



Transportation Alternatives Program 2025-26 Funding Cycle

TAP Sub-Committee Members:

Policy Committee

**Gynn Savage
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Technical Team ()**

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(Non-Voting Members**)**

Application Timeline / Schedule:

January 24, 2025 – Policy Committee officially establishes the 2025-26 Transportation Alternatives Program schedule, funding availability, and sub-committee appointments.

February 1, 2025 through April 1, 2025 – Project development and early coordination period with SCDOT.

April 1, 2025 – Deadline for submitting project applications.

May 16, 2025 – Sub-committee to review project applications.

May 16, 2025 – Policy Committee to consider recommended project applications for FY 25-26.

June 27, 2025 – Policy Committee to grant final approval to FY 25-26 project applications.

Funding Cycle:

The FY 2025-26 funding cycle for the Transportation Alternatives Program will follow the policy and procedural guidelines provided by SCDOT and the RFATS Policy Committee.

The federal allocation for RFATS in FY 2025-26 is projected to be \$729,903.

RFATS will serve as the point of contact with applicants and SCDOT regarding any program questions and / or concerns. RFATS is responsible for developing a process to manage project solicitation and selection. Specifically, the RFATS TAP sub-committee will review, prioritize, and select projects on an annual basis (when there is a call for new projects) for submission to SCDOT.

Timeline:

Applications will be due on or before April 1, 2025 (ORIGINAL APPLICATION AND AN ELECTRONIC VERSION ARE REQUIRED FOR PROCESSING). The TAP sub-committee will then review all applications and recommend project(s) to the Policy Committee for preliminary approval.

It is critical that each project sponsor thoroughly evaluate their project's scope and cost AND reach general agreement with SCDOT on both of these items before an application is submitted for review by the TAP sub-committee. **It is important to note that early coordination with SCDOT is a requirement and must be documented in the project application.** Project sponsors are required to contact the SCDOT TAP Coordinator and the SCDOT Program Manager during the early stages of application development. It is recommended that project sponsors schedule a site-visit with the SCDOT TAP Coordinator and the SCDOT Program Manager to review the project, if warranted. These actions are designed to streamline the application process and ultimately reduce the amount of time needed to initiate project implementation.

Eligible Activities

There are three eligible activities for TAP funding.

1. Pedestrian facilities
2. Bicycle facilities
3. Pedestrian improvement projects

NOTE: Landscaping is not eligible as an individual project, but landscaping elements of a project with a bicycle / pedestrian focus are eligible

Non-infrastructure related portions of projects (educational / informational) must be funded locally.

Application

The application should include a project description, location and project boundary maps, site plans, photographs of existing site or facility, an itemized budget, list of property ownership involved, documented proof of local support, project maintenance and management costs / plans, an environmental assessment, and a breakdown of the funds requested. The application will document whether the project will be administered by SCDOT or through the Local Public Agency (LPA), and if so, state the duties of the local agency.

The application must demonstrate that the project is financially feasible. The application will confirm that the project sponsor is capable of providing the required matching funds, completing the project, and planning for ongoing maintenance. The application must also demonstrate that the project sponsor will secure an encroachment permit outlining any desired extraordinary maintenance effort on SCDOT right of way that would include any special features and / or non-standard department materials.

The application should note that the project sponsor will arrange for payment of any taxes due on the property and adopt necessary ordinances or legal proceedings needed to implement, protect and maintain the project investment. The application must demonstrate that the project sponsor will indemnify SCDOT of liability for the project or its maintenance and certify that there are no known or foreseeable legal impediments to the project. The application should be signed, along with the other required documents listed below, and submitted to RFATS no later than **5:00 P.M. on April 1, 2025.**

Find information on the LPA process at <http://www.scdot.org/doing/localPublicAdmin.aspx>

Required Documents

RFATS must receive the following documents:

- One hard copy of the application (including location and project boundary maps, site plans, and photographs of existing site or facility)
- One electronic copy of the application (including location and project boundary maps, site plans, and photographs of existing site or facility)
- Information identifying ownership of all property and if property is to be acquired, the values of the property.
- SCDOT District 4 Office Feasibility Letter
- Documentation supporting early coordination requirement and general agreement with SCDOT Program Manager on the project's scope and cost
- Documentation supporting coordination requirement and general agreement with SCDOT TAP Coordinator on project feasibility and viability
- Documentation showing local support for the project (letters of support, summary minutes from public hearing, etc.)
- Signed and dated application checklist confirming all steps have been completed

RFATS

For questions about TAP and / or application submission, please contact:

RFATS Director
155 Johnston Street
PO Box 11706
Rock Hill, SC 29731

E-mail to: davidf.hooper@cityofrockhill.com

Program Criteria: Review & Ranking Process

The RFATS TAP sub-committee will review all applications and will recommend projects to the RFATS Policy Committee based on the following criteria:

- A. Compliance with federal, SCDOT Commission and local government policy
- B. Project Impact / Value on:
 - Safety or accident prevention
 - Accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians
 - Planning & Connectivity
 - Project Location & Impact in High Need Areas
 - Quality of Life
- C. Local support of project, including local government sponsorship, public input, and relation to existing plans and projects
- D. RFATS or SCDOT Commission “focus areas,” as applicable, including:
 - Appropriateness of size of investment for results
 - Ability to substantially complete
 - Appropriateness of TAP as the funding source
 - Size limits on local projects [non-regional projects should not exhaust all available funds for consecutive years]
 - Timeliness of previous project execution; number of current active projects.

Using these criteria, the RFATS TAP sub-committee will evaluate and rank candidate projects according to the TAP Project Evaluation Form (see attachment) and make their recommendation to the full Policy Committee. Based on the available resources and character of the projects, they may recommend a multi-year budget.

TAP Set-Aide Program

In addition to the regular TAP allocation that RFATS receives, an additional pool of funds is available through the SCDOT TAP “Set-Aside” Program. This funding is based on guidance from the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act or IIJA. Essentially, this is a designated pool of funds for Transportation Management Areas or TMAs – which RFATS is one of six such areas in the state.

As a point of reference, a Transportation Management Area (TMA) is defined as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with a population of 200,000 or greater. Please note that the amount of Transportation Alternatives funding allocated to each TMA is based on its population and is specifically identified in federal regulations.

Specific Objectives / Elements of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Ade Program include the following:

- Increase emphasis on safety
- Prioritization of projects that align with SCDOT’s Complete Streets Policy and TA-eligible projects in SCDOT’s 10-Year Plan; TIPs, STIPs, LRTPs, and other planning documents.
- Increased partnership and collaboration with local jurisdictions and MPOs.
- Phased project awards to assist in preventing lapse.
- No maximum award amount (i.e., max award is the total amount available per round).
- Appropriate training will be applied to new applicants wishing to serve as the Local Public Agency (LPA) to review requirements of jurisdictions serving in this capacity.

Federal Requirements

The Transportation Alternatives Program is a Federal program. It is subject to Federal rules and regulations.

Approved Projects

Projects approved by the Policy Committee and SCDOT Commission will be reflected in the Transportation Improvement Program. Additionally, it should be noted:

- Appropriate training will be applied to new applicants wishing to serve as the Local Public Agency (LPA) to review requirements of jurisdictions serving in this capacity.
- Upon receiving final approval from the RFATS Policy Committee, **it is the responsibility of each project sponsor to officially notify SCDOT whether this will be an LPA project or assigned to SCDOT project management.** This will need to be documented and forwarded to the RFATS.

- If a local jurisdiction wants to carry out all or part of the project management function, then they are responsible for submitting the required documentation to SCDOT LPA Office (**LPA Administrator, 955 Park Street, Columbia, SC 29202; 803-737-0847**) demonstrating their qualification to serve in this capacity.
- Upon receipt of a fully-executed copy of the project contract (i.e., assuming the local municipality has decided to serve as project manager), the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that their project is completed in a timely manner and in conformance with the signed agreement.
- The applicant will provide progress reports to RFATS to assist in ensuring that all TAP projects are being performed on schedule, within budget and in accordance with the contract terms.
- Applicants must begin their projects in a timely manner upon receipt of their signed contract. If an extension is needed, a notice should be submitted to SCDOT and RFATS summarizing the basis for an extension as well as a revised completion timeline. A contract may be cancelled by SCDOT without damage if progress is not made as scheduled.
- Sources of matching funds must be indicated. SCDOT encourages the applicant to consider a hard match (cash) as their required participation due to stringent mandatory federal reporting requirements. Should the applicant be considering a soft match, this will need to be communicated to RFATS and the SCDOT Program Manager during the early coordination period.
- ***Funds spent prior to execution of the contract are not eligible for reimbursement and cannot be counted toward matching funds. This includes any work (advertising, design, or construction) started or completed before the applicant receives an executed contract.***
- Project cost estimates must contain enough detail that the various cost elements of the project are clear. Please ensure to estimate the project carefully including items such as construction contingencies, construction, engineering, and inflationary increases appropriate to the proposed size and development timeline. Applicants **MUST** show a 10% contingency fee for the project.
- Funding can be approved for preliminary engineering, utility relocation, or property acquisition only when the applicant can demonstrate that the funds, combined with other existing resources, will result in a completed and fully funded project. The applicant acknowledges the resurfacing program of SCDOT does not account for the costs of protecting and / or replacement of TAP project work. **Cost increases above SCDOT's initial commitment are the sole responsibility of the applicant.**

- **APPLICANTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO READ THROUGH THEIR CONTRACTS WITH SCDOT THOROUGHLY FOR THE SPECIFIC COMPLETION SCHEDULE THAT SCDOT HAS ESTABLISHED AS WELL AS ALL APPLICABLE LPA REQUIREMENTS BEFORE UNDERTAKING ANY WORK.**

The RFATS Policy Committee reserves the right to recommend cancellation of a project if satisfactory progress is not made. The SCDOT and RFATS will communicate with the applicant prior to any cancellation being initiated.

Reimbursement

Because the TAP is a reimbursement program, applicants performing the project administration as a Local Public Agency (LPA) should be prepared to pay for the project's completion. However, successful applicants may submit invoices for reimbursement as work is completed. Any work (advertising, design, or construction) started or completed before the applicant receives an executed contract with notice to proceed shall not be reimbursed with Federal-aid funds and will not count towards the program matching fund requirements.

If an applicant does not wish to perform the project administration as a LPA or if SCDOT determines the applicant is not qualified to perform the project administration, SCDOT may manage the project through the Project Development Process or applicable standard and published guidelines. The applicant is then responsible for providing the matching funds prior to the start of the project.