



Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Application Process For The FY 2024 Funding Cycle

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE:

Funding Cycle:

The FY 2024 funding cycle for the Transportation Alternatives Set-aside will follow the policy and procedural revisions adopted by SCDOT and the ARTS Policy Committee. It is the desire of the Policy Committee to fund as many projects as possible, therefore, project costs should not exceed \$180,000 of federal funds. Larger projects will be considered at the discretion of the Policy Committee.

SCDOT will notify each of the eleven Metropolitan Planning Organizations with their projected annual funding amounts (it is important to remember that this amount is the expected level of funding and may change). Annually, the SC urbanized area receives roughly \$300,000. **The ARTS federal allocation for FY 2024 is \$334,275** which brings the current total balance available for new projects to \$904,335. These funds require a 20% local match. Transportation projects funded under this grant program must originate through a competitive grant project selection process in consultation with SCDOT

The SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator will serve as staff contact with applicants and SCDOT staff with regards to the program and will work with SCDOT in addressing any program issues and/or concerns that may arise. This may involve project coordination, public relations, project status information as well as any other items as needed.

SC ARTS is responsible for developing a process to manage project solicitation and selection. Specifically, the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Project Review Committee will review, prioritize, and select projects on a continual basis for submission to SCDOT.

Timeline:

TAP applications may be submitted on a continuous basis (ORIGINAL APPLICATION, ONE COPY, AND AN ELECTRONIC VERSION ARE REQUIRED FOR PROCESSING). Applicants must submit applications to the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator at least eight (8) weeks prior to the next regular scheduled SC ARTS Policy Subcommittee meeting. PLEASE NOTE: Due to review period and agenda processing, applications received after the continuous submission receipt period end date are assigned to the next SC ARTS Policy Subcommittee meeting. The Transportation Alternatives Project Review Committee will review all applications and recommend project(s) to the SC ARTS Policy Subcommittee for preliminary approval.

FY 2024 Application Schedule and Deadlines		
For the SC ARTS Policy Subcommittee Round	Continuous Submission Application Receipt Period Ends	SC ARTS Project Review Committee Review Period
February 1, 2024	December 7, 2023	December 8, 2023 – December 29, 2023
May 2, 2024	March 7, 2024	March 8 – March 29, 2024
August 1, 2024	June 6, 2024	June 7 – June 28, 2024
November 7, 2024	September 5, 2024	September 6 – September 27, 2024

It is critical that each project sponsor thoroughly evaluate their project’s scope and cost AND reach general agreement with SCDOT on both of these items, before an application is submitted for review by the Transportation Alternatives Project Review Committee– it is important to note that early coordination with SCDOT is a requirement and must be documented with project applications. Project sponsors are required to contact a SCDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator and the SCDOT Program Manager for the ARTS Study Area during the early stages of the development of the Transportation Alternatives Set-aside application. It is recommended that project sponsors schedule a site-visit with a SCDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator and the SCDOT Program Manager for the ARTS Study Area to review the project. These actions are designed to streamline the application process and ultimately reduce the amount of time needed to initiate project implementation.

In July of 2016, the South Carolina General Assembly passed Act 275 (s.1258). Section 57-1-460 of the Act authorizes the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Secretary to approve federal transportation enhancement funds. For the ARTS MPO, the Policy Committee will approve funds for Transportation Alternatives Set-aside projects and the application is submitted to the SCDOT Office of Local Government Services for final approval. The proposed project will be identified in the MPO Transportation Improvement Program and then reflected in the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Eligible Activities

TAP Set-aside funds for alternative transportation encompass a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, safe routes for non-drivers to access daily needs, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas, and environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity. Please keep in mind TAP Set-aside funds must be spent on projects within the urbanized area.

NOTE: Landscaping is not eligible as an individual project, but landscaping elements of a project with a transportation focus are eligible

Infrastructure-related portions of projects eligible under the Safe Routes to School Program are eligible for Transportation Alternatives Set-aside funding. *Non-infrastructure related portions of projects (educational/informational) must be funded by the local match.*

