

Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Transportation Alternatives Program Criteria Scoring Guide

August 2015

CRTPO Transportation Alternatives Program

Background

Federal legislation under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) created the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) as a funding source for alternative transportation projects, including projects previously eligible for Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to Schools Funding.

As advised by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in order to allocate available TAP funds, each MPO must adopt a project ranking methodology, specific to TAP, which scores projects based on targeted project criteria. This methodology is to be determined by the individual MPO, based on the MPO's funding and planning priorities, and must be reviewed by FHWA.

Funding

The amount of TAP funding available to individual MPOs in each fiscal year is determined by two factors: 50% of the funding amount is based on the population of the MPO; the other 50% of the funding is based on a general apportionment.

The Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) has been allocated \$1.2 million in each of fiscal years 2013, 2014, and 2015 (verified as of June 2015). CRTPO anticipates \$1.2 million annually for the duration of the current MAP-21 legislation.

The TAP program is a federal reimbursement program. Funds are available to be programmed for a period of three years after each associated fiscal year (i.e., FY 2013 funds must be programmed by FY 2016). All awarded TAP funds require a 20% state/local match. Projects using TAP funds must be added to the TIP.

Eligible Project Types

As stated above, TAP funds are available for specific project types. These project types are determined by FHWA, and generally include planning, design, or construction of projects previously eligible under the Safe Routes to School and Transportation Enhancements programs. Specific eligible project types include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
- Scenic or historic highway programs;
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities;
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors;
- Archaeological planning and research; and
- Environmental mitigation.

For a complete and detailed list of eligible project types, please reference FHWA's on-line guidance: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>.

Eligible Project Sponsors

Eligible project sponsors are also determined by FHWA, and include:

- Local governments;
- Regional transportation authorities;
- Transit agencies;
- Natural resource or public land agencies;
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools;
- Tribal governments; and
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a State agency).

State DOT's and MPOs may not directly sponsor projects. In certain instances, DOT's may partner with local agencies to sponsor projects.

CRTPO's Methodology

CRTPO's Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Bicycle & Pedestrian Work Group (BPWG) are responsible for development of the TAP Methodology and *Criteria Scoring Guide*. The TAP study and development process began in Fall of 2014 and concluded in Summer of 2015.

Development of the methodology began first with recognizing the constraints of TAP as a funding source. These include the eligible project types, eligible project sponsors, and the limited amount of funding available.

The next step in the process included identifying appropriate evaluation categories. The evaluation categories address "big picture" considerations and generally support transportation goals of the MPO as identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The final evaluation categories identified include Connectivity & Place-Making, Feasibility & Cost, Safety, and Health & Environment.

The next step included developing specific, quantifiable criteria which address each of the larger evaluation categories. These criteria were selected and developed with an eye on practically quantifying physical, safety, environmental, and other benefits.

While CRTPO's Bicycle & Pedestrian Work Group was charged with developing the specifics of the TAP Methodology, all TCC staff were integral to its development. Throughout the months-long process of developing the methodology and criteria, formal updates were given to TCC, regional staff, and the MPO board. TCC staff were updated, and provided direction to the process in January, March, and April of 2015. It should be noted that the BPWG is primarily staffed by TCC members. The CRTPO Policy Board was updated in September 2014 and May 2015.

TAP Criteria Scoring Guide

CRTPO's TAP methodology has culminated in the development of this document, the *Transportation Alternatives Program Criteria Scoring Guide*. The purpose of this guide is to communicate CRTPO's preferred evaluation categories and criteria in an organized fashion, and allow potential project sponsors to evaluate and score projects, and submit applications for project ranking and selection. The final Scoring Guide is a compilation of seventeen (17) criteria allocated to the four previously identified evaluation categories.

The criteria included in the Scoring Guide are carefully worded to make applying for TAP funds as intuitive as possible for potential project sponsors. The Scoring Guide is supplemented by on-line maps, documents, and guidance available on CRTPO's website, here: <http://crtpo.org/transportation-alternatives-program>.

Public Significance

Has the project been identified through a previous/existing planning effort or policy?

- > Transportation Plan (LRTP, MTP, TIP, Bicycle Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Other Locally adopted Transportation Plan or Prioritization)
- > Land Use or Comprehensive Plan
- > Recreation Plan
- > Economic Development Plan

* Please note that CRTPO's Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) does not qualify, as it functions as a transportation network assessment

Regional Scope* (6 Pts)	County or Municipal Scope (5 Pts)	None (0 Pts)
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Please select one of the above plan options.

* "Regional" understood to mean crossing county lines

Public Significance Score _____

Place-Making Amenities

Does the project include desirable amenities? Desirable amenities include, but are not limited to:

Seating, Bicycle racks, Repair Stands, Landscaping, Unique Way Finding, Public Art, Pedestrian-Scale Lighting, "Fitness Stations", Other (please specify)

1 Point per Amenity Type (10 Point Max)

Amenities Score _____

Demonstrated Need/Desire

Is there a shown path (goat path), pre-existing facility, high volume of cyclists or pedestrians along a roadway, or documented community request? Please summarize results of any community outreach or request, or provide a picture(s) which illustrates the physical need.

