

# **TCDI 2015 Grant Program**

## **Questions Received (Pre-Application Meeting, At the Meeting, and Post-Meeting)**

**Updated 3/24/14**

- 1. Regarding PA Act 209 Transportation Impact Fee Studies, would such a study be an eligible project for TCDI funding?**

Yes, impact fee studies such as those referenced in PA Act 209 are eligible for TCDI funding.

- 2. If a Township is interested in pursuing a project involving a County road, does the County have to be the applicant or can the Township apply? If the Town applies, what sort of demonstrated support is required from the County as part of the application process?**

A Township can apply for a project involving a County Road. It is good to coordinate with the County, and a County representative will serve on the selection committee and add his or her insight on the project.

- 3. Can we make an application for a recently awarded project that is doing a multi-modal alternatives analysis? There is not a statement about current projects. Can we apply for the preliminary engineering of a selected alternative resulting from a current consultant contract? Could that application include the environmental permitting that will be needed?**

The TCDI application guide does not explicitly state you cannot apply for tasks to be completed for a recently awarded project. However, TCDI funds should be used for early stage and conceptual planning, feasibility, and design. The preliminary engineering referred to in the application is primarily for concept development or alternative analysis. Any environmental work performed through TCDI funded projects is not part of the environmental permitting that is necessary for final design and construction. In the scenario you are presenting it appears that you will have a selected alternative. In this case, the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding may be a better fit for the preliminary engineering work you will be looking to complete.

- 4. Our Township does not competitively select our Engineer. Would we be able to use that person for any work funded through TCDI?**

No. If you have not completed a competitive process in the past 5 years (with supporting documentation), you will be required to go through a competitive RFP process.

- 5. In the case of Philadelphia, do we need a resolution from Council or can we provide another article of documentation?**

Understanding the complexity of Council agendas in the City of Philadelphia, DVRPC will accept a letter via the Mayor or another local official with a signatory authority.

- 6. In the case of a county entity, we must contract with the municipality and consultant before contracting with DVRPC. Will that be a problem?**

DVRPC is instituting a streamlined scoping process for all TCDI contracts. All TCDI-awarded communities will be required to go through the RFP process within a 6-month timeframe (if necessary) and get a scope of work from the chosen consultant. This scope will be used for the contract between DVRPC and the municipality. All contracts must be executed within 9 months of the Board approval date.

**7. Can you elaborate on eligible in-kind services?**

There is increased scrutiny from the federal government regarding the use of federal funds. Eligible in-kind activities must be necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of the project. Secretarial and administrative work on behalf of the receiving municipality is eligible.

**8. Is professional staff and secretarial time eligible as in-kind match?**

Yes. The application asks specifically what type of activities will be provided and this should be included in that section.

**9. As a follow up to the previous question regarding staff time, does the staff working on the TCDI grant need to account for a full workday even if working on a different project?**

Yes.

**10. Is grant administration by the local government able to be used as in-kind match?**

Yes.

**11. What type of payroll practices do municipalities need to employ for staff rendering in-kind services?**

According to the Office of Management and Budget's Standards for Documentation of Personnel Expenses, "charges to Federal awards for salaries and wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed. These records must: 1) be supported by a system of internal control which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated; 2) be incorporated into the official records of the non-Federal entity; 3) reasonably reflect the total activity for which the employee is compensated by the non-Federal entity, not exceeding 100% of compensated activities; 4) encompass both federally assisted and all other activities compensated by the non-Federal entity on an integrated basis; 5) comply with the established accounting policies and practices of the non-Federal entity; 6) support the distribution of the employee's salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives if the employee works on more than one Federal award; a Federal award and non-Federal award; an indirect cost activity and a direct cost activity; two or more indirect activities which are allocated using different allocation bases; or an unallowable activity and a direct or indirect cost activity."

If a local government does not feel they can meet these requirements, DVRPC encourages the use of cash match over in-kind services.

**12. Does the consultant need an approved PennDOT overhead rate?**

No.

**13. The application mentions that a key element of TCDI projects is to enhance or build the capacity of the transportation network. Does this include bike and pedestrian facilities?**

Yes. DVRPC supports non-motorized transportation projects that enhance our bike and pedestrian infrastructure in the region.

**14. Can the 20% required match be a combination of in-kind services and cash?**

Yes.

**15. Is the development of a signage plan eligible for TCDI funds?**

It depends on the activities. If you are applying for funds to develop the concept and design elements of the wayfinding plan, it is covered through the TCDI program. Manufacturing, purchasing, or installation of signs is not an eligible activity of TCDI.

**16. If an applicant accidentally hits the Submit button on the application, can we go back in?**

The online application system has been set up to lock all applicants out either after the Submit button is hit or May 30, 2014 at 5 pm. However, DVRPC staff will be reviewing applications for completeness prior to May 30 and will alert an applicant if there is a problem with an incomplete application.

