

**Transportation Alternatives Program (TA)
Ohio and Kentucky
Project Application Packet
For OKI-allocated Federal Funds**



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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the process used by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) to prioritize and award OKI-allocated federal transportation funds from the State Department of Transportation in Ohio and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet in Kentucky to projects with merit that further the goals of the continuing, coordinated and comprehensive nature of transportation planning towards implementation. This process discusses only awards over which OKI has direct ability and duty to make including, federal Transportation Alternative (TA) funds in Ohio and Kentucky. This packet also includes the application and guidance for applicants.

This document is divided into four sections:

Project Eligibility Requirements – this section covers eligible project types identified in Title 23 of USC and OKI requirements

Prioritization Process – the description of the OKI Board-adopted procedure

Guidance for Applicants – explanation of overall process details and description of factors and measures used in project scoring

Project Scoring Process – the listing of factors, measures and points

The Application Form - to be used by the applicant in providing pertinent information on the project, is attached at the end of this document.

Project Eligibility Requirements

OKI TA funds must be used within the OKI region but does not have to be in the OKI urbanized area (UZA).

The project must be listed in the Ohio Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or consistent with the goals and objectives of the OKI MTP.

Eligible Activities

The following categories of activities are eligible for funding under OKI's sub allocated TA program.

- Transportation Alternatives as defined by 23 U.S.C. (101)(a)(29)
- Infrastructure-related or non-infrastructure-related projects formerly eligible through Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program under Section 1404(f) of the SAFETEA-LU



Prioritization Process

OKI receives a sub-allocation of Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds. The OKI Board of Directors has established the following process for soliciting, reviewing and ranking potential projects funded with OKI-allocated TA funds. Transportation Alternatives applications follow a similar process as STP but the elements and scores are structured to reflect the program eligibilities and priorities of the TA program. The Prioritization Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the OKI Intermodal Coordinating Committee (ICC), reviews and revises the scoring process for TA applications on an “as needed” basis.

1. **Establish a project solicitation period** based on a TIP/STIP development schedule responsive to the needs of the state transportation agencies.
2. **Advertise the project solicitation period** via the OKI website, flyers, etc.
3. **Hold a workshop** for prospective applicants to inform them of the application process, deadlines and scoring procedures developed by the OKI Prioritization Subcommittee.
4. **Accept completed applications until the advertised deadline.** At this point, the project request is fixed—no changes in cost, scope or other aspect will be allowed. The only exception to this requirement will be if non-OKI funding becomes unavailable to the applicant and the project cost must be reduced.
5. **Hold Priority Subcommittee Review Meetings.** These meetings allow for discussion of individual highway and transit projects by the subcommittee and the eventual ranking of projects funded with OKI-allocated funds. The ranking of projects is based on the ICC adopted scoring process shown later in this document.

Project Conditions

The following funding limitations will be applied to each project requesting OKI-allocated TA funding.

1. Maximum funding will be awarded at the amount shown on each application or as determined by the OKI Board of Directors. Applicants should make sure their request is sufficient to cover the cost of the activities shown in their application. However, given that unforeseen circumstances may occur, a one-time allowance of twenty (20) percent above the funding amount may be granted if OKI has sufficient funds to cover the additional amount needed. Applicants should contact OKI as soon as the additional funding is needed as this twenty percent “cushion” is not guaranteed.
2. Eligible Phases
Ohio: Preliminary Engineering--Right-of-Way Services (PE-RWS), Right-of-Way (ROW), Utilities (U) and Construction (CON) phases are eligible for funding. Preliminary engineering (not associated with PE-RWS), environmental and contract plans are the responsibility of the applicant.

Kentucky: Preliminary Engineering (PE and PE-RWS), Design, Right-of-Way (ROW), Utilities (U) and Construction (CON) phases are eligible for funding.

