



## Community Crossings FAQs

- **How do local units receive money from the local road and bridge matching fund?**

Local units will need to submit eligible projects to INDOT for consideration. A call for projects through INDOT will be issued on May 31, 2016 and close July 29, 2016. Eligible projects are road and bridge preservation type, roundabouts, road reconstruction projects along with ADA sidewalk ramps that intersect with road projects. Trails and enhancement type work are not eligible.



Local units of government that perform their own work, such as chip sealing and crack sealing, can receive funds for the materials. Labor or equipment costs are not eligible. Road and bridge projects submitted must be included in the local unit's complete asset management plan.

- **What is the match percentage?**

Projects selected will be funded with a 50/50 match. Local units must provide 50 percent of the funding needed. Applications will require a financial commitment letter which should include the amount of funding the local unit is committing to contribute and the source of that funding.

- **Can a local unit use any funding source to provide the 50 percent match?**

No. Match funds from local units must come from:

- Revenue generated from an increase, after June 30, 2016, in the local unit's motor vehicle excise surtax or wheel tax.
- Money received by the local unit as a special distribution of local income taxes under SEA 67.
- Money in the local unit's rainy day fund.

- **Can a local unit transfer money into its Rainy Day Fund to use for the local match funds?**

Transferring funds from one account to a Rainy Day Fund is a decision that is made at the local government level and does not involve INDOT. Consult with your local government's fiscal body, controller and/or clerk-treasurer if you are considering a transfer of funds.

- **How will projects be selected for funding?**

INDOT has developed an application scoring sheet much like the one that's currently used for local federal aid projects although developed specific for HEA 1001. Scoring categories include:

- **Benefit, Need & Quality of Project** – Does the project appear to meet community needs, is well planned, is widely supported, well-funded etc.? Does the project have community-wide and greater benefit in terms of a high percentage of community/visitors/public served? Is the project unique or does it fill a void in available amenities/facilities? Is the project a a new facility of its type, or is it the sole method to achieve the end result?

- Connection to existing plans – Is the project part or related to existing plans such as comprehensive, land use, transportation, historic, cultural, tourism, etc.? Projects with regional economic significance will be given a higher priority although this is not the only thing that INDOT will score on.
- AADT & AATT – Traffic counts for both cars and trucks
- Bridge classification – Is the bridge structurally deficient, functionally obsolete, does it have a weight restriction, etc.?
- Safety improvements – Does the project reduce accidents or provide safety devices for the motoring public?
- Supplemental funding – Are more funds being committed to the project other than the 50% match.

- **How much funding is available to each local unit?**

State law requires INDOT to allocate at least 50 percent of the total funds to counties with a population of less than 50,000. The remaining 50 percent will be awarded to local units who reside in counties over 50,000 in population. INDOT has capped the amount of award to \$1 million per local unit per fiscal year.

- **What happens if all of the grant money is not used for each call?**

By law, state funds that have been appropriated for the matching grant program are dedicated to the program. If funds are left over at the end of a call for projects the remaining funds will roll over to the next call. Remaining funds will not revert to the general fund or be reallocated for any other purpose.

- **Can a local unit submit multiple projects?**

Local units may submit multiple projects. However, INDOT will only participate up to the \$1 million cap. Local units can have more than one project, but INDOT will not exceed the established cap.

- **Our local unit bundles projects like resurfacing for multiple streets. Can we submit a bundle of projects?**

INDOT will be scoring projects on a per project basis. With that in mind, projects should be submitted individually in order to have the best chance to receive funding. Bundled projects may be submitted, but they will be scored as one project. Therefore, bundled projects will either receive 100 percent of the requested funding or no funding. Submitting individual projects preserves the opportunity for some projects to receive funding. Local Units should prioritize projects for INDOT by indicating in the application comment section which projects are a higher priority for them.

- **What projects are not eligible?**

Stand-alone sidewalk projects, stand-alone drainage projects, sewer separation projects, trails, enhancement projects such as trees, trash receptacles, gateway aesthetics, etc.

- **Are sidewalks eligible?**

Stand-alone sidewalk projects are not eligible. However, sidewalks and ADA ramps that are associated with a road construction project are eligible.

- **Are drainage projects eligible?**

Drainage work that is associated with a specific road resurfacing or reconstruction project is eligible. Stand-alone drainage or sewer separation projects are not eligible.

- **Are streetlights eligible?**

Streetlights are not eligible to be funded through the matching grant program.

- **Our local unit has already awarded contracts for road and bridge construction this year. Are those projects eligible for grant funding?**

Yes. Projects that have already been procured are eligible for funding. However, contracts that have already been paid are only eligible if the local's funding came from their Rainy Day fund or Special LOIT distribution.

- **When will INDOT announce which projects will receive grant funding for 2016?**

Call for projects will be issued May 31, 2016 and closes July 29, 2016 at 5 p.m. EST. Awarded contracts will be announced at the end of August.

- **If a local unit's project is selected for funds, when will funding be received?**

The funding for the INDOT 50 percent match on selected projects will be distributed to local units as soon as INDOT receives the funding from the state. INDOT anticipates this to be sometime around early September 2016.

- **If a local unit is awarded funds in 2016, will that unit be eligible to submit projects for funding in 2017?**

Yes. Prior year grant awards will not preclude a local unit from being considered for funding for a project(s) in the following year.

- **Are funds received through the grant program required to be used for the project submitted?**

Yes. Matching funds awarded to local units by INDOT must be used on the projects submitted by the local unit. The funds cannot be spent on other projects. INDOT will require a final proof of payment on the project and will make a site visit to insure that the project was completed based upon the original scope of work.

- **If a local unit receives grant funding for 2016, do the grant funds have to be spent entirely in 2016?**

No. INDOT will issue a check to the local units once a copy of the procured contractors bid has been submitted. Once the project is complete, a final billing will need to be sent to INDOT on exactly what the project cost was. If a project is completed under budget, the state's matching funds will be returned to INDOT within 30 days. Any overruns will be the responsibility of the local units at 100 percent.

- **If a local unit does not have an asset management plan, can that unit still pursue grant funding?**

No. Asset management plans are required in order to receive consideration for funding. HEA 1001 provides \$500,000 to LTAP to help local units develop their plans and to provide technical assistance where needed.

- **Does INDOT need to approve my asset management plan before I apply?**

No. INDOT is asking that you submit your asset management plan as part of your application. At the same time, the application requires that you share your asset management plan with LTAP if you have not already done so. INDOT is not approving asset management plans as a stipulation to receive grant funds. LTAP may contact you if revisions are required to your asset management plan.

- **If a local unit has not authorized an increase in the motor vehicle excise surtax or the wheel tax, is that local unit still eligible to pursue grant funding?**

Yes. However, the funding sources available to the local unit to provide the local 50 percent match would be required to come from either a special distribution of local income tax under SEA 67 or from the local unit's Rainy Day Fund.

- **I'm not sure my project demonstrates "regional economic significance." Should I still apply for funding?**

Yes, absolutely! Regional economic significance is only one of the factors on which projects will be scored. INDOT will also score based on local support, connectivity and mobility within the local community, traffic volume, project need and quality of the application.

- **What happens if my project costs less than the amount of grant funding awarded?**

Should a local unit receive grant funds for a project and the project ultimately costs less than the preliminary estimate, the local unit will be required to return 50 percent of the cost savings to INDOT. For example, if the preliminary estimate submitted to INDOT is for \$1 million, INDOT would award \$500,000 and the local unit would provide the other \$500,000. If the project cost ends up at \$800,000, the local unit would be required to return \$100,000 to INDOT.

- **Do federal and state laws apply to any phase of the project?**

Yes. Federal and state laws are applicable. Permitting (DNR, IDEM, Corp of Army Engineers etc.), Americans with Disabilities Act, and historic preservation laws must still be followed. There are many of these so please be aware of such laws.