



**Submittal Guide
Fiscal Year 2024-25**

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP)
Direct Attributable (DA)
Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA)
Carbon Reduction (CR)

Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA)

Date of Release: July 5, 2024

Pre-application Review: August 9, 2024

Electronic Application Submittal Deadline: September 13, 2024

Anticipated award date October 30, 2024

Submit two hard copies and one digital copy to:

Wilmington MPO
Attn: Scott A. James, PE
929 N Front Street, 1st Floor
Wilmington, NC 28401

Digital media should be labeled with the following:

Project Name
Name of Government Agency
Requested Funding Source
Date of Application

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Introduction

The Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) infrastructure package was signed into law on November 15, 2021, revising and expanding the funds available for qualifying projects. Several elements of the new bill allow for greater flexibility in the application of federal funds to infrastructure projects. The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) is the recipient of allocated funds for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) Direct Attributable, Transportation Alternatives Set Aside and Carbon Reduction Efforts in the following amounts for the federal fiscal year of October 1, 2024 thru September 30, 2025:

Direct Attributable (DA): \$4,081,088

Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA): \$513,872

Carbon Reduction Efforts (CR): \$492,634

(Note: there is some flexibility with allocation of funds across the above categories.)

The funds will be awarded in a manner similar to past allocations made via the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Direct Attributable (STBGP - DA) and amended the provisions contained in 23 U.S.C. 133. STBGP funds have broad latitude for use on metropolitan transportation planning and projects and in support of the Federal-aid system per 23 U.S. C. 133. Specific eligibility criteria and guidance can be found through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA www.fhwa.dot.gov).

The IIJA funds are available for obligation until September 30, 2026, with any amounts not obligated on or before this date to be returned. Furthermore, the Federal share payable shall be up to 80% percent of qualifying costs. All projects, including public transportation projects, requesting STBGP-DA or TASA-DA or Carbon Reduction funds must submit a formal funding request. A competitive process will be used to determine which projects are funded.

Follows are brief summaries of the three main categories. Additional information is available on the FHWA website for STBGP administration: www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/)

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Direct Attributable (DA)

The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) provides flexible funding that may be used for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road; pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA)

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) provides funding for a variety of projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities; construction of turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas; community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management; environmental mitigation related to storm water and habitat connectivity; recreational trails; safe routes to school projects; and vulnerable road user safety assessments.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Carbon Reduction (CR)

The purpose of the Carbon Reduction Program (CR) is to reduce transportation emissions through the development of State carbon reduction strategies and by funding projects designed to reduce transportation emissions.

You may submit any questions or inquiries ahead of the pre-submittal review deadline in order to reserve adequate time to complete your submittal. Final submittals should be digital format (file transfer) with two (2) hard copies for review.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for funding, a project must meet the minimum criteria outlined in this section. Also, a completed application must be submitted by the applicant(s). Co-applications may be submitted in a primary applicant and secondary applicant format. Incomplete applications will not be considered. These criteria meet federal and state funding requirements, as well as the goals of the WMPO for STBGP- DA/TA/CR dollars as adopted by the Board. Projects that do not meet these criteria will not be considered for funding.

1) Federal Aid Eligible Projects

The federal eligibility requirements associated with Surface Transportation Block Grant Program can be found in 23 USC §133
(<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm>)

2) Locally Administered

The applicants shall be responsible for all federal and state reporting requirements associated with STBGP- DA, TASA-DA or CR funding. The local government entities are also expected to make progress reports to the Board upon request. An inter-local agreement between the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the designated recipients will outline a reimbursement schedule. Local sponsors will be required to front all project costs, invoice NCDOT, and then receive reimbursement for the project. The WMPO may assist in coordination between NCDOT and the local government entities, however, the ultimate responsibility for the NCDOT agreements remains with the local government entities.

3) Compliant with the adopted MTP/LRTP

Projects must be identified in the WMPO's current and adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). For this submittal period, the MTP is the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Plan. A copy of the current plan can be found here: <http://wmpo.org/plans/regionwide-plans>.

4) Commitment of local funds

All funds programmed with IIJA dollars require a minimum 20% local match. The funds are payable up to 80% percent of qualifying costs. Local government entities are responsible for funding cost overruns on projects in excess of the final programmed cost estimate. This provision may be reviewed at the discretion of the WMPO Board and through additional Surface Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) amendments by the Board of Transportation, if needed.