3. Applicants who receive funding through OKI should work closely with OKI and the district office on a coordinated schedule. Strict adherence to schedule milestones is a fundamental requirement. PE-RWS funds may be used for limited right-of-way services (such as title searches, appraisals and appraisals reviews) prior to approval of the environmental document with approval from the OKI TIP Manager.
4. The standard local match requirement for OKI allocated federal funds is 20%. Applicants may commit a higher percentage to gain additional scoring as shown in the Planning Factors section of the adopted scoring process.
5. Applicants must provide a certified or otherwise official cost estimate for each project request.
6. The following scope limitations will apply to each project request:
 - Each applicant is limited to a total of two project applications requesting Ohio TA funds and one application for Kentucky TA funds. If an applicant is making an application on behalf of another entity, that application will not count towards the total number of applications allowed. For example, if a county makes an application on behalf of a township, which is ineligible to apply directly to ODOT, that application will not count towards the county's total applications allowed.
 - Total funding request per Ohio application cannot exceed \$750,000 for TA federal funds (the cap). Total funding request per Kentucky application cannot exceed \$500,000 for TA federal funds (the cap). Once a project has been funded by OKI, the applicant may not request funds for the same project in excess of the cap in the future. In addition, if a project slips from its original programmed year, the project may not request additional funds for the same project. Larger projects may initially be broken into different segments for funding purposes; if one segment slips past its originally programmed year, that segment may not request additional funds. However, if another segment of the project is on schedule, that segment may request additional funds up to the cap. The total project funding for a single application is capped at the approved amount of the application, plus 20 percent contingency which may not always be available (see item #1 above).

Guidance for Applicants

The **Prioritization Process** is a competitive application process that is used to allocate OKI federal funds in Ohio and Kentucky. As part of the process, a workshop will be held for potential applicants where OKI staff provides background and is available to answer specific questions about procedures.

The **Application Form** is to be filled out by the applicant. Supplemental information/attachments may be included at the end of the application if absolutely necessary. They should be as condensed as possible. Incomplete applications may be rejected. Only the online forms will be accepted and can be found at <http://funding.oki.org/>

The **Project Scoring Process** is the method under which the Prioritization Subcommittee reviews and ranks the individual applications. A detailed explanation of the revised scoring process

follows. An application is first scored using Transportation Alternative Factors (Safe Routes to School or Infrastructure) depending on the type of project. A subtotal of 45 points is available. All projects are then scored on planning factors, which are non-mode specific and are standard elements against which all projects regardless of mode are scored. A subtotal of 55 points is available with the Planning factors. The overall total score is the sum of the Transportation Alternatives and Planning factors.

Factors for Transportation Alternatives Projects (45 points available)

MAP-21 combined the previous Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs into the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program with some project changes. The following factors retain separate criteria for SRTS and TA infrastructure project applications because of program differences carried over from SAFETEA-LU.

Safe Routes to School Projects (45 points available)

1. **School Travel Plan (SchTP)** - Applicants requesting funds for Safe Routes to School should have a school travel plan that documents the involvement of school staff, parents and community resources such as transportation and health departments, police, and local businesses. It includes student and parent surveys, the use of pedestrian and/or bicycling audits with mapped student residence locations and routes to school to document problems and needs. It lists needed facility (infrastructure) improvements and assures that related safety, education, and encouragement activities (non-infrastructure) are also planned to complement new facilities. The SchTP should follow the guidelines for the respective state school travel plan of the applicant.
2. **Education** remains an eligible activity under SRTS. It is aimed at child traffic safety for walking along streets with or without sidewalks, bicycling on sidewalks with pedestrians or in the streets with motor vehicles. Education may also be aimed at parents to use other modes than driving their children to school, developing carpools, or to train them to be student escorts (walking school buses).
3. **Encouragement** activities for SRTS programs are intended to increase children's physical activities by walking or biking to school. Applications will be awarded points that involve incentives such as competitions, rewards, recognition for the students and activities that encourage children to walk or bike.
4. **Enforcement** activities to address traffic issues are helpful when encouraging walking or biking to school. Police can have a valuable role in enforcing school zone speed restrictions; providing crossing guards; monitoring criminal activities; directing school bus, parent drop off and pedestrian traffic at schools; enforcing codes for dangerous structures, plant

growth or loose dogs along walking routes. Points will be assigned according to enforcement activities proposed in the application.

5. **Project Type** includes physical facilities that improve safety and accessibility for children traveling to school. These are to be within a two mile radius of an elementary or middle school (grades K-8) and may be street improvements including bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming, or separating the modes within the school grounds (parent drop off, school bus drop off, walkers), or other similar type improvements.
6. **Connections** are valuable and this process awards points to projects making connections between streets and schools, between the ends of dead end streets, or connecting discontinuous sidewalks, or other connections such as facilitating access to school bus stops.
7. **Project Status** awards points based on the existing status of the project. The closer the project is to the construction phase, the more points it will receive. In Ohio, utilities, ROW and construction phases are eligible for funding; in Kentucky, design utilities, ROW and construction phases are all eligible for funding.

