (3)** rating; projects that are not solely focused on environmental mitigation or vegetation management but have a strong environmental component will receive a **Medium (2)** rating. Projects that have only the required minimum environmental mitigation or vegetation management will receive a **Low (1)** rating. Projects not addressing any environmental mitigation or vegetation management will receive 0 points.

## 6. Environmental Justice and Title VI

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Justice defines environmental justice as "The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies."

Projects will be evaluated based on the positive impacts to the greatest number of Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities. Projects will receive a **High (3)** rating if the project provides positive benefits in both low income and minority EJ Communities and one or more Title VI Community, projects that provide positive benefits in one EJ Community and one or more Title VI Community will receive a **Medium (2)** rating, and projects that provide positive benefits in one EJ Community and one Title VI Community will receive a **Low (1)** rating. Projects not located in an EJ or Title VI Community will receive 0 points.

In order to score this criterion, SPC staff will map each project and overlay them with identified EJ and Title VI Communities through [SPC's EJ Web Map](#), as defined by USDOT Guidelines and US Census data.

## Ancillary Selection Factors

The seven national performance goals for federal highway programs and *SmartMoves for a Changing Region* through the plan strategies are ultimately implemented through the TIP and programs such as TA. Details on how each of the Ancillary Selection Factors will be scored are presented on the following pages:

### 1. Consistency with the current SPC Regional Long-Range Plan, *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*

All applicants must demonstrate consistency with the [Long-Range Transportation Plan \(Smart-Moves\)](#) strategies, the Regional Vision, and related strategies (listed below). Project sponsors will be given a checklist with the following plan vision/strategies and will be asked to check each one that the candidate project will help to advance.

#### Vision:

A world-class, safe and well maintained, integrated transportation system that provides mobility for all, enables resilient communities, and supports a globally competitive economy.

#### Relevant Strategies:

- Integrate multiple forms of public/ private transportation to provide increased mobility equitably for all users including those in underserved rural areas and disadvantaged populations.
- Fund additional transportation infrastructure through private sector partnerships, user fees, value capture, and other appropriate mechanisms; broaden revenue tools available to local governments to fund infrastructure projects.
- Employ holistic planning for mobility and accessibility when developing and prioritizing projects. Make transportation improvements fit community context and enhance local quality of life.
- Promote institutional investment in older communities, repurposing versus demolition, and ensure that affordable housing is retained utilizing best practice models in the region for land use, vacant properties, and environmental strategies.
- Support and encourage transportation projects and programs that will contribute to attainment or maintenance of the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM).
- Embrace and expand emerging infrastructure innovations and technologies including planning, design, materials, and construction processes for a more adaptable and resilient built environment.
- Invest in strategies that adapt to and decelerate the impacts of climate change. This includes investment in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, as well as, creating awareness about climate change, its projected impacts, and regional strategies.
- Improve infrastructure efficiency through technology implementation in project development, design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

- Conservation of the region’s natural resource assets and key tracts of land enhances environmental quality, natural land connectivity, habitat corridors, and agricultural lands preservation, and provides recreational opportunities for residents and tourists.

Projects that meet the Vision and seven (or more) Strategies, will receive a **High (3)** rating for this scoring factor, projects that meet the Vision and four to six Strategies, will receive **Medium (2)**, and projects that meet the Vision and one to three Strategies will receive **Low (1)**. Projects that do not advance the Vision or Strategies will receive 0 points.

## 2. Active Transportation Plan Consistency

The Regional Active Transportation Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania (ATP), is intended to provide not only a cohesive vision for primarily non-motorized travel across the region, but also technical guidance to local governments seeking to achieve their respective local active transportation goals. As discussed in the Background Section, the ATP has four overarching Goals:

1. Strengthen Communities
2. Improve Transportation Safety and Security
3. Enhance Multimodal Accessibility and Connectivity
4. Improve Public Health and Enhance the Environment.

