



Van Buren County Rural Task Force 2026-2029 Call for Projects Program Guidance Packet

A FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM MANAGED BY THE
SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Introduction

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is pleased to announce the Call for Projects for the Van Buren County Rural Task Force (RTF) program. Below you will find information on the Rural Task Force, the Call for Projects, and application instructions.

The purpose of this call is to solicit projects from local road and transit agencies to utilize federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds and state Transportation Economic Development Fund-Category D (TEDF-D) funding for fiscal years 2026-2029.

Rural Task Force (RTF)

The Rural Task Force (RTF) is a statewide program with 14 regions, which is charged with determining how to program the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding and the state Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF) Category D (known as “State D”) allocated to rural areas.

Van Buren County is a part of the Region Four RTF which also includes Berrien and Cass counties.

Each county is represented on the RTF by one person from the following agencies:

- County road agency
- Village or city within a rural area
- A rural transit provider

Eligible Applicants

All local road and rural transit agencies within rural areas of Van Buren County are eligible for RTF funding. The eligible applicants include the following:

- City of Bangor
- City of Gobles
- City of Hartford
- Village of Bloomingdale
- Village of Breedsville
- Village of Decatur
- Village of Lawrence
- Village of Lawton
- Van Buren County Road Commission (Townships)
- Van Buren Public Transit

Eligible Project Costs

Only construction costs are eligible for STBG and State D funding. Preliminary and construction engineering is the responsibility of the project sponsor to complete without STBG funding.

Eligible uses include construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, enhancement, and operational improvements. **Right-of-way, construction engineering, and preliminary engineering costs are not eligible.**

STBG funding can also fund transit capital projects. Transit projects must also be eligible for FTA funding to use STBG funds. Eligible transit capital projects may include replacement buses and rehabilitation of existing buses, communication equipment, maintenance equipment, operational support equipment, and services, items related to services under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and facility renovations.

Location of Projects

Rural STBG funds must be used on a road that is classified as federal-aid eligible and is within the rural area of Van Buren County. Rural/urban designations are based on the 2020 Adjusted Census Urban Boundary (ACUB).

A map of road ownership, 2020 ACUB, and functional class can be found here: <https://arcg.is/ePvfT>

State D funds can only be used on roads classified as All Season. To qualify as an All-Season Road, the road must be built to all-season standards, connect to other all-season routes, and cannot restrict legally loaded commercial vehicles. You can find more information about all season requirements on [MDOT's website](#). To see if a road is currently designated as All-Season please see the MDOT [All Season Road map](#). If a road is not currently classified as All Season or on the proposed list, a request can be made to reclassify the road which must be voted on at the county RTF meeting before being sent to MDOT. To be reclassified as an All Season, the road must currently meet the all-season road standards or be reconstructed to All Season standards.

Local Match

STBG can fund up to 81.85% of the total eligible construction costs. The remaining 18.15% must come from a non-federal source of funding. State D can fund up to 80% of total project costs with a 20% match. State D funds may be used as match for federal funds.

Project Selection

SWMPC staff will compile and post candidate project information for a Van Buren County RTF meeting where the three RTF members from Van Buren County will review, discuss, and select a fiscally constrained project list to recommend to the Region Four RTF for final approval. Throughout the selection process, the public will have opportunities to be involved and comment on projects. Projects that are not chosen may be added to an illustrative list, meaning that these projects are considered first in line if additional funds become available.

The process for project prioritization has many steps and SWMPC strives to conduct a process that is fair and transparent. SWMPC encourages public input in accordance with the adopted SWMPC Public Participation Plan. The following is the procedure SWMPC will follow in Project selection:

1. ACT 51 agencies submit projects using the 2026-2029 RTF Project Application along with supporting documentation.
2. SWMPC staff will review project submissions and compile the project information into a spreadsheet, map projects and post project information for the public.
3. The County RTF will develop a draft list of funded projects and an illustrative list of projects.
4. The selected project list may need to be adjusted to remain fiscally constrained.
5. The recommended project lists from each county will be reviewed and approved at the Region 4 RTF meeting.
6. SWMPC will submit the approved project list to MDOT for state and federal approval.