Infrastructure Projects (45 points available)

8. **Project type** the Transportation Alternatives program continues many of the activities previously funded as Transportation Enhancements. Construction of on-road and off-road bicycling and walking improvements, including rail to trail conversions, traffic calming and improvements for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are emphasized transportation projects. Eligible activities also include community improvement activities such as:
 - Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising
 - Preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
 - Vegetation management in rights-of-way for improving safety, invasive species prevention or erosion control
 - Archaeological activity related to transportation project impact
 - Infrastructure related improvements for non-drivers including children and older adults
 - Environmental mitigation activities including pollution prevention, to address highway runoff impacts, reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality, or to restore and maintain habitat connectivity
9. **Safety** points may be awarded to projects shown to improve safety conditions in the project area. The existing safety problems must be documented along with plans for addressing these problems.

10. **Consistency with OKI plan recommendations** seeks to support the implementation of projects included in or consistent with the *OKI Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.
11. **Connection** projects funded under the TA program are to be transportation related, which means they should connect two logical termini rather than a recreational loop trail within a park. They are not limited to the prescribed distances from schools as are SRTS applications. Projects that fill in the gaps between existing facilities of the same mode or connect to destinations are high priority. New or reconstructed sidewalks are eligible. Road construction projects should incorporate the appropriate elements of the OKI complete street approach for the respective funding source.
12. **Project Status** awards points based on the existing status of the project. The closer the project is to the construction phase, the more points it will receive. In Ohio, utilities, ROW and construction phases are eligible for funding; in Kentucky, design utilities, ROW and construction phases are all eligible for funding.

Planning Factors for All Projects (55 points available)

13. **Environmental Justice** factor awards points to projects that will have an overall net benefit to minority and low-income population groups per Executive Order 12898 issued by President Clinton in February 1994. The basis for Environmental Justice is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The OKI Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, which reviews project applications for funding and awards points for this factor, also examines a project's impact on zero-car households, elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The overall net benefit in the scoring indicates a subjective consideration of both POSITIVE and NEGATIVE impacts. It is understood that when federal funds are involved there are federal guidelines that must be met to ensure that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, national origin or income, and that they have access to meaningful participation. Refer to Title 42 of the United States Code. A response to this section is required in order for the project to be funded even if the project is not located within one of the designated Environmental Justice (EJ) communities.
14. **Economic Vitality: Existing Employment within ½ mile:** The link between transportation and the benefits of commerce is well established. Applications will be scored from 0 to 5 points based on the number of existing jobs within ½ mile of the project area. OKI staff will perform the scoring of this element.
 - a. **Economic Vitality: Investment Bonus / Employment Bonus:** Applicants will also have the opportunity to earn up to 5 bonus points for documented job creation and/or real or capital investment within the transportation project area. The applicant will provide clear evidence of the relationship between the proposed transportation project and the (permanent) jobs and/or investment criteria to earn the bonus points. Jobs related to the construction itself is not included in the number of jobs created.