Projects that advance all four Goals will receive a **High (3)** rating for this scoring factor, projects that advance 3 Goals will receive **Medium (2)**, and projects that advance at least one Goal receive **Low (1)**. Projects that do not advance any of the Goals will receive 0 points. Additionally, projects in ATP Network Connection Opportunity Areas will be eligible to receive 1 bonus point

## 3. Safety Improvements

Safety is an essential consideration to all transportation improvement projects. In order to evaluate the safety impacts of the candidate TA projects, similar project categories will be grouped together and calculated as follows:

- **Transit, Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Regional crash rate per million vehicle miles traveled\*projected reduction in vehicle miles traveled = expected reduction in crashes. For Active Transportation projects, reduction in level of traffic stress will also be factored.
  - **Traffic Flow:**
    - Two way AADT\*regional crash rate (by federal functional classification)\*365/1,000,000 = number of crashes per mile
    - Number of crashes per mile\*mileage of project = total number of crashes
    - Expected reduction in crashes = total number of crashes\*crash reduction factor<sup>1</sup>

Projects that are expected to reduce 2.0 or more crashes per year will get a **High (3)** score. Projects with an expected reduction in crashes from .75 to 1.99 will get a **Medium (2)** score, and projects with an expected reduction of less than .74 crashes will score will score **Low (1)**. Projects with no demonstrable impact on safety will receive 0 points.



## 4. Funding

There are two considerations for this factor: federal share and non-traditional funding sources.

Projects that bring significant non-federal and non-traditional funding to the TIP warrant additional consideration. Projects requesting funding of less than 50% of the total project cost from federal funding programs will get a **High (3)** score for this scoring factor. Projects requesting between 50% and 70% federal share will get a **Medium (2)** score. Projects requesting between 70% and 80% federal share will score **Low (1)**. Projects with a federal share above 80% will score **Not Addressed (0)**.

In addition, projects that can show a firm, in writing, commitment of non-traditional funding to the project will get 1 additional point. These projects are typically public/private partnerships that provide some of the required non-federal matching funds from private donations, philanthropic sources, local businesses, or other non-government resources. Documentation verifying sources and committed amounts must be included with the candidate's application.

## Deliverability/Project Readiness

Deliverability is an important aspect of a successful TA project. SPC will utilize a deliverability rating committee made up of experts in this area to assess and rank each of the submitted candidate project's ability to be delivered on-time and within budget.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate project readiness with a well-defined scope, schedule, cost estimate, project understanding, commitments of needed non-federal funding, and documentation of support from the other participating agencies in the project. Project sponsors should consult with [PennDOT Publication 740: Local Project Delivery Manual](#) in order to proactively identify any potential deliverability issues the candidate project(s) may experience and factor them into their schedules and cost estimates. Particularly in the case of the right-of-way phase, sponsor should provide proof of ownership of the right-of-way, or proof of coordination with right-of-way owner. Even if the row is owned by the sponsor a review from a review from PennDOT ROW unit may be required.

Each proposed project will be scored on their responses within the Project Delivery Checklist section of the application. Members of the deliverability rating committee will evaluate each application in order to identify potential project delivery red flags in regard to its scope, schedule, and budget. The more red flags a candidate project receives, the lower of a score it will be assigned.

Applications that clearly demonstrate that the project can be delivered within the proposed project schedule and budget will be scored **High (3)**. Applications that do not adequately demonstrate project readiness will be scored as **Medium (2)**. Projects with potentially significant issues that could impact project deliverability will be rated **Low (1)**. Applications with insufficient information to determine project readiness will be scored as **Not Addressed (0)**.

In addition, projects that have no utility relocations, railroad coordination, or right-of-way acquisitions associated with the implementation of their project will receive additional consideration.

## Appendix A: Other Regulatory Requirements

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There are a number of State and Federal regulatory requirements that apply to this program. Most, if not all, of these requirements (competitive bidding, minority business participation, Davis Bacon Act, prevailing wage rates and Americans with Disabilities Act) can be unfamiliar to project sponsors. In most cases, for compliance with environmental regulations during preliminary engineering, it is expected that project sponsors will secure professional assistance familiar with PennDOT policies and procedures (consulting engineers, landscape architects) to assist them in satisfying these requirements and advancing their project. PennDOT District staff should be contacted to assist with the interpretation and application of these requirements. In addition, sponsors should reference [PennDOT Publication 740: Local Project Delivery Manual](#)

A list of some of these requirements, as well as a brief discussion of each, follows.

