

Minnesota State Active Transportation Infrastructure Program Guide

2022-2023 Program Guide



Minnesota Active Transportation State Infrastructure Program Overview

The Minnesota Active Transportation (AT) Infrastructure Program provides grant funding for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. The program was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2017 and is defined in [Minnesota Statute 174.38](#). Currently, the legislature appropriated a total of \$3.5 million for infrastructure projects across the state.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) administers the state AT infrastructure program with guidance from the AT Infrastructure Advisory Committee. The process, criteria, and prioritization for the solicitation are required by statute to establish a project evaluation and selection process that is competitive, criteria-based, and objective. Projects are approved by the Active Transportation Infrastructure Advisory Committee to provide financial assistance to eligible recipients. AT infrastructure funding does not require any local match. The funds are intended to fund standalone AT projects or provide the local match for AT infrastructure projects under federal bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure programs.

Prospective applicants should be planning for construction to occur in 2023 or 2024. All AT infrastructure applications from non-profits, townships, and non-state aid cities (“small city” or cities with populations fewer than 5,000) require a state aid city or county as the lead agency or sponsor.

Applicants may apply for funding by completing an application and submitting it with the required attachments to MnDOT electronically.

Eligibility

Eligible Agencies

Both public and non-profit entities may submit applications for infrastructure funding with a lead agency sponsor. See *Funding Eligibility* below for more information. Eligible groups include, but are not limited to:

- Non-profits or tax-exempt organizations (registered as a 501(c)(3))
- Townships
- State Aid and non-State Aid Cities
- Counties

Note that while federally recognized tribes are not eligible to receive a grant, tribes may provide a letter of support for projects that would be constructed in a county, city, or township located within a federally recognized reservation. This type of project would be categorized under “Federally recognized tribe” in the *Selection Criteria* section of this guide.

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Lead Agency Sponsor

Township, small city, and non-profit applicants require a county to sponsor their application and project. The sponsor's tasks could include, but are not limited to:

- Be the fiscal agent on behalf of the applicant and have funds flow from MnDOT to the state aid city or county to the contractor
- Request SAP/SP number for the project
- Ensure the project meets milestones and dates
- Assist local agency in execution of a grant agreement
- Develop, review and/or approve the plan
- Submit plan, engineers estimate, and proposal to the District State Aid Engineer (DSAE)
- Advertise, let, and award the project
- Submit pay requests to State Aid
- Communicate progress and updates with the DSAEs and State Aid State Programs Engineer or Active Transportation Engineer
- Ensure that the project receives adequate supervision and inspection
- Assist with project close out

Project Requirements

Proposed projects must follow the listed requirements to be considered for grant funding:

- All improvements constructed with AT funding must have a minimum useful life of 10 years
- The project must be able to enter construction in either the 2023 or 2024 calendar years
- The applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from their council or governing board supporting the project and application for AT grant funds
- If a project sponsor is required, the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from the sponsoring agency's council supporting the project, agreeing to act as the project sponsor, and perform the lead agency sponsor tasks described above
- Active Transportation infrastructure grant funds cannot be used on impacts to trunk highways or trunk highway right-of-way without an explicit letter of support from the MnDOT district engineer. If a funding source other than AT infrastructure funds are being use on trunk highway impacts, then the letter of support from the MnDOT district engineer is not required.



