

**To:** Chief Administrative Officials  
**From:** Robert Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning  
Cara Radzins, Principal Transit Planner  
**Date:** March 15, 2019  
**c:** Municipal Engineers, Municipal Planners, Directors of Public Works  
**Subject:** *Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside: Request for Proposals*

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The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) will expire in 2020. To be prepared for subsequent legislation, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) invites municipalities to submit proposals for projects to be funded under the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside program for federal fiscal years 2021 through 2025. **While this solicitation assumes the continuation of current funding levels and project eligibility, future legislation will dictate the number and type of projects that will be initiated under this program. Therefore, selection under this solicitation does not guarantee project eligibility or funding.**

To aid in application preparation, please download and review the following TA Set-Aside documents via the links under "RFP/RFQ" on CRCOG's website ([www.crcog.org/rfprfq](http://www.crcog.org/rfprfq)):

- CTDOT TA Set-Aside Program Application
- CRCOG Solicitation Guidance (DRAFT – final to be posted on March 26, 2019)
- CTDOT Cost Estimating Template
- CTDOT Cost Estimating Guidelines
  - Please note that towns may opt to use their own cost estimating protocols. However, because this is a federal funding program, use of the CTDOT guidelines is strongly encouraged. The most recent CTDOT cost estimating guidelines are from 2017.

To apply for funding under the 2019 TA Set-Aside program, please send the following materials to Ms. Cara Radzins, CRCOG Principal Transit Planner, by **3:00pm on Monday, May 6, 2019:**

- Three (3) completed and signed hardcopies of the TA Set-Aside Program Application
- Three (3) completed hardcopies of any additional supplemental materials required for the application (cost estimate, location map, concept plan, etc.).
- Digital files of the completed TA Set-Aside Program Application and Cost Estimate (in original file formats with functioning fields/cells) and PDFs of other provided supplemental documents. Please submit the digital files on a flash drive or, if size allows, via email to Cara Radzins at [cradzins@crcog.org](mailto:cradzins@crcog.org).

Municipalities are encouraged to submit no more than one application for consideration. Also, please note that the application requires a duly authorized representative to sign a "Project Sponsor and Commitment Statement" expressing a commitment to fund the necessary local match and to operate, maintain, and insure the proposed transportation improvement.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Cara Radzins ([cradzins@crcog.org](mailto:cradzins@crcog.org)) or Robert Aloise ([raloise@crcog.org](mailto:raloise@crcog.org)).

## TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) SET-ASIDE 2019 SOLICITATION GUIDANCE - **DRAFT**

*Elements of this solicitation guidance were discussed at the CRCOG Subcommittee and Transportation Committee meetings on February 25, 2019. The entirety of this guidance will be discussed and finalized at the March 25, 2019 meetings.*

### PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Per CTDOT guidance, 2019 solicitation applications may be submitted for the following types of projects: on-and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, multi-use trail projects, and safe routes to school projects. For a project to receive TA funding it must:

1. Be submitted by an eligible entity with a complete application;
2. Be deliverable in FFY2021-2025 (design complete/construction started); and
3. Have a minimum cost of \$500,000 (projects are not to be combined to meet this minimum).

### PROJECT FUNDING

The maximum federal share for TA Set-Aside projects is 80% for all phases (Design, ROW, and Construction), and therefore a minimum local funding commitment of 20% of project costs is required. Municipalities should plan to fund the entire local share.

As a result of this solicitation, CRCOG plans to select, approve, and submit to CTDOT approximately four new TA Set-Aside projects for funding. Because prioritized projects must be submitted by Transportation Management Area (TMA), CRCOG's Transportation Committee has agreed that one such project will be from the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) with the remainder coming from CRCOG towns.

CTDOT requires a minimum project size of \$500,000. All projects that meet or exceed this threshold will be considered. However, in order to fully utilize the available funding across approximately four projects, a project cost of \$1.5-\$2 million (federal share of \$1.2-\$1.6 million) is encouraged. Projects larger than \$2 million should demonstrate a local match significant enough to maintain a federal share of \$1.6 million. The final number of projects that will be advanced to CTDOT will be based upon project costs and available funding allocations.

