Florida Department of Transportation

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Guidance and Procedures

Effective June 2019/Updated May 2021



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Contents

Important Information for Project Sponsors	<u>1</u>
Purpose	<u>1</u>
Background	<u>2</u>
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Overview	<u>2</u>
Transportation Alternatives Funding	<u>3</u>
Funding Allocations	<u>3</u>
Statewide TA "Any Area" funds - FDOT work program fund code TALT	<u>3</u>
"By Population" funds	<u>3</u>
Funding and Matching Requirements	<u>4</u>
Cost Reimbursement of Approved Expenses	<u>4</u>
Eligible Entities (Project Sponsors)	<u>7</u>
Eligible Projects and Activities	<u>8</u>
Project Eligibility Determinations	<u>8</u>
Project Sponsor Expectations and Requirements	<u>9</u>
Project Application Submittal Process	<u>9</u>
Application Cycle	<u>9</u>
Application Submittal	<u>9</u>
Application	<u>9</u>
Project Cost Estimate and Funding Request	<u>10</u>
Project Selection and Programming	<u>10</u>
TA Project Selection Evaluation Criteria	<u>10</u>
Competitive Selection Process	
MPO areas under 200,000 population	<u>11</u>
Areas outside of MPOs	
Over 200,000 urbanized population	
Project Programming	<u>12</u>
Other Regulatory Requirements	12

Anticipated Roles for FDOT and Planning Partners .	13
FDOT Central Office	<u>13</u>
FDOT Districts	<u>13</u>
MPOs > 200,000 Urbanized Population (TMA MPOs) .	<u>13</u>
MPOs <200,000 Population	<u>13</u>
Project Sponsors	<u>13</u>
Resources	14
Federal Resources	
Florida Resources	14
Coordination with Central Office	14
Appendix	1
Appendix A	<u>16</u>
FDOT Districts and TA Program Contacts	10
Appendix B	17
FDOT Transportation Alternatives Project Eligibility Guidance	17
Appendix C	
FILLL LA Project Application	10

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Important Information for Project Sponsors

- Transportation Alternatives (TA) is a federal cost reimbursement grant program-- no money is provided upfront.
- Normally, the federal share for TA projects is the same as for the general Federal-aid Highway Program: 80 percent
 federal/20 percent state and/or local match. However, the State of Florida has elected to utilize toll credits to serve as the
 state and local match for the TA Program. Therefore, project sponsors are not required to provide the 20 percent match. For
 "over 200,000 population" funds, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) within Transportation Management Areas
 (TMAs) may solicit a local match as part of their program guidelines.
- · Projects must conform to one of the 10 categories of eligibility, as described on page 13 of this guidance.
- Effective December 2015, with the passing of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, nonprofit
 organizations that oversee the administration of local transportation safety programs are now eligible project sponsors. All
 other non-profits remain ineligible.
- FDOT requires locally administered infrastructure projects be implemented by a Local Agency Program (LAP) certified
 agency; this includes phases of work leading to construction, or activities specifically identified in the definition of
 "construction" in Title 23 of the United States Code, Section 101(a)(4). Non-profit organizations are not eligible for LAP
 certification. Note: In limited circumstances, planning studies and research studies would not require LAP certification.
- If the project applicant intends to administer the project but is not LAP certified at the time of application submittal, they
 may seek project-specific certification prior to project authorization if their application is selected, or partner with a LAP
 certified agency or with FDOT to serve as the project sponsor or implementing agency. The implementing agency must be
 LAP certified at the time the project is programmed. An overview of the requirements of federally funded projects and FDOT
 local project implementation process can be found in the FDOT LAP Manual at https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LAP/LAP-TOC.shtm.
- Non-infrastructure projects do not require LAP certification; this includes equipment purchases. These projects will be treated as non-traditional federal awards. Please see the FDOT Work Program Instructions for more information on nontraditional federal awards.
- FDOT is a decentralized agency, and each FDOT district office is responsible for administering their share of TA funding in compliance with the FAST Act. For FDOT district TA information and contacts, see Appendix A of this guidance.
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects are eligible for TA funding but will need to comply with the Florida SRTS program
 requirements if FDOT SRTS program funds are to be used on any phase of the project. For more information, visit https://www.fdot.gov/safety/2A-Programs/Safe-Routes.shtm.

Purpose

This Transportation Alternatives (TA) Guidance and Procedures document was developed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in response to the changes resulting from the passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act. This document was developed to provide guidance for the consistent implementation of TA across the State and will be updated annually.

This document provides information on how FDOT administers TA funding, including:

- · Eligible project sponsors
- Eligible project activities
- · Project applications
- · Project selection, and
- Other regulatory requirements

Background

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside is a continuation of a federal transportation funding program first established as the Transportation Enhancement Program under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). The Transportation Enhancement Program saw little to no changes from 1991 to 2012 as it was carried forward through two subsequent transportation funding bills: The Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21 Century (TEA-21), and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

However, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) signed into law in 2012 established a new program to provide for a variety of alternative transportation projects. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) consolidated funding from Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), which were separately funded programs under SAFETEA-LU, into a single funding source. RTP funding was made a set-aside from the TAP funds; unless the Governor opts out, the RTP apportionment was to be set aside from the State's TAP funds specifically for RTP.

In December 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was passed, eliminating MAP-21 TAP and replacing it with "a set-aside of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funding for transportation alternatives (TA)." The new program, referred to as the <u>Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside or TA Set-Aside</u>, includes all the same provisions as TAP, with one notable change: nonprofit organizations that oversee the administration of local transportation safety programs are now eligible project sponsors. In Florida, RTP is set-aside from the State's TA funds.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Overview

The TA Set-Aside program provides funding for programs and projects consistent with details described under 23 U.S.C. 133(h)(3), including 1) Transportation Alternatives, 2) Recreational Trails Program, 3) Safe Routes to School Program, and 4) planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.¹

Florida administers TA funds through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT); the Florida Department of Environmental Protection manages the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds. For more information on the administration of RTP funds, visit https://floridadep.gov/lands/land-and-recreation-grants/content/recreational-trails-program. This program guidance will focus on how the remaining TA Set-Aside funds are administered by FDOT for Transportation Alternatives. Note that FDOT includes Safe Routes to School as eligible projects under Transportation Alternatives.