Yes **(7 Pts)**

No **(0 Pts)**

Demonstrated Need Score _____

Documented Safety Challenge

Are there documented safety challenges associated with this project? Examples of documented safety challenges may include (but are not limited to) recorded crash data of any severity, or a posted speed limit over 35 miles per hour.

In lieu of the challenges above, please provide a picture(s) illustrating design flaws, hazards, concerns, etc.

Yes (10 Pts)

No (0 Pts)

Safety Challenge Score _____

Reduce Human Exposure

Does the proposed project reduce the exposure between motor vehicles and vulnerable humans? Reduced exposure should take the form of a physical barrier or defined space.

Examples of a "physical barrier" include, but are not limited to: an off-road greenway, pedestrian refuge island, bike boulevard separated by a vertical structure, or buffered sidewalk (buffered curb or ditch cross-section).

Examples of a "defined space" may include, but are not limited to: striped bike lanes, back-of-curb sidewalks, crosswalks.

10 Pts

5 Pts

0 Pts

Physical Separation/Barrier	Defined Space	No Reduced Exposure
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Human Exposure Score _____

Traffic Calming

Does the proposed project design encourage traffic calming or vehicle lane narrowing, as advanced by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)?

Please reference available NACTO Guidelines.

Yes (5 Pts)

No (0 Pts)

Traffic Calming Score _____

Vehicle Traffic

What is the AADT of affected roadway facilities from which exposure would be reduced?

40,001+ 20 Pts	35,001 - 40,000 19 Pts	30,001 - 35,000 17 Pts	25,001 - 30,000 15 Pts	24,001 - 25,000 13 Pts	22,001 - 24,000 12 Pts
20,001 - 22,000 11 Pts	18,001 - 20,000 10 Pts	16,001 - 18,000 9 Pts	14,001 - 16,000 8 Pts	12,001 - 14,000 7 Pts	10,001 - 12,000 6 Pts
8,001 - 10,000 5 Pts	6,001 - 8,000 4 Pts	4,501 - 6,000 3 Pts	3,001 - 4,500 2 Pts	2,001 - 3,000 1 Pt	Less than 2,000 0 Pts

Vehicle Traffic Score _____

Emission & Pollutant Reduction (Vehicle Mile Reduction)

Will this project result in reducing vehicle miles traveled locally?

1. Assume vehicle trips equal **2%** of the AADT total from the **Vehicle Traffic** criteria.

-OR-

Where AADT/ADT is unavailable, estimate the daily usership of the proposed facility. Assume that each user represents a vehicle trip removed from the road.

2. Measure roadway miles that users would otherwise travel, if not for the proposed facility.

3. Multiply vehicle trips by roadway miles to determine vehicle miles reduced.

20 Pts	300+ Daily Veh Miles
15 Pts	200 - 299 Daily Veh Miles
10 Pts	100 - 199 Daily Veh Miles
5 Pts	0 - 99 Daily Veh Miles

Emissions Reduction Score _____

Environmental Justice

Does the project provide access (direct or adjacent contact) for environmental justice (EJ) populations?

Please reference the most current CRTPO EJ Concentration mapping which identifies geographically-based concentrations of racial, car-less, and low income populations.

High Impact 10 pts	Moderate Impact 5 pts	Low Impact 2pts	No Impact 0pts
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Environmental Justice Score _____

Environmental Quality

Does the project include significant benefits which address wildlife safety, water quality, or other improvements?

Examples of benefits may include, but are not limited to: impervious surfaces, rain gardens, routing to avoid wildlife habitats.

Please list any proposed benefits/improvements.

Yes (**5 Pts**)

No (**0 Pts**)

Environmental Quality Score _____

TAP Funding Requested

What is the estimated amount of TAP funding being requested (This amount should not include the local match) ?
Please reference the "**Funding & Match**" example on the following page.

5 Pts <i>Project administration costs outweigh benefits</i>	20 Pts <i>Most cost-effective</i>	10 Pts <i>Limiting funding for additional cost-effective projects</i>	0 Pts <i>Severely limiting available funding for additional project(s)</i>
\$0 - \$800,000	\$800,001 - \$1,200,000	\$1,200,001 - \$2,000,000	\$2,000,001 +

Funding Score _____

Local Match Commitment

Is the applicant contributing a significant amount of their own resources towards the requested TAP funding?
Keep in mind that a minimum of 20% is required for a local match. "In kind" contributions can not be considered for the local match.

Match % = Point Total (Floor of 20%)

For example: A local match of 35% would result in a score of 35.

Local Match Score _____

Right-of-Way Previously Acquired/ Available

Has right-of-way been acquired or dedicated through the appropriate process, specifically for use by the proposed project?