Application

The application should include a project description, maps, plans, photographs, an itemized budget for

the project, a list of property ownership involved in the project, documented proof of local support, project maintenance and management costs/plans, an environmental assessment, and a list of the funds requested. The application will document whether the project will be administered by SCDOT or through the Local Public Agency (LPA), and if so, state the duties of the local agency. The application must demonstrate that the project is financially feasible. The application will display that the project sponsor is capable of providing the required matching funds, completing the project, and planning for ongoing maintenance. The application must demonstrate that the project sponsor will secure an approved Encroachment Permit outlining any desired extraordinary maintenance effort on SCDOT right of way that would include any special features or non-standard department materials. The application should note that the project sponsor will arrange for payment of any taxes due on the property and adopt necessary ordinances or legal proceedings needed to implement, protect and maintain the project. The application must demonstrate that the project sponsor will indemnify SCDOT of liability for the project or its maintenance and certify that there are no known or foreseeable legal impediments to the project. Therefore, the application should also include a resolution from your local government authorizing the application, as well as, a commitment to provide the 20% local match and any additional funding required above the initial application. The application should be signed, along with the other required documents listed below, and submitted to the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Coordinator.

Project Evaluation Factors:

Financial factors

- Realistic expectations and cost
- A high level of local match funding and ability to pay
- Non-participating work that is determined to be a benefit to the TAP project

Public input

- Consistency with adopted plans, policies, or other investments
- Opportunity and evidence of public involvement

Safety and Livability

- Addresses safety
- Enhances livability, demonstrates quality of experience, improves quality of life, and improves population health
- Total population served and level of exposure or access including the amount or density of nearby population or employment

Coordinated efforts

- Project supporting a community's Complete Streets policy, is on a designated state or national bicycle trail, or is part of a statewide initiative, provides connectivity among other facilities or regions of activity, adds to or enhances existing network
- Completes planned corridors, fills gaps
- Paired with other infrastructure work
- Part of an economic development or community improvement initiative

Constructability

- Technical Merit including feasibility, meeting design standards, realistic

scope/schedule/budget and project readiness

Maintenance factors

- Evidence of a strong maintenance plan that includes tasks, schedule, cost, source of maintenance funding, and responsible parties

Previous Transportation Enhancement (TE) and TAP funding

- Number and scale of previously awarded projects
- Timely implementation and appropriate maintenance on previous projects

Find information on the LPA process at <https://www.scdot.org/business/lpa.aspx>

Required Documents

The SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Coordinator must receive the following documents:

- Original application and one copy (including maps and plans)
- One electronic copy of the application (including maps and plans)
- SCDOT Midlands Regional Production Group Feasibility Letter
- Documentation supporting early coordination requirement and general agreement with SCDOT Program Manager on the project's scope and cost
- Documentation supporting coordination requirement and general agreement with SCDOT Transportation Alternatives Coordinator on project feasibility and viability
- Signed and dated application checklist confirming all steps have been completed

Approved Projects

Alternatives projects approved by the Policy Committee and SCDOT Commission will be reflected in the Transportation Improvement Program. Additionally, it should be noted:

- Projects are subject to a public review and comment period to amend the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the FY 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for inclusion into the SCDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- A workshop for all selected project sponsors will be scheduled after a project receives final approval from the ARTS Policy Committee – to answer any questions as well as review the Local Public Agency (LPA) process requirements that are applicable to this program funding source.
- Upon receiving final approval from the ARTS Policy Committee, it is the responsibility of each project sponsor to officially notify SCDOT of who is to serve as the project manager (i.e., the local municipality or SCDOT). This will need to be documented and forwarded to the Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator.
- If a local municipality wants to carry out all or part of the project management function, then they are responsible for submitting the required documentation to SCDOT LPA Office (**South Carolina Department of Transportation Local Program Administration Office, 955 Park Street, Room 424, P.O. Box 191, Columbia, South Carolina 29202**) demonstrating their qualification

to serve in this capacity.

- Upon receipt of a fully-executed copy of the project contract (i.e., assuming the local municipality has decided to serve as project manager), the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that their project is completed in a timely manner and in conformance with the signed agreement.
- The applicant will submit copies of quarterly progress reports to the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator to assist in ensuring that all Transportation Alternatives Set-aside projects are being performed on schedule, within budget and in accordance with the contract terms.
- Applicants must begin their projects in a timely manner upon receipt of their signed contract. If an extension is needed, a notice should be submitted to SCDOT and the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator summarizing the basis for an extension as well as a revised completion timeline. A contract may be cancelled by SCDOT without damage if progress is not made as scheduled.
- Sources of matching funds must be indicated. SCDOT encourages the applicant consider a hard match (cash) as their required participation due to stringent mandatory federal reporting requirements. Should the applicant be considering a soft match in lieu of a cash match, early communication and coordination with SCDOT's staff is encouraged.
- *Funds spent prior to execution of the contract are not eligible for reimbursement and cannot be counted toward matching funds.* This includes any work (advertising, design, or construction) started or completed before the applicant receives an executed contract.
- Project cost estimates must contain enough detail that the various cost elements of the project are clear. Please ensure to estimate the project carefully including items to address such as construction contingencies, construction engineering, and inflationary increases appropriate to the proposed size and development timeline. Cost increases above SCDOT's initial commitment are the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- **APPLICANTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO READ THROUGH THEIR CONTRACTS WITH SCDOT THOROUGHLY FOR THE SPECIFIC COMPLETION SCHEDULE THAT SCDOT HAS ESTABLISHED AS WELL AS ALL APPLICABLE LPA REQUIREMENTS BEFORE UNDERTAKING ANY WORK.**