¹ Note that Florida has opted not to use TA Set-Aside funds for planning, designing or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

Transportation Alternatives Funding

Nationally, \$835 to \$850 million is available for eligible projects through the TA Set-Aside program each year.² As defined in the FAST Act, each state receives the same proportionate share of these funds as they received in FY2009 through the Transportation Enhancement Program. This translates into an overall apportionment of \$51,733,446 in TA Set-Aside funds for the State of Florida since 2018, including Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding.³

Funding Allocations

Per the legislation, Florida has set aside \$2,602,532 of their apportionment for the RTP, and the remaining \$49,130,914 is allocated to Transportation Alternatives and then divided into two categories:

- 1. Fifty (50) percent of the funds are allocated to any area of the State ("any area").
- 2. Fifty (50) percent of the funds are sub-allocated to areas based on population ("by population").

The "any area" funds may be used on any project within the state, while "by population" funds must be spent in the region to which they are allocated. The "by population" sub-allocations are based on the share of the population located in the following areas of the State according to the most recent Census:

- · Areas with a population of 5,000 or less;
- Areas with a population between 5,001 and 200,000;
- Areas with an urbanized area population greater than 200,000

The funding allocations are further explained below. Figure 2 provides a flowchart of Florida's typical distribution of TA Program funds.

Statewide TA "Any Area" funds - FDOT work program fund code TALT

The FAST Act allocates funding to be used statewide at the discretion of the state.

- Approximately \$24.5 million is typically allocated to FDOT for "any area" funds.
- · Funding can be used anywhere in the state.
- TALT (any area) funds are apportioned to FDOT districts using a statutory formula that is based on population and fuel tax.
- The competitive application round for these funds is open to all eligible sponsors within FDOT districts, including sponsors located in urbanized areas that receive TA funding allocations

"By Population" funds

Areas with less than 5,000 Population - FDOT work program fund code TALN

The FAST Act allocates funding to areas with less than 5,000 population. Approximately \$3 million is typically allocated to FDOT for this population category.

Areas with greater than 5,000 but less than 200,000 Population - FDOT work program fund code TALL

The FAST Act allocates funding to areas of greater than 5,000 but less than 200,000 population. Approximately \$3.3 million is typically allocated to FDOT for this population category.

Areas with greater than 200,000 Urbanized Population - FDOT work program fund code TALU

The FAST Act allocates funding directly to urbanized areas with a population greater than 200,000, otherwise known as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).

² https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/transportationalternativesfs.cfm

³ Estimate based on 2019 distribution: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/notices/n4510832_n4510832_t2.cfm

- According to the Federal Register, Volume 77, No. 1384, there are 15 designated TMAs in Florida: Miami, Tampa-St.
 Petersburg, Orlando, Jacksonville, Sarasota-Bradenton, Cape Coral, Palm Bay-Melbourne, Port St. Lucie, Palm Coast-Daytona Beach-Port Orange, Pensacola, Florida-Alabama, Kissimmee, Bonita Springs, Lakeland, Tallahassee, and Winter Haven.
- Florida has 27 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) serving metropolitan areas with a wide range of population sizes. In Florida, MPOs are also referred to as Transportation Planning Organizations (TPO) and Transportation Planning Agencies (TPA); for the purposes of this document, they will collectively be called MPOs. Eighteen (18) of the State's 27 MPOs are represented within the State's fifteen 15 TMAs (Figure 1).
 - » Approximately \$19 million in "over 200K population" funds for TMAs is typically allocated to FDOT. This amount is divided among the 15 TMAs based on population (Figure 2).
 - » Eligible entities (Project Sponsors) within TMAs submit eligible projects which are prioritized and selected through a competitive process administered by the MPOs in consultation with their FDOT district office.

FDOT is a decentralized agency, and each FDOT district office receives an apportionment of TA funds to administer through a competitive process in compliance with the FAST Act. Typical TA funding apportionment by FDOT district is detailed in Table A.

District	Any Area Funds (FDOT Fund Code TALT)	Population < 5K (FDOT Fund Code TALN)	Population > 5K but < 200K (FDOT Fund Code TALL)	Population > 200K (FDOT Fund Code TALU)	Total
1	\$3,461,501	\$384,463.05	\$545,541	\$2,544,874	\$6,936,378
2	\$2,777,848	\$689,377.01	\$687,280	\$1,391,796	\$5,546,301
3	\$1,824,492	\$739,743.56	\$608,347	\$750,009	\$3,922,592
4	\$4,557,648	\$105,532.22	\$182,987	\$4,432,039	\$9,278,206
5	\$5,180,441	\$267,635.92	\$819,011	\$3,431,663	\$9,698,750
6	\$3,108,324	\$52,693.40	\$63,890	\$3,248,608	\$6,473,515
7	\$3,655,204	\$58,849.85	\$370,744	\$3,190,373	\$7,275,171
FDOT Total	\$24,565,457	\$2,298,295	\$3,277,801	\$18,989,362	\$49,130,914

Table A: Typical Florida Transportation Alternatives Funding Apportionment by FDOT District

Source: FDOT Work Program and Budget, October 30, 2018. Figures do not include Recreational Trails Program funding. Figures may vary slightly from Federal Register (Figure 2) due to rounding.

Note: Table A describes federal funding that was allocated for FY2020 via legislation and apportioned to FDOT districts. However, FDOT operates under a 5-year work program in order to maximize production and service capabilities. Project applications submitted in one fiscal year will be tied to future fiscal year planning and funding. Check with your FDOT district and/or MPO for more information on amounts available for project applications.

Funding and Matching Requirements

Normally, the federal share for TA projects is the same as for the general Federal-aid Highway Program: 80 percent federal/20 percent state and/or local match. However, the State of Florida has elected to utilize toll credits to serve as the state and local match for the TA Program. Therefore, project sponsors are not required to provide the 20 percent match.

FDOT generally administers TA projects through the Local Agency Program (LAP). Information on the LAP can be found on FDOT's LAP webpage at https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LAP/LAP-TOC.shtm.

