



Credit: NACTO Urban Street Design Guide

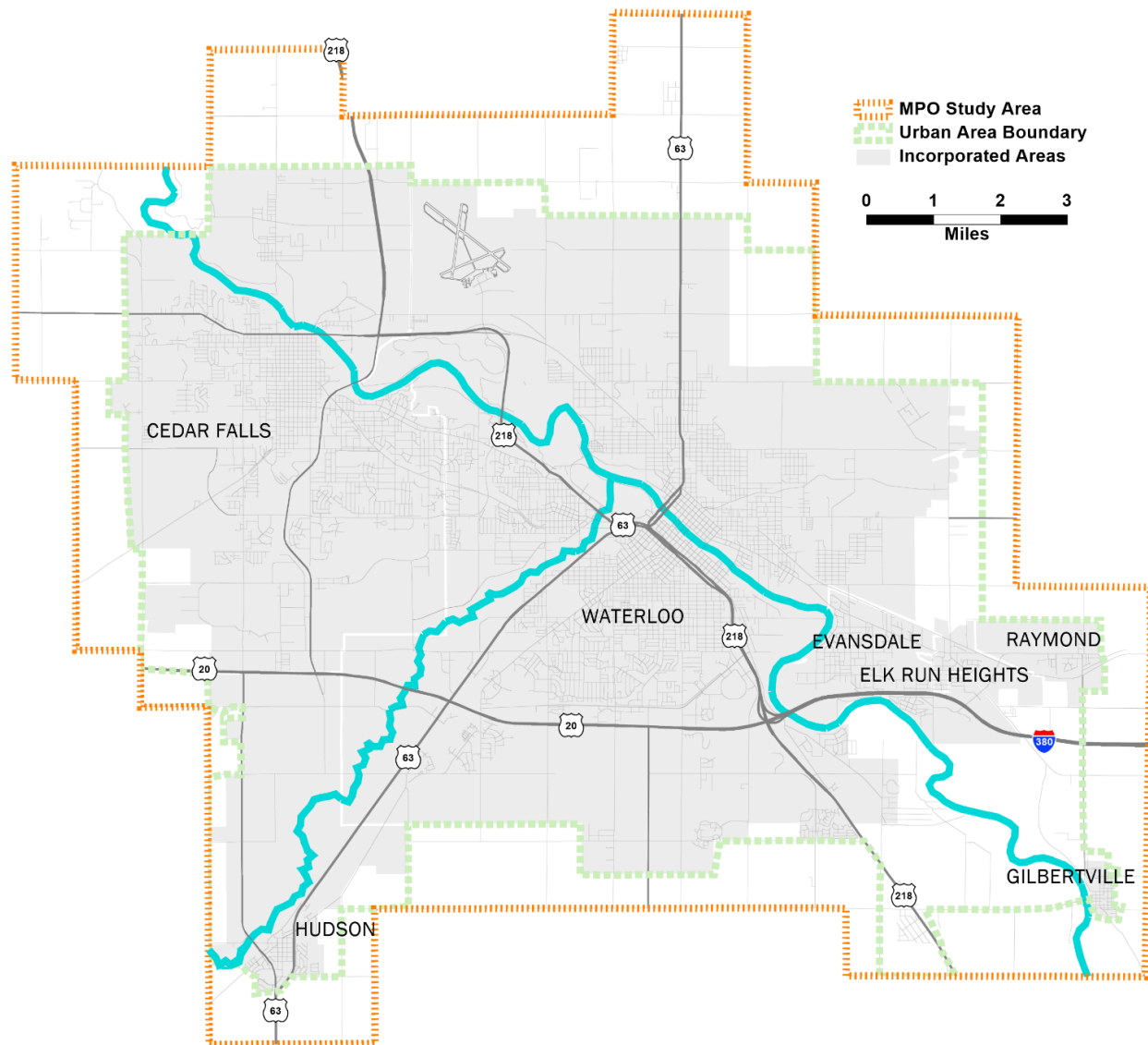
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside

Project Selection & Programming Guidelines

Schedule

November, 2025	Application posted to the MPO website and Notice of Funding Availability emailed to all jurisdictions
February 27, 2026	TA Set-Aside applications due by 3:00 PM, including all required attachments
April 9, 2026	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting to rank projects and develop the draft TA Set-Aside Program
June 11, 2026	Draft FY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) reviewed by the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee
June 12, 2026	Draft FY 2027-2030 TIP submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA
Week of June 22, 2026	TIP Public Input Sessions
July 9, 2026	Final FY 2027-2030 TIP presented to the Policy Board for adoption
July 10, 2026	Final FY 2027-2030 TIP submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA

Black Hawk County MPO Planning Area



Program Purpose and Basics

- The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (23 U.S.C. 133(h)) was authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that was enacted in November 2021. In the published program guidance, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has several aims for the program:
 - To encourage the investment in projects that upgrade the condition of streets, highways, and bridges, and to create a modern transportation network that is safe for all users
 - To provide choice across all modes
 - To accommodate new and emerging technologies
 - To make the network sustainable and resilient
 - To ensure the network is more equitable
- TA Set-Aside funds should be used for the repair, rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure, especially the incorporation of safety, accessibility, multi-modal, and resilience features.
- Applicants should consider the safety of all users in project development and use TA Set-Aside funds to address safety whenever possible.
- Consideration should be given for projects and inclusion of project elements that proactively address workforce development and economic development or remove barriers to opportunity such as automobile dependence.
- Funds that have been selected through a competitive process can be “flexed” to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to fund projects for transit agencies and used for transit projects to further the goal of providing an equitable and safe transportation network for travelers of all ages and abilities.
- Funded projects will be carried out under the same rules and procedures as a federally funded highway project. This subjects all projects to Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements and other applicable federal-aid requirements (e.g., Build America, Buy America, planning, environmental review, letting, etc.). Project sponsors should expect to devote considerable time and resources toward following the federal requirements necessary for their project to be successfully completed.
- For construction projects, the project must be constructible as an independent project and identify a specific project location (including logical project termini where applicable).
- All applications must be accompanied by an official endorsement from the project sponsor (i.e., fully executed resolution by the elected body or board). The endorsement must provide written assurance that the project sponsor will adequately maintain the completed project for its intended public use following the project completion (for most construction projects, this will be a minimum of 20 years) and acknowledge the intent of the project sponsor to provide all funds required to complete the project beyond any TA Set-Aside award.
- TA Set-Aside program funds may reimburse up to 80 percent of eligible project costs or up to the approved grant maximum, whichever is less. A non-federal match is required to pay for a minimum of 20 percent of the remaining project costs.
- Construction projects must have a minimum total project cost of \$100,000 and a minimum federal-aid participation level of 50 percent.

Eligible and Ineligible Activities

- **Eligible** activities are described in 23 U.S.C. 101(1)(29) or 23 U.S.C. 213. Eligible activities include the following:
 1. Transportation Alternatives
 - a) Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq).
 - b) Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
 - c) Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
 - d) Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.
 - e) Community improvement activities, which include but are not limited to:
 - I. Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising.
 - II. Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities.
 - III. Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent invasive species, and provide erosion control.
 - IV. Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.
 - V. Streetscaping and corridor landscaping.
 - f) Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:
 - I. Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in Title 23 sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329; or
 - II. Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
 2. Projects eligible under the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) under 23 U.S.C. 206. A “recreational trail” means a thoroughfare or track across land or snow, used for recreational purposes such as pedestrian activities including wheelchair use, skating or skateboarding, equestrian activities, nonmotorized snow trail activities, bicycling or use of other human-powered vehicles, aquatic or water activities, and motorized vehicular activities including all-terrain vehicle riding, motorcycling, snowmobiling, use of off-road light trucks, or use of other off-road motorized vehicles. Permissible uses include:
 - a) Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails
 - b) Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails
 - c) Purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment
 - d) Construction of new recreational trails

- e) Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors
 - f) Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance
 - g) Development and dissemination of publications and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection, (as those objectives relate to one or more of the uses of recreational trails, supporting non-law enforcement trail safety and trail use monitoring patrol programs, and providing trail-related training)
 - 3. The Safe Routes to School program including:
 - a) Infrastructure-related projects eligible under 23 U.S.C. 208(g)(1)
 - b) Non-infrastructure-related activities eligible under 23 U.S.C. 208(g)(2)
 - 4. Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.
- **Ineligible** activities include the following:
 - 1. MPO administrative activities.
 - 2. Promotional activities, except as permitted within an eligible safe routes to school project.
 - 3. Routine maintenance and operations, except trail maintenance as permitted by the RTP.
 - 4. General recreation and park facilities, playground equipment, sports fields, campgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, or other facilities that do not serve an eligible TA Set-Aside, RTP, or safe routes to school purpose.