The ARTS Policy Committee reserves the right to recommend cancellation of the project if satisfactory progress is not made. The SCDOT and SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator will communicate with the applicant prior to any cancellation being initiated.

Program Criteria: Review & Ranking Process

The SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Project Review Committee will review all applications and will recommend projects to the ARTS Policy Committee based on the following criteria:

- A. Compliance with federal, SCDOT Commission and local government policy
- B. Project Impact / Value on:
 - Safety or accident prevention
 - Accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians
 - Quality of Life
- C. Local support of project, including local government sponsorship, public input, and relation to existing plans and projects
- D. Commission or ARTS “focus areas,” as applicable, including:
 - Appropriateness of size of investment for results
 - Ability to substantially complete
 - Appropriateness of Transportation Alternatives Set-aside as the funding source
 - Size limits on local projects [non-regional projects should not exhaust all available funds for consecutive years]
 - Timeliness of previous project execution; number of current active projects.

Using these criteria, the SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Project Review Committee will evaluate and rank candidate projects according to the Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Project Evaluation Form (attachment 1) and make their recommendation to the full Policy Committee. Based on the available resources and character of the projects, they may recommend a multi-year budget.

Federal Requirements

The Transportation Alternatives Set-aside is a Federal program. It is subject to Federal rules and regulations.

Reimbursement

After completion, the Project Sponsor will file a Request for Reimbursement with SCDOT for reimbursement of all eligible project costs.

REMINDER: Project sponsors must incur the cost prior to being repaid. Only after a project has been approved through a competitive process by SCDOT and FWHA can costs become eligible for reimbursement. Costs accrued before approval will not be reimbursable.

ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator

For questions about Transportation Alternatives Set-aside and application submission:

Mail to:
Saralyn Yarborough
SC ARTS Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Coordinator
1930 University Parkway, Suite 2800
Aiken, SC 29801

E-mail to: syarborough@aikencountysc.gov

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT EVALUATION

PROJECT: _____

SUBMITTED BY: _____

RECEIPT OF QUALIFIED APPLICATION: _____

NAME OF EVALUTOR: _____

DATE: _____

EVALUATION CRITERIA

SCORE

1. Technical merit (feasibility, meets design standards, realistic scope, schedule, budget), prior review by DOT. (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
2. Level of support (from the community, from government). (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
3. Addresses non-motorized safety. (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
4. Project readiness/stage of completion (preliminary engineering, environmental clearance, right-of-way acquisition, final design), match available (budgeted, allocated). (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
5. Provides connectivity among other facilities or regions of activity, adds to or enhances existing network. (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
6. Completes planned corridors, fills gaps. (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
7. Leverage/amount of financial match or overmatch (amount beyond minimum federal or state requirements) (20% - 0) (30% to 50% - 3) (>50% - 5). (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
8. Evidence of a long-term plan (preservation, maintenance, operations), consistency with LRTP, bike/pedestrian plans. (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
9. Total population served/level of exposure or access/amount or density of nearby population/employment. (<500 - 0) (500-5,000 - 3) (>5,000 - 5). (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____
10. Number and scale of previously awarded projects (LPA having lower number of past projects or smaller scale projects would receive a higher ranking). (SCALE: 0 - 5) _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) APPLICATION

APPLICANT: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ TITLE: _____

CONTACT EMAIL: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION:

NAME OF PROJECT: _____

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION: _____

PROJECT LOCATION: _____

LENGTH & TERMINI (i.e. where does project begin & end) (IF APPLICABLE): _____

COUNTY: _____ HOUSE DISTRICT: _____

SENATE DISTRICT: _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: _____

PROJECT CATEGORY AND LOCATION OF PROJECT:

(CHECK ONLY THOSE APPLICABLE ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS)

- Provisions of facilities for bicycles
- Provisions for pedestrians
- Provisions for streetscaping
- In urbanized areas of the State with an urbanized area population of over 200,000, also known as a Transportation Management Area (application to be reviewed and approved by appropriate MPO)
- In areas of the State other than urban areas with a population greater than 5,000
- In areas of the State with a population less than 5,000

**Mail ORIGINAL and SIX(6) COPIES of application to:
South Carolina Department of Transportation
Local Program Administration Office
955 Park Street, Room 424
P.O. Box 191
Columbia, South Carolina 29202**

(PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING IN SPACES PROVIDED.)

