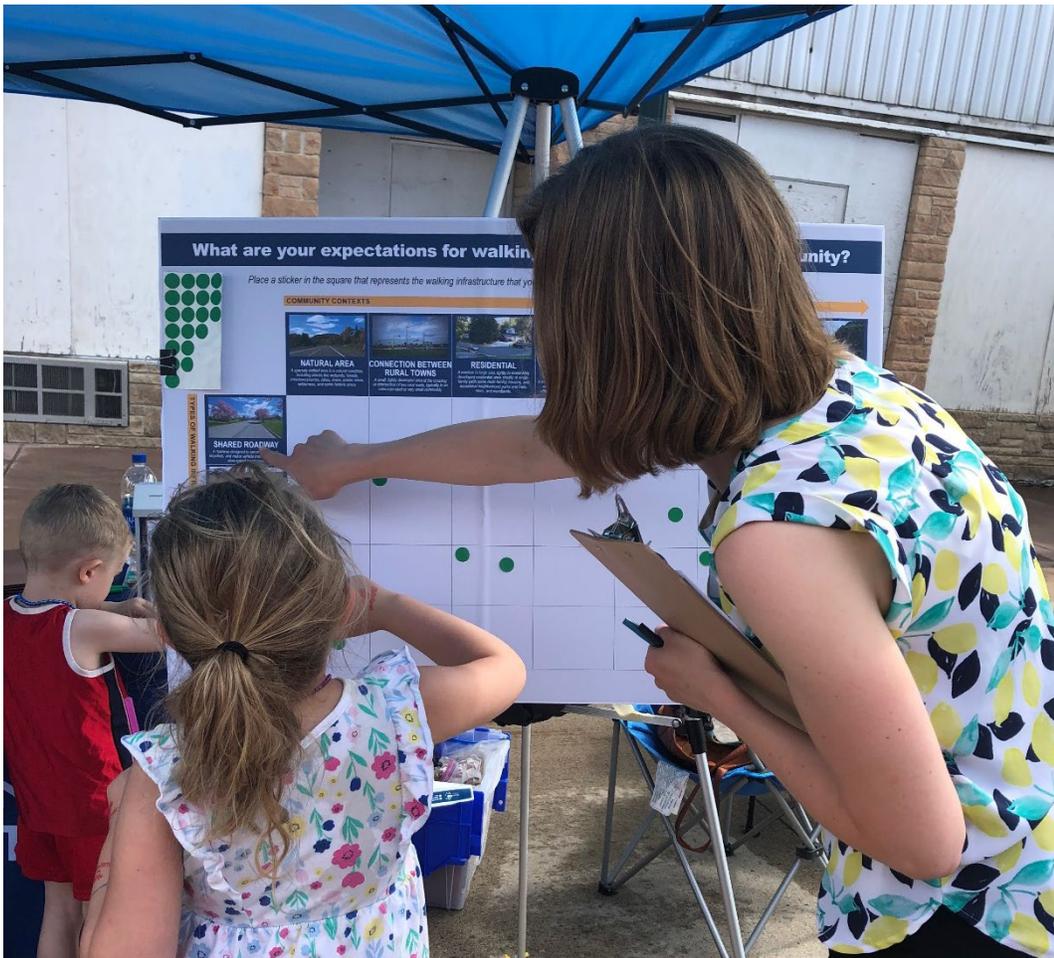


Active Transportation Planning Assistance Grant Application Guide

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Active Transportation Program Planning Assistance Overview

These instructions are for Active Transportation Program planning assistance grant applications.

Through planning assistance awards, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will support Active Transportation plans for communities, cities, and counties across Minnesota. Successful applicants will receive planning assistance provided by a statewide planning consultant. Plans will include an analysis of existing conditions, public outreach and identification of potential infrastructure and non-infrastructure solutions to work towards the State's goal of helping more people walk and bicycle safely to destinations where they live, work, and play. More information on the planning process and type of assistance available through this grant is available on the [Active Transportation Program webpage](#).

