

County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) Program Overview

Purpose

The CTP program was established to ensure the transportation infrastructure has a positive impact on strengthening our economy and communities at both the local and regional levels. It accomplishes this by providing financial assistance for counties and their constituent municipalities to develop joint long-range transportation plans. These plans, while focused on local issues and needs, also serve as the foundation for regional planning efforts led by the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Expected Outcomes

- Prioritized list of transportation investments necessary to support the visions for economic development and strong communities established by cities and counties.
- Five to ten year fiscally constrained action plan which reflects currently available funding sources and feasible policy actions that can be taken at the city/county level.
- Recommendations that have been vetted through a robust community engagement process and formally adopted by local government policy officials.
- Recommendations that leverage regional facilities, services and programs to address local needs and priorities.
- Recommendations that can knit together previous plans and projects identified at the community level through Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) studies, Community Improvement District (CID) work programs, county/city Capital Improvement Programs (CIP), corridor studies, and other initiatives.

Voluntary Program

ARC makes federal funds available to cities and counties to develop joint CTPs at their discretion. While most jurisdictions in the region are active and enthusiastic partners in the CTP program, participation is not a requirement in order to be eligible for federal funding available through regional and state agencies. The CTP program helps cities and counties to jointly identify and analyze their needs, develop solutions which are acceptable to the community, and better articulate their priorities when funding opportunities arise.

Eligible Jurisdictions

Jurisdictions eligible to receive federal funds for the program are those which are within ARC's Metropolitan Planning Area and are not represented in the regional plan development process by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). These are:

- City of Atlanta
- Barrow County
- Cherokee County
- Clayton County
- Cobb County
- Coweta County
- DeKalb County
- Douglas County
- Fayette County
- Forsyth County
- Fulton County (north and south funded separately for purposes of the program)
- Gwinnett County
- Henry County
- Newton County
- Paulding County
- Rockdale County
- Spalding County
- Walton County

The Georgia DCA requires that local governments update their comprehensive plans on a ten-year cycle. When the program was initiated in 2005, funds were generally programmed about two fiscal years in advance of when the jurisdiction needed to have an approved comprehensive plan in place. This established a schedule that has now resulted in CTPs being in place in most counties. The order in which updates will be made in the future to best align with state planning requirements is currently being reassessed.

Available Funding

Funds are programmed in the region's six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) based on the most recent population estimate of the recipient jurisdiction. Amounts are reassessed periodically to reflect any significant population growth which may occur over time and to ensure the level of funding matches the level of planning activities required to meet the program's expected outcomes. Currently, amounts range from a minimum of \$250,000 to a maximum of \$1,000,000.

Local Match Requirement

The CTP program is funded using federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, which require a minimum 20% participation level based on the *total* project cost (not based on the federal amount). The required minimum local match for a \$250,000 federal award is \$62,500 and the match for a \$1,000,000 award is \$250,000.

Federal funds may be matched from any cash source available from local or county governments, such as the general fund, sales tax revenue or bonds. Contributions from private sources, such as a developer or foundation, are also acceptable. Federal funds from another category are not eligible for use as a match, however. In-kind services are also not eligible.

Work Scope

Needs and priorities vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction across the region. For that reason, the emphasis areas of each CTP work program can vary considerably. While all CTPs must address 10 core elements, the depth to which each is studied can be modified to match the relative importance of that element to the jurisdiction. The core elements which every CTP must include are:

01. State of Good Repair / Maintenance
02. Roadways
03. Transit
04. Active Transportation
05. Freight and Goods Movement
06. Human Services Transportation (HST)
07. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs
08. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) / Technology
09. System Resiliency / Emergency Preparedness
10. System Performance Monitoring and Reporting Program

Five other potential elements have been identified, but are considered optional since they may not be universally relevant to every jurisdiction in the region:

11. Airport Access
12. Subarea and/or Corridor Analyses
13. Traffic Calming Program
14. Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
15. Project Screening

The above list is not all inclusive, but does clearly demonstrate the flexibility of the program to address and focus on those transportation issues which are the most relevant and important to local communities.

Every CTP will follow the same basic process in terms of the highest level tasks. The specific activities within a task and the format and content of deliverables may vary considerably, however. The core tasks are:

01. Project Management
02. Engagement
03. Inventory
04. Assessment
05. Recommendations
06. Documentation

More detailed guidance on the work activities and deliverables for each task, as well as information on the possible data collection, assessment and recommendations steps associated with each core element and optional element, are available upon request. This guidance is used as a foundation for negotiating each jurisdiction's planning contract with ARC.

Role of ARC

ARC manages the finances and direction of the overall CTP program and works with local governments to develop contract work scopes that achieve local goals and objectives, while also ensuring they support the regional planning process. The entity contracting with ARC is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the CTP development process, from procuring consultants to engaging stakeholders to documenting the outcomes. ARC expects to be invited to actively participate on any steering or technical committees, but any role above and beyond this (such as participation in public meetings, briefings with elected officials, technical support, draft documentation review) can be negotiated at the beginning of the study. The local government retains all final decision-making authority related to the plan's recommendations.

For More Information

Please contact David Haynes at 404.463.3280 or dhaynes@atlantaregional.com.