### Agreements and Eligible Costs

The project sponsor must execute a standard legal agreement with PennDOT prior to proceeding with any work on the project. Any project costs incurred prior to the execution of a reimbursement agreement for which federal dollars are requested will **not** be eligible for reimbursement. PennDOT will provide guidance, if requested. Interest payments made by municipalities or other project sponsors to finance any portion of the project costs are **not** reimbursable.

### Proprietary Items

The project specifications must list “three manufacturers” or “approved equal” or a generic specification. If a proprietary item is required, an approval letter from PennDOT Central Office will need to be obtained. A sample request letter can be provided if required by any sponsor. All items must also be Bulletin 15 approved or a waiver will be required.

### Budget

The sponsor must demonstrate that there is an acceptable funding strategy for the project. A well-defined scope of work is needed to develop an accurate budget. Budget considerations are very important and an itemized list of anticipated expenses (including labor, supplies, materials and other anticipated costs) should be provided in an application attachment. The budget must be prepared and should be divided into project development phases that include environmental clearance, right-of-way, and construction phases. The budget should identify all sources of funding and how each itemized activity will be funded. Estimated funding for the project that may be from sources other than TA should be identified, such as other federal funds (not the US DOT), state, local, donated services, in-kind services, volunteer, etc. Even though the preliminary engineering and right-of-way are not funded by TA funds, a complete budget is needed to ensure that the applicant can fund the required project phases.

Speaking with PennDOT Engineering District staff and other professionals familiar with PennDOT policies and regulations – such as architects, designers, engineers, contractors or other appropriate individuals that have PennDOT project experience – is highly recommended.

The budget section of the application must be completed and divided into project development phases that include preliminary engineering, final design, right-of-way, utilities and construction phases. The budget should identify all sources of funding and how each itemized activity will be funded.

## Pre-Construction Costs

The project sponsor is responsible for funding pre-construction activities; they are not eligible for TA Set-Aside funds. Funding for pre-construction phases may come from any combination of federal, state, local, or private funds. The sponsor should also list any donated, in-kind, and volunteer services, including those from the Youth Conservation Corps. Even though the preconstruction activities are not funded by program funds, a complete budget is needed to ensure that the sponsor can fund the required project phases. Development of the pre-construction phase will be expected to be consistent with the PennDOT Connects process.

## Project Construction Cost Estimate – Bid Items

For the construction phase, the project sponsor must develop and attach to the project application a construction cost estimate that includes the following:

- ECMS Item numbers (optional)
- Bid Item Description/Name
- Quantity
- Unit of Measure
- Unit Price
- Item Total Cost

Example:

ECMS ITEM NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	ITEM COST
0608-0000	MOBILIZATION	1	L.S.	\$27,000.00	\$27,000.00
0686-0001	CONSTRUCTION SURVEYING	1	L.S.	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
0901-0001	MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION OF TRAFFIC	1	L.S.	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
0849-0010	ROCK CONSTRUCTION ENTRANCE	2	EA	\$3,500.00	\$7,000.00
0866-0005	HEAVY DUTY SILT BARRIER FENCE	100	L.F.	\$11.00	\$1,100.00
0867-0012	COMPOST FILTER SOCK, 18" DIAMETER	200	L.F.	\$10.00	\$2,000.00
0201-0001	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	1	L.S.	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
0627-3020	TEMPORARY BARRIER, TEST LEVEL 3, <I=2'	120	L.F.	\$70.00	\$8,400.00

## Project Construction Cost Estimate – Inflationary and Other Costs

### Construction Inspection Costs

**Construction inspection costs must be included in the total construction costs.** For projects under \$1 million in total construction costs, up to 15% of the construction costs is allowed for project inspection. If a project has a construction cost of over \$1 million, up to 12% of the construction costs is allowed for the inspection cost.

### Contingency Costs

Project sponsors may add up to 10% to the cost of the construction phase of the project (not the inspection phase) to account for unforeseen expenses.