MnDOT defines Active Transportation as: "Using human-powered means of travel to get from one place to another, which includes walking, bicycling, and the use of mobility assistive devices; and may also incorporate other human-scale modes like electric-powered, electric-assisted, or micromobility devices such as e-bikes and e-scooters."

Applicants for planning assistance should be prepared to support plan development by providing information, convening a local advisory group, supporting community engagement, helping to arrange and publicize public workshops, and participating in identifying local issues and solutions that will help more people walk and bicycle to destinations. Applicants should also be able to demonstrate a commitment to implementing the plan once it is complete.

Please note: This plan is broader than engineering and infrastructure improvement identification. The Active Transportation Plan will include programmatic activities that a community should engage in. Therefore, partners should be apprised of the need for both programs and city/county infrastructure improvements that may result from an Active Transportation Plan and be committed to these outcomes when applying.

Planning awards are intended to begin work in Fall of 2022, completing work by June 2023.

Active Transportation Program Resources

Many resources are available to applicants considering how a planning assistance grant may advance active transportation work in a community:

- [MnDOT Bicycle Planning Webpage](#)
- [MnDOT Pedestrian Planning Webpage](#)
- [MnDOT Advancing Transportation Equity Initiative](#)
- [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#)
- [Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning](#)
- [FHWA Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian](#)
- [BikeMN's Bikeable Community Workshops](#)
- [MDH Walkable Community Workshops](#)
- [AARP's Livable Communities Library](#)

Public Data

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13.599 Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once responses are opened. All remaining data in proposed responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed). All data created or maintained by the Minnesota Department of Transportation as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when grant agreements have been fully executed).

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13.03, subd. 1, all government data collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by a government entity shall be public unless classified by statute, or temporary classification pursuant to section [13.06](#), or federal law, as nonpublic or protected nonpublic, or with respect to data on individuals, as private or confidential. The responsible authority in every government entity shall keep records containing government data in such an arrangement and condition as to make them easily accessible for convenient use. Photographic, photostatic, microphotographic, or microfilmed records shall be considered as accessible for convenient use regardless of the size of such records.

Record Keeping and Audit

Generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) refer to a common set of accepted accounting principles, standards, and procedures that a recipient, and any third-party contractor, and their accountants must follow when they compile their financial statements. (See also [Minn. Stat. section 15.17, subd. 1](#)) The records must permit audit verification of grantee cost allocations claimed during the contract period. It is important to keep good records for all labor and material expenditures. Only reasonable costs directly related to and necessary for conducting the business of the public transit system are allowed. A cost is considered reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person as ordinary and necessary for the operations. Regardless of when an expense invoice is received or paid by the grantee, the expense must be billed to MnDOT in the grant agreement period in which the expense was incurred. If applicable, the financial records of the recipient must be audited. Audits occur by the MnDOT audit department and when applicable, as part of an independent audit.

Monthly progress reports will be delivered to the MnDOT Project Manager for each community receiving planning assistance through the program from the start of the planning process through plan completion. Selected communities and the consultant will be expected to work together to submit accurate, timely progress reports.

Eligible Applicants

To ensure that the Active Transportation Program is available to a broad range of stakeholders, both public and non-profit entities may submit applications for funding. Eligible groups include (but are not limited to):

- Cities
- Counties

- Federally Recognized Tribal Nations
- Regional Development Organizations
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Non-Profit Organizations (with letter of support from local government who will own the plan)

It is up to each applicant to determine what type of plan will work best in the community. If a plan would be most beneficial to combine multiple cities, neighborhoods, or a corridor than an application should identify a lead entity that will work with each stakeholder to guide the contractor through the process and take ownership of the project.

Funding Information

The local community receives planning services from a selected transportation planning consultant but does not receive funding directly from MnDOT.

This solicitation will award up to \$400,000 of state Active Transportation Program funds each year from 2022 through 2024 (to be split among successful applicants) toward statewide planning consultant services and does not require a local match. MnDOT enters directly into a contract with a statewide planning consultant to provide planning services to successful applicants. Monthly progress reports will provide updates on opportunities and challenges encountered through the duration of the project to MnDOT. Invoicing during the period of technical support will be handled by the Consultant through MnDOT's Consultant Services process.

