



TEA Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. If I am approved for a TEA grant, do I get all the grant funds up front?

No, grant funds are distributed based on reimbursement of cost. All reimbursements are made to the applicant (sponsor).

The following requirements apply:

- The cost being submitted must be TEA eligible. If an invoice includes both eligible and non-eligible costs, the applicant needs to provide clarification on which costs they are seeking reimbursement for.
 - The cost must have been paid by the applicant. If someone other than the applicant paid for the cost, it is not eligible for reimbursement from the TEA program.
 - The applicant must show proof that the cost was paid by them. This should include invoices addressed to the applicant that can be matched to a payment made by the applicant, such as canceled checks or ACH documents from the bank.
2. The TEA Program Overview guidance states you must submit all of the items listed under the *TEA Project Application Submittal Package* section (steps 2-10) found in the [TEA Project - Key Steps and Documentation](#) checklist to be eligible for TEA funding, but we are facing challenges completing this information. Are there any exceptions?

No, all applicants must complete steps 2-10 as outlined in the [TEA Project - Key Steps and Documentation](#) checklist. The only exception could be if the business is also receiving funding from Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), then WEDC would have already completed a financial analysis of the business and in this case the 3 years of audited and compiled business financials may be waived if WEDC provides WisDOT their financial analysis of the business.

3. If the business is interested in two transportation facility improvements, is that one TEA application or two? For example, the same business is interested in a road project and a rail project.

TEA applications are evaluated per transportation facility improvement. This means that one sponsor/business applicant looking at two different improvements for the same business is two applications. It also means that one sponsor/two businesses sharing a transportation facility improvement is one application.

4. The guidance states that for a transportation project to be TEA eligible, the governing body retains the transportation facility improvement in public ownership. Are there any exceptions to this requirement?

No, there are no exceptions. The governing body must have public ownership over the land upon which the transportation project is located. [Chapter Trans 510](#) references this requirement in several places.

5. What is the process for a governing body to gain public ownership over the land upon which the transportation project is located?

This depends if your project is road or rail. For road projects, this is completed through a right of way acquisition which can be completed through either a [Transportation Project Plat \(TPP\)](#), or a [right-of way-plat with a relocation order](#). For rail projects, both the TEA Rail Agreement and the Facility Use Agreement *reference the "Track Easement" by and between the Municipality and Industry granting the Municipality a perpetual right for construction, operation and ownership of the Project Facility on the Industry's land.*

6. Can we get started on our project while our TEA grant is under review?

The community's ability to advertise the transportation project's construction work is contingent upon the completion of (and WisDOT's approval of) standardized engineering plans, environmental documents, bid packages, and other documents. The timeline for completing those activities depends partially on the complexity of the project and whether it will involve federal funding and/or require federal action. The completed materials must be reviewed and approved by WisDOT's regional Local Program Manager or by other WisDOT staff. In other words, you cannot begin any part of the project that you expect to use TEA funding for until WisDOT has granted its approval.

However, this means you can begin construction of improvements that are not eligible for TEA funding per [Trans 510.04\(2\)](#) (i.e. buildings, parking lots) assuming you have met any separate requirements tied to those projects.

7. My project agreement was signed on April 15, 2020 and I pledged to create 50 new jobs. When do I report job status to WisDOT? How does the timeline work?

Jobs created/retained is based on a 7-year timeline with the clock starting at the point of which the project agreement is signed. It's important to note that the project agreement is different than the grant award. [Trans 510.08\(1\)](#) defines the project agreement as *the scheduling of an approved transportation facility improvement and the obligation of state funds shall occur only after the eligible applicant, the department, and any applicable third parties execute a formal project agreement, setting forth specific terms, conditions and responsibilities of the parties.*

Snapshots are taken at the 3-year and 7-year period for both new and retained jobs. Therefore, if your project agreement was signed on April 15, 2020, you need to report how many jobs you created 3 years from that date, which would be April 15, 2023. Then you need to report job numbers again 7 years from your signed project agreement date, which would be April 15, 2027. The 3-year reporting snapshot is ensuring you created the jobs within the 3 years. The 7-year snapshot is ensuring you retained the jobs you created 4 years earlier.

If your TEA grant had been strictly based on retaining jobs rather than creating jobs, you still would be reporting job status to WisDOT at the 3-year snapshot and the 7-year snapshot. It is the applicant's responsibility to report job status to WisDOT at the 3 year and 7-year mark.

8. Where do I submit my reimbursements?

You need to submit reimbursement documents to the staff overseeing your TEA construction project. When your grant was awarded, there should have been an introductory meeting between you and either one of the WisDOT Regions for road projects or WisDOT Railroads & Harbors for rail or harbor projects. It would be these individuals who would process your reimbursements. If you are unsure who that is, email tea@dot.wi.gov for their contact information. Do not send invoices to the TEA grant email.

9. I have read through the TEA Program Overview guidance and my project will not meet the TEA eligibility requirements. Are there other funding options that I may be eligible for?

Check out [WISDOT's Local Assistance Programs](#) for more information about other programs available.

Review information regarding the [Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\)](#) to see if your project meets those requirements.

Consider reviewing the [U.S. Department of Transportation's website](#) for grant opportunities that may be available through the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.