



**Transportation Alternatives Program
Application Process For
2021-22 Funding Cycle**

TAP Sub-Committee Members:

Policy Committee Members

**Guynn Savage
Tom Audette
Kathy Pender
David O’Neal
Brian Carnes**

Technical Team Members (Non-voting)

**Penelope Karagounis
Christopher Stephens
Leah Youngblood
Susan Britt
Rox Burhans**

Tentative Schedule:

February 4, 2021 – RFATS staff will notify all RFATS members about upcoming application process.

February 26, 2021 – RFATS Policy Committee officially sets 2021-22 Transportation Alternatives Program schedule and funding availability and sub-committee appointments.

March 1, 2021 through April 9, 2021 – Project development and early coordination period with SCDOT.

April 9, 2021 – Deadline for submitting project applications to RFATS Alternatives Coordinator.

May 21, 2021 – Proposed meeting for Alternatives sub-committee to review project applications.

May 21, 2021 – Proposed meeting for RFATS Policy Committee to consider sub-committee’s recommended TAP project applications for FY 2021-22 funding cycle.

June 25, 2021 – Proposed meeting for RFATS Policy Committee to grant final approval to project applications.

Funding Cycle:

The FY 2021-22 funding cycle for the Transportation Alternatives Program will follow the policy and procedural revisions adopted by SCDOT and the RFATS Policy Committee.

SCDOT will notify each of the six Transportation Management Areas (TMA) with their projected annual funding amounts (it is important to remember that this amount is the expected level of funding and may change). The RFATS federal allocation for FY 2021-22 is projected to be \$112,987.

The RFATS Alternatives Coordinator will serve as staff contact with applicants and SCDOT staff with regards to the program and will work with the SCDOT in addressing any program issues and/or concerns that may arise. This may involve project coordination, public relations, project status information as well as any other items as needed.

RFATS is responsible for developing a process to manage project solicitation and selection. Specifically, the RFATS Alternatives sub-committee will review, prioritize, and select projects on an annual basis for submission to SCDOT.

Timeline:

Applications will be due on or before April 9, 2021 (ORIGINAL APPLICATION AND AN ELECTRONIC VERSION ARE REQUIRED FOR PROCESSING). The Alternatives sub-committee will then review all applications and recommend project(s) to the RFATS 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 Alternatives sub-committee – it is important to note that early coordination with SCDOT is a requirement and must be documented with project applications. Project sponsors are required to contact the SCDOT TAP Coordinator and the SCDOT Program Manager during the early stages of the development of the TAP application. 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 necessary. These actions are designed to streamline the application process and ultimately reduce the amount of time needed to initiate project implementation.

In July of 2016, the South Carolina General Assembly passed Act 275 (s.1258). Section 57-1-460 of the Act authorizes the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Secretary to approve federal transportation enhancement funds. For the RFATS MPO, the policy committee will approve funds for TAP projects and the application is submitted to the SCDOT TAP Office for final approval. The proposed project will then be identified in the MPO Transportation Improvement Program.

Eligible Activities

There are three eligible activities for the 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 transportation focus are eligible

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

Application

The application should include a project description, location maps, project boundary maps, site plans, photographs of existing site or facility, an itemized budget for the project, a list of property ownership involved in the project, documented proof of local support, project maintenance and management costs/plans, an environmental assessment, and a list 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 display that the project sponsor is capable of providing the required matching funds, completing the project, and planning for ongoing maintenance. The application must demonstrate that the project sponsor will secure an approved Encroach Permit outlining any desired extraordinary maintenance effort on SCDOT right of way that would include any special features 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. 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 the RFATS Alternatives Coordinator no later than **5:00 P.M. on April 9, 2021.**

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

Required Documents

The RFATS Alternatives Coordinator must receive the following documents:

- One hard copy of the application (including location maps, project boundary maps, site plans, and photographs of existing site or facility)
- One electronic copy of the application (including location maps, 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 Alternatives Coordinator

For questions about TAP and application submission:

Mail to:
RFATS Transportation Alternatives Coordinator
155 Johnston Street
PO Box 11706
Rock Hill, SC 29731

E-mail to: cherrmann@rfatsmpo.org

Program Criteria: Review & Ranking Process

The RFATS Alternatives sub-committee will review all Alternatives 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
 - Quality of Life
- C. Local support of project, including local government sponsorship, public input, and relation to existing plans and projects
- D. Commission or RFATS “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 Alternatives sub-committee will evaluate and rank candidate projects according to the TAP Project Evaluation Form (attachment 1) 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.

Federal Requirements

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

Approved Projects

Alternatives 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 of who is to serve as the project manager (i.e., the local municipality or SCDOT). This will need to be documented and forwarded to the RFATS Alternatives Coordinator.
- 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 (**Yolanda Byrd, LPA Administrator, 955 Park Street, Columbia, SC 29202; 803-737-0847 or ByrdYD@scdot.org**) 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 the RFATS Alternatives Coordinator 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 the RFATS Alternatives Coordinator 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 consider a hard match (cash) as their required participation due to stringent mandatory federal reporting requirements. Should the applicant be considering a soft match in lieu of a cash match, this will need to be communicated to the RFATS Alternatives Coordinator and 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 to address 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 enhancements. 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 the project if satisfactory progress is not made. The SCDOT and MPO Alternatives Coordinator 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.