APPLICATION GUIDE

Applications due: **March 01, 2019, by 5:00PM**

IMPORTANT: Federal FAST Act funds has very specific requirements for grants management along with detailed reporting. If you are unfamiliar with Federal regulations and grant requirements, or have not received federal funds administered by TxDOT in the past, please review the documents associated with this Call for Projects to determine if your agency is willing, and has the institutional capacity, to comply with the required terms and conditions.
Project proposals must be received by 5:00 pm, Central Standard Time, on Friday, March 01, 2019.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) must have the submitted application “in hand” at the NCTCOG offices by the March 01 application deadline. A postmark by the established deadline does not constitute an on-time application. In addition, supplemental information, other than administrative clarifications, final resolutions, and easement or access agreement documentation will not be accepted after the application deadline. Nomination packages failing to include any of the requested documentation may be considered incomplete and will be evaluated based on the information provided. Project sponsors are encouraged to submit their proposals far enough in advance of the submission deadline to allow NCTCOG staff to review proposals for completeness.

Project proposals must consist of three (3) original hard copies (including attachments) and one (1) electronic copy of all files on a CD, USB drive or SD card.

Project proposals should be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Mail:  
North Central Texas Council of Governments  
Transportation Department  
Attn: Karla Weaver  
P.O. Box 5888  
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

Physical location:  
North Central Texas Council of Governments  
Transportation Department  
Attn: Karla Weaver  
616 Six Flags Drive  
Arlington, Texas 76011

The information in this application is public record. Therefore, applicants should not include information regarded as confidential.

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A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGION

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) Program was authorized under Section 1109 of Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) (the current transportation funding and authorization bill) and provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives. The TA Set-Aside Program is similar to the former Transportation Alternatives Program, Transportation Enhancement, and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs.

Please review the rules and become familiar with the requirements for the 2019 TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region. General types of projects eligible in the North Central Texas Region include on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that will substantially improve safety.

Approximately $8 million is anticipated to be available to fund TA Set-Aside Program projects in the 12-county NCTCOG Metropolitan Planning Area (for fiscal year 2020). The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and NCTCOG serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and are responsible for selecting projects for the 12-county region through a competitive process in consultation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The NCTCOG Metropolitan Planning Area includes portions of the Fort Worth, Dallas, and Paris TxDOT Districts.

Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Planning Area
The following list is not all inclusive; it identifies the most basic program facts. Please contact NCTCOG early in the process for questions related to submitting a nomination package.

- **There is no limitation on the number of unique applications that may be submitted by an eligible entity.** However, entities submitting more than one application must rank the projects by priority.

- **Federal guidance states that projects must be principally for transportation rather than purely recreational and must have logical termini.** For example, if a project proposes a looped trail system within a city park, this would be considered recreational and would not be considered eligible.

- **Consistent with other Federal-aid highway programs, TA Set-Aside Program funds require oversight by TxDOT.** After project selection, a determination will be made as to whether the project will be let for construction by TxDOT or the local entity. The local entity is required to implement the project.

- **The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program is not a grant.** The funds provided are on a cost reimbursement basis. Therefore, it is important to understand that the applicant will need adequate cash flow to accommodate the payment of 100 percent of the project costs. Applicants will be reimbursed with the Federal portion after the work has been accomplished. Note: If the project is let for construction by TxDOT, the outstanding local match and 100 percent of any estimated cost overages will be due to TxDOT 60 days prior to advertising for construction.

- **The local match must be cash.** A resolution of local cash-match commitment from the eligible entity project sponsor (e.g., local government/agency) must be provided with the application. Non-cash donations can be used on a project but will not count towards the required local match and should not be included in the project budget. A separate resolution of local cash-match commitment from the eligible entity project sponsor (e.g. local government/agency) must be provided for each submitted application.

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** An MOU or Resolution of Support is strongly recommended for projects located in multiple jurisdictions or applications with multiple supporting entities.

- **The eligible entity project sponsor is responsible for any and all cost overruns.**

- **The Regional Transportation Council will select projects and authorize funding levels.** Itemized budgets submitted for TA Set-Aside Program funding will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), TxDOT, and NCTCOG to ensure work activities are eligible and itemized costs are reasonable. Based on available funds, project application requests may not be fully funded.

- **Right-of-Way.** All proposals must provide documentation of the project sponsor’s property rights by title of ownership, long-term lease, or easement for all property within the project limits. Properties without full ownership lease and right-of-way documentation will be ineligible. TA Set-Aside funds will not be eligible for right of way or easements.
• **A proposed project on right-of-way maintained by TxDOT is referred to by TxDOT as “on-system” and must follow TxDOT procedures.** Projects that include State right-of-way or have a direct effect on an existing State-maintained roadway must have a letter from the TxDOT District Engineer offering consent for the proposed project. The final project design will be subject to TxDOT approval. If awarded funding, project sponsors will be responsible for securing a land-use permit from TxDOT prior to construction.

