

## Transportation Alternatives Program Guidelines



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## DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

**ADOT Project Development Administration (PDA) Fees** – ADOT PDA fees are an eligible TA Program expense and do not constitute an added Project Sponsor cost above the federally required local match. The purpose of PDA fees is to cover ADOT administrative costs associated with implementing the project through such activities as project management, coordination, and environmental document review. **Be sure to include PDA fees in your project cost estimate.**

**Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)** – Current Surface Transportation Authorization Act, provides the basis for FHWA programs and activities through September 30, 2026. It is also referred to as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) also referred to as BIL. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is the official title of the Act, BIL is just the common shorthand name.

**Council of Governments (COG)** – A COG is a regional body with voluntary membership that provides a forum for regional transportation planning, collaboration, and decision making in regions comprising several counties with a total contiguously urbanized population of less than 50,000. COGs work with ADOT and other partners to facilitate cross-agency regional transportation discussions and develop transportation plans and programs for their regions as outlined in the IGA and the Work Program (WP). Arizona has four COGs. COGs are the primary communications channel between ADOT and the rural local governments.

Tribal Governments may coordinate their program interest with the COG Regional Planner or through ADOT-MPD's Tribal Planning and Coordination Managers.

Greater Arizona's COGs are listed below:

[Central Arizona Governments \(CAG\)](#)

[Northern Arizona Council of Governments \(NACOG\)](#)

[Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization \(SEAGO\)](#)

[Western Arizona Council of Governments \(WACOG\)](#)

Click for [MPO and COG Map](#) and [MPO and COG Contacts](#)

**Eligible Costs** – costs directly associated with the planning, scoping, design, and construction of the project, including necessary safety items. Other items unavoidably required for the primary purpose of the project, which is to improve the efficiency and safety of travel, may be considered part of the eligible costs. These items may include utility relocation, sidewalks, ADA ramps and safety features.

**Eligible Entities** – Eligible Entities may include local governments, Tribal Governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource agencies, public land agencies, school districts, schools, local education agencies, and nonprofit organizations. However, if an applicant does not have the ability to enter into a contractual agreement with ADOT or does not have experience working on a federal-aid project, they must partner with an eligible public entity to serve as a Project Sponsor (see definition for Project Sponsor below), who will submit the application and work with ADOT to administer the project on their behalf.

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** – A division of the US Department of Transportation specializing in highway transportation.

**Greater Arizona** – ADOT defines Greater Arizona as areas of the State that are outside of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Pima Association of Governments (PAG) planning boundaries.

**Intergovernmental agreement (IGA)** – IGAs are legally binding documents between the state and government agencies that define the obligations of all parties involved in a project; they must be executed before federal funding authorization is obtained.

#### **Local Match**

Projects will be funded at 94.3 percent maximum federal share and 5.7 percent minimum local match, unless the project is located 100% on an "Indian reservation", per 23 USC 120(F) there is no match requirement.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** – An MPO is a governmental entity required in urban areas with a population of 50,000 persons or more. The MPO is charged with providing a comprehensive regional transportation planning process for the designated planning area.

MPOs work with ADOT and other partner agencies to develop federal- and state-required transportation plans and programs for their regions. An MPO ensures federal spending on transportation occurs through a Comprehensive, Continuous, and Cooperative (3-C) planning process. Greater Arizona's MPOs are listed below:

[Bullhead City Metropolitan Planning Organization \(BHCMPO\)](#)

[MetroPlan Greater Flagstaff \(MetroPlan\)](#)

[Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization \(LHMPO\)](#)

[Sun Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization \(SCMPO\)](#)

[Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization \(SVMPO\)](#)

[Yavapai Plan Regional Planning Organization \(YPLAN\) \*formally known as CYMPO\*](#)

[Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization \(YMPO\)](#)

Click for [MPO and COG Map](#) and [MPO and COG Contacts](#)

**Project Sponsor** – An Arizona Local Public Agency, MPO/COG, or tribe with which ADOT will enter an IGA for the TA Program project. A Project Sponsor is an entity (often a local public agency) that initiates a project, secures funding through regional councils or ADOT Programs, and assumes responsibility for the projects' development, including, but not limited to, federal compliance and the development of a preliminary scope, schedule, and budget.

**Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** – RTP is a FHWA program that funds the development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses (e.g., hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles).

**Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** – SRTS programs aim to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school, and encourage active transportation where safety is not a barrier.

- Infrastructure: includes construction items such as sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.
- Non-infrastructure: includes projects that do not include construction activities, including studies, education programs, and SRTS coordinators.

**Scoping** - Scoping should define a project's purpose and need, budget, schedule, scale, and any anticipated issues and opportunities. Projects must be evaluated multiple times: during the planning process, during the programming process, and during the development/design phase. ADOT encourages LPAs to scope projects as thoroughly as possible and to evaluate cost estimates during planning before projects are included in TIPs to ensure adequate funding is obtained. Timely identification of the project purpose and need, along with logical termini, during preliminary scoping is critical to support project advancement. During programming, scoping focuses on defining the details of a specific project that will be proposed for inclusion in a TIP and the STIP.

The level of scoping during the programming phase should:

- Be commensurate with the complexity of the proposed project; Identify any fatal flaws;
- Define project cost and budget sufficiently to allow the project to be programmed;
- Be sufficient to support an analysis of the level of environmental investigations, right-of-way (ROW) clearances, utility/railroad coordination, and materials report clearances that will be required during the design phase.

The anticipated project costs must take into consideration the expected year of expenditure to account for anticipated inflation; otherwise, there may be insufficient federal funds to complete the project as initially planned. Finally, scoping during the development/design phase involves preparing a formal scoping document, such as a project assessment (PA) or design concept report (DCR). [LPA Manual, Chapter 7, Scoping](#), provides information on the various scoping tasks that occur throughout the LPA project life cycle.

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program** – a category of funding under the federal aid highway program. Provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals.

**Stakeholder(s)** - An individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of the TA Program.

**State Fiscal Year (SFY)** - ADOT operates on the State of Arizona's fiscal year, which begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the following year. This cycle governs ADOT's operating budget and capital improvement planning. Note: While federal transportation funds may follow the federal fiscal year (October 1 to September 30), ADOT's internal State budgeting aligns with the State, not the federal, schedule.

**Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP)** – A federal, fiscally constrained, required document that provides the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) a listing of all projects that are candidates for federal-aid or regionally significant projects that are using federal-aid.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – A federal, fiscally constrained, required document (49 U.S.C. § 5303 (j)) for all MPOs, and statutorily required for COGs. The TIP, also known as a short-range plan, lists all transportation projects in an MPO's metropolitan planning area and COG region that seek federal transportation funding within at least a four-year horizon.

**Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP)** a federal, fiscally constrained, required document administered through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and approved by FHWA.

**Transportation Alternatives Program (TA Program)** - The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside from the STBG Program provides funding for a variety of generally smaller-scale transportation projects.

**Tribal Government** - Tribal Governments are sovereign governments that operate apart from state or federal governments. The Tribal Governments are federally recognized by the U.S. government as a formal nation, and each relates to the U.S. as a separate and independent nation. **See Appendix A Tribal Government Guidance Summary** and [Map of Arizona Tribal Governments on TA website.](#)

## PURPOSE

These Guidelines were developed to assist Local Agencies and Tribal Governments (project sponsors) and stakeholders interested in applying for funding through the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Transportation Alternatives Program (TA Program).

The TA Guidelines describe the basis of eligibility and project selection, which will follow a performance-based approach to project programming. Each project will be rated by ADOT staff and ranked by the ADOT TA Technical Advisory Committee based on criteria and a prioritization method described within this document. Programming of selected projects will follow established ADOT policy and procedures.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

On December 4, 2015, the President signed the FAST Act into law (Pub. L. 114-94). The FAST Act amended the Surface Transportation Program (STP) contained in 23 U.S.C. 133 and changed the program name to the STBG. As part of the STBG program, a special set-aside was designated for the funding of the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)'s STBG Program, the TA Set-Aside provides funding for projects that help States build a variety of generally smaller-scale alternative transportation projects that achieve safer, and connected on-and off-road networks for all users such as: pedestrian and bicycle facilities; construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas; community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management; environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity; RTP projects; SRTS projects; and vulnerable road user safety assessments. [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/)

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible Location

ADOT TA Program projects must be located outside of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Pima Association of Governments (PAG) planning boundaries. See [Map of Arizona's MPO and COG Regions](#). For Tribal Governments with boundaries that fall both within and outside of the MAG and PAG planning boundaries, projects located within MAG or PAG boundaries are not eligible for ADOT TA Program funds, but projects outside of MAG or PAG boundaries are eligible. See [Map of Tribal Governments in Arizona with MPOs and COGs on TA website](#).