- 5) **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
Projects not in compliance with an existing TIP category will require a TIP amendment. Applicants should note that the TIP amendment process could delay the funding obligation timeline.
- 6) **Federal Highway Funds versus Federal Transit Authority Funds**
Projects from local transit authorities whose proposed improvements are typically not listed within FHWA categories may have funding ‘flexed’ to the Federal Transit Agency (FTA) to allow for disbursement of these funds. This is an additional step, undertaken after the funding award. Applicants should note that the processing time for authorization is longer due to the additional level of review.
- 7) **Project Design Intent**
Project design intent must meet or exceed Federal, State and local guidelines for design elements, including any minimum widths, safety elements or controls.
- 8) **Project Cost**
Total Cost of Project = 20% local match + 80% requested from WMPO

For example, if the total project cost is estimated at \$250,000, the local match amount would be \$50,000 and the amount requested would be \$200,000.

Program Administrative Details

- 1) **Project Submittal Limits**
Please limit submittals to no more than thirty (30) pages, including appendices.
- 2) **No Unfunded Project Carry-Over**
Projects submitted that are not prioritized for funding are not automatically considered for funding in subsequent years. Any unfunded project may be resubmitted in subsequent years for funding.
- 3) **Construction Requirement within 10 years**
As a federal funding source, the use of funds must result in achieving Construction Authorization of the project within 10 years of the fiscal year when Preliminary Engineering was authorized. As a result, projects that have cost overruns must be accounted for through a commitment of local funds through the construction phase. This provision may be waived by the approval for additional funding from the WMPO Board and through additional STIP amendments by the Board of Transportation, on a case by case basis.

Application Materials

Applicants are required to submit the following materials with their application:

- Funding Request Submittal Form
- Map of project (see Exhibit A for an example)
- Signed resolution of financial support (minimum 20%) from local government
- Detailed Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Construction Costs
- Project Schedule highlighting key milestone dates (i.e. deadlines for plan submittals at applicable stages, dates for requesting funding authorizations, etc.)
- Additional supporting documents – exhibits, additional maps, prior resolutions adopting plans that specify a need for the project, etc.

Funding Request Submittal Form

The following descriptions are to help completion of this form:

Project Name – A descriptive name of your project.

Project Location – Physical location and extents of the project, with the jurisdiction.

TIP ID# - For projects already in the STIP, include the TIP number here.

Total Project Cost – An estimate of the total cost of the project for all phases needing completion (Design/NEPA, Right-of-Way, and Construction).

Note: Local jurisdictions are responsible for 100% of actual project costs exceeding the estimations programmed through this process into the STIP. Estimated project costs are to include inspection and contract administration costs during construction and must be prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of North Carolina. If design has not been started on the project, it is recommended to use a 25% contingency.

Requested STBGP Funding – This is no more than 80% of the “total project cost”

Primary Applicant – The name of the agency submitting the application.

Secondary Applicant – If the applicant is a joint application include the name of the second entity applying for the funds. For example, local governments may partner with NCDOT, the WMPO, or an adjacent jurisdiction based on funding and project location.

Project Manager – The primary point of contact throughout the life of the project. This staff position is typically a representative of the primary applicant.

Contact Person – The person WMPO staff should contact with questions.

Project Description – A specific description of your project, including beginning and end points of the project and facility type. This should include a broad overview of the required work, plus any relevant background or context to the proposal.

Eligibility Requirements – The following allocation of points should be reviewed to determine if your project is eligible for this funding source. Elements not listed in the following table may be proposed for review on a case-by-case basis. *Projects not meeting the eligibility requirements will not be considered.*

Allocation of Points (100 points total):