Cost Reimbursement of Approved Expenses

TA is a cost reimbursement grant program. Projects must go through multiple levels of review and approval to become eligible for reimbursement. Once the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has authorized a project and the project sponsor has entered into an agreement with FDOT, project costs may be incurred and ultimately reimbursed. Note that costs incurred prior to FHWA authorization and execution of the agreement are not eligible for reimbursement.

^{4 &}lt;u>https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2012-07-18/pdf/2012-17514.pdf</u>

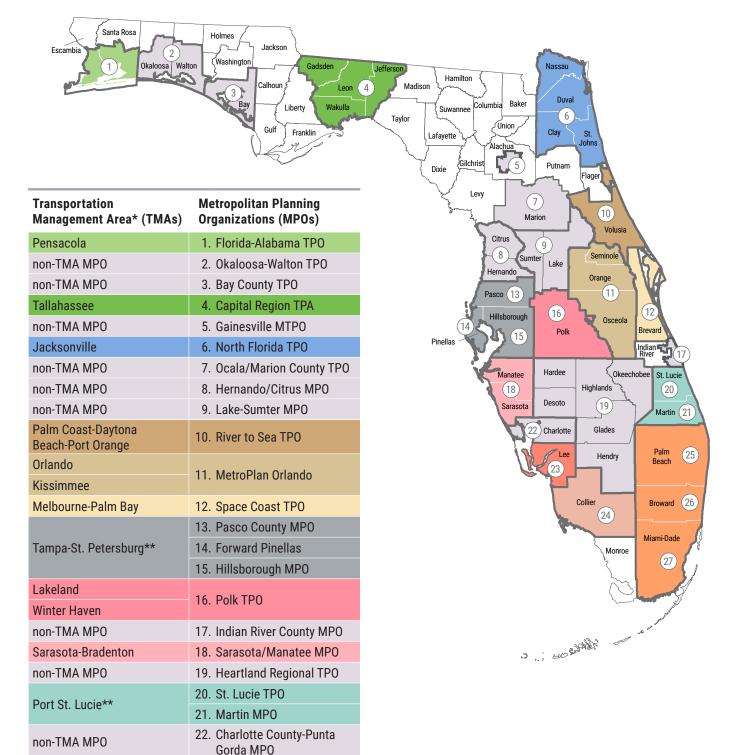


Figure 1: Map of Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Cape Coral

Miami**

Bonita Springs

23. Lee County MPO

24. Collier MPO25. Palm Beach TPA

26. Broward MPO 27. Miami-Dade TPO

^{*} Urbanized population over 200,000

^{**} Tampa-St. Petersburg, Port St. Lucie and Miami TMA's contain multiple MPOs.

TA Set-a-side \$51,733,446 **Recreational Trails** Remaining TA Set-a-side Set-a-side \$2,602,532 \$49,130,914 TA Available TA Available for Sub-allocation Anywhere in the State \$24,565,457 \$24,565,457 TA Available for Urbanized TA Available for Urbanized TA Available for Urbanized Areas > 5K but < 200K Areas > 200K Population Areas < 5K Population Population \$18,989,361 \$2,298,298 \$3,277,798 Palm Coast-Melbourne-Daytona Jacksonville Pensacola **Tallahassee** Port St. Lucie Miami Orlando **Kissimmee** Tampa-St. Petersburg Beach-Port **Palm Bay** Orange 3 3 4 5 7 6 5 5 5 Florida-Palm Miami-Space Pasco

MetroPlan

Orlando

Coast

TP0

River to Sea

TP0

MetroPlan

Orlando

Figure 2: Florida's Distribution of TA Set-Aside Program Funds

Source: Federal Register, Volume 77, No. 138, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2012-07-18/pdf/2012-17514.pdf

North Florida

Winter

Lakeland

Polk TPO Polk TPO

Sarasota-

Sarasota/

Manatee

MP0

TMA

District

MP0s

included

in TMA

Cape

Coral

Lee

County

MP0

Bonita

Springs

Collier

MP0

County

MP0

Forward Hillsborough

Pinellas

MP0

Martin

MP0

Lucie

TP0

Broward

MP0

Beach

TPA

Dade

TP0

Capital

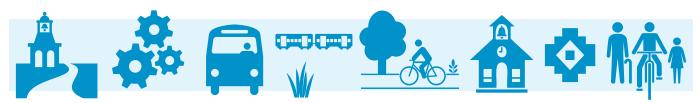
Region TPA

Alabama

TP0

Eligible Entities (Project Sponsors)

Eligible entities are those that can receive TA Program funds. The FAST Act carried forward the eligible entities from the TAP in MAP-21 and adds "non-profit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs" as eligible sponsors. Eligible project sponsors descriptions below are adapted from 23 U.S.C. 213(c)(4)(B).



- Local governments. Local
 government entities include any unit
 of local government below a State
 government agency, except for an
 MPO*. Examples include city, town,
 township, village, borough, parish,
 or county agencies.
- Regional transportation authorities.
 Regional transportation authorities
 are considered the same as the
 Regional Transportation Planning
 Organizations defined in the
 statewide planning section of the
 legislation [23 U.S.C. 135(m)].
- Transit agencies. Transit agencies include any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds as determined by the Federal Transit Administration.

- Natural resource or public land agencies. Natural resource or public land agencies include any federal, tribal, state, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land administration. Examples include:
 - » State or local park or forest agencies;
 - » State or local fish and game or wildlife agencies;
 - » Department of the Interior Land Management Agencies; and
 - » U.S. Forest Service.
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools. School districts, local education agencies, or schools may include any public or non-profit private school. Projects should benefit the general public and not only a private entity.

- Tribal governments
- Non-profit entity responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs. Examples include a non-profit entity responsible for:
 - » a local program implementing construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs; and
 - » a safe routes to school program.
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails that the State determines to be eligible and consistent with the goals of 23 U.S.C. 213 (c).

*The Florida Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are not eligible project sponsors; however, they may partner with an eligible project sponsor and serve as the implementing agency to help a project sponsor carry out a project.