Application Process and Information

Application Instructions

Completed applications must be **submitted by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 10, 2022** online and include:

1. Completed online application form
2. Letters of support uploaded with application

The application should be completed online. If you are unable to do so, please contact [Jake Rueter \(jacob.rueter@state.mn.us\)](mailto:jacob.rueter@state.mn.us)

Informational Webinars

Two webinars will be provided to go over the Active Transportation Program application requirements. Join the meeting using the links provided on the [Active Transportation Planning Assistance web page](#) or email the Active Transportation Program coordinator for more [information here](#). Both webinars will cover the same materials, it is not necessary to attend both.

Submitting Your Application

Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 10, 2022 [via online submission](#).

Application Notification

Awards for planning assistance will be announced in Summer 2022 and implemented beginning Fall of 2022. MnDOT reserves the right to cancel awards, when necessary.

Application Questions

If you have questions about the program or application please submit them to [Jake Rueter \(jacob.rueter@state.mn.us\)](mailto:jacob.rueter@state.mn.us). All questions and answers will be posted to an FAQ document on the MnDOT Active Transportation Program website.

Appeal Process

If an application is not funded based on committee recommendations, the applicant may appeal the outcome by initiating an appeal. The appeal will rely on a written notice of appeal from the applicant that clearly states the organization's name, contact person, address, phone number, project description and the rationale for the appeal. The notice of appeal must be addressed to Mark Nelson, Director, MNDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation and Active Transportation, 395 John Ireland Blvd, MS 430, St. Paul, MN 55155-1899.

In the event of an appeal:

- Staff will verify that the notice of appeal was postmarked no later than 14 calendar days from the date by which MnDOT notified the applicant's funding status (award).
- The Office of Transit and Active Transportation director will review any appeal and provide a written response within ten (10) working days.

Application Guidance

The [grant application is online](#). Use this guide to assist in answering the questions. Information on evaluation criteria will follow this section.

Part 1: Project Lead Contact Information

Please list the name of the organization applying for planning assistance and the application lead's contact information. This person will be notified of final decisions and will be expected to communicate award announcements to the rest of the Active Transportation Program partners. The project lead will represent the planning team during project submission and will be invited to participate in development opportunities during the planning process. This section is not scored.

Part 2: Planning Assistance Requested

Please provide details on the type of plan and communities that will be involved in the planning process. Brief descriptions of each plan type are included in the application.

- Active Transportation Plan: A combined plan focused on walking, bicycling, and other types of human-powered or human-speed mobility
- Bike Plan or Bicycle Master Plan: A plan focused on bicycling
- Pedestrian Plan: A plan focused on walking
- Active Transportation Corridor Plan: A plan focused on active transportation modes within one transportation corridor.
- Parks and Trails Master Plan: A plan focused on active transportation related to parks and trails
- Active Transportation Plan Update: An update to an existing active transportation plan. If requesting an update, provide rationale for why the update is needed.
- Other plan update: If selected, please describe the type of plan you are proposing.

Provide any details on the need that a planning process could help fulfill for people walking and bicycling. If there are any plans, policies, or construction that would adversely affect the progress of Active Transportation Program work in your community, please list those in the follow up questions about policies that affect people walking and biking. This section is not scored.

Part 3: Community Information Sheet

Please provide name and population data for each community (or neighborhood if more applicable) that will be involved in the planning process. This section is not scored.

Part 4: Equity – Reaching Priority Populations

A. Equity: Reaching Priority Populations (30 points)

MnDOT’s Active Transportation Program aims to achieve equitable outcomes by funding initiatives that prioritize communities who are more likely to rely on active transportation, are more vulnerable to unsafe traffic conditions, or have experienced historic disinvestment.