### Eligible Entities

Under the BIL (23 U.S.C. 133 (h) (4) (A)), entities eligible for the TA Program funding include:

- MPO or COG
- Local Public Agencies (including Towns, Cities, and Counties)
- Tribal Government
- Regional Transportation Authority
- Transit Agency
- Natural resources or public land agency with public entity sponsors (federal, state, local, or tribal)  
*(Note: Federal agencies are encouraged to administer their own projects)*
- School District, local education agency, or school  
*(Note: May partner with a public entity sponsor if they do not have experience administering federally- funded non-infrastructure projects. Design/Construction projects ADOT will administer the project and must partner with a public entity sponsor).*
- MPOs that serve an urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or fewer
- Nonprofit organizations may apply through a public entity sponsor (who will sponsor and apply for the project on behalf of the nonprofit organization).
- Any other local or regional government entity with responsibility for or oversight of transportation or RTP (other than a metropolitan planning organization that serves an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000 or a state agency) that the State determines to be eligible.
- State of Arizona (if requested by an eligible public entity and agreed to by ADOT).

### Project Sponsor

Definition of "Project Sponsor" eligible entities may include local governments, Tribal Governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource agencies, public land agencies, school districts, schools, local education agencies, and nonprofit organizations. However, if an applicant does not have the ability to enter into a contractual agreement with ADOT or does not have experience working on a federal-aid project, they must partner with an eligible public entity sponsor, who will submit the application and work with ADOT to administer the project on behalf their behalf.

A Project Sponsor will submit the application, initiate a project, secures funding through regional councils or ADOT Programs, and assumes responsibility for the projects' development, including, but not limited to, development of a preliminary scope, schedule, and budget.

The Project Sponsor will arrange for payment of the required project match and will agree to assume financial responsibility for any project cost overruns.

## Eligible Types of Work Activities

- Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project
- Boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways
- Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
- Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers
- Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users
- Electric bicycle infrastructure
- Environmental mitigation for stormwater management (related to highway construction or runoff), wildlife mortality, or habitat connectivity
- Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
- Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising
- Planning Studies
- RTP (including education, maintenance and restoration)
- SRTS projects
  - Infrastructure
  - Non-infrastructure (including educational programs and SRTS Coordinator)
- Safety Assessments for Vulnerable Road Users
- Shared micro-mobility systems (not operational costs)
- Transit projects
- Vegetation management

## Eligible Project Costs

- Eligible non-infrastructure activities (e.g., educational programming may include instruction, coordination and materials, *with a maximum of 18 months of expense for coordination and instruction*)
- Planning Study
- Scoping
- Design
- Construction
- Other items unavoidably required for the primary purpose of the project, which is to improve the efficiency and safety of travel, may be considered part of the eligible costs. These items may include utility relocation, sidewalks, ADA ramps and safety features.
- ADOT PDA fees

## Ineligible Project Costs

- Any costs incurred prior to federal funding authorization are ineligible for reimbursement.
- Labor Only (*except for educational programs*)
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Routine maintenance and operations or unscheduled work that is performed to preserve existing infrastructure, in reaction to an event (crash) or season (potholes, or for recurring maintenance (e.g., fence repair, culvert cleanouts, etc.)

- General recreation and park facilities, playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic areas, pavilions, or other facilities that do not serve an eligible cost.
- Utility relocation which is not directly related to the TA project
- Promotional activities except as permitted under the Federal Code of Regulations for Safe Routes to School (2 CFR 200.4219e) (3)

## CALL FOR PROJECTS PROCESS

The “Call for Projects” (CFP) notice will be sent by the ADOT Multimodal Planning Division to stakeholders including MPOs, COGs, Tribal Governments, local governments and nonprofit organizations. It will also be announced on the [ADOT Transportation Alternatives Program website](#) along with applicable due dates and timelines each year. Call for Projects may include additional educational opportunities such as webinars or meeting presentations, as needed or requested.

