

Request for Expression of Interest (REI)

Planning For Future Trail And Sidewalk Investments In The Ozarks Transportation Organization Study Area



Overview

The Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) will receive approximately \$8 million in *STBG-Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside* (STBG-TA) funding over the life of the *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law* (BIL). The BIL includes fiscal years 2022 through 2026. The funding level is significantly higher than under previous federal transportation bills and has necessitated a new process awarding these funds.

This Request for Expression of Interest (REI) will allow the OTO to formally gauge both interest in STBG-TA funding and project readiness within its study area. Any community that currently expects to apply for STBG-TA funding under the BIL is requested to submit an expression of interest during this open call.

Communities are asked to supply a basic project description, an estimated project budget, and a project timeline on any project for which they expect to request STBG-TA funding. Expressions of Interest must be submitted to Andy Thomason, OTO Senior Planner, by October 1, 2022.

Purpose

This REI will allow the OTO to gauge community demand for STBG-TA funding and determine if expected projects will allow for the timely expenditure of the region's funding. It will also determine the need for the development of any alternative funding programs.

The OTO intends to develop a comprehensive program and projects for its STBG-TA funding rather than awarding projects one fiscal year at a time. This REI will establish a baseline understanding of potential project types, sizes, costs, and timelines. If demand for STBG-TA funding exceeds the region's allocation, these Expressions of Interest will help inform the development of an appropriate competitive project selection process. If demand for STBG-TA funding is substantially less than the region's allocation, the OTO also will look for ways to expand the scope of pedestrian improvements on existing STIP and TIP projects.

The OTO expects to rely on information submitted in these Expressions of Interest in the project prioritization process for future *Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs* (STIP) and in the development of future *OTO Transportation Improvement Programs* (TIP).

The submission of an Expression of Interest does not guarantee project funding. Funding decisions will be made through a competitive application process.

Expected Timeline for STBG-TA Funding

The table below outlines the major milestones and expected dates related to the development of the OTO's comprehensive program of STBG-TA projects. These milestones include the review of submitted Expressions of Interest, development of an application process, and presentation to the OTO's Technical Planning Committee and Board of Directors.

Major Milestones for STBG-TA Funding	
Expressions of Interest Due	October 1, 2022
STBG-TA Funding Committee to review expressions of interest and recommend project selection and development processes	November 2022
Recommendation presented to Technical Planning Committee	December 2022
Recommendation considered by Board of Directors	January 2023
Communities Invited to Apply for STBG-TA funding	February-March 2023
Inclusion of STBG-TA funding in OTO TIP	TBD

Eligible Recipients

Under 23 U.S.C. 133(h)(4)(A), as amended by the BIL, the entities eligible to receive STBG-TA funds are:

- Local Governments
- Regional Transportation Authorities
- Transit Agencies
- Natural Resource or Public Land Agencies
- School Districts
- Tribal Governments
- Non-Profits
- Local or Regional Governmental Entities with Responsibility or Oversight of Transportation or Recreational Trails
- State DOT, at the Request of an Eligible Recipient Listed Above

Eligible Projects:

The TA Set-Aside authorizes funding for programs and projects defined as *transportation alternatives*, including:

- On- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including trails for nonmotorized use
- Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
- Community improvement activities:
 - Historic preservation of transportation facilities
 - Vegetation management
- Environmental mitigation for stormwater and habitat connectivity
- Recreational trail projects
- Safe routes to school projects
- Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessments

As required in 23 U.S.C. 133(h)(4)(D), the competitive process developed by the OTO to award the STBG-TA funds will include the prioritization of projects located in, or impacting, high need areas, such as low-income or transit-dependent communities.

The OTO expects to require a minimum project budget of \$100,000. If a smaller project is critical to a community's bicycle and pedestrian network, a community may choose to submit an Expression of Interest for that project.

The OTO expects to prioritize projects that can show a transportation purpose and advances the region's bicycle and pedestrian network. If non-transportation projects are critical to a community, it may choose to submit an Expression of Interest for that project.

Funding Requirements

Generally, STBG-TA projects will be treated as a project occurring on the Federal-aid Highway System. One exception included in the BIL allows any recreational trail project to be treated as an RTP project, including RTP match requirements.

STBG-TA funds must be obligated within 3 years of the fiscal year for which the funds are authorized. Thus, funds are available for obligation for up to 4 years. The OTO may choose to set obligation timelines more restrictive than federal requirements.

Submission Requirements

Communities must submit a separate Expression of Interest describing each project for which they expect to seek STBG-TA funding. These Expressions of Interest should be as detailed as possible. Communities should clearly state which project details are firmly established and which are still conceptual. Budget estimates and expected timelines are very important. These details are critical for developing a comprehensive program of projects for the OTO's STBG-TA funding. Projects should be sufficiently developed to be eligible for funding within the life of the BIL, FY 2022-26.

All submissions must include the Expression of Interest form contained in this REI. Communities should also submit any engineering plans, cost estimates, or drawings that have been developed for their projects. Submissions should also include any Comprehensive Plans, trail/sidewalk plans, or community surveys that demonstrate local support for their projects.

Any community that has interest in applying for STBG-TA funding must submit their Expression of Interest to Andy Thomason, OTO Senior Planner, by **October 1, 2022**. Submissions should be emailed to athomason@ozarkstransportation.org or hand delivered to the OTO's offices at 2208 W Chesterfield Blvd, Suite 101.

Questions

Any questions regarding this REI should be directed to Andy Thomason, OTO Senior Planner, at athomason@ozarkstransportation.org or 417-865-3047 x 107.

Expression of Interest

Trail and Sidewalk Funding, FY22-26

Ozarks Transportation Organization

Jurisdiction Information

Community/Organization: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Point of Contact: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Phone: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Email: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Project Details

Type (click all that apply): ☐ Sidewalk ☐ Multi-Use Sidepath (Along Road ROW) ☐ Trail (Dedicated ROW)

☐ Other: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Expected Surface Material: ☐ Concrete ☐ Asphalt ☐ Unknown

Project Location (include map): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Expected Project Length: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Project Description: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Describe any plans or surveys that show community support for this project (include links or copies of documents):

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Project Status

Phases Completed (click all that apply): ☐ Concept ☐ Environmental ☐ ROW ☐ PS&E

Expected Easement/ROW Needs:

☐ Temporary Easement ☐ Permanent Easement ☐ Fee Simple ☐ Undetermined

Describe Work Completed (such PE or Concept Plans; include links or copies of documents): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Funding Request

Phases to be Funded: ☐ Design ☐ ROW ☐ PS&E ☐ Construction

Expected Total Project

Expected Federal Funding Request: \$ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Expected Funding Timeline: *Please complete the following table with project cost estimates in expected funding years. Please use total project cost. An 80/20 local match is assumed, unless otherwise noted.*

	FY 2022	FY2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Engineering					
ROW					
Construction					