

## COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

### Inter-office Communication

DATE: 2/18/2022  
TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chair, County Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation  
SUBJECT: From the Director of the Department of Transportation requesting authorization to retroactively apply for and accept, if awarded, a Transportation Alternatives Program Grant  
FILE TYPE: Action Report

#### REQUEST

Requesting authorization to apply for and accept, if awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program Grant.

#### POLICY

Per Section 56.06 of the Milwaukee County General Ordinances, authorization is required from the County Board to apply for and execute discretionary federal or state grants that require a local match.

#### BACKGROUND

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a legislative program that was authorized in Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act"), the federal transportation act that was signed into law on December 4, 2015. With certain exceptions, projects that meet eligibility criteria for the [Safe Routes to School Program](#), [Transportation Enhancements](#), and/or the [Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program](#) are eligible TAP projects.

All TAP projects require local sponsors to pay 20% of approved projects costs. TAP projects are capped and may not be substituted for another project. TAP projects must commence within four years of the award date.

For the 2022-2023 TAP application cycle, MCDOT has submitted a grant application to address reckless driving and its impact on pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders in Milwaukee County. Reckless driving has reached a crisis level in Milwaukee County. Like many urban areas in the United States, injuries and fatalities caused by reckless driving have increased in recent years in the Milwaukee area. Our pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and drivers demand and deserve a data-driven, effective plan to increase transportation safety in our community. Reckless driving has disproportionately affected residents of color. According to CDC data, from 2013 to 2018, the motor vehicle crash fatality rate for Black, non-Hispanic Wisconsinites nearly doubled on an age-adjusted basis, with Milwaukee County representing the largest percentage of vehicle crash fatalities. Milwaukee County's vision to be the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity cannot be met without taking a new approach to transportation safety that addresses the root causes of reckless driving behavior and protects our most vulnerable residents.

Researching best practices across the Milwaukee region will enable policy leaders to develop data-informed solutions that municipalities can consider to best meet the needs of their residents. MCDOT seeks to actively engage all 19 municipalities, gain their input, and analyze how this plan will meet their needs. As part of this process, MCDOT plans to build upon the foundational work of the City of Milwaukee and its 2018 *Complete Streets Plan*.

We have already begun equity-based transportation safety planning. Currently, Milwaukee County Parks' development of a connecting trail system in the Northwest Trail Connections Plan and Milwaukee County Transit System's new East-West Bus Rapid Transit route beginning in 2022 show promise for transportation alternatives for the residents of Milwaukee County. Promotion of transit, bicycling, and walking is essential to reducing traffic while building support for the investment in traffic calming transit infrastructure can further curb reckless driving. We propose engaging the following entities:

- Milwaukee County Transit System
- Leaders from all 19 Milwaukee County municipalities
- Milwaukee County Board Supervisors
- Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department
- Zero in Wisconsin initiative
- City of Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention
- Community groups
- School Districts

Our proposed process and resulting plan will use a racial equity lens to continuously analyze data that will produce effective solutions that address the causes of reckless driving behavior.

During the first 18 months of the cycle, we will coordinate directly with municipal governments throughout Milwaukee County and actively engage community stakeholders, especially those who are most impacted by reckless driving. During the second 18 months, we will develop a comprehensive county-wide transportation safety plan and design concepts for each municipality to consider.

This project is a transportation plan for safe pedestrian and bicycle access throughout Milwaukee County – this project is not a highway transportation safety plan. MCDOT as the project lead will follow state and federal requirements for project outreach and implementation. At the end of the 18 months, Milwaukee County will have collected all information and related input from municipalities and communities to provide a list of options and recommendations for the Planning phase.

#### ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the strategic plan:

- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity.
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered.
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.
- 3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability.
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

RECOMMENDATION

The Director of the Department of Transportation recommends retroactive authorization to apply for and accept, if awarded, a Transportation Alternatives Program grant.

FISCAL EFFECT

The Transportation Alternatives Program Grant requires a 20% local match. The Department is requesting \$225,000, of which the County share would be \$45,000, if awarded.

TERMS (If applicable)

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Donna Brown-Martin, [donna.brownmartin@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:donna.brownmartin@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

PREPARED BY:

Donna Brown-Martin, Director

APPROVED BY:

---

Donna Brown-Martin  
Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

Report, Resolution, and Fiscal Note

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors  
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk