

Michigan Infrastructure Office Technical Assistance Center Guidance: Window 2

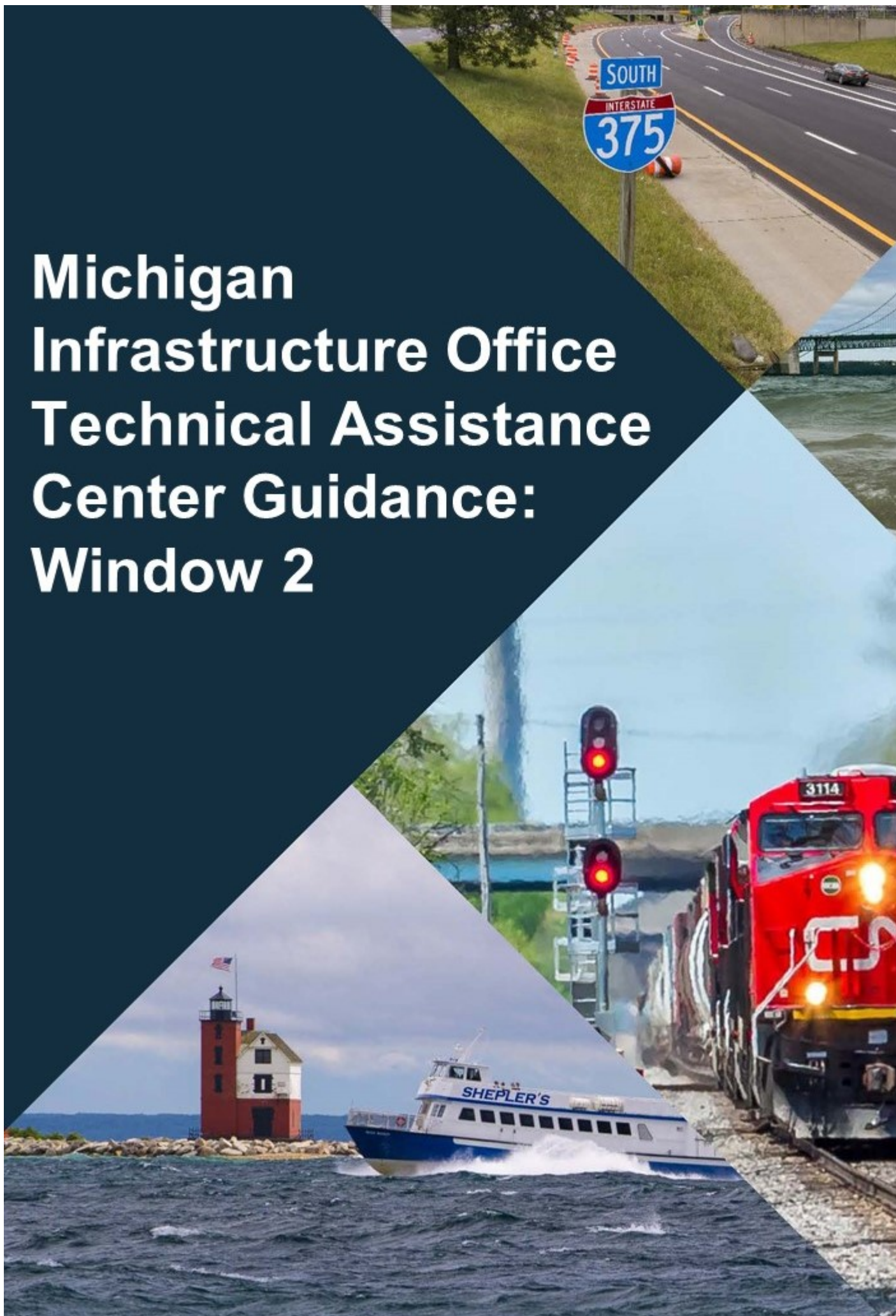


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Introduction

In 2022, the Governor signed P.A. 166 of 2022 to establish a technical assistance program within the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO). The purpose of the program is to provide technical assistance, planning, and matching grants to local units of government, planning organizations, and federally recognized Tribal nations to help draw federal infrastructure money to Michigan's communities.

This document provides guidance for accessing federal funding application support through the MIO Technical Assistance Center 2024 Window 2 Technical Assistance Opportunity.

About the Michigan Infrastructure Office and Technical Assistance Center

The Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) is responsible for organizing and executing Governor Whitmer's vision for infrastructure, coordinating across state government, marshaling resources, and partnering with local officials, federal partners, and outside stakeholders to ensure resources sent to Michigan through BIL, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), are used efficiently and effectively.

The MIO Technical Assistance Center (TAC) provides a suite of resources to support Michigan communities in applying for federal grant funding. TAC is currently offering key support services: grant identification, grant readiness assessment, grant writing, and grant match funding. These services will be available by an application to TAC in specified application windows.