### Inflationary Costs

Project sponsors must design their project cost estimates for the year in which the project is anticipated to be constructed, not the year that the application is submitted. Most projects selected in this application round will go to construction in calendar year 2024 or later, depending on the complexity of the project and the degree to which the sponsor has advanced project design. For the purposes of cost estimating, it is recommended that project sponsors consider inflationary costs. An inflation rate of 3% per year is acceptable. Project sponsors should create project cost estimates that assume construction in 2024 or later.

Please enter the federal funds requested for the project. The following costs may be added to the total construction cost:

- Up to two years of inflation at 3% per year
- Contingency costs may be included, but may not exceed 10%
- Construction Inspection (15% for projects < \$1 million, 12% for project ≥ \$1 million)

Based on the project, and in consultation with the consultant and PennDOT District, the estimate may also need to contain allowances for the items below:

- Administration/Department Costs
- Maintenance and Protection of Traffic
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control
- Inspector's Field Office, Equipment Package, and Microcomputer
- Mobilization
- Stormwater
- Drainage
- Pre-Construction Schedule
- Construction Surveying
- Internal Facilitation

It is also important to note that PennDOT pre-qualified contractors will be required, and that Davis Bacon wage rates will apply. These factors will increase project costs above that of a typical municipally funded project.

## Cost Estimating Resources

In addition to working with the consultant and PennDOT District personnel, please reference [PennDOT Pub 352 - Estimating Manual](#) which will provide more detailed information.

As sponsors develop their estimated budget, they should talk with PennDOT Engineering District staff and other professionals familiar with PennDOT policies and regulations, such as architects, designers, engineers, contractors or other appropriate individuals that have PennDOT project experience. **Important:** Project sponsors should design their project cost estimates for the year in which the project is anticipated to be delivered. Note also that 15% of the estimated construction cost is used for project inspection. The 15% must be included in the Total Construction Costs. In addition, project sponsors should factor in “Commonwealth incurred costs” at approximately 2% of the total construction cost.

## Reimbursement

The TA Set-Aside Program is a federal cost reimbursement program and no money is provided upfront. No reimbursement will be provided for costs incurred before a Federal Form 4232 is authorized; **this does not occur automatically once a project is awarded.**

The Form D-4232 (commonly referred to as simply “4232”) is the mechanism by which the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) authorizes spending of the federal funds and establishes the date of eligibility for funding project activities. PennDOT staff will prepare the necessary fiscal documents to secure the federal authorization of funding. However, this does not mean that FHWA is obligated to reimburse the sponsor if it is found that the federal laws or regulations were not followed. In this event, the project sponsor will be left to fund the project at 100 percent.

In order to receive reimbursement for approved TA Set-Aside project expenses, the sponsor will need to become a registered business partner in the Electronic Construction Management System (further explained below) and become a vendor in the SAP system.

## Project Invoicing and Payments to Contractors

Once a project is authorized to advance and begins to incur costs, the project sponsor will receive periodic invoices from the contractor. The project sponsor then reviews and – if they concur with the reported expenses – approves the invoices and submits them to PennDOT. PennDOT processes the payment (usually 4-6 weeks) and provides the approved funds to the sponsor. Upon receipt of payment from PennDOT, the sponsor has up to ten days to pay the contractor. By using this process, the project

sponsor does not typically have to use their own funds. The sponsor will only be reimbursed for actual approved project expenses, up to the amount approved for the project.

## **Electronic Construction Management System (ECMS)**

ECMS is the communication portal between PennDOT and Business Partners for conducting transportation projects. It is used from project bidding through the construction close-out process. In most cases, sponsors of TA Set-Aside projects will need to register as a [PennDOT ECMS Business Partner](#) for administration of their project.

The vast majority of local projects are bid by PennDOT in ECMS, on behalf of the project sponsor. Generally, plans are prepared according to Publication 14M, Design Manual 3, Plans Presentation. Your designated District Project Manager will be familiar with plans preparation and how projects must be entered into ECMS.

In the rare instance that a project is not bid by PennDOT in ECMS (known as a paper let) the project sponsor must request approval in writing. A request letter must be submitted to the designated PennDOT District Project Manager at the onset of the Project Development Process. The PennDOT District Project Manager then determines eligibility and obtains approval from PennDOT Central Office.