• **Regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway, the treatment of projects will require:** project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (Davis-Bacon), Buy America, and competitive bidding.

• **Projects should benefit the general public.**

• **Project sponsors must be willing to execute an Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) with TxDOT and comply with all federal and state procedures and requirements applicable to development of federal-aid transportation projects.** The AFA must be executed by the project sponsor within one year of project selection and advance to construction within three years from the date of selection or risk the loss of funding. Nominating entities must report a realistic timeframe for project implementation. Because TxDOT will have oversight of funded projects, project sponsors are recommended to review the project’s timeline with a local TxDOT District Office prior to submitting an application. Each District Office has a District Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator available to assist applicants with questions related to Active Transportation. Below is the contact information for each District Office’s point of contact:
  o Fort Worth District: Phillip Hays
    Email: Phillip.Hays@txdot.gov    Phone: 817-370-6673
  o Dallas District: Maher Ghanayem
    Email: Maher.Ghanayem@txdot.gov    Phone: 214-320-6691
  o Paris District: Sydney Newman
    Email: Sydney.Newman@txdot.gov    Phone: 903-737-9285

• **Project timelines should be realistic.** Applicants are encouraged to complete and submit a project schedule using the Excel template as part of completing the “Projected Time Estimate” section of the application. The Excel project schedule templates are online with the 2019 TA Set-Aside Call for Projects application materials at www.nctcog.org/tap.

• **Incidental costs should be kept to a minimum.** In order to implement a bicycle and pedestrian project, it may be necessary to relocate a water line, replace a street light, and replace or install a crosswalk as part of the project. These items of work would be considered incidental activities. The total amount necessary for incidental costs may not exceed 30 percent of the project’s total itemized construction budget. Additionally, if a sidewalk project includes pedestrian lighting on state right-of-way, TxDOT’s policy dictates that such lighting must also be adequate for the adjacent roadway system. It is essential that the project sponsor consult with the TxDOT District Office to make sure that the project budget allows for this additional cost and that the proposed lighting meets TxDOT’s requirements.

• **Projects, or substantially similar projects, submitted in a concurrent TxDOT-administered TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects are not eligible for consideration in NCTCOG’s TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects.**
B. ELIGIBLE TA SET-ASIDE PROGRAM PROJECT CATEGORIES FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGION

The Federally-funded TA Set-Aside Program helps to expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through several categories of activities related to the surface transportation system. However, the RTC has deemed only the following project categories eligible for application in the 2019 TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region. Please contact NCTCOG staff in advance of application submission for any questions concerning project eligibility under the TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region.

Facilities for Active Transportation (Pedestrians and Bicycles)

Active transportation projects are those that make non-motorized transport safe, convenient, and appealing. Such projects eligible for TA Set-Aside Program funding include the following activities:

a. Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic-calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

b. 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.

c. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.

Projects including a paved shared-use path (trail) must at a minimum comply with the guidelines set forth by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012, Fourth Edition) and the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (2011, Revision 2) (for example, minimum width of a shared-use path (trail) is 10 – 14 feet). Projects including an on-street bicycle facility must at a minimum comply with the guidelines set forth by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide (Second Edition) and/or the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide.

Projects implementing innovative or new treatments and technology are encouraged to apply and serve as a model for the North Central Texas region. Many of these innovative facilities are featured in the above referenced guidance documents, including: separated bike lanes, protected intersections, bicycle facilities with interim approval by FHWA (e.g. bike boxes, bicycle signals, colored pavement, etc.), median crossing islands, Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons, pedestrian hybrid beacons, additional crossing treatments, traffic calming measures, and bicycle and pedestrian traffic count equipment.