Non-profit organizations are not eligible project sponsors unless they qualify through one of the eligible entity categories listed above (e.g., where a non-profit organization is a designated transit agency, school, or an entity responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs). Non-profit organizations that do not qualify via the legislation are eligible to partner with any eligible entity on an eligible project, if State or local requirements permit.

FDOT requires locally administered infrastructure projects be implemented by a LAP certified agency; this includes phases of work leading to construction, or activities specifically identified in the definition of "construction" in Title 23 of the United States Code, Section 101(a)(4). In limited circumstances, planning studies and research studies would not require LAP certification. Non-profit organizations are not eligible for LAP certification. If the project sponsor is not LAP certified, they may partner with a LAP certified agency or with FDOT to serve as the implementing agency. An overview of the requirements of federally funded projects and FDOT local project implementation process can be found in the FDOT LAP Manual at https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LAP/LAP-TOC.shtm.

Non-infrastructure projects do not require LAP certification; this includes equipment purchases. These projects will be treated as non-traditional federal awards. Please see the FDOT Work Program Instructions for more information on non-traditional federal awards.

Eligible Projects and Activities

TA funds may be obligated for projects or activities described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) or 23 U.S.C. 213(b)(1) as such provisions were in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the FAST Act. To be eligible for funding under the TA Program, projects must fall under at least one of the ten categories outlined in the legislation (Table B).

However, the legislation gives "states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)...discretion about how to establish project priorities, or whether to fund (or not fund) particular categories. There is no requirement to consider all eligible TA activities equally." FDOT developed TA project eligibility guidance (Appendix B) to provide specific examples of eligible projects and activities in each category described in the legislation. The content is based on guidance from FHWA, and input from FDOT's Transportation Alternatives Working Group, made up of FDOT district representatives.

Note that the FDOT TA Project Eligibility Guidance is not intended to be comprehensive, but instead provides examples to assist applicants in understanding eligible project types. The final decision on project eligibility remains at the discretion of the FDOT district reviewing the application as long as it is consistent with federal eligibility.

Table B: TA Eligible Project Categories

TA Eligible Project Categories

- 1. Construction, planning and design of on and off-road facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation (pedestrian and bicycle facilities)
- 2. Construction, planning and design of infrastructure-related projects/systems to provide safe routes for non-drivers including children, older adults, individuals with disabilities (safe routes for non-drivers)
- 3. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for non-motorized use
- 4. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
- 5. Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising
- 6. Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
- 7. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights of way
- 8. Archaeological activities related to impacts from transportation projects
- 9. Environmental mitigation activities
- 10. Safe Routes to School: Safe Routes to School projects are eligible under TA. For additional information on eligible activities, see https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm#EligibleProjects. Note: FDOT also has a state Safe Routes to School Program. For more information on that program https://www.fdot.gov/safety/2A-Programs/Safe-Routes.shtm

Note: Utility work is not eligible for funding unless it's incidental to a project and in-kind replacement, such as relocating a manhole when creating a bike lane.

Project Eligibility Determinations

Project sponsors should propose projects that clearly fit into the eligible categories defined in this document. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to explain in their application how the project aligns with the guidelines for eligible project activities. FDOT districts will make the final determination on project eligibility and will disallow any project that is not clearly eligible.

⁵ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm

Project Sponsor Expectations and Requirements

It is the responsibility of each project sponsor to read this guidance, and any additional guidance or materials from their FDOT district or MPO as appropriate, and become familiar with the application, selection, and implementation procedures associated with the FDOT TA Program. Applying for federal funds begins a significant undertaking, which must be led by the project sponsor from start to finish. Project sponsors unable to navigate the federal requirements may be subject to forfeiture of awarded funds and project cancellation. Note: the use of federal funds on any phase of the project federalizes all phases of the project, meaning that all other phases of the project also become subject to federal requirements.

An overview of the requirements and process for a locally-administered federal project can be found in the FDOT Local Agency Program (LAP) Manual at www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LAP/LAP-TOC.shtm. The LAP Manual establishes consistent and uniform practices for authorizing other Local Agencies to use Federal-Aid funds provided through FDOT, including allocations, and describes the implementation process, responsibilities and requirements.

Project Application Submittal Process

Each FDOT district administers its portion of Florida's TA Program funds through an annual competitive application process. This section generally describes the application cycle and submittal process for TA funds. Please contact your appropriate FDOT district for specific information related to its application cycle and process; See Appendix A for FDOT district TA contact information.

Application Cycle

Applications for TA projects may be submitted on an annual basis. Each FDOT district office sets its own schedule for application submittals and evaluations, but most follow a process that allows selected applications to be programmed in the FDOT Tentative Work Program each year (see Table C). Applicants should contact their respective FDOT district office for specific processes and schedule dates.

Table C: Typical FDOT TA Application Submittal and Evaluation Process (varies by district)

Process Step

Application Solicitation

Application Submittal

Project Selection and Programming

Application Submittal

Project sponsors are required to submit applications for TA funding through the FDOT Grant Application Process (GAP - online system) by clicking here: www.flgap.com/. GAP system support is provided at: 888-238-9707 or flgap@blackcatsupport.com. A Username and Password are required to access the system, and the webpage includes a link for project sponsors to request user access. FDOT districts work with their region's MPOs and counties to solicit, review and select TA project applications.



Application

As of July 1, 2021 a standardized statewide FDOT TA Application will be used by all FDOT districts, see Appendix C. Districts may have additional documentation or submittal requirements. Project sponsors must contact your appropriate FDOT district for information on all requirements.

Project Cost Estimate and Funding Request

The project application must include a well-defined scope of work which lays the foundation for an accurate budget. Budget considerations are very important, and an itemized list of funds being requested (including labor, supplies, materials and other anticipated costs) are required in the application. Cost estimates must be based on the year in which the project is anticipated to be delivered rather than the year that the application is submitted. It is important to note that if selected for funding, the project is typically programmed in the next new fifth year of the adopted Work Program.

