

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (NWARPC)

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) FFY 2026 Project Application (Construction Projects Only)

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NWARPC DISCLAIMER: This notice is in accordance with the NWARPC 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in cooperation with local agencies, the Arkansas Department of Transportation, the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. Documents are funded in part through grant(s) from the FHWA, FTA, and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions of the NWARPC expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP): The public participation procedures outlined in the NWARPC Public Participation Plan (PPP) with respect to TIP development serve as the public participation process required for the development of transit projects as per FTA Circular 9030.1E. Specifically, the public participation procedures outlined in the PPP will serve to satisfy the Program of Projects (POP) requirements of the Section 5307, Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program for the University of Arkansas/Razorback Transit and Ozark Regional Transit. The NARTS and any and all public transit operators will address the POP requirements as per FTA Circular 9030.1E. Additionally, any and all public transit operator's capital projects and operational costs are included in the NARTS TIP which is developed through a cooperative and collaborative process with interested parties and other private and public transportation providers.

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Section 1. Policy and Project Information

FFY 2026 TAP Project Application Timeline:

Call for Projects:	<u>January 5, 2025</u>
Project Application Deadline:	<u>April 3, 2025 at 11:59 PM, CT</u>
Project Sponsor Presentation to TAC Committee:	<u>April 17, 2025</u>

TAP Funding Background:

In 2012, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) designated the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO urbanized area as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). This TMA designation provides Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) based on the 2010 Census Urbanized Area population of 295,083. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021) provides federal apportioned suballocated funding to the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers AR-MO Urbanized area. Under current BIL, funds can be utilized for all eligible transportation projects at the discretion of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission/Policy Committee (NWARPC).

Availability of approximately \$1.3 million is anticipated. Availability of FFY 2026 and subsequent years funds are subject to Congressional action.

The TAP is a federally funded, 80% Federal/20% local, reimbursable program and projects must meet and follow the ARDOT Local Public Agency (LPA) federal-aid process for reimbursement. Funds must be used for eligible projects that are submitted by eligible entities and chosen through a competitive process. The LPA Manual can be found at: <http://www.ardot.gov/divisions/local-programs/local-public-agency-project-manual/>

The TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on and off road pedestrian and bicycle facilities; infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility; community improvement activities and environmental mitigation; safe routes to school projects; and projects or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. Additional information on TAP can be found at: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/ta_guidance_2022.pdf

A local sponsor must provide at least 20% of the eligible project costs in cash. Federal funds from other sources cannot be used to match these funds. This is a reimbursable program overseen by the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT), which means once the sponsor receives an official Notice to Proceed from ARDOT, up to 80% of the costs directly attributable to the construction of the project can be reimbursed. The local sponsor is responsible for maintaining records and proving that expenses are legitimate and directly related to the project. This may be in the form of receipts, time sheets, etc.

A goal of the 2045 NWARPC Metropolitan Transportation Plan is to expand the bicycle and pedestrian network in Benton and Washington counties and grow the Heritage Trail system. This network will connect active transportation plans across the region's cities, linking key destinations such as employment centers, schools, parks, and historic sites. The plan emphasizes regional commitment to developing these facilities and encourages cities to align their planning with the NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Guidelines: The following guidelines will be used to select projects for funding that are consistent with NWARPC board-adopted regional plans, policies, and initiatives and the FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program Implementation Guidance. Applications are encouraged to demonstrate implementation of regional plans (e.g. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) and Vision Zero Policy; Congestion Management Process; Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture; Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO); NWA Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan; Connect NWA Transit Development Plan; NWA Transportation Alternatives Analysis; NWA Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan; NWA Open Space Plan; and Cave Springs Area Karst Resource Conservation Study).

1.1 **Project Selection and Scoring.** All projects will be scored utilizing the same criteria. Project selection will be based on the overall number of projects submitted, availability of funding, and demonstrated need. Scores and ranking of applications will be determined by a committee.

1.2 **Minimum Project Size.** The proposed total project cost shall be a minimum of \$125,000.

TAP Request	\$100,000	80% Federal Share
Local Match	<u>\$ 25,000</u>	20% Local Match
Total Project	\$125,000	100%

1.3 **Maximum Amount Per Project Sponsor.** A goal is to allocate no more than 50% of the TAP funds to a single project sponsor in one year. There is the understanding that funding should be equitably distributed within the Urbanized Area.

1.4 **Funding of Construction Ready Projects.** TAP funds will be awarded for the construction phase of a selected project. Preliminary Engineering and Final Design, Environmental, Right-of-way, and Utility Relocation is the responsibility of the applicant and must meet Federal-aid requirements.

1.5 **Implementation of Regional Plans.** Project sponsors should focus on projects that will provide on-road and off-road active transportation facilities connecting to the existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian networks as described in the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and NWA Heritage Trail Plan, reduce transportation emissions as described in the NWA Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan, and align with safety strategies in the NWA Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and Vision Zero Policy.

