

Frequently Asked Questions

The Department of Transportation established the Transportation Project Fund (TPF, formerly known as LGTPF) in 2019. The MPO/RTPO played an important role in application process. The department provided webinars and public hearing to help establish the criteria and processes. Since the 2019 call for projects, the department has not changed the process or the roles of the MPO/RTPO. The most pertinent change to the process is that projects that have federal funds, no longer qualify for TPF funding.

Below are a list of frequently asked questions.

1. When are applications due to the NMDOT FTP site?

The deadline to submit applications to the FTP site is Tuesday, May 31, 2022 by 5:00 pm.

2. What is the estimated amount of funding available for the TPF program?

The estimated amount of funding available for FY23 is 46 million (\$2-3 million will be held for hardship waivers). An additional 60 million is also possible if legislation is approved.

3. What is the definition of “Shovel Ready”?

Shovel Ready is defined as- the project is advertisement ready, regardless of the phase the funding is being applied for.

4. Do the MPO/RTPO’s need to create a point system to prioritize and rank projects?

No, a point system is not necessary to prioritize projects, however an MPO/RTPO may use one if they choose to. A ranking scale of 1-10 will be sufficient. If no point system is used, submit all applications received.

5. What if an MPO/RTPO does not wish to rank their projects?

If the MPO/RTPO does not wish to rank their projects, they will need to submit a letter to the Cabinet Secretary stating they do not want to rank the projects and they are allowing the District to do so on their behalf.

6. What criteria does the MPO/RTPO use to rank projects?

The criteria is provided in the call for projects letter dated January 2022. The MPO/RTPOs have the option to add additional criteria if desired.

7. Is the MPO/RTPO Board required to approve the ranked list of projects?

No, the MPO/RTPO Boards are not required to approve the ranked projects. However, each respective board should decide if a ranking system would be used.

8. Who can approve the ranking of projects?

MPO/RTPOs Staff or Boards are all eligible to approve ranking of projects if desired.

9. Is the MPO/RTPO staff responsible for uploading approved applications to the FTP site or will the local entities do this individually?

Yes, MPO/RTPO's should upload the applications to the FTP on behalf of the local entities.

10. Does NMDOT accept the Project Prospectus Form (PPF) in place of the Project Feasibility Form (PFF)?

Yes will accept the PPF. However, we recommend using the PPF that has been created for use with the TPF program and is geared toward 100% state funding.

11. Does a project have to be on an RTIPR to be eligible for funding?

No, projects do not have to be on an RTIPR to be submitted for consideration. However, if a project is on the RTIPR local entities must ensure that no federal funds have or will be used on the project. If a project does have federal funds, it will need to be de-federalized to be eligible for TPF funding.

12. Is drainage work an allowed expense?

Yes, as long as the drainage work is part of an overall project it is eligible. The drainage work cannot be a standalone project.

13. Is utility work an allowed expense?

Yes, if the utility work is required to mitigate the impacts of the proposed construction. A standalone project or upgrading of utilities will not be eligible for this grant funding. This work can be added to the project provided it is paid for with another local or state funding source.

14. Can an application be submitted with the same scope of work as a project that has already been awarded federal funding?

No, the scope of work being submitted cannot be identical to a federally funded project. Per the final rule published April 2021, federal funds may not be used as part of a TPF funded project.

15. Can any form of meeting (i.e. Zoom, Phone, in person, etc.) be used to review project applications with NMDOT District staff?

Yes, meetings to review projects are allowed to be held virtually, by phone or in person.

16. What role do the Districts play in the application review process?

The districts will review the applications to ensure all paperwork is filled out correctly. They will also review the project feasibility form to verify the work can be completed in the time allotted and that funding requested is enough to complete the work/phase requested. The districts provide a priority list of projects to the Cabinet Secretary based on project evaluation criteria.

17. Can the District Engineer reprioritize the list of projects received by the MPO/RTPO?

Yes, the District Engineer has the ability to reprioritize the projects submitted to the Cabinet Secretary.

18. Can the Cabinet Secretary reprioritize the list of projects received by the District Engineer?

Yes, the Cabinet Secretary has the ability to reprioritize the projects submitted to the State Transportation Commission.

19. Who is responsible for the final approval of Transportation Project Funds?

The State Transportation Commission is responsible for final approval of awards.

20. Can Tribal Entities apply for TPF Hardship waiver?

Tribal Entities qualify for Hardship waiver only if the Department of Finance approves a financial hardship qualification certification. Tribal Entities may use Tribal Transportation Funds as their match, but this must be disclosed on the application. It is not the department's responsibility to verify the requirements for the Tribal Transportation funds are followed.

21. Can soft match or in-kind be used to cover the 5% match?

No. Allowing a local entity to use "non-cash" contributions as its 5% match would require more oversight on the part of the NMDOT, such as requiring documentation to establish the value of the services, etc. The purpose of this funding is to provide less oversight from NMDOT.

22. Can Capital Outlay funding be used to cover the 5% match?

Yes as long as the law language falls in line with the scope of work for the TPF project. Keep in mind Capital Outlay cannot be used to cover administrative costs such as salaries and per diem.

23. Can an Entity apply for TPF funds for improvements identified in a Statewide safety study which was federally funded?

Yes, as long as the federal study provided various recommendations and was not completed for a specific location or scope of work. (Reference question 14)