1. Safety (25 Points)

- a. Reported crashes over past three (3) years (up to 5 points):
 - i. One (1) to five (5) – 2 points
 - ii. Six (6) to ten (10) – 4 points
 - iii. More than ten (10+) – 5 points
- b. Crash pattern analysis (up to 7 points)
 - i. Any pedestrian crashes? – If yes, 5 points
 - ii. Percent vehicles only (100% - 3 points)
 - iii. Percent vehicle/pedestrian-cyclist, if >0% add 2 points
 - iv. Percent other, if >0%, add 2 points
- c. Mode separation (proposed) – up to 5 points
 - i. No physical barrier – 5 points to correct
 - ii. No vertical barrier – 5 points to correct
 - iii. Time of day restrictions – 3 points
 - iv. Turn/access restrictions – 3 points
 - v. Road closures (partial or full) – 3 points
- d. Upgrading infrastructure – up to 5 points
 - i. Narrow width sidewalks – 2 points to correct
 - ii. Narrow width bicycle lanes – 2 points to correct
 - iii. Installing transit shelters – 2 points
 - iv. Other – up to 1 point
- e. Designating and installing dedicated routes (up to 3 points)
 - i. Part of existing Safe Routes To School – 3 points
 - ii. Identified pedestrian crossings – 2 points
 - iii. Bicycle crossings – 2 points
 - iv. Closing gaps between facilities – 2 points

- 2. Congestion Management/Capacity Improvements (25 points)**
 - a. Adding thru capacity – up to 10 points
 - i. Dedicated turn lane – 5 points per direction, 10 points maximum
 - b. Adding turn lanes at intersections – up to 5 points
 - i. Conversion of dedicated lane to shared thru/turn lane – 3 points
 - ii. Dedicated turn lane – 5 points
 - c. Restricting access - up to 5 points
 - i. Limiting left turn movements – 3 points
 - ii. Limiting thru movements – 5 points
 - d. Revising traffic controls to improve thru capacity – up to 5 points
 - i. Upgrading traffic signal phasing – 3 points
 - ii. Upgrading intersection geometry – 5 points
- 3. Multi modal elements (20 points)**
 - a. Adding non-automotive capacity to existing roadways – up to 4 points
 - i. Installing sidewalk – 2 points
 - ii. Installing bicycle lane(s) – 2 points
 - b. Extending bicycle lanes – up to 4 points
 - i. Extension < ½ mile – 2 points
 - ii. Extension ≥ ½ mile – 4 points
 - c. Adding recreational trails – up to 4 points
 - i. New shared use path (SUP) 10 feet wide < ½ mile length – 2 points
 - ii. New SUP 10 feet wide ≥ ½ mile length – 4 points
 - d. Upgrading transit infrastructure – up to 4 points
 - i. Installing new transit stops (sign posts) – 2 points
 - ii. Installing shelters at new/existing transit stops – 4 points
 - e. Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) – up to 4 points
- 4. Accessibility (15 points)**
 - a. Closing sidewalk gaps – up to 6 points
 - i. Gap is < ¼ mile in total length – 2 points
 - ii. Gap is > ¼ mile in total length – 4 points
 - iii. Gap connects transit, school and/or trail – 6 points
 - b. New ADA infrastructure (ramps, pedestrian signals, markings) – up to 5 points
 - i. Installing/replacing ADA ramps at intersection – 2 points
 - ii. Installing ADA ramps and pavement markings (crosswalks) – 3 points
 - iii. Installing pedestrian traffic signal equipment – 5 points
 - c. Removing/addressing barriers – up to 4 points
 - i. New accessible roadway crossing – 2 points
 - ii. New accessible roadway crossing w/documented crashes – 4 points

5. **Project Status (up to 10 points)**
 - a. **Design/Planning – 5 points**
 - b. **Right-of-Way acquisition – 8 points**
 - c. **Construction – 10 points**
6. **Administration (5 points)**
 - a. **Prior project – 5 points**

Project Cost Estimates

Cost of NEPA/Design Phase – Provide an estimate of the total cost of the NEPA/Design Phase. This estimate should include the cost for environmental documentation, permitting, engineering, and bid document preparation (including specifications).

Cost of Right-of-Way Phase – Provide an estimate of the total cost of the Right-of-Way Phase. This estimate includes the cost for right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation. Note that the sum of the three phase specific cost estimates (NEPA/Design, Right-of-Way, and Construction) should equal the “Total Cost of Project.” Estimates must be prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of North Carolina.