This document explains this program in detail – **please read it in full**. The **FAQs** also cover a range of relevant questions. Reach out via the contact information provided in the **Key Contacts** section if you still have questions.

This program is administered by MIO with support from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Find the right TAC support offering

Eligible applicant position:

I have preliminary ideas about infrastructure improvements we could make in my community.

I have identified specific infrastructure projects that I am interested in finding federal funding for but need guidance about the correct federal funding opportunities to pursue.

I have identified an infrastructure project and a federal grant that I want to apply for. I need help writing the grant (e.g., BCAs) and/or match funding to complete the application.



Approach for TAC support:

1

Reach out directly to TAC to discuss future support opportunities

2

Apply for TAC grant identification support¹

3

Apply for TAC grant writing or match funding support¹

Certain applicants may be selected for a readiness assessment to ensure their project is sufficiently scoped and ready for grant writing for matching funding

Eligibility for TAC Support Services

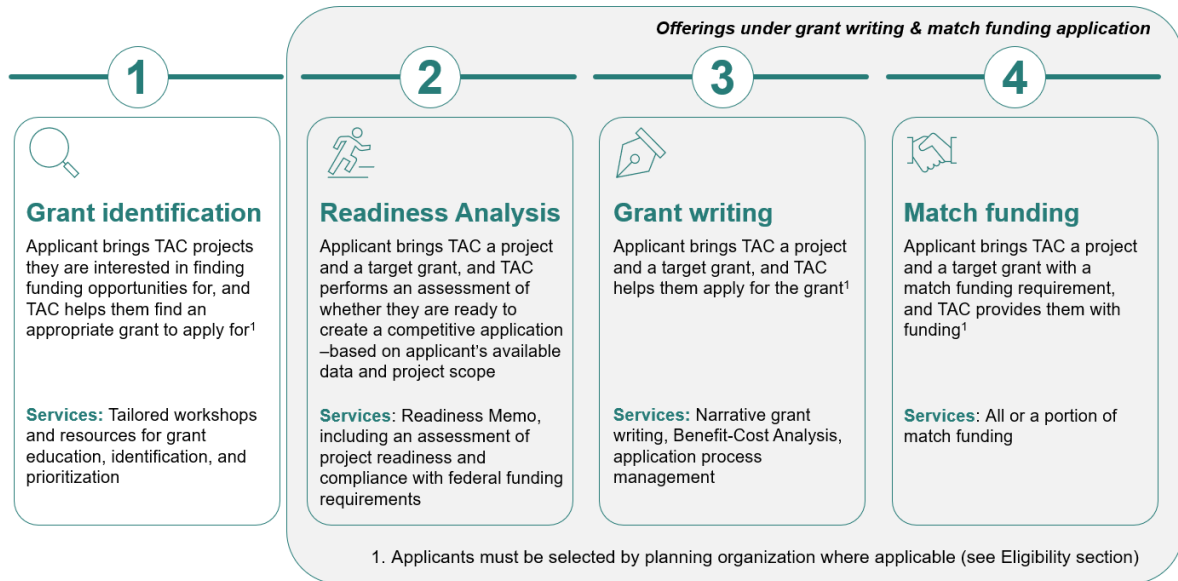
Eligible applicants for TAC support services in the current application window include:

- Federally recognized Tribal nations
- Municipalities and local governments that have been selected by their MPO/RPA
 - Applications must include a letter of support from the applicant's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Regional Planning Agency (RPA). MPOs and RPAs are responsible for prioritizing applications from their member communities. If you need help identifying the MPO or RPA to coordinate with, please see the **List of MPO/RPAs** section at the end of this document.
- Rural public transit authorities
 - With a letter of support from MDOT
- Urban public transit agencies
 - With a letter of support from their MPO. Please reach out to TAC directly with questions.
- School districts

Overview of TAC Support Services

The TAC will offer **four types of services** to support eligible entities in attaining federal infrastructure funding. The next section of the guidance provides further detail on how to access and apply for support.

Through Opportunity Windows TAC is offering four key services to support communities through the grant application lifecycle



1. Grant identification and project matching

- Use case:** An eligible applicant has identified projects that they are interested in finding federal funding for but needs guidance about the correct federal funding opportunities to pursue. TAC will help match them with potential grants that would fit their needs and for which they would be eligible.
- Services could include:** Workshops and resources tailored to recipient community's projects to support grant education, identification, and prioritization

2. Readiness analysis

- Use case:** An eligible applicant has identified a project and a federal grant from the list of TAC eligible grants that they want to apply for. TAC will conduct a deep review of the proposed project and create an assessment of whether an applicant is ready to create a competitive application for the indicated grant.
- Services could include:** Readiness memo, including assessment of project readiness and compliance with federal funding requirements

3. Grant writing

- Use case:** An eligible applicant has identified a project and a federal grant from the list of TAC eligible grants that they want to apply for. They need grant writing support from TAC to complete the application. TAC will provide grant writing services to help them complete the application.
- Services could include:** Narrative grant writing to craft a competitive application, Benefit-Cost Analysis to provide commonly required analysis on quantifiable benefits and costs of project, and application process management to help develop and keep to effective grant writing timelines. If you are considering additional services, please contact TAC directly.

4. Match funding

- a. **Use case:** An eligible applicant has identified a project and a federal grant from the list of eligible grants that they want to apply for. They need funding to meet the match funding requirement that the grant has.
- b. **Services could include:** TAC will earmark all or a portion of the match funding required to qualify for grant application. If application is successful, TAC will disburse match funding; if not, earmarked funding will be returned to TAC funding pool. Applicants can apply for just match funding if they do not need grant writing services.

In order to support grant writing applications that are most likely to attain federal funding, the State will prioritize projects that it deems to be viable and competitive for the relevant funding opportunities. Projects that are not considered competitive (due to project readiness or other reasons) may be considered for other forms of technical support to help make the project more competitive for future funding rounds.

How to Apply for TAC Support Services

Eligible applicants seeking TAC services need to fill out a TAC support application for the support they are requesting, including a letter of support where applicable (please see Eligibility section for more information). Planning organizations should work with their member localities to prioritize the projects and grants they want to provide with letters of support. Applicants are allowed to apply for more than one type of support and can submit more than one application for each type of support.

TAC support applications will be accepted online **during designated application windows**, generally a 2-4 week period throughout the year that will be announced via email and the TAC website.

- For TAC **grant identification support applicants:** TAC grant identification applications do not need to align with a grant announced in the window, but planning organizations should identify specific projects in their applications. TAC will provide guidance on the criteria it will use to select the applications to provide with grant identification services. Grant identification support will have its own application.
- For TAC **grant writing and match funding support:** TAC will announce a set of grants that are eligible for TAC support in each window and the number of projects TAC plans to support in the window. TAC will provide guidance on the criteria it will use to select which applications to provide with grant writing and/or match funding support. Grant writing and match funding requests will share one application, but applicants can choose to apply for just grant writing, just match funding, or both.

After the window closes, TAC will review the applications for each type of support and choose a set of support recipients. Additional application windows will be offered throughout the year with dates to be determined. The next section of this document **Window 2 Announcement and Key Dates** provides details on the application window.

Window 2 Application Instructions



Grant identification support application process

Application step	Details
 TAC opens application window	- TAC announces that TAC application window has opened and issues guidance via webinars, website, and email outreach - TAC will provide guidance on the criteria it will use in evaluating applications
 Eligible applicant seeking grant ID support submits application during window	- Planning organizations (MPOs/RPAs) work with member localities/organizations to pick priority projects and provide letter of support (if applicable) - Eligible applicants fill out a TAC Grant Identification application form
 TAC reviews and chooses whether to support application	TAC reviews the submitted applications at the end of the window, and chooses applications to support based on TAC capacity and alignment with provided support criteria
 TAC and recipient create a scope of work & confirm TAC services with MOU	TAC and recipient create scope of work and confirm the projects and grant identification support to be delivered, enter into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
 TAC provides grant identification support	TAC works with recipient to identify future grants that align with recipient project goals
 Recipient can choose to apply for grant writing support in future window	Recipients have the option to apply for identified grant(s) in future eligible application windows



Grant writing and match funding support application process

Application step	Details	 New in Window 2
 TAC opens application window	- TAC will identify grants eligible to apply for in the window and the number of applications it expects to support in the window - TAC announces that TAC application window has opened and issues application guidance via webinars, website, and email outreach - TAC will provide guidance on the criteria it will use in evaluating applications	
 Eligible applicant seeking grant writing or match funding support submits application during window	- Planning organizations (MPOs/RPAs) work with member localities/organizations to pick priority projects and provide letter of support (if applicable) - Eligible applicants fill out an application for each project for which they are requesting support, indicating on application whether they need grant writing, match funding, or both	
 TAC reviews applications and selects group of applicants to move on to pre-selection stage	TAC reviews submitted applications at the end of window, and chooses applications to move on to pre-selection stage	
 TAC and applicant meet, TAC performs readiness assessment, and TAC chooses whether to provide grant writing and/or match funding	- TAC conducts deeper review of proposed project, including compliance with grant guidelines and readiness / competitiveness as well as any match funding needs, as appropriate - TAC creates readiness memo, indicating any potential gaps that would prevent a competitive application from being submitted by the due date - Applicants deemed to be ready for grant writing/match move on to next stage. Others may receive additional coaching, grant ID, or other support	
 TAC and recipient create scope of work and confirm TAC support services with MOU	<i>Grant writing support:</i> TAC and recipient scope and confirm the grant writing TA to be delivered, execute MOU. <i>Match funding support:</i> TAC and recipient confirm match funding amount, and TAC earmarks funding to be disbursed if applicant wins the grant, execute MOU.	
 TAC provides grant writing support (if applicable)	<i>Grant writing support:</i> TAC delivers agreed upon services for grant writing technical assistance	
 Recipient submits application	Recipient submits application	
 TAC disburses match funding for successful application (if applicable)	<i>Match funding support:</i> If application is successful, TAC disburses match funding. If not successful, earmarked funding is returned to TAC funding pool.	

Window 2 Announcement and Key Dates

TAC will be accepting applications from **2/20//2023 – 3/8/2024** for Window 2A.

TAC will be accepting applications from **2/20//2023 – 3/22/2024** for Window 2B.

The grant identification and grant writing and match funding applications are both available through an online portal [here](#).

Please see the **Guide to Online Application** section for more information on how the online application works.

- For **grant identification support**, applicants do not need to have identified an infrastructure grant they are applying for.
- For **grant writing and match funding** support, applicants can apply for technical assistance support or match funding for grants listed below.

Window 2A grants (*grants with anticipated due date through April 2024*)

- [Low or No Emission Grant Program](#)
- [Buses and Bus Facilities Program](#)
- [Energy Improvements at Public K-12 School Facilities](#)
- [Safe Streets and Roads for All Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Port Infrastructure Development Program Grants](#)
- [Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements](#)
- Congestion Relief [Program](#)

Window 2B grants (*grants with anticipated due dates May - July 2024*)

- [Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas](#)
- [Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program](#)
- [Passenger Ferry Grant Program](#)
- [Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program](#)
- [Alternative Fuel Corridor](#)
- [Charging and Fueling Infrastructure \(CFI\) Discretionary Grant Program](#)

A fact pack providing an overview of these grants is available [HERE](#).

In Window 2, TAC expects to select up to:

- 6 communities for **grant identification** support
- 6 projects for **grant writing and match funding** support

Please see the **Criteria** section for an overview of what TAC is looking for in the projects it selects.

Window 2 Key Dates:

- **Window 2 opens on 2/20/2024**
- **Webinar**
 - The webinar will provide overview of updated TAC support services and the Window 2 application process. We plan to record the webinar and post it on the MIO TAC website for those that cannot attend one of the sessions.

- Please sign up for webinar here:
 - **2/23/2024, 10am ET** [Registration Link](#)
- **TAC office hours:**
 - The office hours session is an opportunity to bring questions about the TAC guidance update & the Window 2 application. We encourage you to email your questions ahead of office hours to allow us time to bring our best answers.
 - Please sign up for office hours here:
 - **3/1/2024, 10am ET** [Office Hours Registration Link](#)
- **Window 2A closes on 3/8/2024, 11:59pm**
- **Window 2B closes on 3/22/2024, 11:59pm**
- **Window 2A recipients of TAC grant writing and match funding support will receive confirmation by March 25, 2024.**
- **Window 2B recipients of TAC grant writing and match funding support, and all Window 2 recipients of grant identification support will receive confirmation by April 8, 2024.**

Support will be provided upon development of mutually agreed upon scope of work.

Criteria for Application Evaluation

TAC will weigh several criteria to decide which to provide with support. The application will have questions that provide an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate their alignment with the criteria. There will be separate criteria for the grant identification application, and the grant writing/match funding application.

Grant identification support evaluation criteria

1. **State priorities:** Assess whether the project aligns with state priorities for infrastructure improvements and equity
2. **Project readiness:** Assess the extent to which the project proposal has undergone pre-development work. Projects do not need to demonstrate full readiness to be competitive; TAC will use this information to understand the services needed.

Grant writing and match funding support evaluation criteria

1. **Does the project align with the Federal Grant opportunity:** Assess whether the project fits the requirements and goals of the federal grant targeted
2. **State priorities:** Assess whether the project aligns with state priorities for infrastructure and equity
3. **Applicant need:** Assess whether applicant has demonstrated need for requested TAC support
4. **Project readiness:** Assess the extent to which the project proposal has undergone pre-development work. Projects do not need to demonstrate full readiness to be competitive; TAC will use this information to understand the services needed.

FAQs

Application process

1. Q: I'm a local government unit, but not an MPO/RPA. How do I apply?
 - a. To apply for TAC support you will need to coordinate with your local planning organization (MPO/RPA) and receive a letter of support from them confirming that they have reviewed and selected your project to be submitted to TAC. When you have received the letter of support, you will then use the application links in the **Window 2** section of the document to apply. Please see the list of MPOs/RPAs to find your local planning agency.
2. Q: I'm an MPO/RPA. Can I apply for TAC myself?
 - a. No, but you will choose the projects and grants from your community that can be considered by the TAC for technical assistance. MPOs/RPAs are asked to coordinate with member localities/organizations to prioritize the projects and grants what will then be submitted for consideration. Localities will be responsible for submission, and MPOs/RPAs should provide letters of support.
3. Q: I'm a rail operator. How do I apply?
 - a. If you are working with a local government agency, please apply in coordination with their MPO/RPA. If you are not working with local government, please coordinate with the MDOT rail office.
4. Q: How often can an eligible entity apply for support? How many grants/projects can I submit per cycle?
 - a. You can apply in multiple windows and there is no cap on how many applications you can submit per window. We highly recommend that you only submit applications for projects and grants that are top priorities across your region, and that you ensure they align with the application criteria provided. If you need help prioritizing projects and grants, please contact us.
5. Q: Can I apply for more than one type of support service in a window?
 - a. Yes.
6. Q: What if the grant I'm interested in isn't available in the list of eligible grants?
 - a. Please reach out to TAC directly to discuss additional grants.
7. Q: What kind of grants do you support?
 - a. TAC is currently only providing support for federal infrastructure grants provided by IIJA/BIL. Please reach out to TAC directly to discuss additional grants.
8. Q: Do I need to pay anything out of pocket or up front?
 - a. If you work directly with TAC, you will not need to pay for services out of pocket or up front.
9. Q: Is this fully replacing the previous guidance on technical assistance support that came out in February 2023?
 - a. Yes, please use this document as the new technical assistance guidance moving forward.

TAC Services

10. Q: I have a project but don't know what grant I want, what should I do?
 - a. Apply for TAC grant identification support.

11. Q: I know what grant I want to apply for, but I don't have a project in mind, what should I do?
 - a. Please develop a project idea that aligns with the TAC project criteria before applying for grant identification approach, or you can reach out directly to TAC to discuss future support offerings.
12. Q: I only need match funding, what should I do?
 - a. Apply for just TAC match funding.
13. Q: How does match funding work?
 - a. If your organization is chosen for match funding support, TAC will earmark your funding and you'll receive it if you win the grant. If you do not receive the grant, you will not receive the funding and it will be returned to the TAC funding pool.
14. Q: How does applying for match funding and grant writing together work? What happens if I get one but don't get the other?
 - a. There is one application form for grant writing and match funding support. On the form, you will note whether you are applying for grant writing, match funding, or both.
 - b. If you apply for both types of support and TAC can only offer one, TAC will discuss whether that option still meets your needs.
15. Q: Are there other types of service offered?
 - a. The TAC initial offerings are the three listed in the "Services" section of the document: grant ID, grant writing, and matching funds. Please reach out if there are additional services you think TAC should consider.
16. Q: Is reporting required if I receive TAC support?
 - a. The TA provider will work with you to report progress to MIO TAC during the service delivery process.
 - b. Each recipient will be asked to complete a feedback form at the completion of technical assistance.

Key Contacts

Kristin Brady
Director
Technical Assistance Center
Michigan Infrastructure Office
BradyK4@michigan.gov

List of MPOs/RPAs

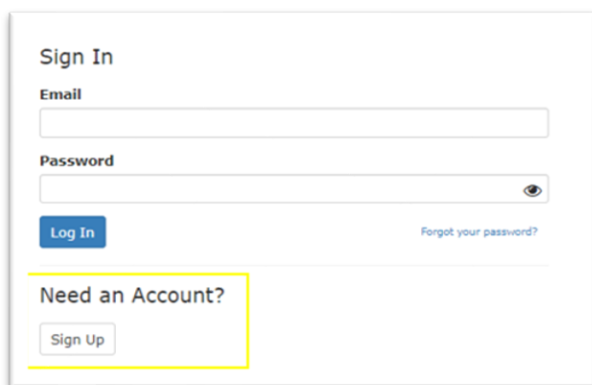
Name of planning organization	Type	Counties (or municipalities)	Website
Battle Creek Area Transportation Study	MPO	City of Battle Creek, Springfield City; Townships of Bedford, Emmett, Pennfield, Leroy	https://www.bcatsmpo.org/
Bay County Area Transportation Study	MPO	Bay City, Essexville, Bangor, Monitor, Hampton, Portsmouth, Kawkawlin, Frankenlust	https://www.baycounty-mi.gov/Transportation/
Central Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Regional Commission	RPA	Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee, Schoolcraft	https://cuppad.org/
East Michigan Council of Governments	RPA	Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Iosco, Isabella, Midland, Ogemaw, Roscommon, Saginaw, Sanilac, Tuscola	http://www.emcog.org/
Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission	RPA	Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac	https://www.eup-planning.org/
Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission	MPO	Genesee County	https://gcmpe.org/
GLS Region V Planning and Development Commission	RPA	Genesee, Lapper, Shiawassee	https://gcmpe.org/region-v-planning-and-development-commission
Grand Valley Metro Council	MPO	Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm	https://www.gvmc.org/about-mpo
Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study	MPO	Cities of Kalamazoo, Portage, Parchment, Galesburg; Counties of Kalamazoo, Van Buren	https://www.katsmpo.org/
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council	MPO	Holland, Zeeland	https://www.the-macc.org/
Midland Area Transportation Study	MPO	Midland County, City of Auburn, Williams Charter Township, Tittabawassee Township in Saginaw	https://www.midlandmpo.org/
Networks Northwest	RPA	Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford	https://www.networksnorthwest.org/

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments	RPA	Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle	https://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/nemcog.asp
Region II Planning Commission	RPA	Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee	https://www.region2planning.com/
Saginaw Area Transportation Agency	MPO	Saginaw County	https://satampo.org/about-sata/
Southcentral Michigan Planning Council	RPA	Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph	https://smpcregion3.org/
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments	MPO and RPA	Livingston, Macomb, St. Clair, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne	https://www.semcog.org/about-semcog
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	RPA	Berrien County; Cass County; Van Buren County; Twin Cities Area Transportation Study; Niles, Buchanan and Cass Area Transportation Study	https://www.swmpc.org/
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission	MPO and RPA	Clinton, Eaton, Ingham	https://www.mitrpc.org/
West Michigan Metropolitan Planning Program	MPO	Muskegon and Northern Ottawa County	https://wmsrdc.org/program/transportation/services/
West Michigan Regional Planning Commission	RPA	Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, Ottawa	https://wmrpc.org/
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development	MPO AND RPA	Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana	https://wmsrdc.org/
Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Regional Commission	RPA	Baraga, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Ontonagon	https://www.wuppdrc.org/

Guide to Online Application

WizeHive Online Application Portal

1. Go to the WizeHive MIO TAC web portal: <https://webportalapp.com/sp/login/mio-tac>
2. Create a new account (once you have made the account, you will continue to use it to log in)



Sign In

Email

Password

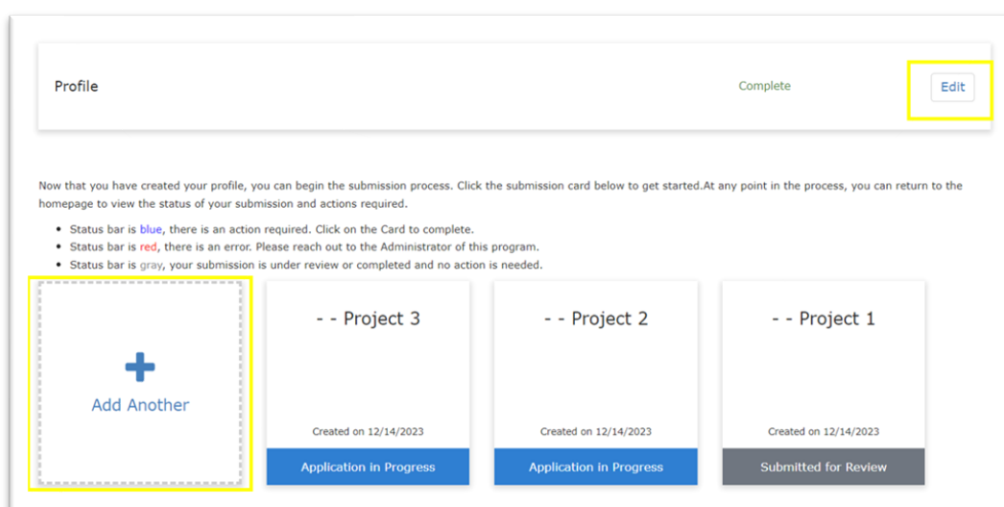
Log In

Forgot your password?

Need an Account?

Sign Up

3. Create your profile. You can edit your profile at any time.
4. Your dashboard is where you can edit your profile and find all of your applications. In the example below, the applicant has 3 applications. Start an application.



Profile Complete Edit

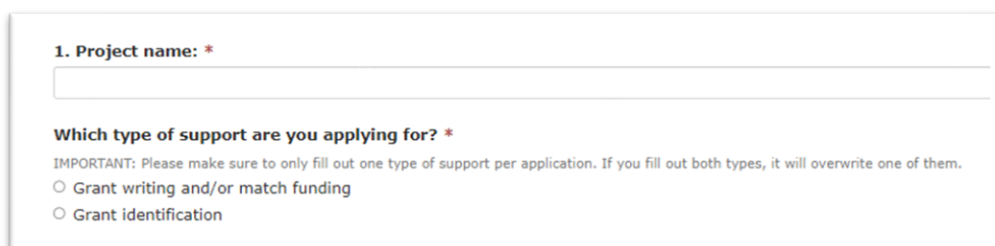
Now that you have created your profile, you can begin the submission process. Click the submission card below to get started. At any point in the process, you can return to the homepage to view the status of your submission and actions required.

- Status bar is **blue**, there is an action required. Click on the Card to complete.
- Status bar is **red**, there is an error. Please reach out to the Administrator of this program.
- Status bar is **gray**, your submission is under review or completed and no action is needed.

+ Add Another

- - Project 3	- - Project 2	- - Project 1
Created on 12/14/2023	Created on 12/14/2023	Created on 12/14/2023
Application In Progress	Application In Progress	Submitted for Review

5. Start with the name of the project your application is about and identify the type of support you are applying for. You can apply for more than one type of support and/or more than one project, but each must be on different application. You can submit a maximum of 5 applications.



1. Project name: *

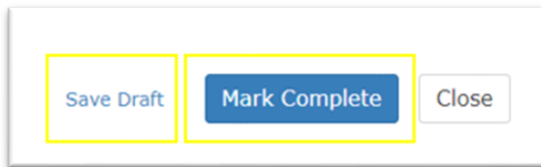
Which type of support are you applying for? *

IMPORTANT: Please make sure to only fill out one type of support per application. If you fill out both types, it will overwrite one of them.

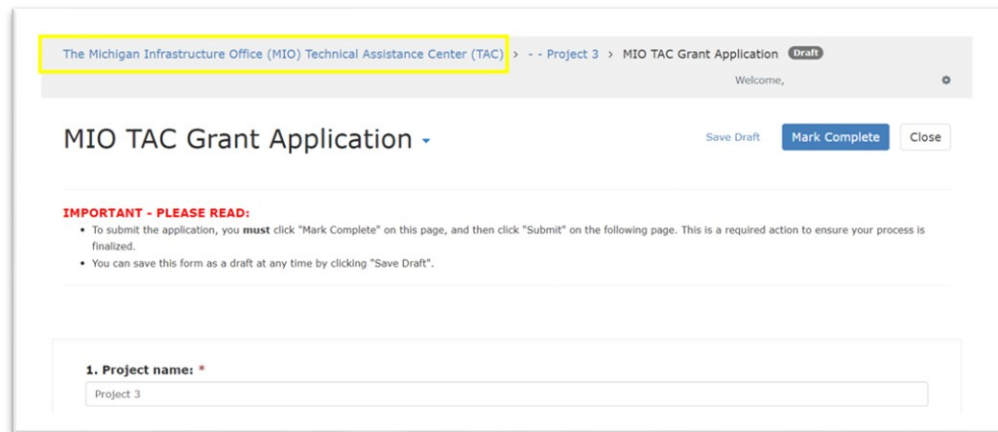
☐ Grant writing and/or match funding

☐ Grant identification

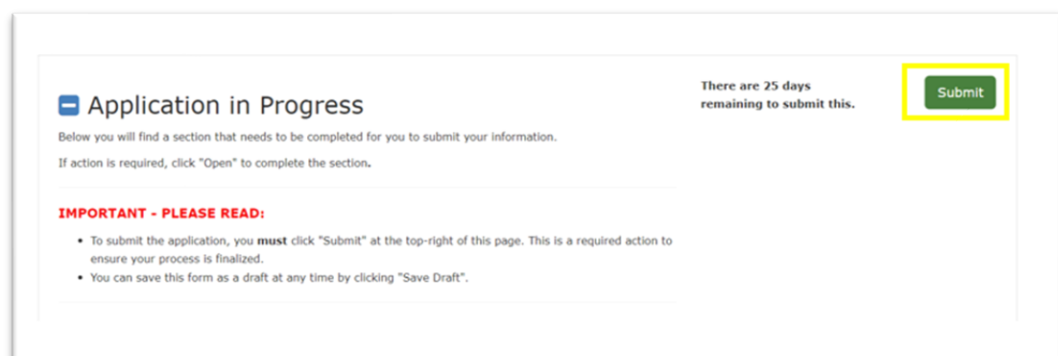
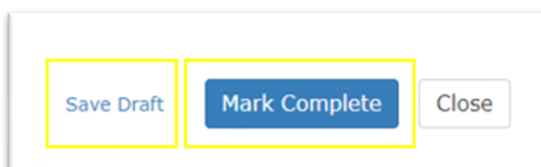
6. Mandatory fields are marked with a red asterisk
7. Please list the supporting entity and include a letter of support for the specific project (see the **Eligibility** section of this document). Optional: list any co-applicants.
8. Fill out the rest of the form
9. You can save draft at any time using the “Save Draft” button; the application will not automatically save without clicking the button. **We recommend you save your draft frequently.**



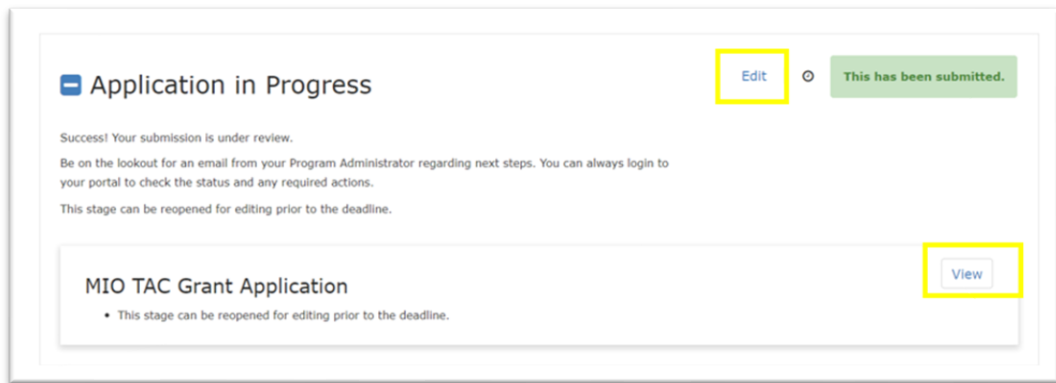
10. If at any time you wish to return to your home dashboard, click the link at the top of the application page. The home dashboard is also where you can create a new application.



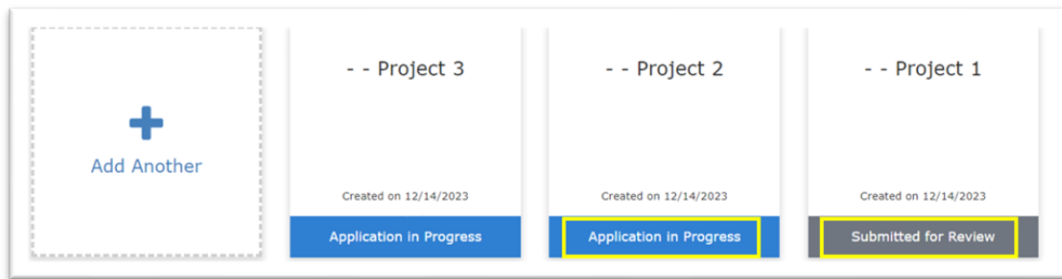
11. To submit the application, you must click the “mark complete” button at the top or bottom of the application page, and then submit on the next page.



12. You will receive a confirmation of submission. You can edit your application up until the application deadline, even after submitting. You can also view your completed application.



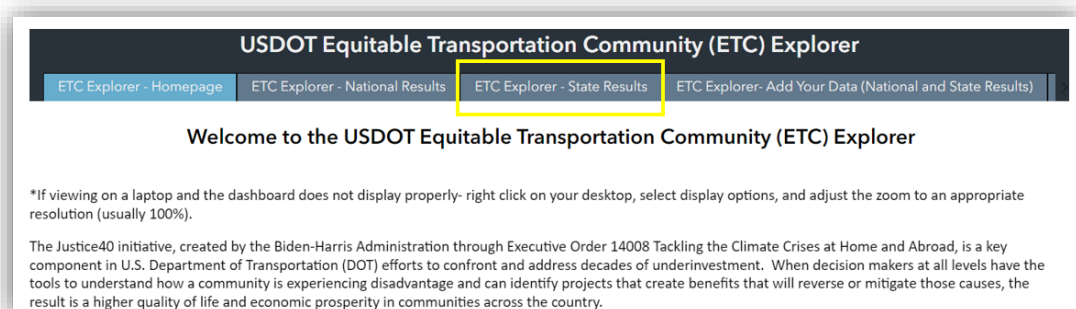
13. You can see the applications you have submitted and the application in progress on your dashboard. We currently do not have the functionality to delete applications, but you can begin an “in progress” application anew by deleting all the fields you have filled in. Applications not submitted will not be reviewed.



14. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kris at BradyK4@michigan.gov

Department of Transportation Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer

1. Visit DOT ETC explorer at: <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/justice40/etc-explorer>
2. Navigate to the “State Results” tab



3. Enter the localities impacted by your proposed project (A)
4. Report the % of disadvantaged census tracts (B)

5. Report the 5 disadvantaged component scores (C). In this case they would be: 1. Climate Disaster & Risk Burden (9%), 2. Environmental Burden (1%), 3. Health Vulnerability (45%), 4. Social Vulnerability (41%), 5. Transportation Insecurity (99%)

