



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Highway  
Administration**

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In Reply Refer to: HFL-17

Federal Land Management Agencies  
Montana Department of Transportation  
Regional, County & Local Governments  
Tribal Governments

Greetings:

2021 Request for Proposals  
Montana Federal Lands Access Program

The Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) of the Federal Highway Administration is soliciting for capital improvement, enhancement, surface preservation, transit, planning, and research proposals to receive funds through the Montana Federal Lands Program in fiscal years 2023 and 2025. Proposal awards will be contingent upon availability of funds.

***What is the purpose of the Federal Lands Access Program?***

The purpose of the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) is to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal Lands.

***Where can proposals be located?***

Proposed projects must be located on Federal Lands Access Transportation Facilities. Federal Lands Access Transportation Facilities means a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that is located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal lands for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in a state, county, town, township, tribal, municipal, or local government. Maintenance means the preservation of the entire roadway surface, shoulders, roadside ditches, drainage structures, bridges, and traffic control devices necessary for safe and efficient operations. Vested maintenance responsibility means that the majority of the cost for these activities is borne by the state, county, town, township, tribal, municipal, or local government.

***Who may apply?***

All proposals must be submitted jointly by the Federal Land Management Agency(ies) whose lands are accessed and the entity with title or vested maintenance responsibility (State, county, town, township, tribal, municipal or local government) for the Federal Lands Access Transportation Facility. Early coordination with the appropriate FLMA is encouraged to ensure adequate time is provided for thorough review and input before the submittal due date.

Proposals must be signed by the following agency officials:

<b><u>Federal Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Signing Official</u></b>
National Park Service	Park Superintendent
National Forest Service	Forest Supervisor
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Refuge/Hatchery Supervisor
Bureau of Land Management	District Manager
Bureau of Reclamation	Area Manager
US Army Corp of Engineers	Operations Project Manager
Department of Defense	Installation Commander
<b><u>Local Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Signing Official</u></b>
Montana Department of Transportation	District Engineers
County	Commissioner
City, Town	Mayor
Tribe	Tribal Chair
Transit District	District Manager

Note: If Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) funds are proposed as match the Federal Agency’s transportation coordinator (typically at the regional level) may be required to sign as well.

Proposals that do not have the signatures that are listed above will not be eligible for consideration. If the Federal Land Management Agency was not listed above and/or you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of the signing official, please contact Sheryl Snyder (see contact info below).

***What types of proposals will be considered?***

Proposals will be accepted for the following:

**Capital Improvements**- These proposals include rehabilitation, restoration, construction, and reconstruction of roads and bridges. This includes improvements such as safety improvements, widening, realignments, surfacing, culverts, signing, guardrail, walls and associated roadway appurtenances.

**Enhancements**- These proposals are road and trail related improvements such as interpretative signing, kiosks, viewpoints, adjacent vehicular parking areas, roadside rest areas (including sanitary and water facilities), provisions for pedestrians and bicycles, acquisition of scenic easement and scenic or historic sites, trailheads, trails, and improvements that improve public safety and reduce vehicle-wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity.

**Surface Preservation**- These proposals include surface preservation that extends the useful life of the asset of roads, trails, and adjacent vehicular parking areas. They include chip sealing, crack sealing, and aggregate courses.

**Transit**- These proposals include construction of transit facilities and limited duration operation/maintenance of transit services and facilities (including vehicles).

**Planning**- These proposals include engineering studies, corridor management planning, bicycle/pedestrian planning and alternative transportation planning that will provide valuable information for future FLAP proposals.

Research- These proposals include evaluating solutions that enhance access, safety or sustainability. They address issues such as wildlife-vehicle collision avoidance measures, context sensitive roadside safety features, and congestion management strategies. Research must be broad-based and applicable to multiple Federal Lands Management Agencies.

