

Siouxland Regional Transportation Planning Association (SRTPA) Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Application Process

1. Application. Members and organizations within the Regional Planning Area will be informed when requests for TAP applications are being requested and their deadline. Members will receive an application by mail or email format. TAP applications will be sent to every incorporated city within the SRTPA area. Other agencies can request an application by contacting the SIMPCO office. Applications will also be available at all times on the Iowa DOT website: https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives. The following is a checklist of things that must be included in a TAP application for it to be valid:

- i. A completed application form. Form 240004 Application Form for Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds is available on the Iowa DOT website.
- ii. A narrative assessing existing conditions, outlining the concept of the proposed project, and providing adequate project justification as described in the application form. The narrative also requires a discussion of topics like how the project will enhance connectivity, project readiness, and environmental conditions among others.
- iii. A detailed map identifying the location of the project.
- iv. A sketch-plan of the project, including cross-section for bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- v. Digital photographs
- vi. An itemized breakdown of the total project costs.
- vii. A time schedule for the total project development.
- viii. An official endorsement of the project from the authority to be responsible for its maintenance and operation according to the requirements included in the application form. For infrastructure projects, this includes assurance that the facility will be adequately maintained in public use for a minimum of 20 years. For cities, counties, or other political subdivisions, this endorsement is required to be in the form of a fully executed resolution by the elected body or board as applicable.
- ix. If applicable, a letter of support for the project from the scenic or historic byway board.
- x. If applicable, information about the affected school(s) and student travel information for a SRTS project.
- xi. A narrative discussing the public input process that was followed and public acceptance as well as a discussion of local and regional planning efforts, partnership, and stakeholder involvement.
- xii. If the project will include construction within Iowa DOT right-of-way, a letter of support from the Iowa DOT District Office is required
- xiii. Minority Impact Statement

Eligible applicants and project sponsors include:

- local governments
- regional transportation authorities
- transit agencies
- natural resource or public lands agencies
- tribal governments

- 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.
- A non-eligible project sponsor may partner with an eligible co-sponsor in applying for funds.

All applications must be received by the application deadline so that staff has an appropriate amount of time for project evaluation. Applications are typically sent out in January and due back to staff in February. Any application received past its deadline will be considered for the following year's application cycle.

- 2. Eligibility requirements.** Once all applications have been received by SIMPCO staff, applications will be sent to the Iowa DOT for an eligibility check, see the application checklist for these requirements. The Iowa DOT will then return confirmation of eligibility and provide any comments on the application back to SIMPCO.
- 3. Scoring.** SIMPCO staff these projects will be evaluated and scored according to the qualifying and priority criterion which is listed in the TIP and Iowa DOT comments. These projects will be evaluated and scored by SIMPCO staff according to the following qualifying and priority criterion:
 - a. Fulfills FAST Act (5 points)
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm
 - b. Fulfills Multiple Transportation Categories under the FAST Act (5 points)
 - c. Assured Local Match of 20% or higher (10 points)
 - d. Components Already Funded (5 points)
 - e. Past Prioritized at the State, Regional or Local Level (5 points)
 - f. Regional Impact including tourism and economic development (5 points)
 - g. Land Acquisition Status (5 points)
 - h. Facility Category Assessment – Connectivity, Development, Extension, Upgrade, Combination (25 points)
 - i. Currently in LRTP (10 points)
 - j. Current Development Status (10 points)

Once scored, staff will compile project information, scoring, and recommendation into a memo provided to both the Transportation Advisory Committee and Policy Board for review. Although SIMPCO staff recommends projects based on the qualifying and priority criteria, the Transportation Advisory Committee and Policy Board are not required to grant funds to the projects based on recommendation.

- 4. Transportation Advisory Committee Recommendation.** The Transportation Advisory Committee will review the recommendations from staff, may discuss significance of projects, and hear any input from Transportation Advisory Committee members,

organizations, agencies or the public. A funding recommendation from the Transportation Advisory Committee will then be presented to the Policy Board. This process is typically done in March.

- 5. Policy Board Action.** The Policy Board will receive projects scores along with recommendations from staff, the Transportation Technical Committee recommendation, any discussion on significance of projects, and any further input from members, organizations, agencies or the public. At that point, the Policy Board will make a final decision for the Iowa TAP funds. Projects will be selected within limitations of funding or “target amounts” that is calculated by the Iowa Department of Transportation.
- 6. Transportation Improvement Program.** Selected projects are then included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The draft TIP is reviewed by the Policy Board in the spring and the final TIP is approved during the month of June and submitted to the Iowa DOT for approval, after which it is submitted to FHWA as part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for federal approval. After the project has federal authorization, approved project applicants must work with the Iowa DOT to ensure all Federal regulations are being met regarding project design and construction. If a project requires a TIP amendment or administrative modification, the applicant must follow the process as outlined in the Public Participation Plan and TIP.