15 Pts	10 Pts	5 Pts	0 Pts
76 - 100%	51 - 75%	21 - 50%	0 - 20%

Right-of-Way Score _____

Cost - Benefit

What is the combined Connectivity, Safety, and Environmental benefit of this project per dollar spent?
Determining this score will first require the applicant to complete scores for the *Trip Generation & Connectivity*, *Safety*, and *Health & Environment* evaluation categories. Please use the calculation method below.

$$\text{Cost Benefit} = \frac{\text{Sum (Trip Generation \& Connectivity Scores + Safety Scores + Health \& Environment Scores)} * 10,000}{\text{Funding Amount Requested (Dollars)}}$$

15 Pts <i>High Cost Benefit</i>	10 Pts <i>Desirable Cost Benefit</i>	5 Pts <i>Moderate Cost Benefit</i>	0 Pts <i>Poor Cost Benefit</i>
2.1 or Higher	0.81 - 2.0	0.4 - 0.8	0.4 or Lower

Cost - Benefit Score _____

Total Combined Score for all Criteria

Please sum scores for each of the above criteria and enter below. This is the final TAP Score for this project/facility.

Funding & Match Example

Town of Municipalville Downtown Pedestrian Improvements

The Town of Municipalville is cobbling together funding for downtown pedestrian improvements.

The suite of improvements is estimated to cost \$2,000,000.

A local Municipalville developer will contribute \$500,000 to the project, leaving a balance of \$1,500,000 in needed funding.

Municipalville has decided to apply for TAP funding to cover the remaining **\$1,500,000**, recognizing that TAP funding requires a minimum **20%** local match.

Municipalville submits an application for **\$1,200,000** in TAP funding, with plans to match **\$300,000** from the town's general fund.

Here is an explanation of Municipalville's project costs and TAP request:

Total Project Cost*:	\$1,500,000
TAP Funding Requested:	\$1,200,000
Local Match:	\$300,000
Local Match Percentage:	20% (Local Match / Total Project Cost)
Local Match Score:	20 points

*For the purposes of funding requests, CRTPO is concerned only with the amount of funding requested from the MPO and any related local match. In this case, CRTPO must assess the \$1,500,000 in TAP funding requested from us.

The total estimate of \$2,000,000 for the suite of improvements, and the developer's \$500,000 contribution, is irrelevant.

Destination Definitions

High Interest Destinations

These are common, highly-trafficked destinations within a particular city, town, or region.

Town Center

Downtown or central business district of a city or town.

Mixed Use Center

An integrated development project which combines multiple uses within individual buildings or sites.

Example: A retail development with residential units above or adjacent.

Major Employment

A dense collection of non-retail employment locations, where the percentage of employers is significantly higher than that of surrounding areas.

Example: An office park

Transit Center

A station or hub which serves as the central location for one or more transit systems or networks.

School (Within 1/2 mile)

Any K-12 school facility located within 1/2 mile of project/facility.

University/College

Any public or private university, college, or community college.

Moderate Interest Destinations

These are common, moderately-trafficked destinations, typically found in many cities and towns.

Multi-family Development

Multiple residential housing units located in one building/structure, or multiple buildings within one complex. Example: Apartment complex.

Park-n-Ride Lot

A designated parking location which allows drivers to park private automobiles, bicycles, or other vehicles, and access public transportation or transit.

Light Rail Stop/Transit Station

A designated location which allows users to board light rail or transit vehicles.

Park

Regional, local, or neighborhood space for passive or active recreation.

Greenway

A natural or paved path, typically located outside of vehicular rights-of-way, intended for non-motorized active transportation.

Bus Stop (Community Scale)

Boarding locations located on larger properties accessible by multiple modes. Typically include large weather-protected passenger waiting areas and often provide bus route transfer service. Community scale bus stops are typically larger than a single bench or bus stop shelter located adjacent to sidewalk.

Destination Definitions

Retail Center

A collection of retail locations where the percentage of retailers is significantly higher than that of surrounding areas.

Religious/Civic Center

A private or public venue which offers religious or civic services to the general public.

Unique Destination

A specific destination of civic or cultural value which attracts visitors, is unique to a particular city, town, or county, and may not satisfy other destination descriptions.

Health Care

Hospital or medical services. These can include both large facilities and offices.

Libraries

A physical location which provides access to reading materials such as books, periodicals, and newspapers, and often other forms of video or audio media.

Healthy Food Options

Large and small grocery stores, farmer's markets, or fresh foods. Other local, stationary food providers will be considered.

Hotels

Hotels, motels, and other commercial establishments offering lodging, meals, and other guest services

Low Interest Destinations

These are common destinations, which typically experience less human traffic.

Low Density Single Family Development

Detached single family development. Can be found in rural, suburban, and urban environments.

Privately Accessible Property

Property which is not legally accessible by the general public.

Bus Stop (Neighborhood Scale)

Typically a bench or 5 to 15-person shelter located adjacent to a sidewalk or roadway.

Rural Road Bike Routes

Rural or suburban roads which typically do not include prescribed bicycle facilities, but may be signed as state, historic, scenic, or recreational bicycle routes.