A CFP will be sent out annually by the ADOT TA Program Manager and may include the following steps:

- Call for Projects Announcement & Webinar
- Submission of TA Application for ADOT review
- ADOT Review of TA Application and feedback to Project Sponsor for application revisions
- TA Application Final Submission Deadline
- TA TAC review and scoring of applications
- ADOT Staff sends a list of recommended projects to the State Transportation Board (STB)
- STB Approval
- ADOT Staff notifies Project Sponsors of award

All projects submitted for consideration under a CFP must adhere to the following requirements. These rules are intended to ensure federal eligibility, fiscal responsibility, timely obligation of funds, and deliverability of projects:

- All applications will be evaluated and scored based on criteria outlined in the CFP guidance memo.
- Eligible projects will be selected through a competitive process.
- Project Sponsors must initiate their projects no later than the project initiation deadline provided by the ADOT Local Public Agency (LPA) section, failure to do so may result in loss of funding. It is important that the project initiation commences early in the fiscal year to deliver the project as programmed.
- A project that has already been scoped through the TA program or another funding source, may apply for funding design and construction, once the scoping document has been completed.
- Applications for infrastructure improvements must include a request for construction funding. Design-only applications will not be accepted unless funding for construction from another source is already committed. That way, the program is not funding partial projects that may not get completed.
- ADOT cannot guarantee the availability of competitive federal funds. The allocation of funds awarded by the federal government is always subject to potential rescission. State funds cannot be used to make up shortfalls in the TA program.

## APPLICATION COORDINATION, SUPPORT AND SUBMISSIONS

The TA application includes guidance and instructions on how to complete the application, as well as a detailed cost estimate form specific to the TA Program. The application should show a fully funded project including all local funding amounts, a detailed description of the project with all questions answered and required documentation attached to the application submission.

Types of applications include:

- **Planning Studies:** A planning study for the TA Program is a structured, evidence-based assessment designed to identify, evaluate, and prioritize small-scale, non-traditional transportation projects, such as bicycle facilities, pedestrian infrastructure, and safe routes to school, before committing federal funds for design or construction. These studies ensure that projects align with community goals, enhance multimodal travel choices, and meet federal eligibility requirements. *(Note: Will require a detailed description of work with an itemized cost estimate)*
- **Non-Infrastructure Educational projects:** May include RTP and [SRTS](#) educational projects for youth from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade that empowers communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. *(Note: Will require a detailed description of work with an itemized cost estimate)*
- **Scoping:** If applying for scoping, the application must be for Scoping Only and these elements will be completed during the scoping process.

For Design/Construction, a well-defined scoping document must be completed with these minimum requirements.

### Description of Required Elements of a Completed Scoping Document

Before a project is ready to begin Design, scoping and preliminary engineering activities, must be completed to refine and further evaluate costs; schedule; relevant design standards; potential design and construction alternatives; likely construction constraints; and anticipated clearances, environmental requirements, or permitting needs. Typically, scoping is completed through the preparation of a Project Assessment (PA) or Design Concept Report (DCR) in which project-specific evaluations can be made. A fully developed scoping document will provide the Project Sponsor with a detailed account of the considerations used to generate potential project needs regarding public and private agency coordination, construction feasibility, and anticipated costs. The complexity of the project will be assessed to determine whether a PA or DCR will be required.

For Design/Construction, a well-defined scoping document must be completed with the minimum requirements as outlined below. A Scope of work document may include a PA or DCR. For non-infrastructure projects, this may be a scope of work letter or document that includes an itemized list of items being purchased and detailed description of work tasks being performed. A sample scoping document, Project Scoping Document Guidelines, and other resources are available on the ADOT Local Public Agency (LPA) Section website.

[\(Click here for link to ADOT LPA Section website\)](#)

**Project Description and Parameters:** Provides a clear definition of the design parameters (typical section and design requirements such as speed, slopes, horizontal and vertical criteria). Includes a clear definition of the alignment (basis for the horizontal/vertical alignment).

**Data Collection and Field Investigations:** Includes surveying with preliminary topographical and boundary surveys to understand the physical site; Traffic Counts & Growth Forecasting that collects data and models future demand; Existing Conditions Analysis that includes roadway geometry, pavement condition, and drainage; and Geotechnical Preliminary Needs assessment that reviews soil and foundation conditions.

**Alternatives & Design Evaluation:** If applicable: Conceptual layouts that develop "Express Design" concepts or preliminary line and grade plans; Analysis of Improvement Alternatives that Compares different geometric and operational strategies; and Safety Assessments that evaluate existing safety performance and predicting the impacts of proposed changes.

**Impact & Environmental Assessments:** Environmental investigations that provide early screening for impacts on the human and natural environment. Assessments include:

- **Environmental:** This includes preliminary NEPA-rated risks such as area of potential impact, likely environmental issues that need to be addressed with NEPA clearance during design.
- **Right-of-Way (ROW) Identification:** Although ROW acquisition is not an eligible TA cost, investigation must be completed during the scoping phase. All ROW must be resolved prior to applying for Design & Construction funding.
- **Utilities:** Investigation must be completed to determine if the project requires any utility relocations, prior rights, and the identification of utilities that may be impacted. Potential utility relocations and necessary property acquisition.
- **Hazardous Materials Assessment:** Includes heavy metals & asbestos, if applicable.
- **Community Impacts:** Identification of Stakeholders and Public Outreach needs.

**Deliverable Production:**

- **Scoping Report:** Drafting of the final document that summarizes the preferred alternative, design parameters, and initial budget. Typically, a Scoping Letter, PA, or DCR; Risk Register Development identifying, ranking, and quantifying potential threats and opportunities to the budget and schedule.
- **Total Project Cost Estimate** that includes inflation factor for the year of expenditure: Refinement of the capital cost estimate based on the finalized scope.

For more detailed information about the ADOT Scoping and Development processes or if you are new to the federal-aid process for local projects, please review the [ADOT Local Public Agencies \(LPA\) Projects Manual](#).

- **Design and Construction:** Applications for Design and Construction phases will require a completed scoping document prior to applying for Design/Construction, that includes a detailed description that includes scope of work, justification, schedule, and detailed itemized cost estimates for both design costs and construction.
  - Cost Estimate should include inflation-adjusted of 9.3% for design and 12.32% for construction to the year of expenditure
  - Sponsors should submit a proposed/estimated year of expenditure.

- Design and construction should not be programmed in consecutive years.
- **Construction:** If the application is for the Construction phase only, applications shall include final design plans that are at or beyond 95% (Stage IV) and include an itemized construction cost estimate. For locally funded design projects ADOT will perform a compliance review to ensure federal compliance and will charge a PDA fee for compliance review.

### **Project Sponsor Coordination with MPO/COG or Tribal Government**

Project Sponsors will need to coordinate with their respective MPOs and COGs to review potential projects for TA Program submittal. MPOs and COGs are knowledgeable of ADOT's application requirements and evaluation criteria and can assist in determining if a project is qualified and sufficiently developed to be submitted for the competitive process. If a project is not yet ready for submission, the MPO or COG can provide advice on action steps to further develop the project so that it may be more competitive during a future TA Program cycle.

### **MPO/COG Letter of Support, or Tribal Self-Certifying Letter**

The Project Sponsor must include a letter of support from the MPO or COG corresponding to the project area, unless the project sponsor is a MPO or COG. If the Project Sponsor is an MPO or COG, a letter of support from the route or facility owner is required.

Tribal Governments are encouraged to coordinate with the applicable MPO/COGs, but the required letter of support will come from the route or facility owner. If the Tribal Government sponsored project is on a tribal route or facility, the Tribal Government Project Sponsor can submit a self-certifying letter that the project has no external jurisdictional coordination impacts.

### **Local Match**

Projects will be funded at 94.3 percent maximum federal share and 5.7 percent minimum local match, and a letter of commitment for the local match is required from the sponsoring agency or organization providing the local match.

If the project is located 100% on tribal lands, there is no local match requirement, as per 23 USC 120(F).

### **ADOT PDA Fees**

ADOT PDA fees cover the administrative costs associated with implementing the project such as project management, coordination, and environmental document review. Currently, the presumptive typical amount ranges between \$30,000 for Design, \$10,000 for Scoping, and \$3,000 for non-infrastructure educational programs, but it can be more or less depending on the scale of the project. An appropriate PDA fee will be determined by the assigned ADOT Project Manager. PDA fees are eligible expenses and should be included in the funding request.

### **Self-Administration (SA)**

Project Sponsors may request ADOT's approval to self-administer their non-infrastructure projects such as SRTS or RTP education projects under certain circumstances. By administering the project, the Project Sponsor manages the procurement/solicitation of architectural and engineering (A&E) services, or SRTS program coordination and educational services using ADOT-approved processes.

