

New Jersey Department of Transportation

Municipal Aid Handbook

Procedures and Criteria for Municipal Aid Grant Program



July 2024

Overview

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's Municipal Aid Grant Program provides grant funds to municipalities who are committed to advancing projects that enhance safety, renew aging infrastructure and supports the State's economy with new transportation opportunities. The Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) provides the opportunity for State assistance to local governments for the funding of road, bridge and other transportation projects. Starting in FY2018 the TTF provides \$400 million in State Aid to municipalities and counties for local transportation improvements. Of that amount the Municipal Aid Program will be funded at level of \$140 million. Additionally \$10 million is allotted for municipalities qualifying for Urban Aid under P.L. 1978 c.14 (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-178 et seq.,). The individual allotments to qualifying municipalities are based on proportions determined by the Department of Community Affairs.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's Municipal Aid Program will provide funding to municipalities for the overall purpose of assisting in the implementation of public transportation projects for the continued safety and accessibility on the roads of New Jersey. Funds are appropriated by the Legislature annually and apportioned to counties based on the formula contained in the legislation which gives equal consideration to municipal road mileage within the county and municipal population. Municipalities can then compete for funds within their respective counties.

Those municipalities whose projects are selected for funding will be notified in writing of the grant award. The municipality shall work with the representative Local Aid district office when coordinating bid, award concurrence and invoicing. Municipal local aid agreements using both formula allocations and urban aid allocations shall specify that a contract must be awarded by the municipality within 24 Months from the date of grant notification.

Eligibility

The 564 Municipalities within the State are eligible to apply for funding through the Municipal Aid Grant Program. Applications can be made for the improvement of any public road or bridge governed by the municipality. Each municipality may submit up to two (2) applications annually under the Municipal Aid Grant Program through NJDOT System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE) which can be accessed from NJDOT Website:

www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/forms.shtm

An e-resolution must be submitted online using the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Project Management and Reporting System (PMRS), which can be accessed from the Local Aid Resource Center:

<https://njdotlocalaidrc.com/pmrs/>. Once an application is submitted online through SAGE, the project will be created in PMRS. The engineer listed on the project application will be assigned to the LPA Project Manager role, and the LPA Project Manager will have the project in their court to start the Resolution and Agreement Execution Process (LAAE). After the LPA Project Manager completes their portion of the LAAE, the process will be directed to go to the Presiding Officer and then to the Clerk to capture the electronic signatures. The e-resolution submission must be completed within **30 days** of application submission in PMRS.

Allowable Costs

For eligible Construction cost: refer to the article 16:20B-4.1 of [Municipal Aid Regulations](#)

For eligible Engineering and Right-of-Way cost: refer to the article 16:20B-4.2 of [Municipal Aid Regulations](#).

Per N.J.S.A. 27:1B-25.1, a grant recipient under the local aid program shall be permitted to expend up to five percent of its aid allotment for design purposes.

Eligible Project Categories

- **Infrastructure**
 - Bikeway
 - Bridge Preservation
 - Mobility
 - Pedestrian Safety
 - Quality of Life
 - Roadway Preservation
 - Roadway Safety
 - Pavement Preservation
- **Purpose**
 - Primary project purpose is for constructing new bikeways (e.g. bike lanes, bike paths, bike compatible roadways).
 - Primary project purpose is for improving the condition of bridge infrastructure (e.g. new deck, rehabilitation, replacement).
 - Primary project purpose is to enhance mobility and reduce congestion (e.g. adding lanes, signal optimization).
 - Primary project purpose is to enhance pedestrian safety (e.g. new sidewalks, new crosswalks, traffic calming, pedestrian overpass).
 - Primary project purpose is for beautification, environmental mitigation, economic development or historic preservation.
 - Primary project purpose is for improving the condition of roadway infrastructure (e.g. resurfacing, reconstruction, drainage).
 - Primary project purpose is to enhance vehicular safety (e.g. guide rail, signing, warning devices, and striping).
 - Primary project purpose is to renew the road surface and correct irregularities while preserving and protecting the underlying pavement structure.