**NOTE: While this solicitation assumes the continuation of current funding levels and project eligibility, future legislation will dictate the number and type of projects that will be initiated under this program. Therefore, selection under this solicitation does not guarantee project eligibility or funding.**

### SCHEDULE

May 6, 2019	Applications to CRCOG <b>by 3:00pm</b>
May 20, 2019	Short List Selected and Notified / NVCOG Project Submitted to CRCOG
June 3, 2019	Special Transportation Committee Meeting / Short List Presentation
June 17, 2019	Approval by Transportation Committee, Acting as Policy Board

## **CRCOG'S EVALUATION, SELECTION, AND RANKING PROCESS**

CRCOG will conduct the following evaluation to select the candidate projects that will be submitted to CTDOT:

### **1. Review of Proposals and Selection of Candidate Project Short List**

CRCOG staff will review and rate all proposals. Staff will identify the best 5-7 projects that will be invited to participate in the second phase of the process that is described below. The factors CRCOG staff will consider include:

- Eligibility of the project and how well the project fits the general program guidelines
- Completeness of the application, including how well the project is described and the quality of the cost estimate
- Evidence of local commitment to the project (match funding, public support, etc.)
- Consistency with regional planning documents such as CRCOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Pedestrian and Bicycle and Plan, etc.

CRCOG Staff will notify applicants of their selection status by May 20, 2019.

### **2. Transportation Committee Review and Program Selection**

The finalists will be invited to a Special Transportation Committee meeting to each give a brief (10-15 minutes) presentation on their proposals. Following each presentation, Committee members will be allowed to ask questions. This meeting will be held on June 3, 2019

Following the presentations, each Committee member will rank the projects from first to last. It will be suggested that the Committee consider the following when ranking the projects:

- High number of potential users
- Safety benefit
- Cultural, historic, and aesthetic enhancement
- Length of useful life
- Relationship to other projects/future projects
- Economic development benefit
- Regional/statewide significance
- Environmental benefit/minimization of impact
- Supports multi-modal travel

### **3. Project Ranking**

CRCOG staff will collect the evaluation forms from the Special Transportation Committee meeting, and each project's average ranking will be calculated. The CRCOG projects with the best average rankings will be advanced as funding allocations allow. It is anticipated that at least three CRCOG projects will be selected. While this process identifies the CRCOG projects and their relative priority, NVCOG will conduct its own solicitation for its best project, which must be included alongside the CRCOG projects in a single, prioritized list for the Hartford TMA. **CRCOG staff is seeking Transportation Committee input on how to include the NVCOG project within the TMA's prioritized list.** The following two approaches will be discussed at the Subcommittee and Transportation Committee meetings on March 25, 2019.

Option 1: Predetermined Rank. The Transportation Committee will identify a predetermined rank for the project from NVCOG. Under this approach, the relative

order of the CRCOG projects against each other will not be changed, but all projects at or below the predetermined rank of the NVCOG project will be bumped down by one position. The resulting priority list will be shared with Transportation Committee for endorsement at the meeting on June 17, 2019.

Option 2: Staff Review and Recommendation. CRCOG Staff will review the NVCOG project against the prioritized CRCOG projects that have been selected and ranked by the Transportation Committee. Using the same criteria as was used by Committee members for ranking the CRCOG projects, Staff will recommend what ranking the NVCOG project should receive. CRCOG Staff **will not** propose any changes to the relative order of the CRCOG projects against each other, but rather will identify where the NVCOG project should be placed within the existing priority list, thereby adjusting the ranking of all projects at or below the NVCOG project's recommended ranking down by one position. The recommended priority list will be shared with Transportation Committee for endorsement at the meeting on June 17, 2019.

**4. Transportation Committee Endorsement / Policy Board Approval**

CRCOG's Transportation Committee will endorse a final prioritized list of TA Set-Aside projects, including one from NVCOG, at their meeting on June 17, 2019. Because of the timing of this action, the Transportation Committee will also approve the recommendation in their capacity as the acting Policy Board. CRCOG will forward the approved projects to CTDOT as the TMA's prioritized recommendations for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program.