

January 25, 2024

**Subject: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
RPA 8 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

Regional Planning Affiliation 8 (RPA 8) is now accepting applications for the RPA 8 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The RPA 8 TAP is a new iteration of the former Transportation Enhancements (later Transportation Alternatives) program that has been in existence since 1991. Eligible project activities continue to include a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, and community improvements such as historic preservation, vegetation management, and some environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity.

Funding for the RPA 8 TAP program comes from an annual suballocation of the State of Iowa's federal Transportation Alternative Set-Aside funds. RPA 8 will use a competitive process to select projects for funding. RPA 8 will provide technical assistance to eligible entities needing help understanding how to apply.

Program intent: The intent of the RPA 8 TAP competitive application program is to make a big impact with the limited funds available. Projects likely to be competitive in the RPA 8 TAP program will have an impact that extends beyond the local scale. The program emphasizes the expansion of the multi-modal trail network through the completion of trail linkages, and projects located immediately adjacent to a state-designated Iowa Byway. Eligible activities and eligible project sponsors are identified in the program guidance available on the program website.

Available funding: Approximately \$1,200,000 is available for this application cycle.

Review of applications: Complete applications will be evaluated and assessed based on the following criteria:

- Regional impact
- Connectivity and completion of trail linkages
- Alignment with local, regional, or statewide planning documents
- Understanding of the Federal-aid highway project development process
- Contribution toward safety for all transportation modes
- Enhancement of regional tourism benefits
- Leverage of non-federal funding sources
- Need for the proposed project and addressing high-need areas
- Improves accessibility
- Long-term maintenance plans
- Project readiness

Award process: RPA 8 TAP program awards will be made by the RPA 8 Policy Board. RPA 8 TAP awards are limited to a maximum of \$250,000.

Cost reimbursement and required match: Funds awarded through the TAP program are provided to project sponsors on a reimbursement basis and are not provided as a lump sum or cash payment in advance of costs being incurred. All projects require project sponsors to pay 100 percent of project costs up front. TAP program funds may reimburse up to 80 percent of eligible project costs or up to the approved grant maximum, whichever is less.

Treatment of projects: Projects funded by the TAP program will be carried out under the same rules and procedures as a highway project on a federal-aid highway. This subjects all projects to, among other things, Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements and other federal-aid requirements applicable to projects on federal-aid highways (e.g., Build America, Buy America, planning, environmental review, letting, etc.).

Application: The program guidance and application materials are available on the program website. All of the following application components must be submitted in the form prescribed:

- Application Form Parts A through F (Word document)
- Part G Checklist and Certification (pdf)
- Form 105101 Minority Impact Statement (pdf)
- Additional Attachments (pdf preferred)
 - Detailed map
 - Sketch plan and cross section
 - Digital photographs
 - Itemized breakdown of total project costs
 - Official endorsement (resolution)
 - Byway organization letter of support (if applicable)
 - Iowa DOT District Letter of Consent to Submit (if applicable)

Complete applications are due **by email to cravada@ecia.org before 5:00 pm CST on March 7, 2024**. The email subject line shall be **TAP Application – Applicant Name**. Emails greater than 20 MB will not be received. Attachments may be zip files. If sending multiple emails due to size restrictions, indicate sequence in the subject line e.g. 1 of 2, 2 of 2, etc. Applications received after the deadline will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed. Incomplete applications may be disqualified from consideration. RPA 8 is not responsible for any errors or delays caused by technical difficulties resulting from the emailing of applications.

To learn more about this funding opportunity and how to apply visit https://eciatrans.org/grants_rfps/rpa_tap.php. You may direct any specific questions to Chandra Ravada at cravada@ecia.org or Dan Fox at dfox@ecia.org.

Additional information on the Iowa DOT statewide Transportation Alternatives Program is available at https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/Grant-Programs/Transportation-Alternatives.