

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITY

Federal infrastructure discretionary grant identification, grant writing, Benefit-Cost Analysis, project outreach, project implantation, project reporting

INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the Michigan legislature appropriated funding to establish a technical assistance program within the Michigan Infrastructure Office. The purpose of the program is to provide technical assistance, planning, and matching grants to local units of government and planning organizations to help draw federal infrastructure money to Michigan's communities.

ABOUT THE MICHIGAN INFRASTRUCTURE OFFICE

The Michigan Infrastructure Office is responsible for organizing and executing Governor Whitmer's vision for infrastructure, coordinating across state government, marshaling resources, and partnering with local officials, federal partners, and outside stakeholders to ensure resources sent to Michigan through BIL, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), are used efficiently and effectively.

FUNDING OPPORUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) Technical Assistance (TA) program allows eligible recipients to directly contract with pre-qualified consultants through their Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Planning Agencies, or Economic Development Districts (MPO/RPA) to first receive consulting services on a fast-track, as-needed basis, and then get reimbursed from the MIO for those approved services. Selected contractors will perform consulting services, grant identification, project management, grant writing and administration for projects supported with federal infrastructure discretionary grants. This program is administered by MIO with support from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The MIO will enter into an agreement with an MPO/RPA to provide funding for eligible activities under this Announcement.

Eligibility

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities include project planning, grant identification, grant application writing and submittal, project implementation, recordkeeping, grant reporting, project close-out, and reasonably associated activities. MPO/RPA staff time for associated work is considered an eligible activity.

Eligible Recipients

Eligible Recipients include

- local governments,

- road commissions,
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations,
- Regional Transportation Planning Agencies/economic development districts,
- Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, and
- transit agencies.

Qualified Consultants

Qualified consultants are pre-vetted firms already under contract through the State of Michigan's [MiDeal Extended Purchasing Program](#). Two contract areas with qualified firms to review and solicit for Requests For Proposals include [Financial Auditing & Accounting Services](#) and [Local Government & School Financial Consulting](#). Pre-qualified contracts are subject to a competitive second-tier bidding process.

Payments and Length of Project

The MPO/RPA and/or the Eligible Recipient will pay the contractor and then submit receipts to MIO for reimbursement. Eligible costs may include MPO/RPA staff time associated with the work. MIO will review submitted receipts and approve payments. Payments will be made by MDOT following MIO approval to release funds.

MIO expects that all projects will proceed expeditiously and encourages applications to be implemented quickly and effectively.

REPORTING

All recipients are required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award. All financial reports must be submitted to MIO in electronic format.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

For administrative and qualification questions:

Timothy R. Fischer
Transportation Infrastructure Officer
Michigan Infrastructure Office
George W. Romney Building
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For financial and reporting questions:

Patrick McCarthy
Director, Bureau of Finance and Administration
Michigan Department of Transportation

Van Wagoner Building
425 West Ottawa Street
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Lansing, MI 48909
Email: MCCARTHYP@michigan.gov

For MiDEAL questions:

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MiDEAL and Outreach Program Manager, Training & Policy Division
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HOW IT WORKS

This part of the process is MPO/RPA-driven.



An Eligible Recipient has a project in mind – it could be, for example, a planning project that is already included in its region’s TIP (but doesn’t necessarily need to be) – that it needs funding for. It thinks that there might be a federal discretionary grant (BIL, IRA) that could work but it doesn’t have the capacity or resources to go after it.



The Eligible Recipient contacts its MPO/RPA and requests that the MPO/RPA approves its project and have it added to the region’s Technical Assistance project bundle.



The MPO/RPA selects the projects from communities in their region that need assistance in applying for federal infrastructure discretionary grants. It then bundles the projects together into a single RFP (can use MIO SOW template in Appendix A).



The MPO/RPA enters into a standard contract with MIO/MDOT for Technical Assistance.



The MPO/RPA joins [MiDEAL](#), pays the \$180.00 fee.



The MPO/RPA solicits bids from the pre-qualified [MiDEAL contractor list](#).



The MPO/RPA selects the consultant to perform the work.



The MPO/RPA pays the consultant for work performed and then seeks reimbursement from MIO. Eligible costs may include MPO/RPA staff time associated with the work. MIO reviews reimbursement request and, upon approval, requests funds be released from MDOT to the MPO/RPA.

WHEN THE FEDERAL GRANT IS AWARDED:

This part of the process is Eligible Recipient-driven.



The MPO/RPA can access up to the amount of match money it is allocated for match (see amounts below) for projects awarded federal infrastructure grants.



The MPO/RPA contacts MIO to inform it that an award has been made, the specific project/s, and the Eligible Recipient/s.



MIO approves the release of match funds from MDOT to the Eligible Recipient. Alternatively, the match funds could be included on a project already being let by MDOT in the Eligible Recipient’s community.



In either case, a contract between the Eligible Recipient and MDOT is required. Once a contract is executed, MDOT will release the funds.



The following regions and regional clusters are allocated an approximate number of funds for grants and matching purposes.