NOTE: The following elements of Eligible Projects will not be considered for funding under the 2019 TA Set-Aside Program Call for Projects for the North Central Texas Region:

- Promotional activities and/or non-infrastructure implementation activities related to education, encouragement, and enforcement.
- General recreation and park facilities, playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, scenic overlooks and viewing areas, etc.
- Routine maintenance and operations.
C. ELIGIBLE ENTITIES TO RECEIVE TA SET-ASIDE PROGRAM FUNDS

The Eligible Entities to receive TA Set-Aside Program funds are:

- Local governments
- Regional transportation authorities
- Transit agencies
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools
- Tribal governments
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails

Nonprofit organizations are not eligible as direct recipients for TA Set-Aside Program funds. However, nonprofits are allowed to partner with an eligible entity on a TA Set-Aside Program funded project.
D. FUNDING AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGION

Funding Target

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) established the following funding target to allocate funds between the western and eastern subregions of the NCTCOG 12-County Metropolitan Planning Area, as well as the minimum and maximum funding award per project in either subregion. There is no limitation on the number of project awards per Eligible Entity receiving TA Set-Aside Program funds. However, Eligible Entities must provide proof of local match funding availability for each of the Entity’s submitted project applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Subregion</th>
<th>Eastern Subregion</th>
<th>Total TA Set-Aside Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth District Share (34%)</td>
<td>Dallas and Paris District Share (66%)</td>
<td>Funding Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,700,960</td>
<td>$5,243,040</td>
<td>$7,944,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Federal Funding Award per Project</th>
<th>Minimum Federal Funding Award per Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Local Match Requirements

A minimum 20 percent local cash match must be provided. However, agencies that have qualified for Policy Bundle Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) may request the use of TDCs in lieu of a local match. Agencies qualified to use TDCs must choose whether to apply their TDCs or provide a local match (or overmatch), but not both. **NOTE: Projects in which nominating entities provide more than the minimum 20 percent local cash match will receive bonus points as part of project scoring and evaluation.**

On August 9, 2018, the Regional Transportation Council certified the following entities to request the use of TDCs:

- City of Arlington
- City of Coppell
- City of Dallas
- City of Duncanville
- City of Farmers Branch
- City of Fort Worth
- City of Garland
- City of Grapevine
- City of Lewisville
- City of McKinney
- City of Mesquite
- City of Plano
- City of Richardson
- Denton County Transportation Authority
- Trinity Metro

For additional information and frequently asked questions on TDCs, click here or go to https://www.nctcog.org/trans/funds/tip/funding-programstransportation-development-credits-frequently-asked.
E. PROGRAM CALL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Nomination Submission to the NCTCOG Transportation Department
Project nominations must be coordinated with and delivered to NCTCOG’s Transportation Department office. Project nominators are limited to local and regional entities eligible to receive and manage Federal transportation funds.

Evaluation and Selection Process
The NCTCOG Transportation Department will review each project to ensure that all of the requested documentation has been included. Nomination packages failing to include any of the requested documentation may be considered incomplete and will be evaluated based on the information provided. Supplemental information may not be provided after the Call for Projects closing deadline. NCTCOG will coordinate Federal eligibility with TxDOT and FHWA.

The NCTCOG Transportation Department will evaluate eligible projects that are submitted by eligible entities through a competitive process. NCTCOG reserves the right to award partial funding based on project-specific factors or to combine projects into one award. Recommended projects and specific funding allocations will be made available at public meetings, as well as the Surface Transportation Technical Committee and the Regional Transportation Council. The RTC will make final selection of projects and funding allocations. NCTCOG will notify all selected project nominating entities. Consistent with other Federal-aid highway programs, TA Set-Aside Program funds are administered by TxDOT.

Through this program, the RTC seeks to prioritize investments in multi-modal transportation projects including facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-drivers. Projects submitted under this Call for Projects will be evaluated to identify the projects or programs that represent the best use of available TA Set-Aside Program funds that implement the priorities adopted by the RTC as outlined in the Active Transportation section of Mobility 2045.

Mobility 2045 recommends prioritizing improvements to active transportation facilities that close gaps within the regional network, increase the use of facilities, improve safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists, and create easier access to destinations including:
• Public transportation facilities (bus stops and rail stations)
• Mixed-use/transit-oriented development areas
• Central business districts and major employment centers
• Educational institutions
• Neighborhood services (e.g. grocery stores, medical centers, and libraries)
• Neighborhoods with transit-dependent populations
• Areas with pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns and high rates of crashes