Cost of Construction Phase – Provide an estimate of the total cost of the Construction Phase. This estimate should include the cost for materials, construction and inspections of the project. Note that the sum of the three phase-specific cost estimates (NEPA/Design, Right-of-Way, and Construction) should equal the “Total Cost of Project.” Estimated project costs must be prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of North Carolina.

Total Cost of Project – This is a sum of the cost of NEPA/Design, Right-of-Way and Construction. The estimate used to generate the associated costs should be provided as an attachment. See Appendix for example.

Funding Year Request – Federal Amount Requested per Phase and Fiscal Year

The STBGP-DA/ TASA-DA/ CR process allows for a multi-year award program with a recurring call for projects every year. The first two years of the program are considered committed. If a project receives funding for design, then the Construction and/or Right-of-Way of that project will also be considered committed. Years three (3) thru five (5) of the program will compete in the next call for projects but will receive points in the application for being previously programmed. Applications should clearly state the funding year(s).

Key Documents for Submittals

Proposed Project Map(s) – See Appendix and Exhibit A for criteria and example map.

Signed Resolution of Support

Resolution must be on the Primary Applicant’s letterhead and signed to be considered to be complete. See Exhibit C for an example resolution.

Detailed Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

Detailed anticipated construction costs prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer along with all costs associated with producing design documents (if required). All associated costs that may be incurred with the completion of the project including engineering, right-of-way, utility relocations, construction contingencies, NCDOT inspection / materials testing and construction administration (approximately 15% of project cost), and NCDOT project administration (currently set at 3% of project cost) should be presented in a line-item cost form.

Project Schedule

Project schedule highlighting key milestone dates (i.e. deadlines for plan submittals at applicable stages, dates for requesting funding authorizations, etc.). An example schedule is provided in the Appendix.

Additional Supporting Documents

Exhibits or site photos (with labels), additional maps, safety reports, crash records, resolutions adopting plans that specify a need for the project, etc. Resolutions in support of project must have been adopted prior to call for projects.

All submittals should be digital format (file transfer) with two (2) hard copies for review.

Tiebreaker Elements

In the event the number of applications exceeds the funding amount available, and one or more selected projects receive the same number of points using the evaluation matrix, the following elements will be used as a tiebreaker:

- 1) Existing projects will have priority over newly proposed projects, and
- 2) The project closest to bid phase will have priority, and
- 3) If necessary, the project with the lower cost shall have priority.



Submittal Guide Appendix Fiscal Year 2024-25

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP)

Direct Attributable (DA)

Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA)

Carbon Reduction (CR)

Proposed Project Map – This map is required with all applications. Map should include project and map title along with a project description and/or project extent explanation (minimum one sentence). Include below the description the following statement to indicate the effected municipality/county “STBGP-DA or TA or CR FUNDING APPLICATION (INSERT MUNICIPALITY/COUNTY), NC.” to identify the source of funds for your request (STBGP – DA, STBGP – TA, STBGP – CR). Please format the map for 8.5” x 11” or 11” x 17” sheet of paper.