SA approval is on a project-by-project basis. For questions regarding self-administration contact the [ADOT LPA Section](#).

MPOs/COGs can administer a planning study if it is part of an approved MPO/COG work program (i.e. SRTS planning study).

**Required TA Application Supporting Documentation:**

- Detailed Scoping Document (not required if submitting for Scoping Only)
- Project Vicinity/Project Location Map  
(with project limits including beginning and ending termini shown)
- FHWA Functional Classification Map
- Letter(s) of Commitment for Local Match
- COG/MPO Support Letters, or Tribal Government Support Letter
- Community Support Letters
- Regional Jurisdictional or Regional Plans

## PROJECT SELECTION

The Project Sponsor will submit their application and supporting documentation to the TA Program email at [TAProgram@azdot.gov](mailto:TAProgram@azdot.gov).

ADOT staff will review the application to ensure that the project meets minimum federal eligibility requirements and application completeness. If additional information or corrections are needed, ADOT staff will work with project sponsors to obtain the necessary information needed to complete the application.

The TA Program Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which is composed of representatives from across Greater Arizona, reviews the projects. The TAC provides scoring input that helps generate a prioritized project list. *A list of members of the current TAC is posted on the [TA Program website](#).*

ADOT staff will review the TAC's rankings and prioritization, available funding, determine programming and will send the recommended projects to the STB for approval. Upon approval, ADOT staff will send award letters to project sponsors.

### APPLICATION SCORING CRITERIA, PERCENTAGES AND METHODS

Applications will be scored based on the three following criteria:

1. **Technical Quality of Project and Project Readiness (maximum 55 points)**

**ADOT will provide a recommended score.**

The points will be based on the following information required from the TA application:

- **Project Work Description:** Overall technical evaluation of all documentation received.
- **Cost Estimate:** Cost Estimate is feasible and Local Match letter of Commitment is included (*not applicable for projects 100% on tribal land*)
- **Project Readiness:** What phase is the project currently in, i.e. conceptual, planning, design, or construction? What preliminary investigation has been done? What is the project timeline, including when it is anticipated to start, end, etc.?

- **Other:** Are there any additional documents or data provided or unique situations such as partnership with nonprofit organizations or other stakeholders.
2. **Plan Alignment (20%, maximum 20 points)**  
The points will be based on the following information required from the TA application:
- **Plan(s) attached or links to plans:** Is the project included in an adopted jurisdictional or regional plan? If yes, is the link or plan attached to the application?
  - **Application and documentation clearly show alignment with existing plan:** Documentation describe how well the project aligns with existing state, community, and/or tribal government plans?
3. **Regional Support & Community Impact (25%, maximum 25 points)**  
The points will be based on the following information required from the TA application:
- **Purpose & Need:** What impact does the project have on the region? Does the project address System Linkage, Level of Service, Transportation Demand, Legislation, Social Demands or Economic Development, Modal Interrelationships, Safety, Infrastructure Deficiencies?
  - **Regional Support: How much public support exists?** Has public outreach been done? What were the outcomes of those efforts? Were support letters included from the MPO/COG, Tribal Government, or other regional and members of the Community.

## PROJECT PROGRAMMING

TA program funding is part of the [ADOT Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program](#) and will follow the federal-aid process. All awarded projects must be obligated by the end of the SFY for each project phase programmed. Application must include a fiscally constrained program year for each phase of the project.

Selected projects require approval by the STB. Upon award by the Board, an eligibility letter will be sent to the Project Sponsor, MPO/COG, and ADOT Technical Groups letting them know that the project has been selected for funding. The Project Sponsor will need to work with their MPO/COG to have the project programmed into a fiscally constrained program year in the TIP.

Once the TIP has been amended and submitted through ADOT and FHWA for approval, the Project Sponsor will need to work with the ADOT LPA Section to initiate the project within 30 days of being programmed in the TIP to begin the ADOT Development Process.

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Once a project has been submitted and selected for TA funding, the Project Sponsor will need to work with their MPO/COG to have the project programmed into a fiscally constrained program year in the TIP. Once the TIP has been amended and submitted through ADOT and FHWA for approval, the Project Sponsor will need to work with the ADOT LPA Section to initiate the project within 30 days of being programmed in the TIP to begin the ADOT Development Process for federal-aid programs as outlined in

the ADOT LPA Manual.