The project cost estimate and funding request should be divided into project development phases. The most common phases include planning, preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, construction and Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI) services. The cost estimate should identify all sources of funding and how each activity will be funded. Sources of funds other than TA may include other federal funds (not US DOT funds), state, local, donated services, in-kind services, volunteer and Youth Conservation Corps.

Project sponsors are responsible for all cost overages, including those caused by inaccurate or incorrect project cost estimating.

Note: As each FDOT district has established procedures for administering its apportionment of TA funding, some FDOT districts and MPOs have set minimum or maximum project costs, or both. Some districts only reimburse for selected phases of the project. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to read relevant FDOT district and MPO application materials in addition to this guidance.

Project Selection and Programming

The FAST Act requires TA projects be selected through a competitive selection process (23 U.S.C. 133(h)(2)). While FDOT is responsible for programming all TA funds, the legislation gives TMA MPOs the authority to develop and administer their own competitive selection procedures for funds sub-allocated to areas with greater than 200,000 population. FDOT oversees TMA procedures and more directly manages selection of projects for all other TA funds, but consults with MPOs and local agencies, regardless of population size, to ensure that MPO and/or county priorities are considered.

Once the evaluation and selection process is completed and approved, the FDOT district office will program projects based on priority, the availability of funds, the implementing agency, and the capacity of the applying agency to implement the project.

FHWA has issued guidance that explains who is responsible for the selection process and Table D describes how TA project selection is managed in Florida. As neither the FAST Act nor FHWA have established standards, procedures, or processes for the competitive selection of projects, development of a competitive selection process is left to the State and MPOs.

TA Project Selection Evaluation Criteria

Each agency that reviews TA applications, whether an MPO or FDOT district office, must utilize documented selection criteria to evaluate project applications. FDOT requires all district offices to assess the **eligibility** and **feasibility** of project applications as defined below.

- Eligibility. Projects must meet all eligibility criteria to receive funding consideration:
 - » Sponsor eligibility Is the project sponsor an eligible applicant?
 - » Project eligibility Does the project fit within the eligible project categories for the TA Program?

FDOT has developed TA project eligibility guidance (Table B)

TALT fund code and/or countie

to clarify how the state interprets which specific projects are
eligible in Florida. The final decision on project eligibility remains at the discretion of the FDOT district.

Table D: FDOT TA Project Selection Process

Area Funds	FDOT and MPO Roles		
	MPOs within the TMAs manage application solicitation.		
Areas with >200,000 urbanized population – TALU fund code	Project sponsors submit applications through the Florida DOT Grant Application Process (GAP).		
	MPOs within the TMAs manage application review and selection in consultation with the FDOT district office.		
Areas with >5,000 but <200,000 population -	FDOT district offices manage application solicitation in coordination with MPOs and counties.		
TALL fund code Areas with <5,000 population – TALN fund code	Project sponsors submit applications through the Florida DOT Grant Application Process (GAP).		
Any area of the State – TALT fund code	FDOT district offices manage project selection with consideration of prioritized project submittals by MPOs and/or counties.		

- 2. **Feasibility**. Can the project be completed within the cost and timeframe presented in the application? At the discretion of the FDOT district, this may include consideration of some or all of the following feasibility factors:
 - » Cost estimate
 - » Scope of work
 - » Funding availability (FDOT district TA funds)
 - » Right-of-Way availability
 - » Environmental impacts/permitting issues
 - » Utilities
 - » Constructability and readiness
 - » Status of project sponsor or implementing agency's Local Agency Program (LAP) certification
 - » Local agency ability to pay for non-participating costs and/or provide a funding match
 - » Prior investments from public agency applicant
 - » Maintenance responsibility (has it been identified/secured)
 - » Other factors as identified by the FDOT district
- 3. FDOT districts also have the option to assess **additional selection factors** to address regional or local priorities; please contact your appropriate FDOT district office to confirm selection criteria. These may include factors such as:
 - » Public support for the project (documentation of public involvement/support should be provided with application)
 - » Connectivity
 - » Applicant past performance on project implementation
 - » Geographic equity
 - » Project schedule
 - » Mobility of disadvantaged groups
 - » Other factors as determined by the FDOT district
- 4. Finally, if the project is within the boundaries of an MPO, FDOT districts consider the **MPO project priority ranking** when selecting applications. If outside of MPO boundaries, FDOT districts may consider the county priority ranking as well. For more information on MPO prioritization criteria, please contact the appropriate MPO or FDOT district office.

Competitive Selection Process

FDOT is responsible for programming all TA funds and directly manages or oversees selection of projects in consultation with MPOs and local agencies, regardless of population size, to ensure that MPO and/or county priorities are considered.

MPO areas under 200,000 population

In all MPO areas under 200,000 population, FDOT districts manage TA application collection, review and selection in collaboration with their respective MPOs. Applications are evaluated by the FDOT districts using the selection criteria as described above, which include consideration of MPO project priority ranking. Projects determined eligible and feasible may then be considered for funding and programming in the FDOT Work Program.

Areas outside of MPOs

For areas outside of MPOs, FDOT districts manage TA application collection, review and selection in collaboration with their respective local agencies. Applications are evaluated by the FDOT districts using the selection criteria as described above, which includes an option to consider county project priority ranking. Projects determined eligible and feasible may then be considered for funding and programming in the FDOT Work Program.

Over 200,000 urbanized population

The FAST Act provides TMAs (urbanized areas with over 200K population) with the authority to administer their own competitive selection procedure for TA funds. MPOs within the TMAs are responsible for communicating program guidance and eligibility criteria and a project scoring and selection procedure that reflects regional priorities. These MPOs must include the minimum selection evaluation criteria outlined in this guidance or may opt to use the competitive selection evaluation criteria developed by FDOT district offices for the other TA Program funds. Regardless, when the competitive process and materials have been developed, the MPO must submit them to their respective FDOT district office for review in partnership with the FDOT Central Office to confirm that a required competitive process for eligible projects was used. The MPO must submit three documents to the FDOT district office prior to soliciting TA applications:

- 1. The MPO's competitive selection process, including:
 - a. Persons involved in project review, scoring and selection
 - b. A summary of the competitive selection process
 - c. A scoring matrix or weighting criteria, as relevant
- 2. Additional regional program guidance, as relevant
- 3. A list of eligible project activities. MPOs may use or adapt FDOT's eligible project list if choosing to fund only certain project categories. All project activities must comply with the federal legislation.