## **Registering as a Business Partner**

All organizations that will receive payments from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or that will receive grant or loan money from the Commonwealth, must have an SAP number for the payments to be processed. Project sponsors not already registered as a vendor with the Commonwealth must also acquire a SAP vendor number.

## **Public Involvement**

Early and continued public involvement in program activities will need to be sought to ensure consistency with the requirements for public involvement in the metropolitan and statewide planning regulations and with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) project implementation guidelines. The applicant should contact their local transportation-planning agency (MPO or RPO) for more information. Generally, the public involvement activities handled through the application review and approval process by the MPO and RPO fulfills this requirement. However, the project sponsor should discuss their project locally in a public format, such as at local planning commission and/or municipal meetings.

## Environmental Clearance

All projects will require an environmental clearance document as part of the preliminary engineering phase of work. The level of effort varies by the type of project, the anticipated impact and the degree of public controversy. The NEPA documentation may be a Categorical Exclusion (CE), Environmental Assessment (EA), or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Except in unusual circumstances, most TA projects are usually processed as a CE under the NEPA. Preparation of the document can be a cooperative venture: Normally, at the project scoping, a decision will be made on the type of documentation required and which entity will prepare the document. The project sponsor or their consultant will be required to prepare the environmental clearance document.

There may be costs associated with obtaining environmental clearance. These costs, like all pre-construction expenses, must be borne by the project sponsor. Please discuss this with your PennDOT Engineering District TA Program Coordinator PRIOR to submitting an application. District TA Coordinators are listed in Appendix C.

## Consultant Selection, Project Design, and Inspection

Projects must follow standard federal/state procedures for all phases of work. Project sponsors should acquire the services of a qualified consultant to oversee the development and implementation of the project (including project inspection) and ensure compliance with all state and federal requirements. This professional is typically an engineer, although an architect or landscape architect may be appropriate, depending upon the nature and scope of the project. It is important to recognize that the project sponsor, not PennDOT, employs the design and/or construction professionals at their own expense.

It is highly recommended that the selected consultant has experience with PennDOT specifications and has demonstrated experience in the successful delivery of TE, SRTS, PCTI, or TA projects. Please consult the [PennDOT Publication 740: Local Project Delivery Manual](#) for qualifications of a PennDOT experienced consultant. Expedient, accurate design lessens the chance that the project will not meet the two year deadline for TA Set-Aside projects to advertise. Projects that are not advertised within two years are subject to cancellation.

## Treatment of Projects

Projects funded through the TA Set-Aside Program must conform to 23 U.S.C. 133(i):

*(c) Treatment of Projects. — Notwithstanding any other provision of law, projects funded under this section (excluding those carried out under subsection (h)(5)) shall be treated as projects on a Federal-aid highway under this chapter.*

The “treatment of projects” requirement (23 U.S.C. 133(i)) means that all projects carried out using TA Set-Aside funds (except for recreational trails projects carried out under the RTP set-aside) must comply with applicable provisions in Title 23, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to

incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (Davis-Bacon), Buy America, competitive bidding, and other contracting requirements, regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

## Design and Implementation Requirements

The design requirements for TA Set-Aside projects are defined in [PennDOT Pub 10](#) (Design Manual 1): Specifically, Chapters 6 and 7 address key design requirements, including NEPA requirements, preliminary and final design processes, and key procedures for obtaining right of way and utility clearances. These steps, requirements and standards must be followed by the sponsor's project designer for the project to be funded through the TA Set-Aside.

## Right-of-Way Clearance

All right-of-way acquisition must follow federal regulations, including the Uniform Act (Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies of 1970). In particular, property owners must be advised that federal funding is being used to implement the project, and they are entitled to fair market value for their property. The property owner has the right to be informed of this value, as determined by a qualified appraiser. In addition, if the sponsor does not have the authority to acquire property by eminent domain, the property owner must be so advised prior to any offer being made. This requirement does not preclude the voluntary donation of property to the project. Federal funds are not available for land that is already within the public domain, e.g., owned by a municipality; however, such land may be donated to the project as part of the sponsor's investment. Right-of-way certification will be required for all projects prior to advertising for construction bids.

