

Transportation Alternatives Program

Eligible Activities



The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) makes use of the phrase "Transportation Alternatives" with two different meanings. First, Transportation Alternatives (TA) refers to the 9 eligible definitions, which are a recasting of the former Transportation Enhancements program. The term Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is an umbrella term used to refer to the total reservation of funding for the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and Recreational Trails (RTP) programs which have been consolidated into one funding source with the 9 eligible TA activities. Although the SRTS and RTP are continued as authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act (SAFETEA-LU), the different funding source has changed some of the requirements for administering the funds.

This document will highlight the eligible uses for each of the programs contained within the Transportation Alternatives reservation of funding.

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Transportation Alternatives Eligibilities

The Transportation Enhancements Program was authorized in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and was continued in the two subsequent bills. MAP-21 continued the legacy of the program but removed safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, scenic or historic highway programs (including visitor and welcome centers), operation of historic transportation facilities, archaeological planning and research undertaken for proactive planning, and the establishment of transportation museums from the eligible activities. The following activities are defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) (MAP-21 1103):

- 1. Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation**, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- 2. Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems** that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
- 3. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors** for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users.
- 4. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.**
- 5. Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising.**
- 6. Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.**
- 7. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way** to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control.
- 8. Archaeological activities** relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under title 23.
- 9. Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:**
 - a) address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329 of title 23; or
 - b) reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

Safe Routes to School Program

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program was authorized in section 1404 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005. The SRTS program no longer has a dedicated funding source, but SRTS projects are eligible under the TAP and under STP. Without a dedicated funding source, certain requirements of the program no longer exist. Please visit [FHWA's Interim Guidance](#) website for more information. The activities that remain eligible are:

1. Infrastructure-related Projects

The planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects on any public road or any bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail in the vicinity of schools that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including:

- **Sidewalk improvements:** new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, sidewalk gap closures, sidewalk repairs, curbs, gutters, and curb ramps.
- **Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements:** roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crossings, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, automated speed enforcement, and variable speed limits.
- **Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements:** crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, traffic control devices (including new or upgraded traffic signals, pavement markings, traffic stripes, in-roadway crossing lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, and pedestrian activated signal upgrades), and sight distance improvements.
- **On-street bicycle facilities:** new or upgraded bicycle lanes, widened outside lanes or roadway shoulders, geometric improvements, turning lanes, channelization and roadway realignment, traffic signs, and pavement markings.
- **Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities:** exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- **Secure bicycle parking facilities:** bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, designated areas with safety lighting, and covered bicycle shelters.
- **Traffic diversion improvements:** separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, and traffic diversion away from school zones or designated routes to a school.

2. Noninfrastructure Related

Activities to encourage walking and bicycling to school, including:

- public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders,
- traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools,
- student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and
- funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs.

3. Safe Routes to School Coordinators

Managers of safe routes to school programs are eligible at the State or local level, but are not required. SRTS projects using TAP funds must be sponsored by an eligible entity. An eligible entity may propose a State coordinator on behalf of the State, or the State may use STP funds.

Recreational Trails Program

MAP-21 continues the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) as it was previously authorized with relatively few changes. MAP-21 makes RTP funding a set-aside from the Transportation Alternatives Program funding source instead of a standalone source. Unless the Governor of a State opts out in advance, an amount equal to the State's FY 2009 RTP apportionment is to be set aside from the State's TAP funds for recreational trails projects. RTP requirements under 23 U.S.C. 206 continue to apply to RTP set-aside funds. (23 U.S.C. 213(f)-(g)).

Eligible Projects:

1. Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails.
2. Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails.
3. Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment.
4. Construction of new recreational trails (with restrictions for new trails on Federal lands).
5. Acquisition of easements and property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.
6. Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.
7. Development and dissemination of publications and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails, including supporting non-law enforcement trail safety and trail use monitoring patrol programs, and providing trail-related training (limited to 5 percent of a State's apportionment).
8. State costs incurred in administering the program (limited to 7 percent of a State's apportionment). [RTP administrative costs are not eligible in a fiscal year if the Governor opts out of the RTP for that fiscal year.]

Boulevards from Former Divided Highways

MAP-21 authorized 23 U.S.C. §213(b)(4):

- Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

Surface Transportation Program Eligibility

Projects eligible under the Transportation Alternatives Program also are eligible under the Surface Transportation Program.