A. ELIGIBILITY DEMONSTRATION: “SEE ATTACHED” IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

1. Does the project meet the requirements outlined within the **FAST Act**?
 YES NO
2. Does project conform to applicable requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act and any other state or federal laws concurring accessibility?
 YES NO

EXPLAIN BRIEFLY:

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION: “SEE ATTACHED” IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

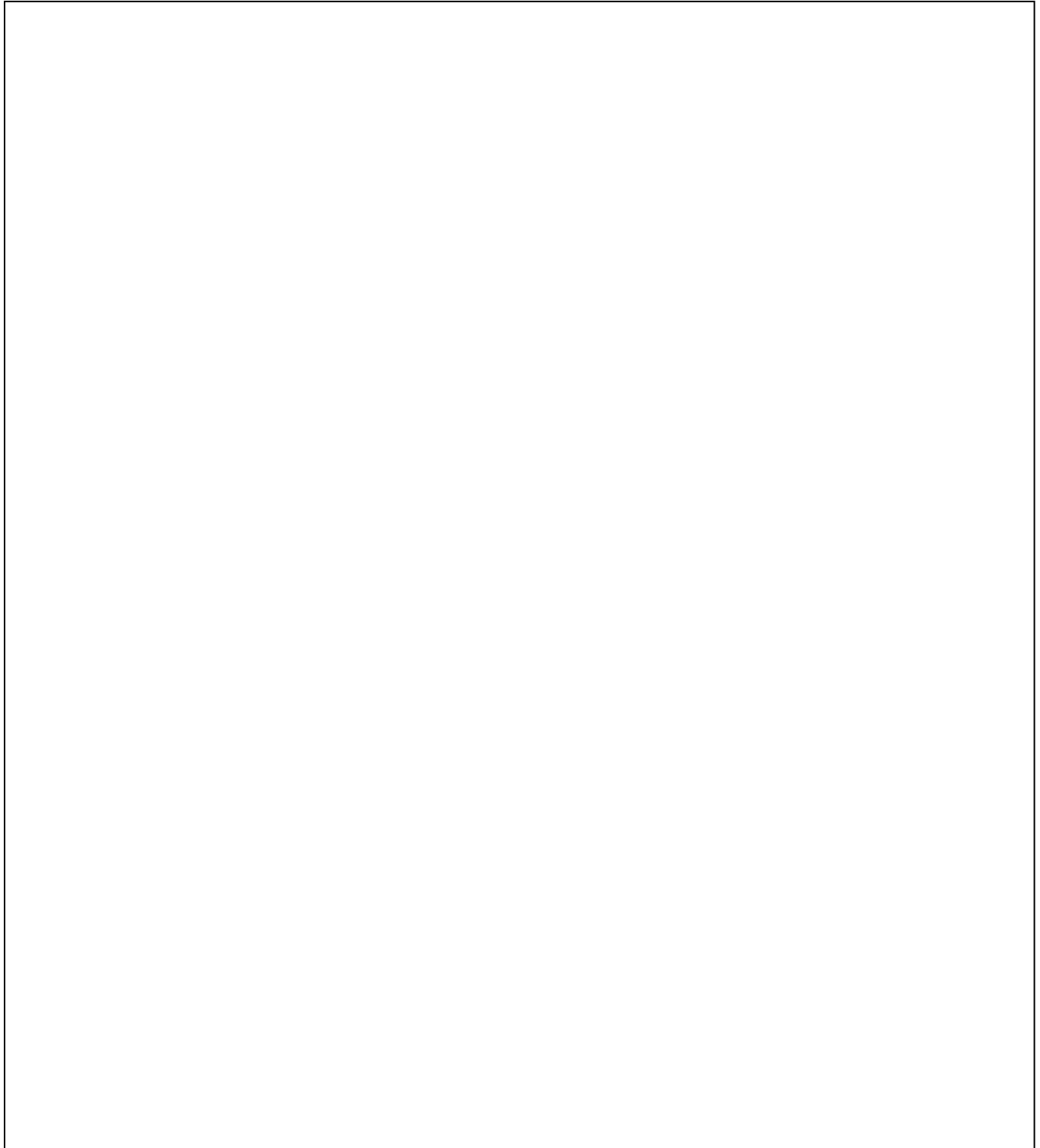
Does the applicant intend to apply to perform the administration and management functions for the project through the Local Public Agency (LPA) process?