1.6 **Application and Deadline Requirement.** All project sponsors must submit an application for funding and meet the required deadline, as noted above.

1.7 **Obligation of Funds.** All projects awarded must meet the **obligation deadline of September 30, 2026.** (Note: The project will need to be through the ARDOT process and submitted to FHWA by the end of August to obligate funds before the September deadline).

1.8 **Criteria for Project Selection.** Projects will be evaluated and scored based on the following categories:

- Connectivity
- Safety
- Barriers to mobility/usability
- Implementation of NWARPC Board-adopted regional plans

1.9 **Federal-Aid Project Requirements.** Projects are required to be designed to AASHTO and Federal Standards/Guidelines.

1.10 **Application Submittal.** Submit electronic applications to ngibbs@nwarpc.org or submit paper applications to NWARPC, 1311 Clayton St., Springdale, AR 72762. For more information on this program or questions related to the application process, please contact Nicole Gibbs, Transportation Programs Manager/Regional Planner, (479) 751-7125 x105, or visit <https://www.nwarpc.org/funding-programs/>.

1.11 **Resolution.** A signed resolution from the Applicant's governing body is **required to be submitted with the application**. See sample resolution at the end of this document.

**NWARPC Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
FFY2026 Project Application
(Construction Only)**

Project Sponsor Data:

Sponsor Jurisdiction: _____ Phone Number: _____

Primary Contact: _____ E-mail: _____

Partners: _____

General Project Data:

Project Title: _____

Project Purpose: _____

Project Priority *(if submitting multiple project applications)* _____

Please Attach a Project Site Plan, Vicinity Map, and Proposed Cross-Section

Project Overview:

General Project Overview and Description (500-character limit)

Section 2. Project Requirements, Local Commitment and Project Funding (10 Points)

2.1 Required Match/Local Support. Project sponsors must provide a minimum of 20% local funding match for all projects. (Note: This a **reimbursable program** through ARDOT.)

	Requested Project Funding	Percentage
TAP Funds	\$ _____	_____ %
Local Match	\$ _____	_____ % (20% - No in-kind)
Project Cost	\$ _____	_____ %

Attach copy of required resolution authorizing the project.

Resolution number: _____ Approval date: _____

What source of funds will be used by the local sponsor to match the federal funds? _____

Is local funding currently available/budgeted? Yes No

2.2 Planning.

2.2.1 List a local or regional plan in which the project is included:

2.3 Public Access. The project must be open for public access.

2.3.1. Is the property currently owned by the local Jurisdiction? Yes No

2.3.2 Is the project located on public right-of-way? Yes No

2.3.3 Is the project located in an easement that allows for public access? Yes No

2.4 Maintenance. What governmental entity will be responsible for the short- and long-term project operation and maintenance?

2.5. Link to Surface Transportation. All projects must link to the surface transportation system. A project must have a strong link to surface transportation in order to compete for this funding. Describe how this project links to the surface transportation system.

2.6 Federal-Aid Project Requirements. Has the project been designed to Federal-aid Guidelines?

PE/Environmental	Yes	No
Engineering/Design	Yes	No
ROW	Yes	No
Utility Relocation	Yes	No

2.7 Project Site Plan, Vicinity Map, Location Map and Cross-section. Provide legible map(s) of the project location. The map(s) should be good enough to be easily-reproducible and should include the following:

- Project path. The map should clearly show where the project will be located.
- North arrow.
- Pertinent landmarks.
- If appropriate, a Legend identifying any other items on the map (i.e. existing paths or sidewalks, previous phases of the project, etc.)

2.8 Safety. Describe how this project will improve the safety of the transportation system. Please cite any studies that show a reduction in crash rates and/or reduction in serious and fatal injuries based on the type of project proposed. Please describe how safety will be improved for all users of the facility: pedestrians and bicyclists.

2.9 Previous Federal Funding

If this project (or phase of this project) has previously received Federal TAP or STBG funding (ARDOT or NWARPC), please describe the status of the project(s). (500 character max)

2.10 Project Construction Estimate

This form is limited to 20 items. If you have more items use excel file provided.

	Item of Work	Quantity	Units	Unit Cost	Item Cost
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
Total Estimated Project Cost					
Requested TAP Funds (up to 80% of construction cost)					
Local Sponsor Match (at least 20% of construction cost)					

Source of Estimate/Estimator: _____

Section 3. Project Development (20 Possible Points)

Current Design Plans Level

Preliminary (10%)

Partially Complete (30%-60%)

Final Plans (90%-100%)

Engineer _____ Under Contract? Yes No *(Please attach drawings)*

Rights-of-Way (ROW)

Already within public ROW

New ROW Required

Property Owners Identified? Yes No *Number of Project Owners* _____

Donation Expected? Yes No *Purchase Options/Agreements?* Yes No

Utilities Conflicts

Does the project have utilities that must be relocated prior to construction? Yes No

List any utilities with conflicts: _____

Utility coordination initiated (utilities with conflicts notified of project) Yes No

Environmental

Agency Letters Requested? Yes

Potential environmental impacts (list): _____

Project Timeline

Provide detailed timeline or complete table below.