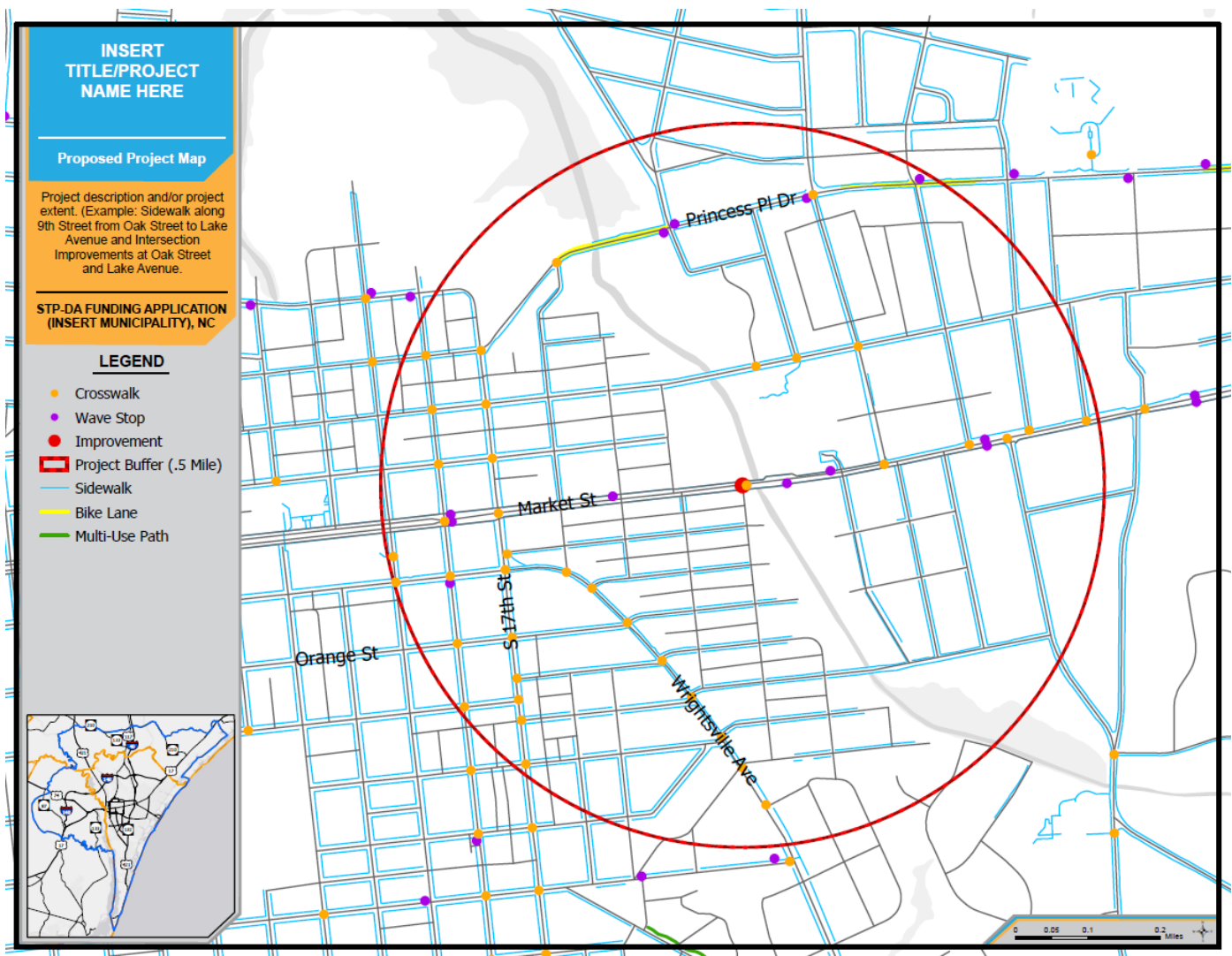
Map must show the following:

- 1) Full extent of proposed project (multiple sheets are allowed)
- 2) Inset extent map – use the WMPO boundary highlighted in **DARK BLUE**
- 3) ½ - mile buffer around proposed project drawn in **RED**
- 4) Existing roadways drawn in **DARK GREY**
- 5) Existing water features in **LIGHT GREY**
- 6) Proposed project drawn in **RED DOTTED LINE** (linear projects) or **RED CIRCLE** (intersection or point projects)
- 7) Existing sidewalk drawn in **BLUE**
- 8) Existing bike lanes drawn in **YELLOW**
- 9) Existing greenway/multi-use path drawn in **GREEN**
- 10) Existing bus stop drawn as **PURPLE CIRCLE**
- 11) Existing crosswalks (improved intersections) drawn as **ORANGE CIRCLE**
- 12) Major obstacle drawn in **BROWN**
- 13) Mapping elements:
 - a) Title
 - b) Legend
 - c) North arrow
 - d) Scale
 - e) Length of project (if applicable)
 - f) Label at minimum five (5) street names for reference on the map in **BLACK**

Note: if you are suggesting the proposed project should receive points for providing a new connection over a major obstacle, be sure to illustrate this on this map.

See Exhibit A for an example of a ‘Proposed Project’ map

Exhibit A – Sample Proposed Project Map



Closing a Gap: If you are suggesting the proposed project should receive points for closing a gap, a separate map is required. Map should include project and map title along with a project description and project extent (minimum one sentence). Include below the description the following statement to indicate the affected municipality/county “STBGP-DA or TASA or CR FUNDING APPLICATION (INSERT MUNICIPALITY/COUNTY), NC.” to identify the source of funds for your request (STBGP – DA, STBGP – TA, STBGP – CR). Please format the map for 8.5 x 11 or 11 x 17 sheet of paper.