Eligible Applicants

- Each application must identify an eligible project sponsor that will assume all responsibility for implementing the project, guarantee the necessary funds are delivered to the project, and is accountable for the use of program funds.
- Projects involving more than one entity must identify a single project sponsor that will be required to enter into a project agreement with the Iowa DOT and will ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- The project sponsor will designate a full-time employee to be the Person in Responsible Charge who will supervise all project administration duties, oversee the work performed by consultants and contractors, and coordinate the development of the project with the Iowa DOT.
- Entities eligible to receive TA Set-Aside funds (23 U.S.C. 133(h)(4)(A), as amended by the IIJA) are:
 - 1. A local government.
 - 2. A regional transportation authority or transit agency.
 - 3. A natural resource or public land agency.
 - 4. A school district, local education agency, or school.
 - 5. A Tribal government.
 - 6. The Black Hawk County MPO.
 - 7. A nonprofit entity.
 - 8. Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for or oversight of transportation or recreational trails that the State determines to be eligible, consistent with the goals of 23 U.S.C. 133(h).
 - 9. The State of Iowa, at the request of an eligible entity listed above.

TA Set-Aside Application

- Applications must include the following:
 - TA Set-Aside Application Form** (in Word format) with all parts completed
 - Detailed Map** identifying the location of the project
 - Sketch Plan** of the project, including cross section (construction projects only)
 - Digital Photographs** (limit to 5)
 - Itemized Breakdown** of the total project costs
 - Official Endorsement** of the project from the project sponsor
 - Letter of Support** from the local byway organization board (if applicable)
 - Letter of Consent** to Submit the application from the Iowa DOT District Engineer (if applicable)
 - Part G – Checklist and Certification** (in PDF format) signed by an official authorized by the project sponsor
 - Completed Minority Impact Statement** (in PDF format)
 - <https://iowadot.seamlessdocs.com/f/C019101000125171775>
- The *Application for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Funds Parts A through F, Application Part G Checklist and Certification, and Minority Impact Statement* can be accessed at <https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives>
- Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.
- Applications received past the deadline will not be considered for funding.
- Applications will be reviewed by MPO and Iowa DOT staff for program eligibility prior to the project ranking and programming process.
- Completed applications must be directed to Oghogho Oriakhi at ooriakhi@inrcog.org.

IOWADOT	
Iowa Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Application	
Please review the program guidance before completing this application. https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/Grant-Programs/Transportation-Alternatives	
PART A – PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION	
Project Sponsor:	
Contact Name:	Contact Title:
Email Address:	
Street Address:	
City:	Zip Code: Phone Number:
Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): <small>(To verify existing UEI or to register, go to System for Award Management at https://SAM.gov. The entity name associated with the UEI must match the entity listed on this application as the project sponsor.)</small>	
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA): <small>(To identify your local MPO or RPA, go to https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/Grant-Programs/Transportation-Alternatives.)</small>	
PART B – PROJECT INFORMATION	
Project Title:	
Project Description. The project description entered in the space below should include summary details of only the project scope that is the subject of the funding request. Do not provide details of completed or future phases of a larger project. For a construction project, the description should include the facility name, brief description of the work to be completed, length of the project to be completed, the project end points or termini, and any existing connecting trails or facilities.	
Is this application intended to be considered for funding as a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project? If yes, Part E of this application form must be completed. If a SRTS construction project, the project must be located within 2 miles of a school serving students K-12.	
Is this application located immediately adjacent to a state-designated Iowa Byway? If yes, the project should be identified in the byway's adopted Corridor Management Plan and the application shall include an endorsement of the project by the local byway organization.	
Upon completion, will the project be open to the public?	
Do you intend to charge a fee to users? If yes, how much will the fee be and how will the revenue be used?	