Key Dates

Date	Activity	Public Involvement
June 28, 2024	Call for STBG-funded projects issued	X
October 4, 2024	Applications due to SWMPC staff	X
October 21, 2024	Submitted projects available for public review and comment	X
November – Early January 2024/2025	County RTF meetings select a fiscally constrained draft list of projects.	X
January 2025	Full RTF Region 4 review and approval of selected county RTF projects and illustrative list for submission to MDOT.	X

Illustrative List of Projects

RTF Region 4 will adopt a list of projects that are financially constrained with the amount of STBG and State D funding available for programming. Applications not included in the fiscally constrained list will be placed on an illustrative list of projects, ranked in priority order based on the project's evaluation score. Should additional funding become available, projects on the approved illustrative list will be considered for funding. This illustrative list will be in effect only until the adoption of the next programming cycle.

General Considerations for Federal Funding

Projects carried out using USDOT funds must comply with applicable provisions in Title 23 of the United States Code dealing with Federal-aid highways, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (DavisBacon), Buy America, competitive bidding, and other contracting requirements, regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

Applicants are urged to familiarize themselves with Title 23 requirements. Federal aid, including STBG, is generally most efficiently used for major road rehabilitation or reconstruction. The administrative burden of a federal-aid project can be substantial. Thus, a small project is often best accomplished with local funds to avoid this burden.

Application Instructions

The fillable PDF application is attached to the email sent out for the Call for Project. The application can also be found here: https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/rtf_20262029_application.pdf.

A sample application is attached to this packet.

The application includes several questions that require road data. You can find the required information through the following links:

- [PASER Rating](#)
- [Average annual daily traffic \(AADT\) volume](#)
- [National Functional Classification \(NFC\)](#) – *click on the road to get the NFC*
- [All Season Road Status](#) – *check yes if the road is either All Season or Proposed All Season*
- [Crash Data](#)

The applicant must fill out a separate application for each project for which they are applying for, with each road segment being considered a separate project. Although this is a call for the 2026–2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), projects approved and programmed for 2026 do not need to reapply.

All applications are due on **Friday, October 4, 2024**

Please save your final file in the following format: AgencyName_ProjectName.dox.

Please email the completed application to both Brandon Kovnat at kovnatb@swmpc.org and Kim Gallagher at gallagherk@swmpc.org. Please include “NATS STBG Application” in the subject line.

NOTE: SWMPC staff will contact you with an email confirmation of your submitted application. If you do not receive an email confirmation, please contact a SWMPC staff member.

Rural Task Force Region Four
2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Project Application

If you need assistance, please contact Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Transportation Planner
Email kovnatb@swmpc.org or call (269) 925-1137 x 1524

Applicant Information

Agency Name: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Engineer/Consultant: _____ Company: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Project Description

Project Name/Road Name: _____

Project Limits (From/To): _____

Project Length (to the nearest hundredth of a mile): ____ miles

City, Village, or Township: _____

Additional location description if needed

Major Work Type: _____ **Preferred Year of Funding:** _____

Detailed Work Description (Include all work items as part of this project e.g. drain cleaning, curb and gutter replacement, guardrail, tree clearing, grading, culvert replacement, all types of ROW, ADA upgrades, etc.).

Describe any non-participating work if applicable

What is the need and purpose for this project (what issues are being addressed by the proposed work)

If you are submitting multiple applications, please rank your applications by priority. Rank: ____ of ____

Proposed Budget

	Amount	Percent of Total
Total Participating Construction Estimate	\$	100 %
STBG Requested	\$	%
State D Requested	\$	%
Local Match	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%

Are the other funding sources secured? Yes No *If no, provide details on when these funds will be secured*

Non-Participating Cost Estimate: \$ _____

Total Project Estimate with Non-Participating: \$ _____

Are you willing to contribute additional local match above the minimum 18.15% required: Yes No

Are you willing to use an Advance Construct (AC): Yes No

If so, what is the maximum Amount: \$ _____

Estimated Project Schedule

Activity	Date (Month/Year)
NEPA/SHPPO Submitted	
Right-of-Way Certification Submitted	
Grade Inspection (GI) Completed	
Full Biddable Package Submitted to MDOT	
Project Letting	
Construction Start	
Project Completion	

