

# RPA 14/ATURA

## Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) APPLICATION FOR REGIONAL FUNDS

Please provide the following information when applying to RPA 14/ATURA for regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding for projects you propose to include in the *RPA 14/ATURA Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY 2021 – 2024* by **November 30, 2019**.

Applicant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Agency if Multi-Jurisdictional: \_\_\_\_\_

Classification of project: (Check those that apply)

- Construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation
- Operation improvements
- Capital costs for transit projects and publicly owned intra-city and intercity bus terminals or facilities
- Highway and transit safety programs
- Surface transportation planning, highway and transit technology transfer activities, and research and development
- Capital and operating costs for traffic management and control
- Fringe and corridor parking facilities
- Most transportation control measures in the Clean Air Act
- Development and establishment of management systems
- Enhancements/Transportation Alternatives
- County/City borrowing ahead

Provide a brief narrative describing your project:

Explain why STBG funds are needed and provide a preliminary budget showing the source of all funds:

Federal Fiscal Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Participation Requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

Non-FHWA Match: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

Roadway or bike/pedestrian Projects:

County: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Route/Street/Bridge ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Average Daily Traffic: \_\_\_\_\_ (Year of count \_\_\_\_\_)

Length (Miles): \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Point: \_\_\_\_\_ Termini: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person / Phone / E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a narrative describing how this project addresses the following ranking criteria:

1. The degree to which the proposed project fulfills the intent of the Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and the goals and priorities of RPA 14/ATURA and its most recent Long Range Transportation Plan (RPA 14/ATURA Long-Range Transportation Plan Looking Ahead to 2045). (See attached LRTP Key Needs & Issues & Action Plan.) How does this project encourage economic vitality - jobs created through construction or ongoing use of project, promote tourism, enhance freight movement, enhance movement of workers or consumers, or improve business opportunities.
2. Projects that enhance inter-connectivity through pedestrian/bicycle/sidewalk facilities, transit connections, or improve connectivity to a road classified as arterial or higher, improve freight connectivity or access to multiple modes of transportation.
3. Projects that demonstrate environmental justice (to what extent does the project serve minority, disabled or low-income persons or improve access to essential services for the population in general).
4. Projects that demonstrate significant system use and scale (# of persons/vehicles impacted by project, contribution to regional transportation system, impact of project on quality of life).
5. Projects with an assured local match (non-federal funds) of more than the minimum 20 percent or that leverage additional funding sources.
6. If the applicant is a jurisdiction that receives a sub-allocation of STP funds from RPA 14/ATURA and they wish to borrow ahead from the region, please address the following: benefits that will be derived by spending anticipated funds sooner.

**CHECKLIST: The following items must be submitted along with this application:**

- Project Location Map(s) *(if applicable)*
- Resolution from Sponsoring Entity (not required when County is the applicant)
  - Commitment of matching funds *(if applicable)*
  - Statement agreeing to project maintenance
- Reproducible site map that clearly outlines the project area *(if applicable)*
- Letter of Support from County Board of Supervisors *(if City is applicant)*
- Narrative addressing ranking criteria

**Return By November 30, 2019 to:**

**RPA 14/ATURA**

**Southern Iowa Council of Governments**

**101 East Montgomery Street**

**Creston, IA 50801-2406**

**Fax: 641-782-8492 or E-Mail to: [amman@sicog.com](mailto:amman@sicog.com)**

IF YOU DESIRE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE APPLICATION OR YOUR PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT:

Marcus Amman, Transportation/Planner 641-782-8491 [amman@sicog.com](mailto:amman@sicog.com)

## QUALIFYING CRITERIA – SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT

**1. To be eligible as a Surface Transportation Block Grant activity, any project or area served by the project must fit one or more of the following categories:**

- Construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation
- Operation improvements
- Capital costs for transit projects and publicly owned intra-city and intercity bus terminals or facilities
- Highway and transit safety programs
- Surface transportation planning, highway and transit technology transfer activities, and research and development
- Capital and operating costs for traffic management and control
- Fringe and corridor parking facilities
- Most transportation control measures in the Clean Air Act
- Development and establishment of management systems
- Transportation Alternatives

**NOTE:** This list is exclusive; a project must fit into one of the categories to be eligible for Surface Transportation Block Grant funds.

