

Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 3/10/2023

The information provided in this FAQ is intended to assist local governments with questions about HUD's Thriving Communities Technical Assistance (TCTA) program. Additional information is available on the TCTA [website](#). Local governments may submit requests for technical assistance by using the form located [here](#). Questions should be sent to ThrivingCommunitiesTA@hud.gov. This document will be updated as HUD receives additional questions. New questions added from the previous version are denoted by an asterisk*.

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

What is HUD's TCTA program?

HUD's TCTA program is designed to support local governments receiving federal infrastructure funds, directly or through state pass through grants, in creating thriving communities and ensuring housing needs are addressed when designing and implementing infrastructure investments.

HUD's TA providers will assist local governments with ensuring housing needs are considered as part of their larger infrastructure investment plans, while also supporting equitable development and local economic development ecosystems in disadvantaged communities.¹

HUD's TCTA is specifically focused on integrating housing and transportation planning to support disadvantaged communities as local governments design and implement infrastructure plans.

What are the areas in which technical assistance will be provided?

Local governments will receive TA that focuses on one or more of the following areas:

1. Identifying and using vacant, abandoned, or underutilized land located on or near transportation projects that is suitable for housing development (including land owned by governmental entities as well as private sector) to create location-efficient housing.
2. Preserving affordable housing and protecting residents and businesses from displacement as new infrastructure is deployed.
3. Identifying and implementing regulatory and procedural reforms to reduce unnecessary barriers to location-efficient housing that impede housing production and increase development costs.
4. Improving coordination among public entities (for example, local housing, transportation, planning, and community development departments) and between public entities and state recipients of infrastructure funding; transit authorities and other quasi-public entities; the private sector; and locally based organizations, to support a holistic and regional approach to housing and transportation.

What type of support is provided?

Local governments selected for the TCTA program will receive technical assistance to help them as they address housing needs while deploying transportation funds. TCTA does not provide any direct funding to local governments.

Technical assistance typically begins with a needs assessment, during which a TA provider will gather data and other information that helps customize TA to the specific needs of the jurisdiction. The TA may

¹ Disadvantaged Community is defined as: (1) Any Tribal land or any territory or possession of the United States and (2) those census tracts (a) experiencing disproportionate effects (as defined by Executive Order 12898); (b) that contain areas of persistent poverty as defined in 49 U.S.C. section 6702(a)(1); (c) that are historically disadvantaged as defined by DOT's mapping tool for Historically Disadvantaged Communities; or (d) other federally designated community development zones.

include one-on-one, in-depth support from a TA provider as well as participation in a peer cohort to share best practices and lessons learned with other local governments engaged in similar housing activities. TA also includes access to training, tools, and other resources that will help support a local government as it aligns housing and transportation investments.

Is a match required for recipients of TCTA?

No, a match is not required for recipients of TCTA. No funding is provided to local governments that receive support through TCTA.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to receive Thriving Communities technical assistance?

TCTA is available to units of general local government, which include villages, towns, cities, counties, and other small municipalities, as well as tribes.

To be eligible for TCTA, local governments must meet the following criteria:

- The jurisdiction has received federal transportation funds, directly or through state pass through grants. Preference will be given to jurisdictions that have received competitive transportation funds.
- The jurisdiction will address housing needs in relation to the transportation project;
- The infrastructure project will support equitable development and local economic development ecosystems in Disadvantaged Communities;² and
- The TA requested falls into one or more of the TA Focus Areas.

HUD will give priority to jurisdictions with a population less than 250,000.

Is a tribe eligible for TCTA?*

For the purposes of TCTA, tribal governments are defined as units of general local government.

Is this TA available to public housing authorities?

TCTA is available to local governments. As a quasi-governmental entity, public housing authorities (PHAs) are not eligible to request TCTA. However, PHAs are encouraged to work with their local government to ensure that local housing needs are considered as part of transportation and infrastructure investments.

² Disadvantaged Community is defined as: (1) Any Tribal land or any territory or possession of the United States and (2) those census tracts (a) experiencing disproportionate effects (as defined by Executive Order 12898); (b) that contain areas of persistent poverty as defined in 49 U.S.C. section 6702(a)(1); (c) that are historically disadvantaged as defined by DOT's mapping tool for Historically Disadvantaged Communities; or (d) other federally designated community development zones.

TCTA may support a local government's work with the local PHA and other organizations on its housing activity supporting disadvantaged communities.

What role can Metropolitan Planning Organizations play in TCTA?

TCTA is available to units of general local government – such as cities, counties, or townships.³ A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is not eligible to receive TCTA directly as it is not a UGLG. TCTA may support a local government's work with regional organizations, nonprofits, philanthropy, and other cross-sector partnerships on its housing activity supporting disadvantaged communities.

Additionally, an MPO could review regional transportation and housing needs and investments to see which local governments may benefit from TCTA. An MPO could offer data or other support to a local government that requests TCTA.

What role can a non-profit organization play in TCTA?