15. **Air Quality/Energy** factor relates to continued efforts to improve the regional air quality and encourage investment in more environmentally friendly forms of fuel use. A reduction in VMT (vehicle miles of travel), VHT (vehicle hours of travel), or emissions reduced can be combined to receive a score of up to 10 points. If two or three items are reduced, 8 to 10 points will be awarded. If only one item is reduced, 1 to 7 points will be awarded. If a project has no or negligible impact a score of zero is awarded. Examples of these measures include the use of diesel engine pollution control devices (emissions reduced), intersection signal improvements (VHT reduced), construction of a new roadway link reducing circuitous travel (VMT reduced), or a new compressed natural gas bus on a new route (all three).
17. **Intermodal Connections** factor awards up to 5 points for projects that involve new and direct interactions connections between modes. Examples of this are such things as park and ride facilities, or a new sidewalk to a bus stop. Replacement features are not awarded points under this element. Introduction of a new mode in the project area with direct connections to at least one other mode will not be awarded points under this element.
18. **Replacement/Expansion** factor gives preference to projects that invest in replacement rather than new facilities, reflecting the expressed priority in OKI's MTP to maintain what currently exists before investing in new infrastructure. The points associated with this criterion take into account that some expansion projects involve a certain amount of replacement; the points for this criterion are awarded based on percentage of replacement versus percentage of expansion associated with the project.
19. **Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP)** Implementation factor examines the ability of the project to help implement the policies of OKI's Strategic Regional Policy Plan. The policies within the SRPP were envisioned by the Land Use Commission to be implemented concurrently by OKI, local governments and other organizations. Implementation of these policies will help bring about more consistency between local land use planning and regional transportation planning to create a more efficient and more accessible regional transportation network that serves the needs of individual communities.
20. **Local Planning** factor awards up to 5 points and examines the degree to which a project helps to implement the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) through effective local comprehensive planning. A central objective of OKI's SRPP is for each local government to have an up-to-date comprehensive plan that links transportation, land use, economic development, public facilities, housing, natural resources, recreation, intergovernmental coordination and capital improvements. The SRPP emphasizes complete and current local government comprehensive plans as a means to a more efficient multi-modal regional transportation system. The SRPP responds to the Land Use Commission's mission to bring more consistency between regional transportation planning and local land use planning. Since not all communities have complete and up-to-date comprehensive plans, OKI will again consider and award up to 5 points to proposed transportation projects that are consistent with a comprehensive plan **or** other discrete studies or plans such as thoroughfare plans, corridor studies, small area plans or other planning documents if the applicant can demonstrate that the plan meets similar analysis and content criteria.
21. **Local Share** factor rewards applicants that increase their local share to "overmatch" the required rate for local participation. The standard match rate for OKI-allocated funds is 20

percent; however, the applicant can gain up to a maximum of 10 points through overmatching.

22. **Applicant’s History of Project Delivery** takes into account whether an applicant has had projects slip from one fiscal year to a later year after the project has been programmed or if the project has been canceled. While external factors can affect the delivery of a project, it is important for OKI to maintain a balanced budget of projects to be delivered each fiscal year. The potential for slippage needs to be addressed when a project is initially programmed. Projects not yet awarded for construction and listed in the current TIP as of September 1st will be evaluated for history of project delivery. Penalties for slippage will continue into subsequent application cycles until the project is awarded for construction. Sponsors with a canceled project will receive the penalty once; occurring during the next application cycle where they have submitted an application. An applicant who has had one project slip to a later year will be penalized -3 points; an applicant who has had two or more projects slip to a later year will be penalized -5 points; an applicant who has had one or more projects canceled will be penalized -10 points.
23. **Technology** – This element is added in 2019 to prepare for and encourage the implementation of new technologies, automation, advanced materials, etc. in transportation. The applicant will be required to explicitly state the component(s) of their project that justify award of points.

Equipment or technologies that reduce reliance on motorized travel or enhance public accessibility and usage (i.e. bike-sharing facilities, services, mobile applications (Apps), payment systems (cash and credit card). May also include pedestrian crossing technology or data collection improvements such as permanent count stations	3
High performance building materials leading to significant facilities lifecycle cost savings and/or other significant public benefits related to emissions, noise, etc.	5

FACTORS FOR TA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROJECTS

(45 points available)

<u>Category/Factor</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Points</u>
School Travel Plan (SchTP)	Application is consistent with the local SchTP	10
	Not consistent.....	0
Education Activities	Application includes SRTS eligible education activities	5
	Not included.....	0
Encouragement Activities	Application includes SRTS eligible encouragement activities	5
	Not included.....	0
Enforcement Activities	Application includes SRTS eligible enforcement activities	5
	Not included.....	0
Project Type (Maximum 5)	Sidewalks and/or crossing improvements.....	5
	School on-site travel improvements.....	3
	Lighting for safety and security	2
	Bike racks	1
Connections (Maximum 10)	Complete network gaps.....	10
	Between street and school.....	5
	No connections made	0
Project Status	Construction and/or ROW plans complete	5
	P/E and Environmental complete	4
	Initial request for construction funding only	2
	Initial request for construction and ROW funding.....	1