- YES NO

Describe all necessary work needed to complete the proposed project. Description should reflect only activities checked under project category:

C. MAPS, PLANS, & PHOTOGRAPHS:

Attach project location map(s), project boundary map and site plan. Include photographs of the existing site and/or facility if applicable. COMMENTS: _____



D. PROJECT COST: “SEE ATTACHED” IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

Itemize all project elements and costs. List item, description, quantity, unit price, amount, etc. Ensure costs shown are accurate and sufficient to satisfactorily complete all work anticipated in accordance with federal requirements. If the project is located in close proximity to a railroad crossing that does not have automatic gates with flashing light signals (within 500’ along the mainline roadway, and within 200’ of the mainline roadway on intersecting roads), project funds to upgrade the railroad signals may be required pursuant to federal regulations. All budget item costs for project administration and management to adequately accomplish the work must be shown. These expenses are to include engineering, inspection, and testing in accordance with state and federal requirements. **Applicants MUST show a 10% contingency fee for the project.** (Enter total project cost in Section I – Line 1, Page 9.) Itemize below:

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E. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP:

Identify ownership of ALL property involved in the project. If additional property must be acquired to complete the project, identify ownership and value of property, either purchased or donated:

(NOTE: For all projects on SCDOT rights of way, include with your application either a copy of the approved SCDOT Encroachment Permit or a letter from your SCDOT County Maintenance Office or SCDOT District Office indicating your project appears feasible in concept with specific details to be worked out in an Encroachment Permit.)

F. LOCAL SUPPORT

Describe the level of local support for the proposed project. Attach letters from donors or sponsors committing non-federal share of project costs, commitment or support from sponsors, local government officials and regional organizations. Document the opportunities for public participation in the development of this project.

G.PROJECT MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT PLANS:

Describe maintenance and management of the project, including the yearly amount of funds to support activities:
Provide details for long-term maintenance of the project with project yearly maintenance costs.

H. DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBER (DUNS NUMBER): _____

(The federal government requires that all applications for Federal grants and cooperative agreements with the exception of individuals other than sole proprietors have DUNS number. The Federal government will use the DUNS number to better identify related organizations that are receiving funding under grants and cooperative agreements, and to provide consistent name of address data for electronic grant application systems. If an applicant needs to obtain a DUNS Number, please call the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line a 1-866-705-5711).

I. ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT:

Attach any previously prepared environmental documentation to this application. If no previously approved environmental documentation is available, the applicant must complete necessary studies if any, and have them approved prior to project implementation. This requirement does not apply if the application is for planning or feasibility studies only. Indicate below any impact the project is expected to cause.

	<u>IMPACT</u>	
	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Displacement of residences or business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disruption of neighborhoods.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacts agricultural or recreational lands.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacts historical/archaeological sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impacts wetlands, streams/lakes, floodplains	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Within coastal zone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Endangered species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air/water quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Noise.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hazardous waste site.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Any county, state, and/or federal permits required will have to be secured by the applicant prior to contract signing. These may include Army Corps of Engineers, Office of Coastal Resource Management, Coast Guard, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, County Sediment and Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance, or State Budget and Control Board.

Comments:

J. FUNDS REQUESTED, LOCAL MATCH AND SOURCE

LINE 1 – Total project cost (From Section D; Page #5) \$ _____

LINE 2 – Funds requested by applicant \$ _____
(80%) of line 1, not to exceed \$400,000

LINE 3 – Local Match (Must be at least 20 % of Line 1 \$ _____
List source of match and amount from each
source

LIST SOURCES (Be Specific)

AMOUNT

A - _____ \$ _____

B - _____ \$ _____

C - _____ \$ _____

D - _____ \$ _____

E - _____ \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF MATCH (Should be equal to Line #3 above.) \$ _____

Is project within a Transportation Management Area (TMA) boundary? YES NO

If yes, is the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)? YES NO

List TMA _____ Amount in TIP for project: \$ _____

K. CERTIFICATION

The undersigned has authority to sign on behalf of the applicant and certifies that the applicant has legal authority to enter into contract to implement this project and that all information provided is complete and accurate to their best knowledge.

SIGNATURE

DATE

TITLE

PHONE NO.

PRINTED NAME