IOWADOT	
PART G – CHECKLIST AND CERTIFICATION	
Before certifying the accuracy of this application, please review Section 5 of the program guidance to verify you have complied with all requirements for your application to be considered complete. The below is a list of minimum requirements to be submitted as part of a complete application for all TA Set-Aside programs; however, applicants applying to a Regional TA Set-Aside program are encouraged to contact their local MPO or RPA for any additional requirements.	
<input type="checkbox"/> A. An APPLICATION FORM (in Word format) with all parts completed:	
<input type="checkbox"/> B. A DETAILED MAP identifying the location of the project	
<input type="checkbox"/> C. A SKETCH PLAN of the project, including cross section (construction projects only)	
<input type="checkbox"/> D. DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS (limit to five)	
<input type="checkbox"/> E. An ITEMIZED BREAKDOWN of the total project costs	
<input type="checkbox"/> F. An OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT of the project from the project sponsor	
<input type="checkbox"/> G. A LETTER OF SUPPORT from the local byway organization board (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> H. A LETTER OF CONSENT TO SUBMIT the application from the Iowa DOT District Engineer (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> J. This CERTIFICATION (in PDF format) signed by an official authorized by the project sponsor	
<input type="checkbox"/> K. A completed MINORITY IMPACT STATEMENT (in PDF format) as required by Iowa Code section 8.11	
The undersigned is an official authorized to represent the applying organization. The person signing this document must have the authority to contractually bind the organization.	
Certification I certify that all proposed activities will be carried out; that all grant money received will be utilized solely for the purposes for which it is intended; that records documenting the planning process and implementation will be maintained and submitted when requested, and the Iowa DOT is hereby granted access to inspect project sites and/or records. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information included in this application is true and accurate, including the commitment of all physical and financial resources. This application has been duly authorized by the applying organization. I understand that the attached official endorsement(s) binds the participating authority to assume responsibility for adequate maintenance of any new or improved facilities. The award of Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program funds; any subsequent funding or letting of contracts for design, construction, reconstruction, improvement, or maintenance; or the furnishing of materials shall not involve direct or indirect interest, prohibited by Iowa Code §14-2, §62.5, or §331.342, of any state, county, or city official, elective or appointive. Any award of funding or any letting of a contract in violation of the foregoing provisions shall invalidate the award of funding and authorize a complete recovery of any funds previously disbursed. If funding assistance is approved for the project described in this application, I understand that an executed agreement between the applicant and the Iowa DOT is required before the project can be started, costs incurred, or such funding assistance authorized for use in implementing the project.	
Printed Name	Title
Signature	Date

Project Ranking and Programming

- Projects will be ranked and recommended for funding by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). Voting entities include the following:
 - City of Cedar Falls
 - City of Elk Run Heights
 - City of Evansdale
 - City of Gilbertville
 - City of Hudson
 - City of Raymond
 - City of Waterloo
 - Black Hawk County
 - MET Transit
 - George Wyth State Park
- The BPAC will rank completed applications based on the following criteria:
 - **Alignment with Local, Regional, or Statewide Planning Documents:** What is the relationship of the proposed project to local, regional, or statewide plans? For example, how does the project align with the MPO Bikeway Plan?
 - **Connectivity and Completion of Bikeway Linkages:** To what degree will completion of the proposed project provide connectivity to existing facilities or develop bikeway linkages?
 - **Federal-aid Highway Project Development Process, Understanding, and Capacity:** What previous experience does the existing project sponsor staff have with the federal-aid highway project development process? Has past performance resulted in successful projects that delivered the projects in a timely and compliant manner? Does existing staff have the capacity to administer the proposed project? Has the project sponsor demonstrated an understanding of the program rules? What strategies will be implemented to deliver the proposed project successfully?
 - **Contribution Toward Safety for All Transportation Modes:** How would the proposed project address the safety of all users such as those who walk, bike, drive, ride transit, or travel by other modes? To what degree will the proposed project address any existing safety needs or concerns?
 - **Enhancement of Local Tourism Benefits:** How will the proposed project enhance tourism in the MPO? What are the economic benefits of the proposed project to the metro area and the state?
 - **Need for the Proposed Project:** Why is the project needed in the area and what population will it serve? How will the proposed project satisfy that need?
 - **Address High-Need Areas:** How does the project impact a high need area such as low-income, transit-dependent, rural (less than 5,000 population), or other areas? How will the proposed project improve the overall mobility of these areas and how has this population been engaged in the planning for the proposed project?
 - **Improve Accessibility:** What efforts have been made to go beyond compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 to ensure the proposed project will be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities?
 - **Long-Term Maintenance Plan:** What arrangements have been made to continue operation and maintenance of the proposed project after the project is complete? Has a maintenance fund or an endowment been established?
 - **Project Readiness:** How has the project sponsor demonstrated the project is ready for development? How has the project sponsor prepared for the proposed project by resolving any potential obstacles? Will the project proceed without delay upon award of funding?

- Projects will be ranked via a comparison process. All projects will be directly compared to each other, with a priority being chosen out of each pair. Each time a project is chosen, it will receive a point. Points will be totaled, resulting in a ranked priority list for funding.
- The BPAC shall recommend projects for funding based upon the project rankings and funding constraints.
- The BPAC has the discretion to recommend the share of TA Set-Aside funds for each recommended project.
- Projects recommended for funds will be incorporated into the draft MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), distributed to the Policy Board for review, and shared for public comment. The draft document will also be submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA for review. Comments from these agencies and the public will be incorporated into the final document and presented to the Policy Board for adoption.
- The Policy Board has the ultimate decision-making authority. The Policy Board shall review and approve the allocation of all TA Set-Aside funds within the final TIP.
- Upon approval of the final TIP by the Policy Board, the MPO shall forward a *TA Set-Aside Award Letter* to the recipient.