As federally funded projects, all projects will follow the federal-aid process that includes various federal requirements (e.g., NEPA) as well as deadlines established by the ADOT LPA Section, including dates to initiate IGAs prior to the funds being obligated, etc. Therefore, applicants should carefully review information on the [ADOT LPA Section Website](#), including the LPA Projects Manual, prior to submitting an application. Additionally, sponsors of awarded projects should contact the ADOT LPA section to inquire about deadlines once notification of project award has been received from ADOT.

**Throughout the Project Delivery Process for a Design/Construction project, Project Sponsors will need to have the following items completed:**

**Scoping Document:** A scoping document that includes scope of work, justification, schedule, and detailed cost estimates for Design and Construction phases are required as part of the documentation needed for the project review and selection process. Guidance on preparing appropriate scoping documents for ADOT administered projects can be found on [ADOT Roadway Engineering Webpage](#).

**Project Initiation:** Project Sponsor will prepare and submit a Project Initiation request to the ADOT LPA Section to request an ADOT Project and Federal ID numbers. Project Initiation request forms and supporting documentation forms can be found on the [ADOT LPA Section's Project Initiation webpage](#).

**Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA):** Execute an IGA. ADOT will prepare an IGA that outlines the funding for the project based on the final cost estimate.

**ADOT PDA Fee:** All Project Sponsors will have an executed IGA with ADOT that outlines procedures for ADOT to recover the design review and bid package preparation costs by ADOT to administer the development and advertisement for bid of local construction projects.

**Environmental Analysis:** Environmental Determination will be made by ADOT regarding the type of Environmental Analysis required for the project. All federal-aid projects require environmental analysis and an environmental clearance certification.

**Design Memorandum:** A Design Memorandum letter will be prepared and submitted by the Project Sponsor to the ADOT Project Manager after Environmental Clearance has been given for the project. After the Design Memorandum has been signed, final design work on the project can begin.

**Stage Submittals:** Submit 30%, 60%, and 95%, Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&Es): If the Project Sponsor is designing the project, requirements for the 30%, 60%, and 95% projects submittals are described in ADOT's Project Development Process.

**Right of Way (ROW) Clearance:** The Project Sponsor will provide the ADOT ROW Group with a Real Property Interest Certification upon completion for environmental clearance and completion of 95% plan submittal. All federal-aid projects regardless of new rights of way or not require ROW clearance.

**Final Plans Package:** Special Provisions shall be prepared in accordance with ADOT format and be submitted electronically. The ADOT Contracts and Specifications Section will prepare a PS&E package. Environmental Clearance, Right of Way Clearance and Utility Clearance letters should be submitted as part

of the final plan package to ensure that the approval process will not delay bid advertising.

**Construction Matching Funds:** The matching funds required for a local government project will be the amount shown on the project estimate recapitulation sheet provided by Contracts and Specifications Section in the project PS&E bid package plus a surcharge amount (for change order use).

**Project Bid Advertisement and Award:** Projects will be advertised for bid when Environmental Clearance, Right of Way and Utility Clearances are approved, PS&E package is approved, and matching funds have been provided. The project is advertised, bid open, bids reviewed and certified and the project awarded by the Board. This process requires a minimum of two (2) months.

**Project Construction, Post Design Services:** A Project Sponsor who has hired a consultant engineering firm to prepare plans, specifications, and estimate for their federal-aid highway construction project must retain the firm for post design work that may be required during the construction phase of the project.

**Construction Administration Change Orders:** During the administration of the construction project, change orders may be required due to unforeseen circumstances or changes in field conditions that require a change order to be processed and move the project forward. In the event contingency funding is exhausted to complete the project, a Project Sponsor may submit a request to fund the increase in construction costs through the LPA Section from the eligible programs to supplement the increased costs. The Department will determine if program funds can be used in these instances and the Intergovernmental Agreement will require an amendment if deemed eligible.

**Final Project Cost Accounting:** At the conclusion of the construction phase of the project, a final accounting of project costs will be made. The Project Sponsor will be informed by the letter from ADOT Accounts Receivable Section of the final construction costs for the project.

## APPENDIX A - TRIBAL GUIDANCE SUMMARY

ADOT recognizes the status of Tribal Governments as sovereign governments that operate apart from state or federal governments. Therefore, there are several areas where TA Program guidance differs between Tribal Governments and all other eligible entities. While the Guidelines note these differences, this appendix provides a summary of Tribal Government TA Program considerations in one place.