**FACTORS FOR TA INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
(45 points available)**

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Points</u>
Project Type (maximum 10)	Sidewalks	10
	Bike/ped signals	10
	Safe routes for non-drivers.....	10
	Traffic calming	10
	Shared-use path facility	10
	Lighting to enhance safety.....	5
	On-road bicycle improvements	5
	Historic preservation/archeology	5
	Control or removal of outdoor advertising.....	1
	Environmental mitigation	1
	Turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas	1
	Vegetation management	1
Safety	High positive impact	5
	Medium positive impact	3
	Low positive impact	1
	No impact	0
Consistency with OKI Metropolitan Transportation Plan	Identified as an OKI MTP recommendation	10
	Consistent with an OKI MTP recommendation	5
	Not consistent with an OKI MTP plan recommendation.....	0
Connections	Complete network gaps	10
	New.....	6
	Replace	4
	No connections made.....	0
Project Status	Construction and/or ROW plans complete.....	10
	P/E and Environmental complete (NEPA, ADA).....	8
	Categorically exempt for NEPA.....	7
	Initial request for construction funding only	5
	Initial request for construction and ROW funding.....	2

PLANNING FACTORS FOR ALL PROJECTS
(55 points available)

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Points</u>
Environmental	Overall net benefits (good to excellent)	4-5
Justice	Overall net benefits (fair to good)	2-3
	Overall net benefits (none to fair)	0-1
	Note: NET benefit for Environmental Justice indicates a subjective consideration of both POSITIVE and NEGATIVE impacts.	
Existing	<u>Existing Employment¹</u>	
Employment	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 5000+	5
	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 2500 to 4999	4
	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 1000 to 2499	3
	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 750 to 999	2
	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 500 to 749	1
	Existing employment within ½ mile of project 0 to 499	0
	<i>And</i>	
	<u>Investment Bonus²</u>	
	New Investment in the project area more than \$20M	5
	New Investment in the project area \$15M to \$20M	4
	New Investment in the project area \$10M to \$15M	3
	New Investment in the project area \$5M to \$10M	2
	New Investment in the project area \$1M to \$5M	1
	New Investment in the project area less than \$1M	0
	<i>Or</i>	
	<u>Employment Bonus³</u>	
	New employment within ½ mile of project 200+	5
	New employment within ½ mile of project 100 to 200	4
	New employment within ½ mile of project 75 to 100	3
	New employment within ½ mile of project 50 to 75	2
	New employment within ½ mile of project 25 to 50	1
	New employment within ½ mile of project 0 to 25	0
Air Quality/Energy	2 or 3 Reduced	8 to 10
(VMT, VHT &	1 Reduced	1 to 7
Emission Reductions)	No Improvement	0

Intermodal Connections	New interactions and/or direct connections of 3 or more modes 5 New interactions and/or direct connections of 2 or more modes 3 No new interactions or direct connections between modes..... 0
Replacement/Expansion	100% Replacement 5 75% Replacement/25% Expansion 4 50% Replacement/50% Expansion 3 25% Replacement/75% Expansion 2 100% Expansion 0
SRPP	Based on answers, up to 5 points 0 to 5
Local Planning	Consistent--comprehensive plan complete & current..... 5 Consistent--comprehensive plan needs improvement..... 3 Inconsistent--no comprehensive plan 0
Local Share	50% or above of estimate 10 45% to 49% of estimate 8 40% to 44% of estimate 6 35% to 39% of estimate 4 30% to 34% of estimate 2 21% to 29% of estimate 1 20% of project estimate (Required local amount)..... 0
History of Project Delivery	1 project slipped past programmed year..... -3 2 or more projects slipped past programmed year -5 Project canceled -10
Technology	Very High Impact 5 Low Impact 3
Applicants Requesting Additional Funds	up to 25% of original approved funding amount..... 0 25% to up to 50% of original approved funding amount..... -1 50% or more of original approved funding amount -2

- 1 *OKI staff can assist or provide this figure using GIS applications.*
- 2 *Applicant must provide evidence from a study using generally accepted principals of economic analysis. Higher significance will be placed on the percentage of employment with earnings above the state median income.*
- 3 *Applicant must provide evidence from a study using generally accepted principals of economic analysis. Employment should be new employment for the region (not a shift from elsewhere in the region).*