**17. Can you clarify the process for multi-municipal applications?**

DVRPC encourages multi-municipal projects. We ask that one municipality serves as the lead and submits the application, and if chosen, DVRPC will contract with that lead municipality. All municipalities participating in the project must provide the required resolution of support from their respective governing bodies at the time of the application. The 20% required match should be worked out between the municipalities. If each municipality will be using in-kind services, you should detail what services will be provided by which municipalities in the application. If selected, these in-kind services will be included in the scope of work in the contract and should be supported by timesheets when invoicing.

**18. If a consultant is filling out the application on behalf of a municipality, can they create the user account for the application?**

Yes.

**19. Under what type of scenario would a letter of support be necessary?**

The application states that we do not require general letters of support. However, if the application includes a nonprofit partner or community group, a letter of support should be submitted

illustrating a commitment to the project. In addition, if a municipality is using private funds as match for the TCDI grant, a letter from the private source should be provided.

**20. The application no longer requires a detailed budget? Can you confirm?**

That is correct. At the application stage, the Budget tab asks for the TCDI requested amount, total project cost (includes match), the source of the matching funds, and the in-kind services that will be provided (if applicable).

**21. What other items will be required after the application?**

If your project is selected, you will be asked to provide a detailed scope (from the chosen consultant, if you are hiring one) and a detailed budget. This will include information such as the personnel working on the project, number of hours, overhead rate, profit, and other soft costs. DVRPC will also request a meeting with the primary municipal contact and DVRPC project managers.

**22. Do consultants need to be from the local NJ/PA area?**

No.

**23. What is the maximum amount a community can apply for if they are submitting more than one application?**

A local government can apply for a maximum of \$100,000, while a multi-municipal application can be up to \$175,000. If a community submits two applications they could apply for \$100,000 for each, totaling \$200,000. Given the interest in the TCDI program, DVRPC encourages each community to put their "best" application forth. We will not guarantee that a community will receive more than one TCDI award.

**24. What type of municipal resolution are you requiring?**

The resolution should come from the Governing Body and verify support of the application, matching funds, and administrative requirements of the TCDI grant. A sample resolution is included in the FY 2015 TCDI program guide.

**25. If using CDBG funds for the match, will the draft plan be acceptable at the application stage?**

Yes. DVRPC understands that the cycles for TCDI and CDBG are different. If your application lists CDBG funds as match and those funds fall through, we will work with the municipality/county to find a solution to the 20% match.

**26. The Administrative Highlights form provided in the packet states that all consultants and subconsultants over \$10,000 must be competitively selected. Can you elaborate?**

Yes. Anyone consultant or sub-consultant with a budget of \$10,000 or greater must be chosen competitively. In the case of a team of consultants being chosen from a RFP process, that team and everyone on it has obviously been chosen competitively. However, if you are going to use an

existing consultant and need to bring on an expert or subconsultant for a specific task, that subconsultant must then be competitively selected if they have a budget of \$10,000 or greater.

**27. Can you use more than one consultant?**

Yes.

**28. Is there a benefit to showing more than the 20% required match?**

No.

**29. What is the normal disbursement of payment on the TCDI grant? What if your community cannot provide the 20% in-kind match? Can the municipality then withhold money from the consultant?**

No, you cannot withhold money from the consultant, as you have a contract in place with them. In this case, the municipality would be required to pay the consultant their full contract amount. DVRPC pays 80% of every invoice submitted (to account for the 20% match of the total project cost), thus DVRPC will only pay 80% of whatever services are invoiced.

**30. Are applicants allowed to say in the application that the project is scalable and the applicant would accept a smaller or larger grant amount?**

Yes.

**31. Can we use TMA dollars as a match for the TCDI grant?**

TMA dollars cannot be used as the local match as those are federal dollars, and we do not allow federal dollars to be matched by federal.

**32. Can DVRPC provide a list of pre-application meeting attendees?**

It is DVRPC's policy not to share our meeting or contact lists. However, if you are interested, you can contact the county planner(s) to discuss who attended.

**33. Can I get a paper copy or .pdf version of the application to review and pre-plan what information I need to gather and "practice" a draft form?**

To get a paper copy, you must go to [www.dvrpc.org/tcdi](http://www.dvrpc.org/tcdi) and click on Apply Online. Once you are there, you need to create an account. Our system will send you a password. Once you have the password, you can then log into the application system and see the five sections of the application. If you hit the Print button, you will be able to see the entire application and print it if you wish to prepare a draft.

**34. Can a local government do the work in-house and not hire a consultant?**

Yes, local government staff can do the work. DVRPC still requires a 20% cash or in-kind services match.