

TA Set-Aside Frequently Asked Questions

Project Eligibility

Can TASA be used to reimburse a sponsor for the cost of moving, installing, and renovating an antique steel truss bridge?

If the bridge is National Register listed or eligible for listing, it would be eligible for TA Set-Aside funding. Refer to pages 15 and 16 of the TA Set-Aside Guidance Document for eligible project types.

Are train stations eligible for these funds or is it only for historical highway use?

If the train station is National Register listed or eligible for listing, it would be eligible for TA Set-Aside funding. Refer to pages 15 and 16 of the TA Set-Aside Guidance Document for eligible project types.

Would restoration of a National Register building within a historic canal village and adjacent to a regional trail system qualify for this funding?

If the building is listed or eligible for listing on the National Register, it would be eligible for TA Set-Aside funding. Refer to pages 15 and 16 of the TA Set-Aside Guidance Document for eligible project types.

What is the best way to determine if stormwater runoff is municipal road or state highway caused?

If runoff is roadway related, regardless of the type of roadway, it is eligible to receive funding under the TA Set-Aside program.

Can TASA be used for a roadway with standing water that is not draining to storm water runoff correctly?

Stormwater projects should serve both a transportation and an environmental purpose. If the standing water in the roadway is related to highway construction or due to highway runoff it would be eligible for TASA funds. The specific circumstances that warrant the project should be presented in the application and it should clearly demonstrate why it qualifies for funding. If you would like to receive an eligibility determination for your project before completing a draft application you may submit an email to RAPdTASA@pa.gov and provide an overview of the proposed project activities and describe how they align with an eligible project category or categories. See page 18 of the TA Set-Aside Guidance Document.

Project Sponsors

Can a consultant be hired by the municipality to complete the application on their behalf?

Yes. Please contact your PennDOT District's TA Set-Aside Coordinator for additional information.

Does the applicant have to be the sponsor or have to have approval from a sponsor?

A consultant may fill out an application and submit on behalf of a project sponsor. A consultant should have the approval of the sponsor and work closely with them to complete the application. The contact information within the application should be for the sponsor, not the consultant.

Are consultants able to fill out the application and have the sponsor actually submit it?

The individual that creates the application in the system may add additional users to edit and/or submit the application; the contact information within the application should be for the sponsor.

Are consultants able to apply for multiple clients?

Yes. They would need to apply on behalf of the sponsor as they are not the applicant.

Can more than one individual from the same sponsor register and create an account?

Yes. The individual who creates the application can then add additional users to the application.

Application System

Should District planning and programming staff create an account to review the applications?

Yes, any District users that will be reviewing and commenting on applications should contact Justin Cambric (jcambric@pa.gov), PennDOT, Program Center for access.

Can you provide a word document of the application so applicants can write it out before entering information into the form?

A pdf of the application is available on the TA Set-Aside website.

Will applicants be able to print out their submitted application with all text for each answer shown?

Yes, the application system has a function to create a pdf of the application. The pdf can then be printed or saved.

Is there a limit of number of characters that can be entered in the description boxes?

Yes. Most text fields have a 3,999 character limit. There is a tally feature that lets you know how many characters you have used.

Is the online mapping tool required as part of the application?

Yes, the mapping within the application system is required as it brings in the environmental information as well as linking other information such as Planning Partner, PennDOT District, School District, etc. If a sponsor is having difficulty with mapping, they can reach out for assistance via RA-pdTASA@pa.gov or 717-775-3276. The sponsor's District or Planning Partner may also be able to assist with this.

For the mapping tool, if you clear the point from the legend, will it automatically remove the item as a proposed feature?

The Clear Proposal Features button will remove all proposed features from the map. Individual features can be removed by clicking on the feature and selecting Remove from Proposal in the popup.

For the mapping tool, do you have to click "Add to Proposal" for line features created, or are they automatically added?

For the default Redline tool, the lines are automatically added to proposal when you complete the line. But for the Lasso Tool, or selecting roads/bridges, you still need to click "Add to Proposal".

Application Process

Will a PNDI search be required during the application process?

A PNDI search will not be required during the application process. If you have already done a PNDI search you may include the information, but it is not required. See item #9 from Appendix B of the TA Set-Aside Guidance Document.

Are PennDOT District or planning partner meetings required before the draft application?

After the draft application is submitted, a mandatory draft application meeting will be held with the PennDOT District and planning partner. The draft application meeting must occur prior to submission of the final application.

If the final application is due Sept 15th, when does the "draft application" need to be sent to the District?

Draft applications must be submitted by July 17, 2023 at 4:00 PM.

Can the cost estimate(s) be changed between draft and final applications?

Yes. This is an important topic for discussion at the draft application meeting with the PennDOT District and planning partner.

If in one of the Large MPO areas that are not partnering with the statewide application round, are we eligible to apply?

Yes. You can still apply for consideration for statewide funding.

Can an applicant submit more than one draft application for feedback on which would be best to submit through the full application?

Yes, a sponsor can submit multiple draft applications and even multiple final applications.

Am I understanding the scoring system correctly? It appeared that a high score in environmental impacts was undesirable and in the Project Criteria a high score is desirable.

A high score in the environmental section does not mean that a project is undesirable but that there is a potential to have an effect on environmental resources as they are located in close proximity to your project. These items could be discussed during the draft application meeting and if your project is selected, they would be evaluated more closely during the environmental clearance process. A high score in the Selection Criteria is desirable as this score aids in project selection.

If you are in a large MPO like SPC, do you still submit the draft applications and final applications to the District or to SPC?

SPC specifically, has a separate application for their large MPO funding allocation but run their application process on a concurrent timeline with the statewide application round. Sponsors within the SPC region who want to be considered for both large MPO funding and statewide funding would need to apply under both of the separate applications. The statewide draft application would then be submitted to the applicable District. Please monitor PennDOT's TA Set-Aside webpage for large MPO guidance or reach out to your large MPO directly.

Is there a fee to apply?

No.

Is there any possibility that for project selection, the State could choose before the large MPO, if there is more than one application?

For the current funding round the large MPOs will provide their selections first, followed by the statewide selection committee. A revision to this process could be evaluated at a later date.

Funding Related

Is there a "hardship" option for sponsors that may not have funds to pay a contractor up-front? This was an option in prior programs.

There is a special provision for Locally Sponsored Project Payment Process that can be included in the bid package which will allow the sponsor to wait to pay the contractor until they receive reimbursement from PennDOT. Sponsors who are awarded funds can confer with their assigned PennDOT District project manager about the use of this special provision.

Can you explain the logistics of this grant being a reimbursement only? At what point will the grant amount be set? Are there partial releases of funds?

During the application process the sponsor provides a construction estimate for the project and requests the amount of funding that they feel will be needed based upon that estimate. If the sponsor is not requesting TA Set-Aside funds cover the entire construction total, additional information should be provided within the application indicating the amount being requested and how the remainder of the project will be funded. Upon project award, the sponsors of selected projects will be notified of the amount of funding they have been awarded. During the course of construction, periodic invoices will be submitted to PennDOT for reimbursement. PennDOT will provide payment to the sponsor and then the sponsor will in turn pay the contractor.

Does the sponsor typically pay for construction inspection or is that reimbursed through the TASA program?

TA Set-Aside funds can be used to pay for construction inspection, but a qualifications-based selection process must be followed.

Is there a maximum award value?

There is a soft cap at \$1.5 million but projects with exceptional value could receive up to \$3 million on a case-by-case basis.

The website mentions sponsors in environmental justice areas are eligible for help with consulting. Can you explain more?

Further information will be posted on the TA Set-Aside website as it becomes available.

If awarded funding, can you use this funding as the local match for a DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant?

This should be verified with DCED but would be allowable from a TA Set-Aside standpoint.

Can other federal funding (such as Smart Growth Transportation funding) be helping to fund the same project? It would not be match funding but filling in a gap in funding.

Yes, this is allowable with the TA Set-Aside funding, but it is recommended that you check on specifications from the other funding source to see if it is allowable from their end to combine.

Similar to the last question, can other state funding sources be used to help fund the same project, not as a match but to fill in the gaps in funding? i.e. DCNR, DCED and DEP grant programs

Yes, this is allowable with the TA Set-Aside funding, but it is recommended that you check on specifications from the other funding source to see if it is allowable from their end to combine.

Is there a match requirement?

No match is required. The sponsor is responsible for all pre-construction costs. These would include design costs, preparation of environmental, right-of-way, and utility submission documents, any required environmental studies, any needed temporary or permanent right-of-way acquisition, any needed railroad coordination, any needed permits and the preparation of final plans and specifications.

Can federal funds be used for the design of a TA-Set Aside project?

If you have federal funds for design and those funds require a match you will need to check with the source of those design funds to see if TA Set-Aside funds will be an acceptable match.

Project Delivery

Will extensions be allowed beyond the Spring 2026 deadline for project advertisement if the permitting process takes longer than 2 years?

Extensions may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

Is there a published environmental clearance document similar the PennDOT MTF program?

The CEE system is utilized for environmental documentation for the TA Set-Aside projects. You may review the approved environmental documents in the [CEE system](#) for reference.

Does the municipality need to select a design engineer through the Federal selection process similar to other local, federally funded projects?

No, TA Set-Aside pre-construction costs are the sponsor's responsibility. The sponsor can follow their standard practices for selection of a design consultant. However, it is highly recommended to use an engineer with PennDOT/ ECMS experience in order to reduce the time required to design and deliver the project and not put the awarded federal construction funds in jeopardy. For construction inspection, the sponsor must follow a qualifications-based selection process if they wish to use TA Set-Aside funds to pay for inspection. Please refer to [PennDOT Publication 93](#).

Can the consultant hired by the sponsor for design of the project also provide construction inspection?

That is allowable if the project construction costs are \$1.5 million or less and the consultant was selected using a qualification based selection process and is qualified to perform both design and inspection. Please refer to [PennDOT's Publication 740](#) for more information.