### NOTES:

- The requirements of the Uniform Act apply to any acquisitions associated with approved TA Set-Aside projects, regardless of whether federal funds are used for the purchase or not. Please contact your PennDOT Engineering District Right-of-Way Administrator if you have any questions or need specific guidance.
- Only projects for conversion of abandoned railway corridors and scenic overlooks are eligible to use program funds for right-of-way acquisition. See the Project Funding section of this document for more details on acquisition only projects.
- More information is available in Chapter 5, Right of Way Phase, of the [Local Project Delivery Manual](#).

## Utility Clearance

All projects *must have* a utility clearance form (PennDOT Form D-419) processed *prior* to the advertisement for bids. This procedure requires that the sponsor certify that all necessary arrangements have been completed for the relocation of any affected utility. PennDOT personnel will provide assistance with this process.



## Permits

It will be the responsibility of the project sponsor to secure all necessary permits to design and implement the project. These may involve permits from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as County and Municipal permits. The assigned PennDOT District Project Manager and/or hired consultant will be familiar with the permits required for each project and can provide guidance, as necessary.

## Public Utility Commission Involvement

Certain projects may require the involvement of the Public Utility Commission. *It will be the responsibility of the project sponsor to contact the Public Utility Commission to secure the necessary actions by that agency.*

## Railroad Coordination

If your project involves a bridge over a railroad, a bridge that carries a railroad, a railroad grade crossing or would require acquisition or an easement on railroad property, you will need to involve the owner of the rail line early. This initial contact, which may be facilitated by your PennDOT District Project Manager in consultation with your District's Grade Crossing Engineer/Administrator, should define the proposed project scope and timeframe. In the case of Norfolk Southern, they offer a Public Projects Manual, which outlines their process for projects that go along, over, or under their rail facilities.

The PUC may also be involved if the proposed project involves facilities designed for bicycle use, including shared use paths and most rail trails.

Projects involving railroads are likely to involve additional expenses (including direct costs to the railroad for design and plan reviews). Additionally, railroad coordination often leads to delays or project cancellation. As such, if possible, it is recommended that reasonable options to avoid impacting the railroad be explored.

## Projects Involving Lighting

For any project that includes lighting, a lighting plan will be required, which may add time and cost to your project. For more information, reference Chapter 4.9, Section H of the [PennDOT Design Manual Part 1C](#).

For guidance specific to TA Set-Aside projects, please reference “PennDOT Highway Lighting Requirements and Design Approval for TA Set-Aside Projects” document. Your PennDOT District TA Set-Aside Program Coordinator will also be familiar with these requirements.

## Bidding

For projects that require a contractor to perform physical construction or rehabilitation, the sponsor's professional will assemble the contract proposal package. PennDOT's Engineering District Office will review the Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) package. The project sponsor or PennDOT will manage the bidding as agreed upon at the project kickoff meeting.

## Bid Savings and Bid Overages

Each selected project has been approved for a specific scope of work and funding level, based on the information submitted by the project sponsor and approved by the SPC Transportation Technical Committee. While each project is awarded a set amount, it is important to understand that PennDOT's focus is to deliver awarded projects; the funding provided is not an absolute award to the project sponsor. It should not be assumed that additional work can be performed if bids come in lower than the awarded amount.

Once bid, if the lowest bid falls below the project award amount, PennDOT captures the bid savings and returns them to the TA Set-Aside Statewide Line Item. Again, delivery of the awarded project, not the dollar amount is key.

When bids exceed the design estimate, the sponsor will be asked to contribute toward the bid overage. If necessary, the District Project Manager will work with SPC and PennDOT Central Office to find additional funds to leverage the project sponsor's contribution; however, it cannot be assumed that additional funds will be available and there may be cases where the sponsor must bear all additional costs.

## Construction

Project sponsor's contractor may proceed with the construction phase of the project *only upon receipt of the project sponsor's written authorization (notice to proceed)*, which ensures that all necessary approvals have been secured. PennDOT Pub 740 requires a mandatory 12 weeks built into the pre-bid construction schedule between the let date and the issuance of the notice to proceed.