10-YEAR
USEFUL LIFE



2023 / 2024
CONSTRUCTION



COUNCIL
RESOLUTION



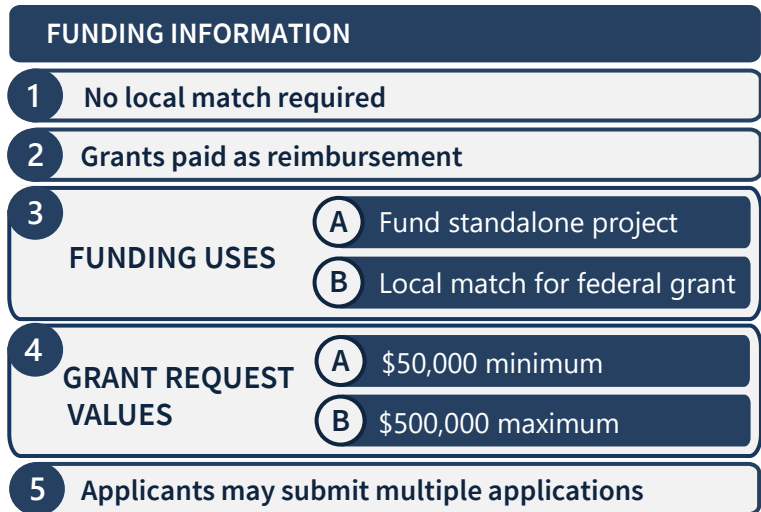
SPONSOR
RESOLUTION



TRUNK HIGHWAY
IMPACTS

Funding Options

AT funding does not require any local match, and grants are paid on a reimbursable basis (the local agency finances 100% of the project cost up front and submits state aid pay requests for reimbursement). Grant requests must be between \$50,000 and \$500,000. The grant funds are intended to fund standalone AT projects or provide the local match for a federally funded active transportation project. Applicants may also submit multiple applications for different AT projects in and around their community.



Funding Types

Two project types are available for applicants to select from: (1) funding for construction of standalone project that uses no federal funding, and (2) local match for a project that has already been selected for a federal grant.

Construction of Standalone Project (No federal funding)

This option is available for communities that have a project identified in their AT plan or other planning document and only need funds to implement the improvements. This option may be used to fund up to 100% of eligible AT construction costs.

Local Match for Federally Funded Project

Funds may be used for the local share on AT federally funded projects already programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). To be considered for a local match, the project must already be awarded federal funding, have a federal MnDOT project number, and be listed in an approved STIP for construction in 2023 or 2024.

Federal Transportation Alternative or Safe Streets for All funding may also be eligible for use on these types of infrastructure projects. Applicants may want to consider which program best fits the needs of their project.

Multiple Applications

Applicants may submit multiple project applications but only one for each project location. Applications may be either of the two funding types described above under *Funding Types*.

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Eligible Improvements

AT funds may be used for one or more of the following improvements:

| AT PROGRAM ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS | Pedestrian curb ramps Intersections or midblock crossings Speed humps Median refuges Raised crossings Raised intersections Curb extensions |
| OFF-STREET FACILITIES | Trails Sidewalks Bicycle paths Multi-use or shared-use paths ADA-compliant curb ramps Other separated pathways |
| ON-STREET FACILITIES | Bicycle lanes Bicycle boulevards Cycle tracks Rural pedestrian lanes |
| TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES | Signage Bicycle and pedestrian activated signals Flexible bollards Pavement markings |
| IN-KIND REPLACEMENTS | Curb replacements Roadway & bituminous replacements Basic turf Other replacements due to required removals |

Ineligible Improvements

Items that are **ineligible** for AT funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

| AT PROGRAM INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS | |
|---|---|
| ORNAMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS | Ornamental lighting Decorative benches Decorative landscaping Trees & plantings |
| REMOVABLE OBJECTS | Benches Bike racks or bike parking Other non-permanent improvements |
| AESTHETIC TREATMENTS | Treatments, landscaping, or finishes above the standard |
| NON-CONSTRUCTION | Engineering costs Construction administration & inspection costs Right-of-way acquisition Water main or sewer work Private utility work |
|  TRUNK HIGHWAY IMPACTS | Work on trunk highways or trunk highway right-of-way without a letter of support from the MnDOT district engineer ¹ |

1. Work on trunk highways is allowed only if the applicant has explicit approval from the MnDOT district engineer in a letter of support

Selection Criteria

Projects from similar types of communities will be scored among each other. Applications will be categorized into five selection pools. These pools are not based on the agency submitting the application, but rather are based on the community in which the project will be constructed. The selection pools are listed below:

- MN Cities of the First Class (Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Rochester, & Duluth)
- Metro District Communities (excluding Minneapolis & Saint Paul)
- Greater MN State Aid Cities (excluding Duluth & Rochester)
- Greater MN non-State Aid Cities & Townships
- Federally Recognized Tribes (grant recipient must be township, city, or county within a reservation)*

*Note that a tribe must submit a letter of support for the project for it to be considered in the “Federally recognized tribes” selection pool.

