

Grant Workshop Transportation Alternatives/SRTS– Frequently Asked Questions

General questions:

- What/who is a project sponsor?
A project sponsor is any local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for, or oversight of transportation or recreational trails.
- If design or construction funding is received, can the LPA add another task to a current project?
It depends, if the additional task is within the project scope that was originally awarded, it may be included. If it a new task outside of the original project scope, then no it cannot be added.
- Can SRTS funding be used for crossing guards?
SRTS can be used for training and equipment for crossing guards but not for the salary of crossing guards.
- Can SRTS funding be used to provide a safer connection to school bus stops?
Typically, no SRTS funding cannot be used just to provide a safer connection to bus stops but discuss with TA Manager.
- Can SRTS funding be used for trail projects?
It depends on if it meets all the SRTS eligibility requirements, TA or Rec Trails are typically the better choice.
- Can TA funding be used for sidewalk projects?
Yes, TA funding can be used for sidewalk projects as long as it provides a logical terminus.
- Can multiple categories be selected for one project?
Yes, multiple categories can be selected for one project, if applicable.
- How detailed should the project location map be?
As detailed as possible. Map should include the starting and ending points with the logical terminus, how it connects facilities or points of designation, show if it is part of phased project.
- Does the SRTS/TAP program provide reimbursement for ROW?
Land acquisition is allowed for eligible TA projects, such as right-of-way or easements for pedestrian and bicycle projects, turnouts, overlooks, historic transportation facilities or environmental mitigation.
- If a project is constructed on MDOT SHA ROW, will MDOT SHA provide maintenance?
No, the project sponsor is responsible for the maintenance of the project, even if on MDOT SHA ROW.
- If the award amount is not enough to complete the project, will MDOT SHA provide the additional funding?
Any overruns should be covered by the project sponsor. If a request is made for additional funding, it will go towards the MPO that originally awarded the project for any requests over 10 percent of the original project costs. This is not a guarantee.
- Is this state funding?
No – this is federal funding which requires sponsors to follow requirements for using federal dollars

- How quickly can we receive the funds?
This is a reimbursement-based award. Reimbursements will be provided once an invoice is submitted for all eligible project expenses.

Applications and Application Process:

- When is the application deadline?
Call for applications are from April 15th until May 15, 2019
- What if I submit my application and then need to change or fix something?
Contact the TA Manager for assistance.
- What if I make a mistake but don't realize it until after the due date?
Contact the TA Manager for assistance.
- What if I need help?
Contact the TA Manager for assistance.
- Should I apply if I'm not ready to start my project?
No, it is best to wait until staff, time and budget committees are in place.

Award

- What is the maximum amount of funding that can be requested?
Currently, there is no maximum amount of funding that can be requested.
- Can I change the details of the project scope once the grant is awarded?
No, the project was awarded with the details in the project scope that was reviewed and approved by the TA Selection Committee.
- What if I need to change a budget line item or match item?
Contact TA Manager to discuss changes. Any budget line item change over 10 percent may need TA Selection Committee approval to proceed.
- What happens if I am awarded less than I requested?
The project sponsor can use the funding awarded to complete a portion of the project with logical terminus or return funds if the project cannot be completed.
- What do I do if only certain items were awarded?
If only certain items were awarded, it may be that only those items awarded are eligible for federal reimbursement. Contact the TA Manager for clarification.
- Can I schedule a debrief call if my request is denied?
Yes, contact the TA Manger to schedule a debrief.
- What if I don't agree with the award or no longer need/want the funds?
If you do not agree, need and/or want the funds, please submit a letter to the TA Manager stating that you are no longer interested in the funds that were awarded.
- What if I want to reduce my award?
The award can be reduced but need to confirm how the 80/20 requirement will be covered and why.
- How long do I have to complete the project?

Design projects should be completed within 2 years and construction projects should be completed within 3 years of receiving award.

Design Projects:

- If design funding is received, can the project sponsor's engineer be used to complete design? (For example, the Town/City or County Engineer)
No, the design funds can not be used for staff time for the Town or City.
- If design funding is received, can the project sponsor select a contractor from their approved list?
It depends, supporting documents must be provided, reviewed and approved by MDOT SHA's Federal Aid Programming Division to ensure it meets federal requirements. If it only follows the state procurement, the project sponsor's approved list can not be used.
- What is the timeframe for design projects?
Design projects should be completed within 2 years of receiving TA funds.
- Now that I have my award for design, can I continue with the consultant that completed the 30% design plans?
Unless the procurement process followed the federal guidelines and MDOT SHA approves the process of which design consultant was obtained, the same design consultant cannot be used.

Construction Projects:

- What is the timeframe for construction projects?
Construction project should be completed within 3 years of receiving TA funds.

Match:

- If construction funding is received, can design be used as match?
No, design costs can not be used for match. 20 percent cash match is required.
- Does MDOT SHA provide the required match using state funding since the programs provide federal funding?
No, MDOT SHA does not provide state funding for the required match of TA projects.
- Can in-kind services be used as match for design or construction projects?
No, in-kind services cannot be used for match of design or construction projects.