### Tribal Governments that Extend Beyond the MAG or PAG regions

For Tribal Governments that exist both within the MAG or PAG region and within the Greater Arizona region, whether to apply to the MAG, PAG or ADOT’s Greater Arizona TA Program is based on the project location:

- Any eligible project located within MAG or PAG is eligible for TA Program funding through MAG or PAG's TA Program.
- Whereas any eligible project located outside of the MAG or PAG regions is eligible through ADOT's TA Program.
- Otherwise, ADOT will coordinate with the parties involved to determine the best course of action on a case-by-case basis. For example, if a portion of a project in Greater Arizona crosses into the MAG or PAG region.

Currently, this only applies to Tohono O’odham Nation which overlaps with the MAG, PAG, and Greater Arizona regions. The table below provides a comparison between Native Nations/Tribal Governments, MPOs, and COGs:

Native Nations & Tribal Governments	MPO	COG
Ak-Chin Indian Community		CAG
Cocopah Indian Tribe	YMPO	
Colorado River Indian Tribes		WACOG
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation	MAG	
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe		WACOG
Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe	YMPO	
Gila River Indian Community	MAG	
Havasupai Tribe		NACOG
Hopi Tribe		NACOG
Hualapai Tribe		NACOG
Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians		NACOG, WACOG
Navajo Nation		NACOG
Pascua Yaqui Tribe	PAG, MAG	
Pueblo of Zuni		NACOG
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	MAG	
San Carlos Apache Tribe		CAG, SEAGO
San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe		NACOG
Tohono O’odham Nation	PAG, MAG	CAG
Tonto Apache Tribe		CAG
White Mountain Apache Tribe/Fort Apache		NACOG, CAG
Yavapai-Apache Nation		NACOG
Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe		NACOG

### **Screening Application Letter of Support or Self-Certifying Letter**

While ADOT encourages coordination between Tribal Governments and corresponding MPOs and COGs, ADOT will not require Tribal Governments to secure a letter of support from an MPO or COG, unlike other eligible entities. Instead, ADOT will require that the Tribal Government either:

1. Submit a letter of support from the owner of a route or facility wholly or partially impacted by a proposed TA Program project if the route or facility is not under Tribal Government ownership/jurisdiction, or
2. If the project is on a Tribal route or facility, then the sponsoring Tribal Government must submit a self-certifying letter that there is no external route or facility impacts.

### **Local Match**

For projects located 100% on Tribal lands, no local match is required.

For projects not 100% on Tribal lands, only Tribal Governments will be able to use federal funding to cover the 5.7 percent local match requirement. Tribal Governments can use funds under 23 U.S.C. 202 (Tribal Transportation Program) or 23 U.S.C. 203 (Federal Lands Transportation Program) to pay the non-Federal share of the cost of any project that is funded under Title 23 U.S.C. (Highways), or under Chapter 53 of Title 49 U.S.C. (Public Transportation) that provides access to or within Federal or Tribal land.

### **Programming**

Unlike other eligible entities, Tribal Governments have several options to program a TA Project in ADOT's STIP, these options include:

1. Through the Tribal Transportation Improvement Program process,
2. Through the appropriate corresponding MPO or COG Transportation Improvement Program process, or
3. Working with ADOT to add the project directly to the STIP.

ADOT will coordinate with Tribal Governments to find the best way to program projects.

### **25 CFR Part 170 Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)**

ADOT recommends that Tribal applicants communicate with their Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Regional Office to inform that agency of the Tribe's intent to apply for ADOT TA Program funding. The BIA Region Office should then verify that the proposed project is in the Tribe's TTP facility inventory, in the Tribe's TTP Transportation Improvement Program, and that the project complies with [TTP regulation requirements](#). This is also significant if the Tribal applicant proposes to have the BIA Regional Office administer the project funds and/or construction. Reference to completion of these verifications should be described in the TA Program project application.

### **ADOT 202(a)(9) Intergovernmental Funds Transfer Agreements (IFTA) Process**

After the STB makes project awards, Tribal Governments may request ADOT to consider transferring project funds to the Tribe or BIA through the [202\(a\)\(9\) IFTA process](#). Upon notification of project award, the ADOT JPA Section will coordinate this process.