The Active Transportation Equity Score uses 15 indicators to identify locations in Minnesota that likely have a greater need for Active Transportation investment. The maximum score awarded to a hexagon in the analysis was 13 points. Points will be awarded to applicants proportionally compared to the maximum awarded score based on the applying community’s equity score.

Calculations of equity scores will be conducted by MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation staff. The scores to be used can be viewed on [MnDOT’s Active Transportation Equity Score Web App](#). This app allows viewers to preview scores throughout the state and develop an understanding of how scores will be calculated.

As an example, the table below shows scores and the percentage of the total area for a hypothetical application. OTAT Staff would calculate an area-weighted average to arrive at an overall score for the area in question. For this example, assume the applying area is 2.5 hexagon area units. The following table shows how the area-weighted average would be calculated.

Hexagon Score	Percentage of Total	Final Score
4	20%	0.8
5	20%	1
8	20%	1.6
9	40%	3.6
Total	100%	7

For corridor planning projects, the length of the corridor will be used in the weighted average calculation instead of area.

B. Narrative Response (10 Points)

Applicants will be asked to provide information about how the proposed plan will address equity in any way that would not be readily identified by the Active Transportation Equity Tool. This could include finding ways to mitigate barriers within the community, provide broader access to a community resource, address historic disinvestment, or invest in communities that have been historically marginalized.

Part 5: Project Need

- A. Please use this section to describe the unique barriers and needs your community, city, or county have that makes walking and biking challenging for people, especially priority populations. Priority populations include People of Color, children and youth, Native American people, people with low incomes, small rural communities, older adults, and people with disabilities. Describe how this planning process will engage the community and key stakeholders to identify policy, systems and built environment changes to improve walking and biking conditions for all. (15 points)
- B. Describe how this plan fits into and/or supports larger community goals. Applicants might consider comprehensive planning efforts, city/county transportation plans, local public health initiatives, school district wellness policies, traffic safety goals, complete streets policies and active living plans in the answer. (5 points)

Part 6: Active Transportation Program Team Members and Local Support

A robust, well rounded and engaged Active Transportation Program team is critical for the successful development and implementation of an Active Transportation Program Plan. The applicant should aim to demonstrate individual commitment to the team from a variety of sectors.

- A. Please provide a team leader who will co-lead the planning process with the statewide consultant and assist with organizing meetings, local engagement, and tracking progress on the plan.

- B. Please provide the Active Transportation Program with the following information in the question A table:
- a. Provide names and/or titles of active/committed team members
 - b. Provide their role on the team and how they will contribute to plan development and implementation. Examples of roles may include team lead, city planning support, community outreach, etc. Consider the skills, knowledge or connections that could be valuable for during the planning process that is unique to each of these individuals. More ideas on how various team members can contribute to an Active Transportation Program team.

Part 7: Existing Conditions and Implementation Support

- A. Using the 6Es- [education, encouragement, engagement, equity, engineering and evaluation](#)- briefly discuss the Active Transportation Program specific activities that currently happen in your community or have occurred within the last two years.
Examples might include:
- Crosswalk safety campaigns
 - Bike rodeos or safety courses
 - Infrastructure improvements for walking and biking
 - Teaching Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum or components of the curriculum
 - Bike Libraries or bike share programs
- B. What is your team’s vision for a successfully implemented Active Transportation Program plan? In other words, what is the best outcome that you can imagine from a completed plan? What do you plan to accomplish after the planning process? Please consider including who will be involved and by when in your implementation.

Part 8: Letters of Support

Please attach the following unique letters of support:

1. City staff or City administrator letter of support from each City that will be covered in the plan and/or a County official letter if this will be a County or Regional level plan.
2. Letter of support from the local partner (Pedestrian/Bicycle group, Local Public Health, SRTS or TZD committee, etc.)

2022 Planning Assistance Scoring Criteria and Review Process

In order to be evaluated, applications must be:

- Submitted by the deadline;
- Complete; and,
- Meet eligibility requirements

Part 2 – Part 8 will be evaluated using the criteria explained in the “2022 Active Transportation Program Planning Assistance Scoring Criteria” section.