In TMAs with multiple MPOs, either the MPOs will each develop a priority list for TA funding applications or will coordinate and agree upon a single project priority list for the TMA. Once each TMA has finalized its regional project selection, they will coordinate with their respective FDOT district office to indicate their selection. For a list of Florida TMAs and information on TMA funding allocations see Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Project Programming

Once the project evaluations are complete, priorities established, and selections made for inclusion in the Work Program, FDOT districts will prepare an official project estimate by phase, using budget information submitted by the project sponsor, for budgeting and programming purposes. Selected projects will be programmed in the FDOT Tentative Work Program according to the Work Program Instructions to commit the funds to the project. FDOT cannot request authorization without the local agency providing all necessary documentation, such as plans and permits, for the project. In MPO areas, FDOT districts will coordinate with the MPO for any necessary amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Other Regulatory Requirements

There are a number of state and federal regulatory requirements that apply to the TA Program which are described in the <u>Local Agency Program (LAP) Manual</u>. A FDOT district LAP Administrator will assist with the interpretation and application of requirements, but it is the responsibility of the project sponsor to review the LAP Manual.

Below is a list of some of these requirements with which the project sponsor should be familiar.

- · Agreements and Eligible Costs
- Reimbursement
- Public Involvement
- · Environmental Clearance
- Consultant Selection for Project Development and Implementation
- Treatment of Projects
- Design and Implementation Requirements

- · Right-of-Way Clearance
- Permits
- Bidding
- Construction
- Maintenance

Anticipated Roles for FDOT and Planning Partners

FDOT Central Office

- · Create statewide guidance and policy.
- Develop and maintain a website with general information for the public, including project sponsors (https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/tap/default.shtm).
- Promote the program and disseminate information to partners and the public.
- · Create statewide application and application guidance.
- · Provide guidance on project eligibility and sponsor eligibility for applications.
- · Maintain a database of submitted applications and awarded projects.

FDOT Districts

- Provide support to project sponsors as they develop applications.
- Work with Planning Partners (MPOs and Counties) to assess project eligibility and feasibility.
- · Work with Planning Partners to review, comment, and rank applications.
- Enter into cost-reimbursable contractual agreements with sponsors to successfully deliver selected projects.

MPOs > 200,000 Urbanized Population (TMA MPOs)

- · Communicate program guidance and eligibility criteria.
- · Communicate funding availability to eligible sponsors
- · Review and rank applications through a competitive process.
- · Select projects for their regional TA allocation.
- · Assure projects recommended for funding can be delivered in a timely manner by the sponsor.

MPOs <200,000 Population

- · Communicate funding availability to eligible sponsors.
- Assure that projects recommended for funding can be delivered in a timely manner by the sponsor.
- · Review, rank and provide comments to Central Office for all applications received from their area.

Project Sponsors

- · Identify the FDOT district TA Program contact.
- · Identify if the project falls within an MPO.
- Read the Florida Department of Transportation TA Program Guidance and Procedures document, and any additional guidance or materials from relevant FDOT districts or MPOs as appropriate to determine application cycle.
- Become familiar with the application, selection and implementation procedures associated with the FDOT TA Program and the FDOT district or MPO as appropriate.

Resources

Federal Resources

The Federal Highway Administration TA implementation guidance: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm.

Federal Guidance for the Recreational Trails Program: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/.

The Rails to Trails Conservancy tracks state spending of Transportation Alternatives funds through annual data collection from states. Project tracking information and annual spending reports are housed on the Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange (TrADE) site: https://trade.railstotrails.org/index.

Florida Resources

The Florida Department of Transportation TA webpage: https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/tap/default.shtm

The Florida Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Program webpage: https://www.fdot.gov/safety/2A-Programs/Safe-Routes.shtm.

The Florida Department of Transportation Local Agency Program (LAP) website: https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/ LAP/default.shtm.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection Recreational Trails webpage: https://floridadep.gov/lands/land-and-recreational-trails-program

Coordination with Central Office

Chris Edmonston and Robin Birdsong oversee FDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program and can assist with related questions.

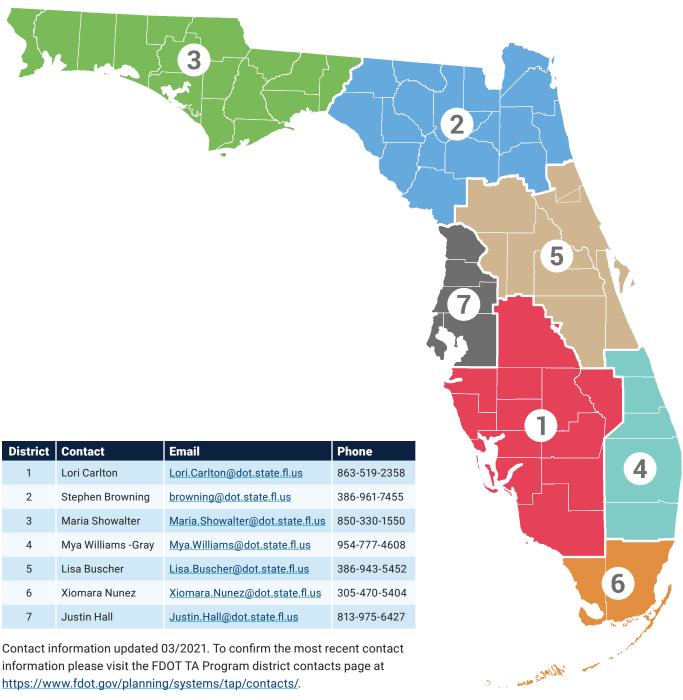
Chris Edmonston | Systems Implementation Office Manager Florida Department of Transportation Systems Implementation Office 605 Suwannee Street, MS 19 Tallahassee, FL 32399 (850) 414-4813 chris.edmonston@dot.state.fl.us

Robin Birdsong | Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program Manager Florida Department of Transportation (850) 414-4922 robin.birdsong@dot.state.fl.us

Appendix

Appendix A

FDOT Districts and TA Program Contacts



https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/tap/contacts/.