Each project will be reviewed with the following criteria. The application criteria include (but are not limited to):



ELIGIBILITY



SAFETY
CONCERNS



PROJECT
DESCRIPTION



RISK
MITIGATION



ENGAGEMENT
& POLICIES



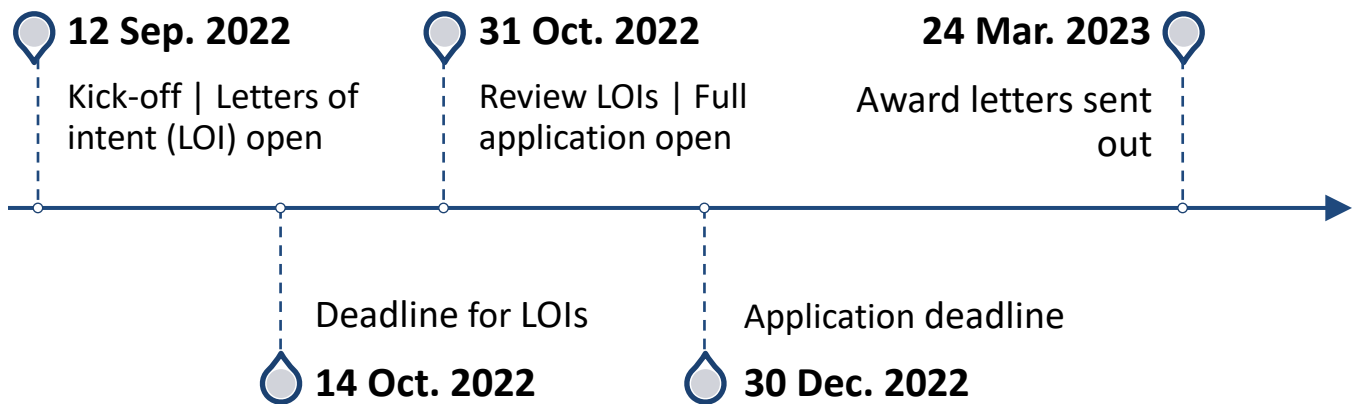
EQUITY
SCORE

1. Eligibility: Applicant must follow all criteria identified in the *Application Eligibility* section of this document, including the criteria outlined the *Funding Eligibility* and *Lead Agency Sponsor* subsections.
2. Safety Concerns: Identified risks to safety for citizens walking or biking throughout the community and potential pedestrian and bicycle counts of those who may continue to make these trips on foot or bicycle even though these risks are present.
3. Full Project Description: All improvements are identified including the improvement location, destinations connected, and any project maps or design exhibits
4. Risk Mitigation: Project improvements address the safety risks and hazards identified, mitigate safety concerns, and boosts health benefits
5. Community engagement & transportation policies: Adoption of pedestrian or bicycle plans or full complete streets policies as well as development of activities or policies that encourage or promote walking and biking
6. Equity Score: Description on how this project will advance equity in the community. Also using the AT equity score, modified for the AT program, which was developed by MnDOT to identify priority locations for people walking. The scoring map can be found here: [Active Transportation Equity Score Tool](#)

Solicitation Timeline

A typical solicitation schedule for funding is provided below.

- **Monday, September 12th, 2022** – Active Transportation Infrastructure Program solicitation kick-off. Open letter of intent period
- **Friday, October 14th, 2022** – Deadline for applicants to submit letters of intent
- **Friday, October 28th, 2022** – Deadline for MnDOT to review of letters of intent. Recommendation to proceed forward with full application sent to applicants
- **Monday, October 31st, 2022** – Opening date for full application submittals
- **Friday, December 30th, 2022** – Deadline for applicants to submit full applications
- **Friday, March 24th, 2023** – Project selection finalized, and award letters distributed to selected projects



Application Submittal

This application is submitted as an online form, which can be accessed on the [AT infrastructure grant webpage](#). The online form may not be available until the call for full applications on October 31, 2022. The downloadable application document may be used to prepare and record responses, which may then be copied into the online form. All prompts and questions on the online form will be the same as on the downloadable application document. A link may be generated to save responses until the whole form is submitted. The final date to submit the full application form is December 30, 2022.

If Awarded

If an applicant is awarded an AT infrastructure grant, they will receive an award letter from MnDOT. This letter will outline the amount awarded and the next steps the applicant should follow. After receiving an award letter, awardees will need to follow the steps outlined in the [State Fund Grantee User Guide](#).

Awardees cannot award a contractor until receiving a funding letter (different than the award letter). Additionally, construction cannot begin until a grant is executed between MnDOT and the applicant agency.