Map must show the following:

- 1) Full extent of proposed project
- 2) Inset vicinity map – use the WMPO boundary in **DARK BLUE**
- 3) ½ mile – 2 mile buffer around proposed project drawn in **RED**
- 4) Existing roadways drawn in **DARK GREY**
- 5) Existing Water Features in **LIGHT GREY**
- 6) Proposed project drawn in **RED DOTTED LINE** (linear projects) or **RED CIRCLE** (intersection or point projects)
- 7) Only include the existing facility that your project will be closing a gap:
 - a) Existing sidewalk drawn in **BLUE**
 - b) Existing bike lanes drawn in **YELLOW**
 - c) Existing greenway/multi-use path drawn in **GREEN**
 - d) Existing crosswalks (improved intersections) drawn as **ORANGE CIRCLE**
- 8) Mapping Elements
 - a) Title
 - b) Legend
 - c) North Arrow
 - d) Scale
 - e) Length of project (if applicable)
 - f) Label at minimum **5 street names** for reference on the map in **BLACK**

See Exhibit B for an example of a ‘Closing a Gap’ Map

Exhibit B – Sample Gap Closure project map

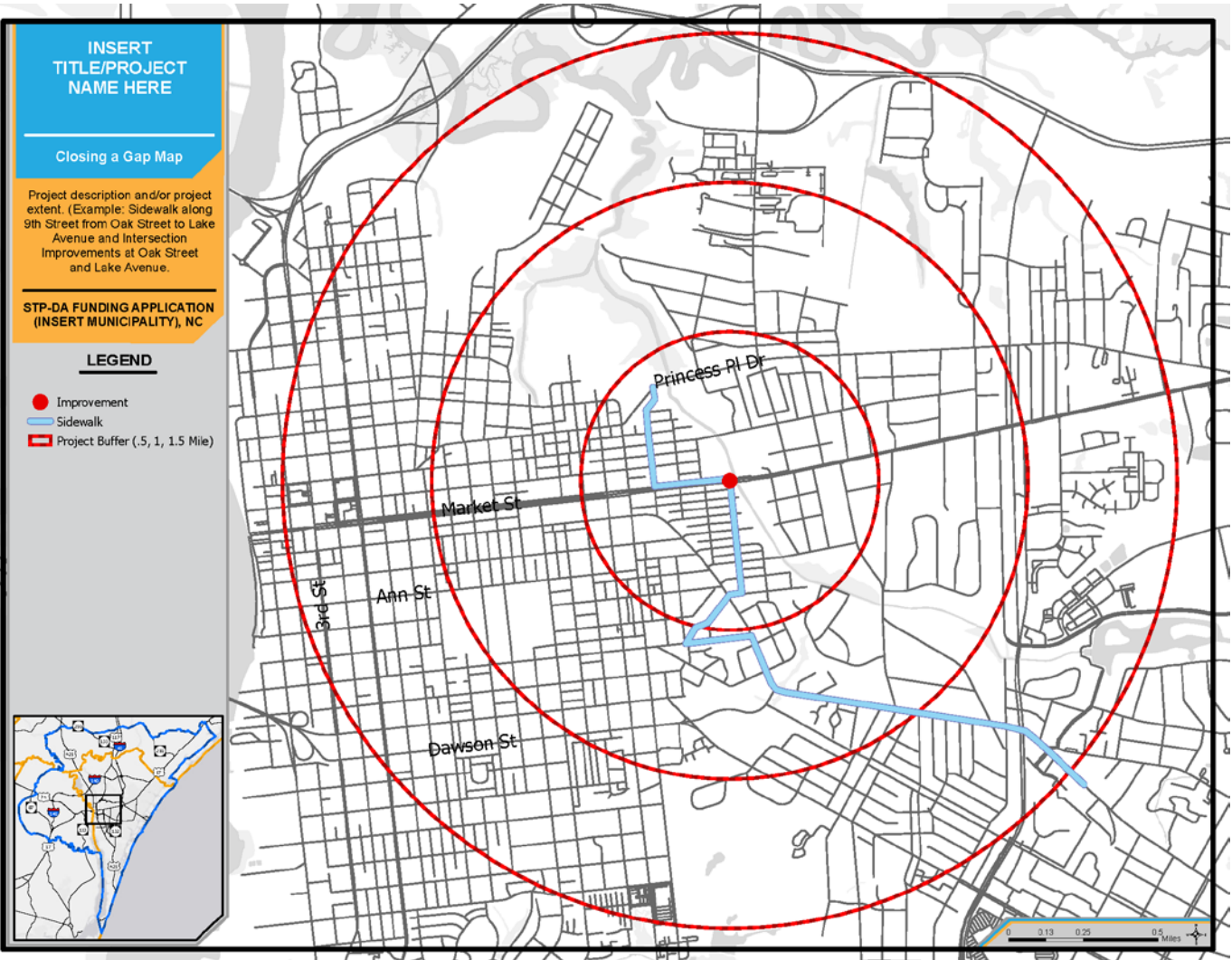


Exhibit C – Sample Municipal Resolution of support

(sample)

Resolution authorizing (a local government) to submit an application to the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in the Amount of \$_____ for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program - Direct Attributable Funds or Transportation Alternative Set Aside – Direct Attributable for Name of Project

LEGISLATIVE INTENT/PURPOSE:

On (date) the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) issued a call for projects to agencies in its jurisdiction for Surface Transportation Block Grant Program- Direct Attributable Funding (STBGP-DA) or Transportation Alternative Set Aside – Direct Attributable (TASA-DA). A total of \$_____ is available to award. STBGP-DA and TASA-DA is comprised of a collection of discretionary programs including (short description of what you are applying for – for example: planning, design and construction of on- and off- road bicycle and pedestrian facilities). The funding requires a minimum 20% local cash match.