System Preservation

What is the most recent PASER rating (<https://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/tamcMap/>): _____

Do the project limits begin or end at a road with a PASER of 7 or higher: Yes No

Which MDOT guidelines will the project use:

What is the expected increase in Remaining Service Life (RSL): _____ Years

What is the current state of drainage on the road:

Regional Significance

What is the average annual daily traffic (AADT) volume for the limits of this project? _____ Vehicles/day

What is the National Functional Classification (NFC) of the road:

Is the project on a All Season Route Yes No

Safety

For the questions below use the five-year totals from 2019-2023 (<https://www.michigantrafficcrashfacts.org/>)

All Crashes

Total number of crashes: _____

Number of fatalities: _____

Number of Serious Injuries: _____

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes

Total number of crashes: _____

Number of fatalities: _____

Number of Serious Injuries: _____

List the safety countermeasures included in the project

Use the attached list of countermeasures and associated crash types

Counter Measure	Crash Type Addressed	Does this address a fatal or serious injury crash
<i>Improved pavement markings</i>	<i>Angle, Rear-End Crashes</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Complete Streets

Are there existing pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities within the limits of the project? If so, please explain

Describe any improvements to pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities included with the project

Will the new/improved pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities connect to existing pedestrian/bicycle facility or one that is planned to be completed before 2029: Y/N Yes No

Does your agency have a policy for maintaining non-motorized transportation infrastructure, such as bike lanes and pedestrian pathways/sidewalks? Yes No

Accessibility and Equity

Is the project located in a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), as identified by the Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool (<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>): Yes No

Does this project remove a priority ADA barrier, as identified in an adopted ADA Transition Plan or similar plan? Yes No

Strategic Planning & Investment

The project crosses jurisdictional boundaries. Yes No

The project will coordinate with other infrastructure projects (i.e. utility, water, sewer, etc.) Yes No

The Project is identified in a pavement asset management plan Yes No

There is an asset management plan covering utilities along the length of the project Yes No

The city/village/Township has adopted an asset management policy Yes No

The project supports goals or objectives from another planning document (ex. master plan or rec plan) Yes No

If the project supports goals or objectives in another planning document please identify the plan, specify the relevant goals or objectives, and describe how this project will help achieve them

Risk Assessment

Does right of way need to be acquired? Yes No Unknown

Does the project intersect with a railroad crossing? Yes No Unknown

Does the project require utility relocation? Yes No Unknown

Are the project limits within a defined FEMA floodplain? Yes No Unknown

Will there be trees removed within the project limits? Yes No Unknown

Is the project within 100 feet of a cemetery? Yes No Unknown

Are there historic elements withing 100 feet of the proposed work* Yes No Unknown

Describe approximately how many individual mature trees or acres of trees will be removed if applicable

* Historic elements include any of the following if they are 50 years old or older: **objects** (ex. Statues or monuments), **structures** (ex. bridges, stone curbs, or brick streets), intentional/designed landscapes, **buildings**, **Historic districts**, **intentional/designed landscapes**

Existing and Proposed Roadway Design

	Existing			Proposed		
Number of lanes	Through Lanes: ____	Center Turn Lane (Y/N): ____	On Street Parking (Y/N): ____	Through Lanes: ____	Center Turn Lane (Y/N): ____	On Street Parking (Y/N): ____
Shoulder	<input type="checkbox"/> Paved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unpaved		Width: ____ Ft.	<input type="checkbox"/> Paved <input type="checkbox"/> Unpaved		Width: ____ Ft.
Sidewalk/path	Placement		Width: ____ Ft.	Placement		Width: ____ Ft.
On road bicycle facilities	<input type="radio"/> Bike Lanes <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="radio"/> Sharrows			<input type="radio"/> Bike Lanes <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="radio"/> Sharrows		
	<input type="radio"/> Wide Shoulders		<input type="radio"/> None	<input type="radio"/> Wide Shoulders		<input type="radio"/> None
Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Utility Work is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Water/Sewer Work is needed			<input type="checkbox"/> Replacement of utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Relocation of utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer and/or water line work		

Applicant Acknowledgements

By signing below, the project sponsor ensures that they have read and understood the appropriate federal guidance and agree to follow all applicable federal regulations and requirements from the acceptance of federal funds, should this project receive an award. In addition, the project sponsor acknowledges the potential loss of federal funds if the project is not obligated within the programmed fiscal year or if Michigan Department of Transportation statewide obligation limitations have been met.

Certification of Matching Funds

By signing below, the Project Sponsor assures that sufficient funds are available to pay any costs above the awarded federal fund amount and that completion of this project is not contingent upon additional grants (the sources of matching funds may be changed after STBG funding has been awarded, in accordance with all established TIP amendment guidelines).

Name: _____ Title: _____

SEGMENT CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Geometric Safety Enhancements		
Center Left-Turn Lane - Construct	80%	Rear-End Left-Turn
	50%	Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Head-On, Angle, Sideswipe*
	15%	Non Left-Turn Rear-End, Other*
Right-Turn Lane - Construct	65%	Rear-End Right-Turn
	30%	Angle
	15%	Rear-End
	10%	Other*
Horizontal Curve Flattening	30%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 1' each side)	5%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 2' each side)	10%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 3' each side)	15%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 4' each side)	20%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 5' each side)	25%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 6' each side)	30%	Lane Departure***
Shoulders - Widen to Standard Width (add 7' each side)	35%	Lane Departure***
Vertical Curve Modification	20%	All Applicable Crash Types +++
Superelevation Correction	20%	Lane Departure***
General Segment Enhancements		
Access Management - Improve	15%	Drive-way Related Applicable Crashes
Centerline Rumble Strips - Install	44%	K and A injury Applicable Crashes
	46%	Single Vehicle Run off Road Left Crashes
	43%	Sideswipe Same Crashes
	55%	Sideswipe Opposite Crashes
	35%	Wet Crashes
High Friction Surface Treatment - Install	20%	All Other Applicable Crashes
Recessed Durable Pavement Markings	5%	All Applicable Crashes
Road Diet (4-3 Lane Conversion) - Install	50%	Suburban - All Applicable Crashes
	30%	Urban - All Applicable Crashes
Shoulder Rumble Strips	20%	Run-Off the Road Right Crashes
Signing/Delineation on Horizontal Curves (Including Recessed Durable Pavement Markings) - Install	20%	Lane Departure***
Install Edgelines - Where none currently exist	15%	Lane Departure*** (CMF Clearing House ID 10243)
HMA Safety Edge Improvement	13%	All non-intersection crashes
Roadside Enhancements		
Fixed Objects From Clearzone (Trees, Culverts, Etc.) - Removal	75%	Fixed-Object Applicable Crashes
Guardrail - Install	55%	Lane Departure *** Fatalities and "A" Injury Crashes
	7%	Lane Departure *** B/C/O Applicable Crashes
Slope Flattening	15%	Fixed-Object, Overturn Applicable Crashes
Living Snow Fence	20%	Crashes due to wintry surface conditions
Lighting - install on segment	20%	Dark Unlighted Crashes