These destinations and routes are places that generate higher-than-average pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Prioritizing improvements in these areas will create the greatest benefit for people who travel by walking or bicycling. Other factors when prioritizing projects include community support, innovative treatments and technology, cost/benefit analysis, status of engineering/design, additional local funding overmatch, and geographic balance to ensure facilities are evenly constructed throughout the region.
### Active Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Scoring (pts)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Network Connectivity</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Improves connectivity of Mobility 2045 regional paths and bikeways between cities and counties</td>
<td>• Implements the Regional Veloweb network, including completing gaps between existing paths and extensions of the existing network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Improves connections and access to transit</td>
<td>• Implements facilities (sidewalks, paths, on-street bikeways) providing first/last mile access to transit stations and stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Improves safety and provides facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists with a high level of comfort and suitable for users of all ages and abilities</td>
<td>• Improves safety in documented high crash areas through safety countermeasures recommended by a safety report or study such as crossings, bicycle/pedestrian signalization, traffic calming, and separate facilities for various transportation modes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Barriers</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Provides safe crossing of existing travel obstacles such as major roadways, interchanges, railroads, and bodies of water</td>
<td>• Provides grade-separated or other barrier crossing improvements with a high level of comfort and suitable for users of all ages and abilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Congestion Reduction**        | 10            | Provides alternative travel options in lieu of motor vehicle trips in areas with greater opportunity for walking and bicycling | • Implements projects in areas with high vehicle congestion areas identified in Mobility 2045  
   • Implements projects in areas with a high density of short car trips |
| **Destination Density**         | 5             | Provides access to areas with a high density of major employers and destinations | • Improves access to major destinations (schools, employment districts, major employers, high density residential, shopping, entertainment, and other special trip generators) |
| **Air Quality Benefits**        | 5             | Improves air quality by supporting non-motorized facility usage              | • Improves air quality based on the forecasted bicycle and pedestrian traffic counts resulting from the project                                                                                      |
| **Equity**                      | 5             | Improves access to disadvantaged populations and underserved communities     | • Improves access for areas with greater percentages of minorities and low income households compared to the regional average, and areas with a high density of zero car households |
| **Local Network Connectivity**  | 5             | Implements locally planned priorities                                       | • Implements a locally-planned facility identified in an on-street bicycle/pedestrian plan, trails plan, SRTS plan, or other related community master plan adopted by the governing body |

**Subtotal** 100

### Additional Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Scoring (pts)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Readiness and Other Factors</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Project readiness / ability to obligate funds and initiate construction quickly. Other factors related to project impact upon the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Innovation</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Project implements innovative or new treatments and technology that can serve as a model for the region.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• Additional local funding overmatch (closes a funding gap)  
• Status of engineering/design and construction  
• Status of environmental approvals (if applicable)  
• Status of stakeholder/community feedback and support  
• Economic vitality (supports community revitalization, redevelopment, and job creation)  
• Benefit versus cost  
• Geographic distribution

• Examples may include separated bike lanes, protected intersections, bicycle facilities with interim approval by FHWA (e.g. bike boxes, bicycle signals, colored pavement), bicycle and pedestrian traffic count equipment, etc.  
• Use of a variety of treatments to create safe and comfortable crossings such as median crossing islands, Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons, pedestrian hybrid beacons, additional crossing treatments, traffic calming measures, etc.

**Total** 125
F. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Projects must be implemented as approved by the RTC and as included in the project agreement with TxDOT. Changes in items of work or project scope that occur without advance TxDOT approval will not be reimbursed, and the eligible entity project sponsor is responsible for any and all cost overruns. The construction contractor will, in all cases, be chosen through a competitive bidding process approved by TxDOT.

Please remember that the project may be eliminated from the program if:

- Implementation of the project would involve significant deviation from the activities as proposed in the nomination form;
- The project agreement with TxDOT is not executed within one (1) year after the project is selected by the RTC; or
- A construction contract has not been awarded or construction has not been initiated by the local entity within three years from the date of selection.

The RTC reserves the right to remove funding from a project for which the local sponsor is unable or unwilling to sign an agreement to implement the project or cannot provide the required minimum local match.

Placement of TA Set-Aside Program projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and in the Statewide TIP (STIP)

Entities awarded TA Set-Aside Program funding are responsible for submitting their project to NCTCOG before the July 26, 2019 TIP Modification deadline. The TIP and STIP require FHWA approval and are updated quarterly. All TA Set-Aside Program projects must be approved in the TIP and STIP prior to TxDOT and FHWA approval of the Advanced Funding Agreement and Federal Project Authorization and Agreement for any work which the local entity is seeking federal reimbursement. NCTCOG anticipates approval of the STIP approximately November – December 2019.

G. EXAMPLE ITEMIZED PROJECT BUDGET

The “Project Budget Summary” Excel worksheets must be completed and included in application submittals. Budgets with lump sums will be deemed incomplete. Line items must include units, unit prices and quantities. The “Itemized Construction Costs” worksheet should distinguish line items that are new construction versus rehabilitation and/or reconstruction portions of the project. Budget line items should be organized by type of work and identify the proportion of costs for design, mobilization, etc. Applicants are encouraged to review the “Example Itemized Project Budget” online with the 2019 TA Set-Aside Call for Projects application materials at www.nctcog.org/tap.