

Reading Area Transportation Study

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c/o Berks County Planning Commission
Berks County Services Center
633 Court Street, 14th Floor
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To: Reading Area Transportation Study Coordinating Committee

From: Alan D. Piper, Secretary

Re: TASA Funding Scoring and Recommendation

Date: January 13, 2022

The Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) received four (4) applications for funding from the PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA). This program funds projects like bicycle or pedestrian facilities, conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails, overlooks and viewing areas, historic preservation and rehab of historic transportation facilities, vegetation management, and wildlife mitigation projects, among other types.

TASA has two sources of funds - RATS has a total of \$1,376,000 available locally to fund one or more of these applications and PennDOT has approximately \$70.5 million to fund projects.

Projects were evaluated through a two-part submission process. Preliminary applications were due by August 16, 2021. Each applicant then met with staff from PennDOT and the MPO to review the draft submission. Guidance was provided to the applicants on suggested changes to the application to bring the projects into better compliance with the program and in defining more accurate cost estimates. The applicants were then given until October 15, 2021 to revise and resubmit their applications. These were given a preliminary review by PennDOT and then distributed to their respective MPO's for local review and recommendations on funding.

A special one-hour meeting was held on Thursday, December 2, 2021 to review and score the projects against the program criteria and project readiness. The projects were ranked, and a series of funding recommendations were made for your consideration.

You may review the applications and project summary sheets at the following link:

https://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Planning/Pages/Reading_Area_Transportation_Study_2021-2022_TASA_Applications.aspx

Brief summaries of the projects and their scores are below:

Governor Mifflin School District – Governor Mifflin Safe Routes to School Transportation Improvements: \$726,406
Score: 1st Place, 67.4 average score

Governor Mifflin School District proposes a series of infrastructure improvements to facilitate safe transportation to Governor Mifflin Middle School and other community facilities at its Secondary Campus. The improvements will take place along S. Waverly Street, which bisects the Secondary Campus and serves as a vital pedestrian linkage for students and community members.

Albright College – Albright College Pedestrian Safety Initiative
Requested Funding: \$168,475
Score: 2nd place, 65.2 average score

Albright College proposes to target 11 pedestrian crossing areas in the vicinity of their campus in need of accessible curb cuts after analyzing pedestrian travel patterns and identifying the sidewalk and crosswalk areas that present the greatest danger to students and residents.

Ontelaunee Township – Ontelaunee Township Stormwater Improvements
Requested Funding: \$233,705
Score: 3rd Place, 57.6 average score

Ontelaunee Township proposes two improvements related to the treatment of highway stormwater runoff. The first is to install a vegetated swale and rain garden to help filter out pollutants before the runoff reaches Lake Ontelaunee. These improvements would be located on Lakeshore Drive and addresses the pollution of Lake Ontelaunee, an impaired body of water, by stormwater runoff from roadways in the area.

The second proposal by the Township is a wet pond to help clean up discharge that would otherwise flow from roadways and paved surfaces directly into Willow Creek. The proposed wet pond would be located within the Willow Creek subdivision.

Borough of Sinking Spring – 2021 BOSS PD-TA CBD-IIP P-3(b) Complete Streets
Requested Funding: \$1,230,490
Score: 4th place, 42.2 average score

The Borough proposes to furnish the Columbia Avenue Extension in modern form that provides for safety, equity, and commerce through complete street practices creating a mixed-use, walkable New Town Center.

It is to be noted that after the December 2, 2021 meeting, Governor Mifflin School District decided to withdraw their application for TASA funding. This determination was made primarily in part to receiving \$620,000 from the Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund.

A fifth application was submitted by Cumru Township in the preliminary application round, however, it was withdrawn prior to the final application deadline. This application proposed to address stormwater management along the Wyomissing Creek by removing legacy fill, replacing an existing storm sewer with a swale or detention area, and restoring the existing stream banks. These proposals were made to mitigate flooding around the intersection of Route 222 Business/724 and Museum Road. This application was withdrawn as it was in the beginning stages, with more planning and design to be completed. Cumru Township is considering applying for TASA funding in a future round

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations were reviewed by the Technical Committee at its meeting on January 6, 2022 and are recommended for approval by the Coordinating Committee.

1. To fully fund the proposed projects for Albright College (\$168,475) and Ontelaunee Township (\$233,705) for a total of \$402,180 from the TASA funds available to the Reading MPO.
2. To retain the balance of available funds (\$973,820) in a TASA line item on the Reading MPO TIP to apply to current projects if required to reach completion or for future projects subject to program eligibility and readiness.
3. To forward the application from the Borough of Sinking Spring to PennDOT for consideration under the statewide program with a recommendation that the project concept is acceptable, however, the timing of the request is too early based on the current state of planning for the road on which the improvements would be applied. A final alignment of the Columbia Avenue Extension has not yet been established and right-of-way has not been secured. Projects are required to be ready to be advertised by August 31, 2023. Projects that are not anticipated to be ready to advertise for construction by then should not apply during this round.

Reading TASA Scoresheet 2021

Project Evaluation Criteria						
		Possible Points	2021 BOSS PD-TA CBD-IIP P-3(b) Complete Streets	Albright College Pedestrian Safety Initiative	Governor Mifflin Safe Routes to School Transportation Improvements	Ontelaunee Township Stormwater Improvements
1	Network Connectivity	5				
2	Consistency with Land Use, Community Context, and Planning	5				
3	Collaboration with Stakeholders	5				
4	Leveraging of Other Projects or Funds	5				
5	Cost Estimating	5				
6	Project Value	5				
7	Economic Impact	5				
8	Teachability	5				
9	Project reimbursement prepared/executed	5				
	AREAS of EMPHASIS					
10	Safety	10				
11	Project Delivery	10				
12	PennDOT Connects Environmental Screening	10				
13	Environmental Justice	10				
Total Possible		85				
Did they meet with MPO and PennDOT?			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amount of funds requested?			\$1,230,490.00	\$168,475.00	\$726,406.40	\$233,704.90
Requestor			Sinking Spring	Albright College	Governor Mifflin School District	Ontelaunee
Suggested Ranking						

Technical Committee Member Completing this Score Sheet: _____

Reading TASA 2021

Project	Mike Golembiewski	PennDOT Central (DA)	Alan Piper	Stan Rugis	Tim Krall	SCTA no response	RRAA no response	Total Score	Average	Ranking
2021 BOSS PD-TA CBD-IIP P-3(b) Complete Streets	55	61	48	23	24	0	0	211	42.2	4
Albright College Pedestrian Safety Initiative	65	62	67	66	66	0	0	326	65.2	2
Governor Mifflin Safe Routes to School Transportation Improvements	69	60	76	66	66	0	0	337	67.4	1
Ontelaunee Township Stormwater Improvements	47	60	49	66	66	0	0	288	57.6	3