INTERSECTION CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Signal Timing / Hardware Enhancements		
Install Reflectorized Backplates	15%	All Applicable Crashes
Add All-Red Clearance Interval - <i>Add per ITE</i>	20%	Head-On Left-Turn, Angle
Yellow-Change Interval - <i>Increase</i>	10%	All Crash Types
Box Span Signal - <i>Upgrade from Stop Control</i>	65%	Angle
	-25%	Rear-End (Increases Crashes)
	20%	All Other Non Rear-End Crashes
Box Span Signal - <i>Upgrade from Diagonal Span</i>	10%	All Applicable Crashes+
Protected Left-Turn Signal Phase - <i>Add</i>	30%	Left-Turn
Signal Head Size - <i>Increase to 12 "</i>	10%	All Applicable Crashes +
Signal Optimization & Timing Updates	10%	All Applicable Crashes +
Removing Night Flash from Signal Timing	50%	Nighttime Flash mode Related Crashes
Intersection Geometric Enhancements		
Center Left-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	80%	Rear-End Left-Turn
	50%	Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Head-On, Angle, Other
	15%	Non Left-Turn Rear-End
Intersection Improvements (Realignment, Sight-Distance Improvements, Radii Improvements, Etc.)	30%	Angle
	15%	Rear-End
	10%	Head-On, Sideswipe, Pedestrian, Bicycle, Left-Turn Related
Offset Left-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Angle-Turn, Head-On Left-Turn
	20%	Rear-End Left-Turn
Offset Right-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Angle-Turn
	50%	Other Applicable Crashes
	20%	Rear-End Right Turn
Right-Turn Lane - <i>Construct</i>	65%	Rear-End Right-Turn
	20%	Applicable Rear-End Crashes, Sideswipe Same Direction
Roundabout	78%	Fatal and A-Injury Reduction
	57%	Minor Crash Reduction
General Intersection Enhancements (Non-Signalized Intersections)		
All-Way Stop Control - <i>New Installation</i>	60%	All Applicable Crashes
Ground Mounted Flashing Beacons (Red)- <i>Install **</i>	30%	All Crashes On Install Approach
Ground Mounted Flashing Beacons(Amber) - <i>Install **</i>	20%	All Crashes On Install Approach
Signing - <i>Improve/Upgrade</i>	30%	Angle, Rear-End Crashes
Pavement Markings - <i>Improve/Upgrade</i>	30%	Angle, Rear-End Crashes
Reflective Sheeting on Sign Posts (<i>lollipops</i>)	15%	All Applicable Crashes

NON-MOTORIZED CRASH REDUCTION FACTORS

Proposed Improvement	% Reduction	Associated Crash Types
Pedestrian / Bicycle Enhancements		
Pedestrian Refuge Island - Install	50%	Pedestrian Crashes (Review NCHRP Report 841)
Bump Out / Curb Extension - Remove Parking / Install	30%	All Crashes
Bicycle Lanes - Intersections, Install per standards	25%	Bicycle Crashes
Bicycle Lanes - Segments, Install per standards	50%	Bicycle Crashes
Shared Use Path - Install	33%	Bicycle and Pedestrian Related Crashes
Sidewalk for Pedestrians - Construct	85%	Pedestrian Crashes
Intersection Lighting - install	75%	Pedestrian Fatal - Dark Unlighted Crashes
	40%	Pedestrian A-Injury - Dark Unlighted Crashes
	30%	All Applicable Dark Unlighted Crashes
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (HAWK Signals) - Install	55%	Pedestrian Crashes (CMF ID 9020)
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons	47%	Pedestrian Crashes
Ped. Countdown Signals - Install new Pedestrian signal	30%	Pedestrian Crashes
Ped. Countdown Signals - Upgrade from existing Pedestrian signal	25%	Pedestrian Crashes

Notes:

* "Other" includes other crash which might be mitigated by the addition of a right-turn lane in the judgment of the crash analyst

** applies to new installation or with removal of existing overhead flashing beacon

*** "Lane departure" crashes include the following types: Fixed Object, Overturn, Sideswipe Opposite, Sideswipe Same and Head-On (Run off Road Right/Left Crashes)

+ All Applicable Crash - Rear End, Angle Crashes, Sideswipe Same. The Crashes should occur at The signal that is being upgraded. Does not include driveway and anima

+++ All Applicable Crash Types - Lane Departure, Fixed Object, Angle Crashes, Sideswipe Opposite, Sideswipe Same. The crashes should occur on or near a vertical curve

REFERENCES:

The references listed below are the sources recognized by MDOT for obtaining crash reduction factors.

- 1) MDOT Safety Programs Unit - Crash Reduction Factors (As recommended by K. Kunde. P.E.); October, 1986
- 2) *Selection Process for Local High Safety Projects*, - Transportation Research Record 847: 1982
- 3) UKTRP - 85-6, University of Kentucky; March, 1985
- 4) *Desktop Reference for Crash Reduction Factor*, Federal Highway Administration. 2007
- 5) NCHRP Report 617: *Accident Modification Factors for Traffic Engineering and ITS Improvements*, TRB 2008
- 6) Crash Modification Factor Clearinghouse, <http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org/index.cfm>, 2009
- 7) Safety Edge - <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/hsis/11025/11025.pdf>
- 8) Removing Night Flash - <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/hsis/13069/index.cfm>
- 9) RRFBs - CMF Clearinghouse ID 9024