Example Ranking

BPAC Member 1			BPAC Member 2		
Project A or B	Project B or C	Project C or D	Project A or B	Project B or C	Project C or D
Project A or C	Project B or D		Project A or C	Project B or D	
Project A or D			Project A or D		
A: 0 B: 3 C: 2 D: 1			A: 3 B: 2 C: 1 D: 0		
BPAC Member 3			BPAC Member 4		
Project A or B	Project B or C	Project C or D	Project A or B	Project B or C	Project C or D
Project A or C	Project B or D		Project A or C	Project B or D	
Project A or D			Project A or D		
A: 0 B: 2 C: 2 D: 2			A: 3 B: 1 C: 1 D: 1		
BPAC Member 5					
Project A or B	Project B or C	Project C or D			
Project A or C	Project B or D				
Project A or D					
A: 2 B: 2 C: 1 D: 1					
Overall Ranking:					
Project B: 10 Points					
Project A: 8 Points					
Project C: 7 Points					
Project D: 5 Points					

Project Status Updates

- Project sponsors shall provide status updates at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee meetings.
- Status updates include but are not limited to:
 - a. Letting schedule
 - b. Construction schedule
 - c. Changes in project scope
 - d. Construction progress

Technical Resources

Iowa DOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program

<https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives>

Application for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Funds Parts A through F

<https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives>

Application Part G Checklist and Certification

<https://iowadot.gov/transportation-development/local-systems/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives>

Minority Impact Statement Form 105101

<https://iowadot.seamlessdocs.com/f/C019101000125171775>

Black Hawk County MPO Funding Opportunities

<https://bhcmpo.org/funding-opportunities/>

MPO Contact Information

Nick Fratzke

Director of Transportation

nfratzke@inrcog.org



INRCOG

Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

229 East Park Ave

Waterloo, IA 50703

(319) 235-0311

Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

www.bhcmpo.org

Appendix A: Example Resolution

A RESOLUTION OF THE **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** APPROVING AN APPLICATION TO THE BLACK HAWK COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) FOR TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE **[PROJECT NAME]** PROJECT AND DIRECTING EXECUTION OF SAID APPLICATION BY THE **[GOVERNING BODY]**.

WHEREAS, the **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** is a full member in good standing of the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); and

WHEREAS, the MPO provides Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program funds, on a competitive basis, for eligible projects to provide choice across all modes, accommodate new and emerging technologies, make the network sustainable and resilient, ensure the network is more equitable, and create a modern transportation network safe for all users; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** to avail itself of financial assistance through the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program as administered by the Black Hawk County MPO.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE **[GOVERNING BODY]** OF THE **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program application for the **[PROJECT NAME]** project is hereby approved and endorsed by the **[GOVERNING BODY]**.
- 2) The improvements provided for in this application will be dedicated to public use and adequately maintained by the **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** for a minimum of 20 years.
- 3) The **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** assures the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization that funds for the local match have been or will be committed to the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program project.
- 4) The **[DESIGNATED OFFICIAL]** is hereby designated as the official representative of the **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** and is further hereby directed and authorized to affix their signature to said application on behalf of the **[GOVERNING BODY]**.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS _____ day of _____, 20__.

ATTEST:

Appendix B: Example Award Letter



INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

September 22, 2023

Name
Title
Place
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear _____ :

RE: Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Funding Award

This correspondence is to inform the City or County that the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has awarded Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds in the amount of _____ for the _____ project. Your project will be programmed into the MPO Fiscal Year 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in federal fiscal year 20--.

To receive funds, the City or County must work with the Iowa Department of Transportation. To initiate that process, project sponsors should contact Susan Hollenkamp at the Iowa DOT Systems Planning Bureau in Ames.

Please note the City or County does not yet have a funding commitment nor is it authorized to expend federal funds until the project has been authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Expenditures incurred prior to FHWA authorization will be ineligible for reimbursement. If you have questions, please contact me at (319) 235-0311 or kdurant@inrcog.org.

Sincerely,

Kyle Durant
Transportation Planner II

Cc: Susan Hollenkamp, Iowa DOT

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