Region – MPO/RPA	Technical Assistance \$5 million total available	Project Match \$15 million total available
SEMCOG	up to \$2.3 million	\$7 million
West Michigan Regional Planning/Grand Valley Metro Council/Macatawa Area Coordinating Council	up to \$640,000	\$1.9 million

EMCOG/Bay County Area Transportation Study/Saginaw Area Transportation Agency/Midland Area Transportation Study	up to \$320,000	\$970,000
GLS Region V Planning and Development Commission/Genesee Co Metropolitan Planning Commission	up to \$240,000	\$726,000
Southcentral Michigan Planning/Battle Creek Area Transportation Study/Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study	up to \$240,000	\$726,000
Tri-County Regional Planning	up to \$240,000	\$726,000
Lower Central and Southwest Cluster	Total: up to \$320,000	\$968,000
- Region II Planning	up to \$160,000	
- Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	up to \$160,000	
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development/WestPlan	up to \$160,000	\$484,000
Northern Lower and Upper Peninsula Cluster	Total: up to \$400,000	\$1.2 million
- Networks Northwest	up to \$160,000	
- Central UP Planning	up to \$80,000	
- NEMCOG	up to \$80,000	
- Western UP Planning	up to \$80,000	
- Eastern UP Planning		
Totals	\$4,720,000	\$14,700,000



What is a “Cluster”? For the purposes of this MIO Technical Assistance program, there are two Clusters: (1) the Lower Central and Southwest Cluster, and (2) the Northern Lower and Upper Peninsula Cluster. Smaller population MPOs/RPAs are clustered to allow for a bigger assemblage of projects, increasing the chances of more bids and more competitive bids from consultants.

Find out more about the Michigan Infrastructure Office by visiting the [website](#).

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF WORK

Federal infrastructure discretionary grant identification, grant writing, Benefit-Cost Analysis, project outreach, project implantation, project reporting

BACKGROUND

The Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) provides through its Technical Assistance program funding for eligible recipients to contract with qualified consultants on projects supported by federal infrastructure discretionary grants. The Contractor will aid and support in communicating and understanding grant opportunities, recommending grant strategies, interacting with state and federal agencies, forming partnerships, and drafting and submitting complete grant applications. The type of professional services requested requires in-depth familiarity, knowledge and expertise in transportation, environment, including water resources and natural resources, and community and economic development issues with demonstrated success in procuring grant funding.

Eligible recipients are local governments, road commissions, and transit agencies.

This is a prequalification program allowing eligible recipients and MiDEAL members to contract for consulting services through their Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Planning Agencies, or Economic Development Districts on a fast-track, as-needed basis and then receive reimbursement from MIO for those approved services.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

The selected Contractor will perform consulting services which include, but are not limited to, the following:

Task 1. Establish Project Team and Duties:

Define roles and responsibilities of project participants.

- Meet with the project manager throughout the project to ensure deliverables and deadlines are being submitted and met.
- Create a project timeline and deadlines for deliverables.
- Weekly meetings with the project team.

Task 2. Grant Identification / Project Management

The Contractor will identify federal infrastructure grant opportunities consistent with applicants' programs. Preference is for a cost-effective, interactive, web-based grant listing of federal discretionary grant opportunities that can be utilized by staff. The grant listing will show, at the minimum, grant availability, openings, due dates and Contractor activity with partner agencies in the areas of transportation and environment.

Expected Deliverables: List of Grant availability, due dates, and requirements based on staff's priority topic areas updated monthly, with preference for an interactive, web-based tool.

Task 3. Grant Writing / Administration

The general grant writing and related tasks for any single application should include:

1. Provide staff to work on the applications who have in-depth knowledge and subject matter expertise;
2. Review grant application guidelines with staff to develop and oversee an application strategy and schedule to ensure timely submittal;
3. Develop a grant-writing schedule that includes draft reviews by staff;
4. Writing and editing grant narratives, outlining clear explanation of project funding, linking to local, regional and state plans, developing work plans and schedules and securing letters of support from recommended partner agencies and elected officials;
5. Creating the Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA): Detailed breakdown of the various costs of the project as laid out in the narrative;
6. Locate, identify, research, collect and analyze data as needed for the grant application;
7. Interact with staff and bring in additional partners to increase funding opportunities and leverage resources;
8. Develop language about data for grant application narratives and, if necessary, charts, tables and diagrams to illustrate data;
9. Prepare supplemental documents required for grant application completion including budget forms and budget justifications;
10. Prepare drafts of the grant application proposals and coordinate reviews of the draft proposal documents with staff. Incorporate comments and edits as necessary;
11. Follow all federal and state agency requirements outlined in the grant availability notice;
12. If awarded, provide early logistical support to the local agency, if needed, to ensure the local agency is prepared to accept the grant funding, and;
13. Track the status of grant applications and provide additional supporting information, as required.

Expected Deliverables: Final electronic copies of all grant applications.

Task 4 – Grant administration: Work with stakeholders as needed to ensure grant funds are used in accordance with state and federal requirements.

Pricing

The contractor will be compensated based on the established hourly rate for services performed up to a maximum of \$80,000 per grant application.

REQUIRED MDOT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Work shall conform to current MDOT, FHWA, and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) practices, guidelines, policies, and standards.