Safety- These proposals only include one or more of the following: traffic control signalization; maintaining minimum levels of retroreflectivity of highway sign or pavement marking; traffic circles/roundabouts; safety rest areas; pavement marking; shoulder and centerline rumble strips and stripes; commuter carpooling and vanpooling; rail-highway crossing closure; installation of traffic signs, traffic lights, guardrails, impact attenuators, concrete barrier end treatments, breakaway utility poles; priority control systems for emergency vehicles or transit vehicles at signalized intersection.

While the Programming Decision Committee supports preventative maintenance activities, these activities do not align with the direction for the use of FLAP program funds. Applicants are discouraged from submitting preventative maintenance only type projects in this call. As mentioned above, surface preservation projects that extend the useful life of the asset will be considered.

Proposals should also be consistent with a statewide, regional, county, local, or tribal transportation plan and a Federal Land Management Plan. Proposals that are specifically identified in a transportation plan or Local Road Safety Plan will receive additional consideration.

***Are matching funds required?***

The program requires matching funds of 13.42% of the total proposal costs for Capital Improvement, Surface Preservation, Enhancement, Transit, Planning, and Research proposals.

The MT PDC encourages match from local funds, Federal Lands Transportation Program funds, Federal Land Management Agency appropriations, and other eligible sources. Applicants may also provide additional funds to contribute to the project. Because of limited FLAP funding, proposals will receive additional consideration when funding is leveraged from other sources such as local funding sources, County Road Administration Board funds, FLMA funds or other non-federal sources.

Typically, the preliminary engineering phase (planning, engineering, NEPA, etc...) of a project will require a cash match. Right-of-way, construction, and other phases of the project may use cash and/or “in-kind matches” such as donated property, materials, and services subject to WFLHD approval. Funds authorized under the Tribal Transportation Program and the Federal Lands Transportation Program as well as other Federal funds not authorized under Title 23 or 49 may also be used to satisfy the match. Match must be mutually acceptable to both WFLHD and the proposal applicants. Additional information regarding match may be found at the following website:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/policy/fedaid\\_guidance\\_nfmr.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/policy/fedaid_guidance_nfmr.htm)

***What size proposal will be considered?***

The Montana Federal Lands Access Program is currently estimated to receive about \$12 million annually. Proposals requesting up to \$5,000,000 are recommended for the 2021 Request for Proposals. A proposal may request more than \$5,000,000 if the project cannot be subdivided into smaller phases. If FLAP funds the first phase of larger project it is not a commitment to fund future phases solely from FLAP.

The best available data should be used in developing the initial cost estimate. Typically, if project construction costs exceed the originally approved program amount by more than 10%, the proposal proponents will be responsible to provide the additional funds.

***How do I submit a proposal?***

The best available data should be used in completing the project proposal forms. Maps and photos should be included to support the proposal. Maps should include project locations, project limits or proposal termini, high use federal recreation sites, federal economic generators, and most importantly, **show the Federal Lands accessed by the project**. Letters of support from other entities may also be included.

Crash data for the state of Montana can be obtained here:

<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/datastats/crashdata.shtml>

Email the completed proposal form with all required signatures, maps, photos and any letters of support to:

WFL.CallForProjects@dot.gov

The proposal must be received by April 1, 2021. The entire proposal packet (the proposal form, signature pages, maps, photos, and any letters of support) should not exceed 15 megabytes in file size and the total page length should not exceed 30 pages.

Copies of this letter, evaluation criteria, proposal instruction checklist, proposal form, public interest finding, capabilities assessment and webinar announcement can be downloaded from the following website.

<http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/mt/>

***How will the proposals be evaluated?***

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will review the proposals according to the following evaluation criteria (see attached for additional details): Safety, Transportation Improvement, Recreation/Economic, Mobility, Sustainability/Environmental Quality, and Readiness/Support. Preference shall be given to proposals that provide access to high-use federal recreation sites or federal economic generators, as identified by the Federal Land Management Agency.

The TAG will be facilitated by the WFLHD and include representatives from the from the Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Association of Counties, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S Army Corp of Engineers and the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (DOD).