Appendix B

FDOT Transportation Alternatives Project Eligibility Guidance

Not Eligible

Eligible

 Construction, planning and design of on and off-road facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation (pedestrian and bicycle facilities) 				
 Pedestrian infrastructure such as new sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. Bicycle infrastructure such as bike lanes, bicycle parking, etc. Bicycle racks for buses Pedestrian and bicycle signals Bike share infrastructure such as bikes, racks, kiosks New or reconstructed off-road trails that serve a transportation need, such as trails that provide connections to schools, parks, or other public places Amenities along a trail that serve trail users such as benches, trash cans, watering stations, pet amenities, bicycle repair stations, wayfinding signs, security cameras, etc. Trailhead projects that serve trail users such as rest areas with benches, restrooms, trail access improvements, parking, kiosks, etc. Bicycle and pedestrian bridges and underpasses Lighting and other safety related infrastructure 	 Routine maintenance or replacement of existing sidewalks (unless ADA upgrades are needed) Circular trails/sidewalks Facilities located within a property that do not connect to other trails/sidewalks General resurfacing of roadways General recreation and park facilities: playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic and pavilion areas 			
2. Construction, planning and design of infrastructure-related projects/solder adults, individuals with disabilities (safe routes for non-drivers)	systems to provide safe routes for non-drivers including children,			
 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 compliance projects such as rehabilitation of existing sidewalks, curb ramps, sidewalk widening, etc.) Traffic calming techniques Lighting and other safety related infrastructure Traffic realignments, road diets, or intersection changes that improve bicycle and pedestrian access or safety Crosswalks Pedestrian refuge areas Crossing improvements that shorten crossing distance, provide access, and/or primarily improve bicycle and pedestrian safety 	 Roadway lighting that doesn't benefit non-drivers Promotional materials (except for Safe Routes to School; see Category 10) Intersection realignments aimed at improving vehicular flow Projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off primarily for the convenience of drivers Education programs that are primarily focused on bus safety Improvements to school bus stops 			
3. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for non-motorize	d use			
 Developing rails-to-trails facilities, where there is an adjacent line that is no longer active Trailhead projects that serve trail users, such as rest areas with benches, restrooms, trail access improvements, parking, etc. Construction or reconstruction of multi-use trails within a railroad right-of-way, Purchasing and converting unused railroad property for reuse as a trail 	Trails for motorized vehicles Maintenance of an existing trail			
4. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas				
Turnouts and viewing areas at scenic or historic sitesRight-of-way acquisition	Visitor centerOperation or maintenanceMarketing/promotional materials			
5. Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising				
Data collection Removal	Administration or operating expenses			
	table continued on following page			

table continued

Eligible	Not Eligible
6. Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation faci	lities
 Facilities on historic register or eligible for historic register. Rehabilitation of historic surface transportation facilities (bridges, lighthouses, canals, etc.) Historic toll and ferry facilities Historic railroad facilities 	 Operating costs Facilities not open to the public Construction of replica facilities Infrastructure not related to surface transportation (air and space) Structures not on or eligible for the national historic register
7. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights of way	
 Removal of invasive species and plant native plants Planting of native species that can help control erosion and ensure that roadsides are stable, look nice, and provide clear sightlines Planting of vegetation to attract honey bees, monarch butterflies, etc. 	Standalone landscaping Planting of annuals
8. Archaeological activities related to impacts from transportation proje	ects
 Archaeological excavations and surveys related to a transportation project Archaeological activities required as part of a TA Set-aside eligible project Interpretation and display of artifacts discovered as part of a transportation project 	Archaeological activities not related to a transportation project eligible under federal Title 23
9. Environmental mitigation activities	
 Pollution prevention, abatement and mitigation activities to address storm water management, control and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities listed in Sections 133(b), 328(a), and 329. Reduction in vehicle caused wildlife mortality such as a wildlife crossing or fencing Restoration and maintenance of the connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats (e.g. surmountable curbs for turtles) Erosion and sediment control Native plantings Minimizing impervious surfaces 	Drainage improvements related to poor maintenance and /or upgrades to inadequate systems Stormwater management activities not related to highway runoff and water pollution
10. Safe Routes to School Safe Routes to School projects are eligible under TA Set-Aside. For additi- gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.c School Program. For more information on that program visit http://www.s	cfm#EligibleProjects. Note: FDOT also has a state Safe Routes to
 Bicycle and pedestrian education targeting student travel (grades K-8) Public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment Funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school program Infrastructure projects Sidewalk improvements Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements On-street bicycle facilities Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities Secure bicycle parking facilities Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools 	Bicycle and pedestrian education campaigns for the general public

Appendix C

FDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program

FUNDING APPLICATION

Submittal Date:

	APPLICANT INFORMAT	ION	
Agency/Organization Name:			
Agency Contact Name:	Title:		
Mailing Address:	City:	State: FL	Zip Code:
County:	MPO/TPO (if applic	able):	
Telephone:	Email Address:		
CERTIFICATION OF PROJECT SPONS Certification of project sponsor/imple	•		☐ Yes (Required)
PROJECT TYPE: ☐ Infrastructure ☐	l Non-infrastructure		
FDOT requires locally administered inf projects do not require LAP certification at the time of application submittal, the application is selected, or they may pos- implementing agency. Non-profit orgo	on. If the project applicant intends hey may seek project-specific cert artner with a LAP certified agency	to administer the project buification prior to project author with FDOT to serve as the	ut is not LAP certified norization if their
FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS C Currently fully LAP Certified / Y Not LAP Certified but will seek Not LAP Certified but project w Not LAP Certified but have secu	'ear of Certification: project-specific certification vill be administered by the FDOT [District	
LAP Sponsor/Implementing Agency	Name:		
LAP Sponsor/Implementing Agency	Contact Name: Title:		
Mailing Address:	City:	State: FL	Zip Code:
Talanhana	Final	A daluaca.	

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME/TITLE:

ELIGIBLE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT CATEGORY:

Please check the one Transportation Alternatives eligible project category that the proposed project will address. Checking more than one category does not ensure or increase eligibility. Additional guidance on eligible project activities is included in Appendix B of the FDOT TA Program Guidance.

ρρε	maix B of the <u>FDOT TA Program Galdance</u> .
1.	☐ Construction, planning and design of on and off-road facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other forms o nonmotorized transportation (pedestrian and bicycle facilities)
2.	lacktriangle Construction, planning and design of infrastructure-related projects/systems to provide safe routes for non
	drivers including children, older adults, individuals with disabilities (safe routes for non-drivers)
3.	☐ Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for non-motorized use
4.	☐ Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
5.	☐ Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising
6.	☐ Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
7.	☐ Vegetation management practices in transportation rights of way
8.	☐ Archaeological activities related to impacts from transportation projects
9.	☐ Environmental mitigation activities
10.	☐ Safe Routes to School
*N	OTE: Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding under Transportation Alternatives is separate from the FDOT SRTS
Pro	gram; however, if FDOT SRTS Program funds are to be used on any phase of the project then the project will need
to	comply with the Florida SRTS program requirements. For more information, visit https://www.fdot.gov/safety/2A
Pro	grams/Safe-Routes.shtm.

PROJECT LOCATION:

Roadway name:*			
☐ On-State System Road	☐ Off-State System Road	Roadway number:	
(State Roadway)	(Local Roadway)	(i.e. US, SR, CR, etc., if applicable)	

PROJECT LIMITS:

If project has various locations (e.g. city-wide), include attachments specifying each termini and project length.

South or West Termini:	North or East Termini:		
Street Name/Mile Post/Other	Street Name/Mile Post/Other		
Project Length (in miles):			
Attachment included?			
A location map with aerial view is attached to this application. ☐ Yes (Required)			
Label important features, roadways, etc. to clearly locate and show the boundaries of the project.			

^{*}NOTE: For off-road/trail projects please indicate adjacent roadway

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Brief Description (1,000 character limit) (e.g. planning, design and construction of a sidewalk along Sample Road)					
Detailed Scope of Work:					
A detailed scope of work is attached.	☐ Yes (R	Required)			
Clearly describe the existing conditions and the proposed project in detail, including specifics on the major i width of sidewalks or trails, materials to be used, etc.), the purpose and need for this project, and the desired	-				
Conceptual or design plans are attached.	Yes	☐ No			
Typical Section drawings are attached.	☐ Yes	☐ No			
Other attachment (e.g. studies, documentation to support the project).	☐ Yes	□ No			
If yes, please describe (250 character limit):					
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT(500 character limit for each question below):					
Has the applicant received input from stakeholders? Briefly explain:	☐ Yes	□ No			
Have public information or community meetings been held? If yes, please provide a brief description and attach supporting documentation:	☐ Yes	□ No			
Describe public and private support for the project (e.g. petitions, endorsements, resolutions, let	ters of sup	pport):			

endangered/thre		as, contamination, n	azardous waste ar	eas or	☐ Yes ☐ No	
	permitting required provide documents				□ Yes □ No	
Provide any addi	tional project specif	fic information that :	should be consider	red:		
Trovide dily dual	tional project specifi		niodia de considei	cu.		
		PROJECT IMPLE	MENTATION			
Please indicate th	ne project phases in	cluded in this fundir				
☐ Project☐ Prelimii☐ Right-o☐ Constru	nary Engineering/Fir f-Way (ROW) action	Environment Study (F nal Design nd Inspection activit				
Please indicate w	ho will execute the	project phases iden	tified for this proje	ect:*		
Planning	PD&E	Preliminary Engineering/ Final Design	ROW	Construction	CEI	
☐ Implementing agency staff	N/A	☐ Implementing agency staff	N/A	☐ Implementing agency staff	☐ Implementing agency staff	,
☐ Consultant	☐ Consultant	☐ Consultant	☐ Consultant	☐ Consultant	☐ Consultant	=
☐ FDOT	☐ FDOT	☐ FDOT	☐ FDOT	☐ FDOT	☐ FDOT	

☐ Not applicable

☐ Not applicable

■ Not applicable

☐ Not applicable

☐ Not applicable

☐ Not applicable

^{*}NOTE: Local agencies are not eligible to be certified in PD&E and/or ROW (Refer to FDOT LAP Manual Chapters 11 and 12).

Is this project related to other FDOT funded phases that are complete, underway, or in FDOT's 5-year Work Program? Yes No
If Yes, please describe. If previous phases of this project were constructed as LAP projects, please provide the associated FDOT Project Number (i.e. FPID/FMN numbers) (500 character limit):
Is there a proposed maintenance plan for when the project is complete? Yes No If yes, please provide a brief description and attach supporting documentation as appropriate (500 character limit):
PROJECT RIGHT-OF-WAY / EASEMENT REQUIREMENTS
Is right-of-way acquisition proposed?
Also describe proposed acquisition including timeline, expected fund source, limitations on fund use or availability, and who will acquire and retain ownership of proposed right-of-way (500 character limit):
Will temporary construction easements be required? ☐ Yes ☐ No If Yes, please describe (500 character limit):

PROJECT COST ESTIMATE AND FUNDING REQUEST

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST:

☐ Yes (Required)

Provide a summary of the estimated cost for the work being proposed, indicating local fund allocation as appropriate.

Project Phase	TA funds	Local funds	Total Cost
Planning Activities	\$	\$	\$
Project Development &	\$	\$	\$
Environmental Study (PD&E)			
Design Costs/Plan Preparation	\$	\$	\$
Environmental Assessment (s) associated with the design phase	\$	\$	\$
Permits associated with the design phase (including application fees, mitigation and permit acquisition work)	\$	\$	\psi
Right-of-Way	\$	\$	\$
Construction	\$	\$	\$
Construction Engineering and Inspection Activities (CEI)	\$	\$	\
Other costs* (please describe)	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$	\$	\$
PERCENT OF TOTAL PROJECT COST			100%

^{*}FDOT does not allow programming for contingency costs. Any contingency costs should be accounted for using local funds.