Review committees include internal MnDOT staff and partner agencies. External stakeholders from the Active Transportation Program Statewide Steering Committee provide guidance for scoring criteria, and the Active Transportation Program’s Non-Infrastructure Advisory Committee recommends adoption of award decisions.

Applicant Classification by Community Size

Program administrators will be grouping applicants by [Legislative City designations](#) to accurately compare similar communities in lieu of dividing applicants by metro and greater Minnesota.

Cities are classified by population under [Minnesota Statutes, section 410.01](#). Cities are divided, for legislative purposes, into four classes.

1. **First class:** Cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Once a city is in the first class, it is not reclassified unless its population decreases by 25 percent from the census figures that last qualified the city as first class.
2. **Second class:** Cities with a population between 20,001 and 100,000
3. **Third class:** Cities with a population between 10,001 and 20,000
4. **Fourth class:** Cities with not more than 10,000 inhabitants

Population by Type of Local Government and Class As of the state demographer’s 2018 estimates, the state’s total population is 5,629,416 and is distributed among these classifications of cities, and in towns or unorganized areas as follows:



Note: Based on 2010 census and 2018 estimates data from the [state demographer’s website](#). Counties or Tribal Governments who apply will be considered based on their population with the corresponding city classification.

Collaborative applications between entities will be classified based on the population of the largest applying entity.

2022 Active Transportation Program Planning Assistance Scoring Criteria

Questions	In order to get points indicated, the response meets these criteria:
<p>Part 1-3 These sections are reviewed by the selection committee but not scored.</p>	No Points
<p>Part 4: The community information sheets will be ranked by the committee on the following criteria:</p> <p>A) Equity Score to prioritize resources towards marginalized populations and communities (30 points)</p> <p>B) Narrative response to how the potential plan would advance equity (10 points)</p>	<p>Equity (Part 4): 0-40 points The number of points received for the equity score are a weighted average of the application’s subject area as a percentage multiplied by the number of points available.</p> <p>Continuing the example from earlier in the guide, a community scoring 7 out of 13 would receive a score of:</p> <p>$(7/13) \times 30 = 16$ (with any rounding to the nearest whole point). In this example, the application would score 16 points for this section, plus any additional points awarded for the narrative section (B).</p>
<p>Part 5: A) Description of need and use of plan, and potential to get more people walking and bicycling. B) How does this plan fit into community goals?</p>	<p>Part 5A: 0-15 Points 0-5 Points: Application does not have a clear sense of how this plan will advance walking and bicycling. 6-10 Points: Application identifies either need for the plan or potential to get people walking and bicycling, but not both. 11-15 Points: Application responds to multiple aspects of active transportation with an understanding of how the plan will move the community towards the stated goals.</p> <p>Part 5B: 0-5 Points The successful applicant will clearly describe how the Active Transportation Program fits into their community goals.</p>

Questions	In order to get points indicated, the response meets these criteria:
<p>Part 6: Active Transportation Team members and roles</p>	<p>Part 6: 20 Points 0-9 Points: Most of the team is missing or is not yet identified 10-15 Points: There is a good mix of team members, could use more support 16-20 Points: There is a good mix of team members and all the necessary partners are involved with clear and unique roles.</p>
<p>Part 7: A) Using the 6Es, discuss existing Active Transportation Program activities. B) What is your team’s vision for a successful Active Transportation Plan? What do you plan to accomplish after the planning process?</p>	<p>Part 7A: 0-5 Points 0 Points: No Active Transportation work is occurring 1-3 Points: Some work has happened in the past or is occurring in some of the E areas. 5 Points: Active Transportation activities are happening, and clearly described in the application.</p> <p>Part 7B: 0-10 Points The successful applicant will have a clearly demonstrated vision including who will be involved and the timeline for future accomplishments is comprehensive.</p>
<p>Part 8: Letters of Support</p>	<p>Part 8: (5 Points) 5 Points: Letters are unique in nature describing individual or organizational roles in planning and implementation.</p>
<p>Application Total</p>	<p>___ / 100 points</p>