

## **RDO/MPO Letter of Intent Review sheet**

(Applicants do not need to complete this check-list, but should be prepared to answer these questions during a follow-up conversation with their respective Regional Development Organization or MAPO).

Proposed project name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant/Sponsor interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of LOI interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

The following is a list of questions that the reviewing party should discuss with the applicant prior to recommending the project to continue to the full application.

**1. Is the project eligible to receive federal funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program? *Does the project meet one of the qualifying criteria below?***

- 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.).
- 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.
- Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
- Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.
- Community improvement activities, including—
  - a. inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
  - b. historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
  - c. vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and
  - d. archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.
- Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:
  - a. address storm water management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections [133 \(b\)\(11\)](#), [328 \(a\)](#), and [329](#); or
  - b. reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

**2. Does the applicant have a clear concept of the project for which they are applying for TAP funding as well as a clear understanding of the costs associated with the project?**

Have the applicant tell you about their project. You should be able to gauge their level of knowledge and project readiness by the depth of clarity about the project details.

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Are they clear about what they want to do?

- Are they searching for funds and creating a project to fit the funds?
- Is it more than a concept?
- Has there been good communication with an engineer who can identify costs involved with the various stages of the project?

**3. Has the project received written support or equivalent from the sponsoring agency including elected officials and engineers responsible for project delivery?**

- Do they have written support/resolution from their local unit of government?
- Do they have written support/resolution from their sponsoring agency, if required?*
- Does the sponsoring agency's Engineer support the project?
- Does the project involve partnering with and / or crossing private, railroad, other local, state or federal agency controlled land / rights of way? If so, the full application should include a Letter of Support from the agency(ies) involved.

**4. Has the applicant and/or sponsoring agency developed a financial strategy to match the federal funding and any additional funding necessary to complete your proposed project?**

This question will help gauge their understanding of required match. It is also important to identify whether their match has been verbally committed, is budgeted, or has actually been set aside. *Their match has been:*

- Verbally committed
- Budgeted
- Funds are already encumbered and specifically designated for this project

If additional funds are required due to unforeseen circumstances, would they be able to come up with the additional funds? Yes No

Are there other funding sources they will be using for this project (e.g. MnDOT, DNR, LCCMR, State Aid)? Yes No

Do any of the funds have time related requirements? Yes No

If Yes, will the schedule work with the TAP funding schedule? Yes No

Are they looking at advance construction? Yes: year \_\_\_\_\_ No

**5. Does this project involve the need to acquire Right of Way or temporary easement, (including railroad)<sup>1</sup>, access change, or relocation?**

- Yes
- No
- 25%
- 50%
- 75%
- 100% certain

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<sup>1</sup> Public ROW should be alright, Private ROW may be a challenge – ask the city/county engineer to advise applicant of the process and time it takes to accomplish activities so project would be delivered on time if selected.

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Does the applicant and/or sponsoring agency have a plan or commitment and timeline to acquire or purchase the necessary right of way (if applicable)?  Yes  No

**6. These questions will help reduce any potential for project “slippage”. They should be aware of the following potential issues:**

Does the project use Section 4(f) Park Lands or properties and / or Section 6(f)?<sup>2</sup>

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project occur within any areas of effect on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project affect species or critical habitat protected by the Endangered Species Act?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project have a high risk of hazardous materials involvement?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project involve placement of fill into Waters of the U.S.?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project encroach into a floodplain /wetlands?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project significantly impact air quality in a negative manner?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Is the project anticipated to be controversial?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Will the project involve relocation of utilities? (water, sewer, electric, cable)<sup>3</sup>

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Will the project address ADA?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project involve removal of trees?<sup>4</sup>

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the property involve redevelopment of an area? What was the previous land use?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project involve properties with previous uses that involved hazardous materials?

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Does the project come near (within 600') of railroad property?<sup>5</sup>

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

Is the project within the airport influence zone?<sup>6</sup>

Yes  No  25%  50%  75%  100% certain

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<sup>2</sup> Section 4(f) includes school property with public use areas, pocket parks, see: for more information

<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fAtGlance.asp> Section 6(f) is LAWCON <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/lawcon/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> Gopher 1 call - can place an initial request so applicants would have an idea of time required. It normally takes a couple of weeks – because it is not priority for gopher 1

<sup>4</sup> Tree removal is turning out to be a huge issue with the Northern Long-eared Bat. This currently impacts the entire state.

<sup>5</sup> Connect applicant up with the office of Freight and Waterways for a diagnostic (in southern MN that is Dennis Williams 651.366.3641 [dennis.williams@state.mn.us](mailto:dennis.williams@state.mn.us); 600' triggers potential railroad involvement;

<sup>6</sup> Connect applicant up with the aeronautics office- the contact is Rylan Juran, - [rylan.juran@state.mn.us](mailto:rylan.juran@state.mn.us) - 651-234-7190 airport influence map [www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/airportinfluncemaps.html](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/airportinfluncemaps.html) May want to connect the applicant with local airport to see if it is in Zone A, B, C.

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### **7. Is the applicant aware of the federal project development process and other requirements associated with the receipt of TAP funding, including the environmental documentation requirements?**

Following is a partial listing of the regulations that apply to any project receiving federal transportation funds. Ask the applicant if they are familiar with the following federal regulations:

- Davis-Bacon and Copeland Acts: Payment of pre-determined wage is applicable to all federal-aid construction contracts exceeding \$2,000 and to all related subcontracts.
- ADA Requirements: All transportation alternative projects must comply with the federal and state handicapped accessibility mandates.
- Anti-Discrimination Laws: Each sponsoring participant must comply with applicable federal and state Anti-discrimination laws and be able to demonstrate compliance.
- Project Supervision: All projects must be under the direct supervision of a Minnesota Licensed Professional Engineer.
- Environmental Documentation (NEPA) - Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate.
- Contract procurement laws and requirements.

### **8. Is the project identified in a Plan?**

Preference will be given to projects that have been identified in a local, regional, or state plan, and have included public involvement.

- The project is identified in a plan \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of all plans)
- The plan development included a robust public involvement process
- Does the public have knowledge of the project and support it? <sup>7</sup>
- There has not been any public objection to this project
- Applicant is aware that they need to submit the page from the plan that identifies this project<sup>8</sup>
- Describe proactive promotion of bike and pedestrian facilities / use if applicable.

### **9. Is the project an approved Safe Routes to School project?**

- The project is a SRTS project
- The school/community has a comprehensive 5E program. Is the applicant pursuing or demonstrating all 5Es?
- The MnDOT SRTS Coordinator is aware of the project and supports the application
- The applicant understands that the MnDOT SRTS Coordinator will need to sign off on the TAP application

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<sup>7</sup> Describe – there are various levels of public support or involvement.

<sup>8</sup> Planner may wish to ask for copy of the plans if they are unfamiliar with them

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**10. Is the projects primary function a transportation purpose?**

“Transportation purpose” has been defined as primarily serving a commuting purpose and/or that connect two destination points; a facility may serve both a transportation purpose and a recreational purpose; a facility that connects people to recreational destinations may be considered to have a transportation purpose.

*The projects primary function is a transportation purpose*

**11. If Rehabilitation / Replacement / Reconstruction, how was it funded?**

If previously funded with federal TEA \$ we need to make sure it is beyond the life of the project.

Past TEA project \_\_\_\_\_ year constructed.

RDO/MPO Comments:

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