The TAG may request additional information during the evaluation process. Proponents should be ready to provide documentation that substantiates, clarifies or appends any information provided in the proposals.

***How will a final decision be made on the proposals?***

The Program Decision Committee (PDC) made up of representatives from WFLHD, Montana Department of Transportation, and the Montana Association of Counties, will make a final decision on the proposals. The PDC will make these decisions based on the evaluation criteria and recommendations of the TAG. The PDC will also coordinate with the Federal Land Management Agencies prior to making a final decision. The final decision on the project proposals should be made by early Summer of 2021.

Following approval of a proposal, on appropriate projects, FHWA will conduct a coordinated scoping effort with the applicant and other partners to assess the scope, schedule, budget, and requirements. Through this effort safety, environment, mobility, access, contracting, engineering, and other issues will be evaluated. These efforts are estimated at \$50,000 in the estimate section of the application form. Changes may be recommended to the PDC through the scoping effort and elements of the approved project are subject to change. The PDC will inform the applicant of the changes following the scoping effort.

***Who will be the lead agency for project delivery?***

The lead agency for all facets of project delivery will be the WFLHD. Project delivery consists of federal environmental compliance, design, construction contract advertisement, and construction contract administration. However, the lead agency and participating agencies roles will be considered during proposal evaluation. Decisions regarding lead and participating agency roles will be based on the type of project, project complexity, capabilities assessment, Public Interest Finding and how the work is proposed to be delivered. The TAG may approach the project applicants during proposal evaluation to discuss project delivery. On non-FHWA delivered projects, FHWA will be responsible for stewardship and oversight of the project to assure compliance with federal requirements, in coordination with participating agencies. The final decision for project delivery resides with the PDC.

***What if I have questions?***

In conjunction with this request for proposals, WFLHD will conduct an informational webinar. This webinar will provide information to potential applicants on the FLAP, eligibility, evaluation criteria, how to submit proposals, and helpful hints for filling out proposal forms. See the attached webinar announcement for details.

In the meantime, if you have questions you can contact Sheryl Snyder, or the FLAP coordinator for your agency.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Federal Highway Administration	Sheryl Snyder	(360) 619-7946	Sheryl.Snyder@dot.gov
Montana Department of Transportation	Andy White	(406)202-4601	awhite@mt.gov
Montana Association of Counties	Harold Blattie	(406) 449-4360	hblattie@mtcounties.org
US Forest Service	Brenda Christensen	(406)329-3351	<u>Brenda.christensen@usda.gov</u>
National Park Service	Sena Wiley Erica Cole	(303) 969-2615 (303) 969-2338	<u>senawiley@nps.gov</u> <u>ericacole@nps.gov</u>
Bureau of Land Management	Scott DeBock	(406) 896-5207	sdebock@blm.gov
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Nathan Caldwell	(703) 358-2205	nathan_caldwell@fws.gov
US Army Corps of Engineers	Alana Mesenbrink	(406) 293-7751 Ext 252	alana.f.mesenbrink@usace.army.mil
Department of Defense	Jason Cowin	(618) 220-5229	<u>jason.w.cowin.civ@mail.mil</u>
Bureau of Reclamation	Dan Staton Morgan Kimmet	(303) 445-3858 (406) 247-7312	<u>dstaton@usbr.gov</u> <u>mkimmet@usbr.gov</u>

Additional information, guidance, and FAQs regarding the Federal Lands Access Program may also be found at the following websites:

<http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>

<https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs-access/flap-implementation-guidance>

Sincerely yours,

*(signed electronically)*

Sheryl Snyder  
MT FLAP Program Manager

Links to forms on website:  
 Proposal Evaluation Criteria  
 Webinar Announcement  
 Proposal Instruction Checklist  
 Proposal Form  
 Proposal Joint Endorsement Form  
 Public Interest Finding  
 Capabilities Assessment