An approved contractor must perform construction. All material used in conjunction with the project must meet project specifications and special provisions included in the PS&E package.

**NOTE: 15% of the estimated construction cost is used for project inspection. The 15% *must* be included in the Total Construction Costs.**

## Cost Increases/Changes in Scope of Work

Each programmed project has been approved for a specific scope of work and funding level based on the information submitted by the project sponsor. When preparing a project scope and cost estimate, all project materials and labor costs should reflect anticipated year of construction. It should not be assumed that cost increases can be covered with state or federal funds. There may be cases where the sponsor must bear any unforeseen project cost increases. It should be noted that the project in which funding is awarded is the project that must be constructed. If the project that is awarded funding cannot proceed, the funding will return to the SPC TA line item in the TIP and will be reallocated to another regional project that has been competitively selected.

## Maintenance

The project sponsor will be responsible for all costs associated with the maintenance and operation of the project after construction. No TA Set-Aside funding will be provided for ongoing maintenance and operations costs. Failure by the sponsor to fulfill its maintenance responsibilities may result in the loss of future state and federal funds for private sponsors and the withholding of liquid fuels funds for municipal sponsors. The sponsor may transfer project maintenance and operation to another party with concurrence from the Department. For more information, please see the Maintenance section excerpt from the TA Set-Aside Program Reimbursement Agreement.

The sponsor may charge a fee to access a facility constructed with TA Set-Aside funds only if the proceeds from the fee are not excessive to the general public and, by agreement, are instituted for the maintenance and operation of the TA Set-Aside funded resource. Generally, this fee applies only to historic transportation facilities and, in some unique circumstances, trails.

The sponsor must establish a formalized inspection and maintenance program, to be performed by its own or contract personnel, to ensure an acceptable level of physical integrity and operation consistent with the original design standards. This maintenance program, established in accordance with standards determined to be acceptable to PennDOT, must include, but is not limited to:

- Periodic inspections
- Appropriate preventive maintenance (i.e., cleaning, lubricating, refurbishing electrical equipment, etc.)
- A systematic record-keeping system
- The means to handle notification and implementation of emergency repairs

Failure by the project sponsor to fulfill its maintenance responsibilities may result in the loss of future state and federal funds.

## Project Reporting and Cancellation

A project sponsor may, at any time in the project development process, decide to cancel the project and drop out of the program. The project sponsor will be responsible for the reimbursement of all federal funds received as of that date, as well as for PennDOT staff costs incurred as a part of the project. The sponsor will also be responsible for payment of all outstanding invoices to all project contractors. At a project kickoff meeting a joint staff of SPC and PennDOT Engineering District choose the timeframe and the specific milestones to be evaluated. Examples include reimbursement agreement, plans approved, etc. *Project sponsors will be required to submit quarterly progress reports to SPC, detailing steps underway or completed to reach the specific milestones.*

One year after the kickoff meeting, a project review will be undertaken by joint staff to determine if significant progress has been reached toward the established milestones.

During the review, if it is determined that insufficient progress has been made; the applicant will be warned in writing that more time (joint staff decision) will be allowed. If no progress occurs, the project may be removed from the program. When a decision to warn the applicant is reached, SPC will notify the applicant (via written letter) within 30 days of such a decision. The applicant must respond in writing within 30 days. Milestone dates for estimated project completion will be included in the application. If the project has to be cancelled due to lack of progress or other unforeseen circumstances, the project sponsor will be notified by SPC (via written letter) that the project funding is no longer available and the project has been cancelled.

## Appendix B: TA Contacts

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### SPC TA Coordinator

Ryan Gordon  
[rgordon@spcregion.org](mailto:rgordon@spcregion.org)  
(412)-391-5590

### PennDOT Districts:

PennDOT District 10  
Jason Barkey  
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(724)-357-2646

PennDOT District 11  
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PennDOT District 12  
Josh Theakston  
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### PennDOT Center for Program Development and Management

Statewide TA Coordinator  
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