**2. Projects must have an assured local (non-federal funds) match of at least 20 percent of the estimated total cost of the proposed project.**

Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act requires a non-federal match of at least 20% of federal project costs. Assurance of this required local match by the applicant at the time of the application indicates a necessary level of support by the applicant to immediately proceed with the project development and implementation.

**3. Projects must be submitted through incorporated cities, counties, or a public transit agency within the region.**

Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act federal funds received by the State of Iowa will be received and disbursed by the Iowa Department of Transportation. RPA 14/ATURA provides Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding for projects within smaller cities and towns eligible for federal aid. STP funds are available as a reimbursement program administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Reimbursement will be received from federal highway funds for the federal portion (up to 80 percent of total expenditures) of those expenditures for the project. All applications for STBG funds by cities of less than 5,000 populations shall first be submitted to their respective County Board of Supervisors for review and a letter of support. (Financial support is not required from the Board of Supervisors.) Transit capital project reimbursements will not exceed the allowable federal level.

**4. Projects/project bundles must have a minimum estimated total cost of \$25,000.**

Project proposers can “bundle” projects together to meet this minimum. Communities may want to consider using joint powers agreements for implementing bundled projects, although it is not required as long as there is one lead county or city to oversee the project.

**5. Roadway projects must be proposed on eligible roads.**

The STBG provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the National Highway System (NHS), federal aid eligible bridge projects on public roads, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities. To check eligibility, applicants should refer to the Federal Functional Classification map available at their county engineer’s office, the Southern Iowa Council of Governments office, or the Iowa Department of Transportation website: [http://www.iowadot.gov/systems\\_planning/fedfuncclass.html](http://www.iowadot.gov/systems_planning/fedfuncclass.html)

**EXCERPTED FROM RPA 14/ATURA Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)  
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2045**

**KEY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS & ISSUES**

Key findings of the long-range transportation plan include the following:

**Roads**

- Maintenance of the existing regional highway network is a key need. As a complete network, preservation, reconstruction and rehabilitation, and safety improvements are a higher priority than capacity building and new facility construction.
- Obtaining adequate funding to maintain the existing roadways within the region is a great concern.
- Obtaining funding to construct transportation facilities that enhance economic development or result in job creation or retention is desired.

**Safety**

- Although crash rates have generally remained fairly constant or declined over the past few years for both intersection and non-intersection crashes, incorporating cost-effective safety improvements into reconstruction and rehabilitation projects is desired whenever feasible.
- It is desirable to initiate cost-effective safety improvements in locations with a high number or severity of crashes when feasible.

**Bridges**

- The region has an exceptionally high number of bridges. Counties spend considerable time and money maintaining the numerous bridges within their jurisdictions. Additional funds are needed to help rehabilitate the many bridges, especially those located on the secondary roads system. The lack of funds to repair bridges is so severe it has already resulted in a few secondary roads in rural areas being closed.

**Transit**

- Public transit is primarily provided for within the region by the regional transit system – Southern Iowa Trolley.
- There is a need to expand public transit services and hours of service, but a deficit of funding prevents this expansion.
- Obtaining new and replacement vehicles is a high priority of Southern Iowa Trolley.
- The region's transit providers must maximize the use of existing resources and coordinate services with human service agencies in order to provide the most public transit capability throughout the region.
- The Southern Iowa Trolley has identified a need for a new facility to house its operations.
- Maintaining current transit operations and services, including funding to supplement rides for the elderly is desired.

**Aviation**

- Aviation facilities within the region generally meet the needs of business and industry; the only exception being the lack of regularly scheduled passenger air service.
- Regularly scheduled passenger air service must be obtained outside the RPA 14/ATURA region. The closest facilities offering the service are in Des Moines, Omaha or Kansas City.
- Creston and Greenfield should continue to pursue federal and state funds for planned improvements to their facilities. This will help them to continue to meet the needs of business and industry, and to attract new aviation based services. Many smaller airports in the region struggle to fund the operations and improvements to their airports.

## **Rail & Pipeline**

- Rail lines see heavy use with considerable amounts of freight passing through the region. Rail access is important for large businesses and industry and should be preserved.
- Proposed new high-speed passenger rail routes between Iowa City, Des Moines and Omaha are a concern for the region. There is concern new routes could result in discontinuance of the current route through southern Iowa. Efforts should be made to maintain or improve Amtrak service within the region and retain the Amtrak station in Creston.
- Few serious rail incidents or rail/vehicle crashes have occurred within the region in recent years. However, safety improvements to warning devices and crossings should continue to be made on at-grade crossings when feasible, especially along high traffic roads.

## **Trails & Sidewalks**

- Trails development is gaining interest within the region for both recreation and transportation purposes. Most existing trails have been short, local trails within communities and there is no network of connected trails throughout the region.
- Funding assistance is essential for trails development and more funding is needed. Trails projects often lack the needed local match dollars due to sparse population and the high number of low-income residents in the region.
- Coordination among local jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT in order to make further trail and pedestrian improvements is encouraged.
- Most communities have areas where there are no or poor quality sidewalks. Funding for sidewalk construction and replacement is desired in order to enhance safety and quality of life for the residents.

## **Security**

- It is impossible to monitor or secure every mile of road or every mile of rail. Instead, key areas or structures may be checked and alternative routes planned in the event of a disruption.
- All five counties in the region have multi-jurisdictional FEMA approved Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans in place that address security issues related to transportation and evacuation should a disaster occur.

## **ACTION PLAN**

The following improvements are identified needs and suggested improvements to the regional transportation network that were developed during this planning process. This Action Plan is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. It is intended as a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project development over the next 20 plus years.

### **HIGHWAYS and BRIDGES**

- Maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed. As a complete network, preservation, reconstruction, bridge replacement and rehabilitation, and safety improvements are a higher priority than capacity building and new facility construction.
- Support conversion of Highway 34 to four-lanes throughout the region should the Iowa DOT choose to make this change.
- Support roadway improvements or construction of new facilities tied to economic development or creation of jobs when feasible.

### **TRANSIT**

- Include Passenger Transportation Plan Advisory Group input in decision-making process where applicable.
- Expand services, when feasible, and attract new patrons without compromising service to existing patrons.
- Replace the transit fleet as necessary and as funds allow.
- Support construction or acquisition of a new fleet maintenance/office facility for Southern Iowa Trolley that provides a secure (preferably covered) parking area, maintenance and vehicle washing facility, and adequate office space with parking if a feasible location and funding is found.

### **RAIL**

- Include railroads in decision-making process where applicable.
- Work with railroads to improve crossing safety, especially when improvements are being made on the regional transportation network.
- Support the widening of Iowa Highway 25 viaduct in Creston, should BNSF list the project as a priority.
- Support rail access development at new and existing industrial parks.
- Support expansion of passenger rail services within the region.

### **AIR**

- Support facility updates and expansions of the five public airports in the region.

### **TRAILS & SIDEWALKS**

- Focus new trails development at specific sites, as geographic distances and available resources limit developing a locally funded and maintained regional trail network. Regional funding on trails is best spent at specific sites, or connecting adjacent sites, facilities, or existing trails.
- Place development priorities on trail facilities that address the greatest public use and need as well as enhance the safety of cyclists and pedestrians and improve quality of life.
- Support the construction of new or replacement sidewalks to enhance walkability, improve quality of life, and enhance safe transportation, particularly in and near schools and activity centers.

**INTERMODAL**

- Investigate the opportunities of intermodal facility development in the region with emphasis on value-added agriculture and economic development.

**ENHANCEMENTS/TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES**

- Continued use of regional Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding to support eligible projects. Place development priorities on facilities that address the greatest public use and need.

**TECHNOLOGY**

- Support continued development of Geographic Information System (GIS) services and other forms of technology throughout the region and further integrate them into the transportation planning process.