<Insert description of proposed project, including (if applicable): length, connections to other facilities, and connections to schools, shopping, etc. Include other adopted plans that recommend this project. Include estimated cost, amount of DA funds requesting, and proposed match (percentage and amount).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That, the (appropriate person) is hereby authorized to submit a STBGP-DA or TASA-DA application in the amount of \$_____ and will commit \$_____ as a cash match for the (name of project)

Exhibit D – Sample Engineer’s Estimate of Probable Costs

SAMPLE STBGP - DA PROJECT WMPO MEMBER JURISDICTION					
Opinion of Probable Construction Cost-EXAMPLE					
Item #	Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Cost
1	MOBILIZATION	1	LS	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
2	CONST SURVEY	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
3	CLEAR AND GRUB	2.5	AC	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
4	TRAFFIC CONTROL	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
5	GRADING	1900	CY	\$ 15.00	\$ 28,500.00
6	CURB RAMPS	4	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 2,000.00
7	INCIDENTAL STONE	100	TON	\$ 35.00	\$ 3,500.00
8	DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS	1	LS	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
9	#57 STONE	15	TON	\$ 50.00	\$ 750.00
10	AGGREGATE BASE CRSE	2500	TON	\$ 65.00	\$ 162,500.00
11	ASPH CONC SURF CRSE, S9.5B	700	TON	\$ 95.00	\$ 66,500.00
12	SEEDING & MULCHING	2.5	AC	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 4,000.00
13	REMOVABLE BOLLARDS W/ MARKINGS	24	EA	\$ 800.00	\$ 19,200.00
14	THERMO PVT MKGLINES (4", 90 MILS)	5100	LF	\$ 0.55	\$ 2,805.00
15	THERMO PVT MKGLINES (24", 120 MILS)	120	LF	\$ 7.60	\$ 912.00
				Project Construction Subtotal	\$ 395,667.00
				Contingency (10%)	\$ 39,566.70
				Inspection/DOT Fees (18%)	\$ 78,342.07
				Total Construction Cost	\$ 513,575.77

Note: Contingency percentage should be based on the stage of the project. If design has not been started the contingency should be higher and should be determined by the engineer performing the estimate. If the project is ready for bid the contingency should be a minimum of 10%. Also, if funding is not being requested in the first two years inflation should be taken into account as part of the contingency.