Ineligible Projects & Activities

- Relocation costs of utility property and equipment owned by a private utility or a municipal or county utility authority
- Betterment of any utility property or equipment, whether publicly-owned, privately-owned, or owned by a municipal or county utility authority
- Engineering or right-of-way acquisition costs except for those deemed eligible pursuant to N.J.A.C. 16:20B-4.2; and per N.J.S.A. 27:1B-25.1, a grant recipient under the local aid program shall be permitted to expend up to five percent of its aid allotment for design purposes.
- Planning activity costs.
- The work of any local government entity's employees on any construction projects funded, in whole or in part, out of funds from the local aid program, per N.J.S.A. 27:1B-25.1

Application Guidelines

- Each municipality may submit up to two (2) applications for Municipal Aid funding.
- Applications must be submitted through SAGE, the Department's online grant management system.
- A completed Resolution-Agreement for each application shall also be submitted to the District Office.
- Training and instructions on how to apply can be found on the NJDOT's Local Aid and Economic Development website under the tab Doing Business: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/sage.shtm>.

Through SAGE, users can also communicate with grant program staff, request changes, and manage grants.

The Department shall distribute an aid application solicitation letter to each municipality for funding by April 30th of each year. Each municipality shall submit an application for funding by July 1st of each year. The Department shall distribute an award letter to each municipality receiving a grant by November 30th of each year.

The Department shall execute an agreement with each municipality receiving an award within 90 days from the date the department distributes the award letter to the municipality or by March 1st of the following year, whichever is later.

The major components of the application are the Scope of Work and the Data Sheet. The Scope of Work must include a narrative explaining how the project will meet each of the individual selection criteria described below. Applicants must include maps and are encouraged to enclose photographs in order to depict what will be achieved. Answers to questions asked in the on-line SAGE application, and supporting documentation supplied by the applicant shall form part of the basis upon which the applications are scored. Applicants should answer all questions to the best of their ability; if a question is not answered or required supporting documentation is not supplied applicant will not receive points.

Project Selection Criteria

Projects are evaluated and scored based on a field review of the project by the Local Aid District Office and the content of the application.

Typical Rating Criteria

- Existing road conditions
- Traffic Volumes
- Proposed Safety Improvements
- Project's service to the public
- Special Designation of the Municipality
- Targeted Urban Municipality Designation of the Municipality
- Timely submission of the e-resolution
- Projects addressing equity criteria such as low-income earners and ethnic minorities will receive additional consideration.
- Projects utilizing FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures
<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>

Project Selection Process

All rated applications are reviewed by members of the Municipal Aid Project Selection Committee, comprised of staff from the New Jersey Department of

Transportation's Local Aid Regional Offices and the Society of Municipal Engineers. Upon evaluation of all applications, a list of recommended projects is forwarded to the commissioner of Transportation for consideration and approval. Once approved by the commissioner, all municipalities and counties are notified in writing of the disposition of their application. Project sponsors are required to award the contract within 24 months from the date of grant notification.

Design Guidelines

All transportation related facilities must meet minimum AASHTO standards and the standards of the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MUTCD). For all municipalities and counties that accept federal or state funded grants from the NJDOT are required to comply with the provisions of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to the fullest extent possible. ADA guidance can be found on the NJDOT website at:

<https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/documents/ADA-FHWA.pdf>

Proposed road and bridge improvements shall conform to the current design standards utilized by the Department, incorporated herein by reference, as amended and supplemented, including, but not limited to, the appropriate American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publications. These publications are available for review at:

https://bookstore.transportation.org/direct_order_form.aspx

Program Administration

The Municipal Aid Grant Program will be governed by the rules and provisions contained in N.J.A.C. 16:20B. The rules establish guidelines and procedures to be followed by counties and municipalities when administering contracts. In addition, the rules provide the requirements for preparing plans and specifications, contracts administration, contract completion and payment, state participation in cost as well

as audit requirements. Detailed information on these requirements can be found in the State Aid Handbook.

The State Aid Handbook is available on the New Jersey Department of Transportation Division of Local Aid and Economic Development web site and can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/stateaid.shtm>

Contact Persons:

For questions concerning all aspects of the program, please contact the appropriate District Office listed below:

District 1

200 Stierli Court
Mount Arlington, NJ 07856
Phone: (973) 810-9120
Fax: (973) 601-0049
Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren
Sussex and Warren

District 2

153 Halsey Street - 5th floor
Newark, NJ 07102
Phone: (862) 350-5730
Fax: (973) 648-4547
Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and
Union

District 3

1035 Parkway Avenue
P.O. Box 600
Trenton, NJ 08625
Phone: (609) 963-2020
Fax (609) 530-8044
Hunterdon, Middlesex, Mercer,
Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset

District 4

1 Executive Campus
Route 70 West, 3rd Floor
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
Phone: (856) 414-8414
Fax (856) 486-6771
Atlantic, Burlington,
Camden, Cape May,
Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem