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Municipal Aid Grants Application Cycle Accelerated to Better Help Local Governments Fiscally Plan



Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti

Budgetary planning is always one of the most challenging jobs for local governments. Last week, Governor Murphy and I announced that we are accelerating the Municipal Aid grants cycle to now be able to announce grant recipients by November ahead of the annual budget cycle. By announcing the grants in November funding for local

projects can be better incorporated into upcoming municipal budgets and provide more predictability for local budget officials. The vast majority of towns and cities operate on a calendar fiscal year running from January 1 through December 31. The applications are now being accepted through Friday, July 19.

As I noted in the last issue of this newsletter, the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) Reauthorization in 2016 allocated an additional \$240 million to NJDOT's Local Aid grants programs resulting in the doubling of the annual Municipal Aid and County Aid programs from \$78.75 million to \$161.25 million respectively. County roads and municipal streets comprise 90

percent of all roadways in New Jersey. Municipal Aid and County Aid are the key programs that pay for repairs to local infrastructure and help to hold down property tax rates.

Since January 2018, NJDOT has awarded \$821 million in grants for local transportation infrastructure, most recently in April when Governor Murphy announced the 2019 municipal grant recipients. The Governor called on NJDOT to find a way to fast-track the municipal grants awards program to help with property tax relief and to hasten important improvements to the local infrastructure. With the 2020 grants accelerated and on schedule to be awarded later this calendar year, NJDOT will have handed out \$1.2 billion to local governments.

The Governor and I believe this is going to be very good news for New Jersey's mayors, business administrators and municipal engineers. The change in the Municipal Aid application cycle also applies to other TTF funded grants programs including the Bikeways, Safe Streets to Transit, and Transit Village programs—each of which provides \$1 million to local communities for infrastructure projects.



Local Aid Resource Center Opens Fulfilling Pledge to Offer Proactive Assistance

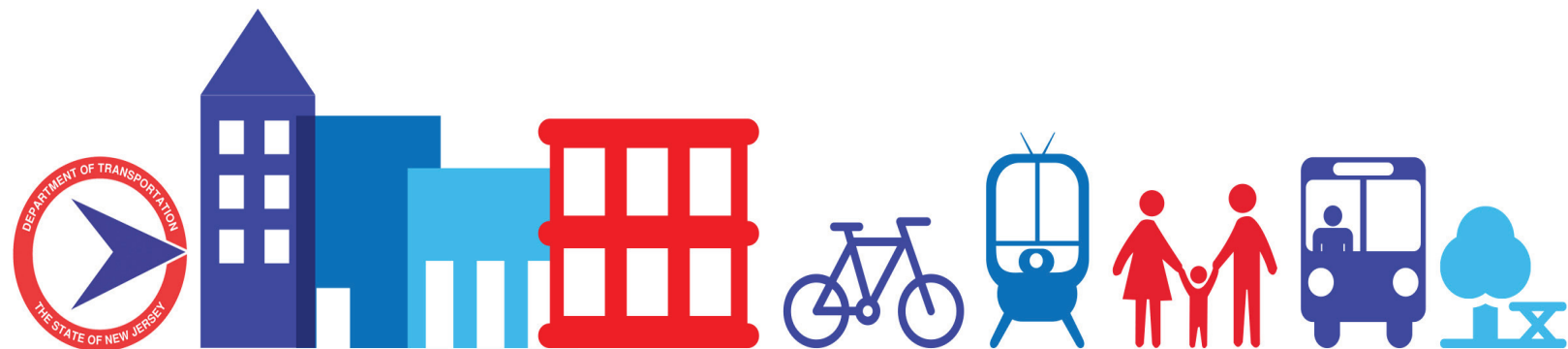
The grants application process can be daunting at times, especially for smaller towns. To the extent that NJDOT can provide enhanced technical support and expertise we have just opened a Local Aid Resource Center. This facility will provide one-stop shopping for local government managers by providing hands-on resources for the whole grants process, raising awareness of the state and federal grants cycle timelines and communicating pertinent information in a timely fashion.

NJDOT's Division of Local Aid has assembled a team of consultants to assist with this effort. By proactively helping local governments succeed in spending the additional transportation dollars afforded them we ensure the entire transportation network provides the mobility necessary for efficient and effective function. The Resource will serve as the hub for a variety of information and services that local governments need to manage and deliver projects on the local transportation network. Consultants from McCormick Taylor, Inc. will staff the Resource Center with AECOM assisting as needed.

It is in everyone's interest to make sure we award as many grants as allowable and that those projects funded by those grants are successfully completed. Right now local government agencies are doing a great job of delivering their projects—over 95 percent—in the required two year timeframe. For more information regarding the Resource Center visit: www.njdotlocalaidrc.com or call 609-649-9395. A flyer with information about the Resource Center is attached to this newsletter. Please feel free to distribute as you see fit.

[Commitment to Communities](#) means going every mile of the way to be helpful. Moving the grants application cycle timeframe and establishing the Resource Center will ensure every local project that is delivered is a benefit to that community and a worthwhile investment of your tax dollars. I want to make sure that as an agency the NJDOT does everything it can do to improve the quality of life for our taxpayers.

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti
Commissioner



RESOURCE CENTER

NJDOT LOCAL AID



Your New Technical Resource for Improving Local Project Delivery

THE LOCAL AID RESOURCE CENTER connects you to information, tools, and technical experts ready to help guide you through the grant application process, assist with project selection, and provide overall support for successful project delivery.

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