	2025				2026			
	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sep	Oct - Dec
Design								
Environmental								
Utilities								
Right-of-way								
Start Construction								

Please describe any additional preliminary work that has been done to facilitate this project.

3.1 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Does the project provide a future or planned extension and/or connection to the regional trail system?

3.1.1 Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan(NWARBPMP) and/or Heritage Trail Plan.

Is the project shown in the NWARBPM Plan? Yes No

Is the project show in the Heritage Trail Plan? Yes No

Is the project a Catalyst project in the NWARBPM Plan? Yes No

3.1.2 Local Master Trail Plan or Local Comprehensive Plan. Is the project listed in a local Plan? Yes No

Name: _____ Ordinance #: _____

Adoption Date: _____

3.2 Connectivity. Does the project provide a future or planned extension and/or connection to the regional trail system? Does the project connect to other transportation modes and/or transportation facilities?

3.2.1 Connection to/from a neighborhood. Yes No
Name: _____ Distance: _____

3.2.2 Connection to/from employment retail center. Yes No
Name: _____ Distance _____

3.2.3 Connection to/from a school. Yes No
Name: _____ Distance _____

3.2.4 Connection to/from a community, regional, state, and/or national park. Yes No
Name: _____ Distance _____

3.2.5 Trailhead Construction and facilities Yes No
Name: _____

3.3 Project Length/Width

Project length in linear feet (if applicable): _____

Project width in feet (if applicable): _____

3.4 Barriers to Mobility/Usability. Does the project address a barrier to mobility or usability? Does it address general ADA mobility? Does it address challenges to active transportation such as steep hills, stairs, sharp curves, intersections, etc.? Does the project enhance the user experience?

Section 4. Project Background, Overview, Benefits, and Planning Process (70 Possible Points*)

4.1. Provide a detailed project overview. What improvements are proposed? What steps are being taken to ensure the project promotes multi-modal transportation and design aspirations consistent with the regional plan and CARTS Multi-Modal Infrastructure Guidelines? Include project limits, street facility names, and project cross-sections. (3000 character limit) – 20 points

4.2. Describe the purpose of the project and how it will benefit the affected communities. What user groups will be positively affected? If the project has a larger regional benefit, please describe this connection. If this is a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) eligible project, include what schools would benefit. (3000 character limit) – 20 points

4.3. Describe any planning or public input process used in development of this project. If the proposed project is in an existing bicycle/pedestrian plan, street plan, master plan, or other long-range plan, please identify this as well. Describe how this project will connect to existing infrastructure to advance access to the region's active transportation network. (1000 character limit) – 20 points

***10 additional discretionary points may be awarded by evaluators according to project quality and costs vs. benefits considerations.**

Sponsor Authorization and Certification

To be completed by the chief executive officer (Mayor, City Manger, County Judge, etc.)

By Checking the box below, I attest that the information contained in this application is truthful and correct to the best of my knowledge and that the provision of false or misleading information can lead to the withdrawal of TAP funding. I do hereby certify that I will comply with all federal, state, and ARDOT regulations for submittal of plans and specifications and follow the LAP manual. Additionally, I certify that local matching funds are available for the project. I agree a resolution has been adopted for this project.

I AGREE

Authorized Signatory:

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Title: _____ **Email:** _____

Signature: _____

FEDERAL-AID PROJECT SAMPLE RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE WILLINGNESS OF [INSERT SPONSOR NAME] TO UTILIZE FEDERAL-AID FUNDS FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECT:
[INSERT PROJECT NAME]

WHEREAS, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission has issued a call for projects to be funded with Federal-Aid funds suballocated to Northwest Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the funding for selected projects will be at the following Federal and Local participating ratios, up to the maximum Federal-aid available:

Type Work	Work Phase	Federal %	Local %
Projects that reach construction	Preliminary Engineering	80	20
	Right-of-Way	80	20
	Utilities	80	20
	Construction	80	20
	Construction Engineering	80	20
Projects that never progress to construction	All Phases	-0-	100

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE [INSERT SPONSOR'S GOVERNING BODY] OF [INSERT CITY/COUNTY], ARKANSAS, THAT:

SECTION I: [INSERT SPONSOR NAME] authorizes the application submittal for [INSERT PROJECT NAME].

SECTION II: The [INSERT SPONSOR NAME] will participate in accordance with its designated responsibilities in this project, including providing of the local match requirement.

SECTION III: The [SPONSOR'S CEO TITLE] or their designated representative is hereby authorized and directed to execute all appropriate agreements and contracts necessary to expedite the construction of this project.

SECTION IV: The [INSERT SPONSOR NAME] pledges its full support and hereby authorizes the Arkansas Department of Transportation and Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission to initiate action to implement this project.

THIS RESOLUTION adopted this _____ day of _____, _____.

[SPONSOR CEO NAME]
[SPONSOR CEO TITLE]

ATTEST: _____
(SEAL)