While only units of general local government are eligible to receive TCTA, nonprofit organizations can play a vital role in addressing housing needs as part of infrastructure investments and supporting community engagement. A nonprofit organization could support a local government by identifying local housing and transportation needs in the community and coordinating with other community stakeholders. TCTA may support a local government's work with non-profit and cross-sector partners serving disadvantaged communities.

Does HUD anticipate requests related to multi-jurisdictional projects?*

Yes. Transportation projects typically span multiple local governments. HUD has designed the program to enable the TA to support a local government working with regional organizations and other governments. Additionally, coordination among public sector entities is one of the focus areas for TCTA.

In its TCTA request submission, the local government should identify the other entities – including other local governments – it is working with on the project(s). The request for a multi-jurisdictional project, submitted by a single local government, should clearly identify each local government that would participate in the TA engagement. HUD will request additional information as needed.

We have a consortium of neighborhoods that want to preserve housing, how can TCTA help?

The eligible recipients of TCTA are units of generalized local government – such as a city, county, township or parish.⁴ A consortium of neighborhoods is not considered a unit of generalized local government. A consortium of neighborhoods could partner with an eligible local government entity. The local government could request TCTA that would assist with preserving housing in coordination with a transportation project.

³ HUD defines a unit of generalized local government as any city, county, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State or territory. For the purposes of this program, this includes tribal governments.

⁴ HUD defines a unit of generalized local government as any city, county, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State or territory. For the purposes of this program, this includes tribal governments.

REQUESTING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

How does an eligible entity submit a request for TCTA?

A local government must submit the TCTA request [form](#).

What materials are needed to submit a request?

A local government must submit the TCTA request [form](#). The form is designed to be easy for a jurisdiction with limited staff resources to submit without accessing additional resources or hiring consultants. The form requests narratives addressing the following items:

- A description of the project(s) that would benefit from your jurisdiction receiving Thriving Communities technical assistance
- Details on geography and demographics of the area impacted by the project(s)
- A summary of the stated purposes or uses for the federal transportation funds, as provided by the jurisdiction in its DOT application or other documents
- A discussion of how the project(s) advance your jurisdiction's affordable housing plan(s) and broader equitable development goals
- Any outreach your jurisdiction conducted with communities in connection with the project(s).

May I review the TCTA request form before I submit it so that I know what information is needed?

A preview of the request form is available [here](#). You will still need to submit your request through the electronic submission [tool](#).

Can municipalities submit more than one TCTA request?*

Local governments should only submit one TCTA request using the request form. However, the request form allows local governments to identify up to three related projects and request TA in multiple focus areas.

Can a local government resubmit a request for TCTA?*

Yes, a local government can submit a revised request for TCTA if it would like to change or revise its original request. HUD will review only the most recent request submitted.

Can a TA request include more than one focus area (e.g. identifying vacant/underutilized property for development AND displacement mitigation planning)?*

Yes, a local government can request assistance with more than one focus area. The [submission form](#) allows a local government to describe its needs in each of the focus areas for which it wants to receive TA.

When is the TCTA request deadline?

HUD's program does not have a deadline. Requests can be submitted at any time. Selections will depend in part on the capacity of the TA providers and the needs of the local governments. There is a "rolling"

process in which requests are reviewed as they are received (beginning after March 15), needs are identified, and capacity is evaluated. Not all requests will be able to be met.

Will HUD staff contact me if they have questions about our TCTA request or need more information?*

Yes. HUD staff will contact a local government for additional information regarding a TCTA request as needed.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS- DOT FUNDS

Our community has received federal transportation funding for several projects. Does the proposed TCTA project need to be directly tied to one of those federally funded projects?

The TCTA project needs to be connected to at least one federally funded transportation project. The housing opportunity may arise as a result of several projects, for example adding Bus Rapid Transit and creating safe bicycle and pedestrian routes. It does not need to be “directly tied” in the sense that the housing component is part of the transportation proposal, but it must show that the local government is working to coordinate transportation and housing.

If we are submitting a request on behalf of multiple jurisdictions, do all the cities need to be DOT grantees (directly or through pass-through)?*

A request should come from a single local government. The request should identify the transportation project(s) related to the housing need it is addressing and the DOT funding for the transportation project(s). If the local government is working with neighboring jurisdictions or a regional organization on the project and would like the TA to focus on multi-jurisdictional activities, that information should be stated clearly in the request form and the neighboring jurisdictions should be identified.

The request form should be completed with the information related to the local government submitting it; it does not need to address the specifics for each jurisdiction involved in the project(s). For example, the government requesting the TA should identify the disadvantaged communities in its jurisdiction that would benefit.

My local government is receiving DOT funding that is not on the list of transportation funding programs on the request form. If our transportation project has a housing component that would benefit from TCTA, would we be eligible?

HUD’s TCTA program is designed to support local governments receiving federal infrastructure funds, directly or through state pass through grants, in creating thriving communities and ensuring housing needs are addressed when designing and implementing infrastructure investments. While priority will be given to local governments receiving competitive funding from DOT that included housing or land use in its rating factors, such funding is not a requirement.

Is TCTA limited to local governments receiving transportation funding from the DOT programs listed on the request form?

Priority will be given to local governments that receive competitive DOT funding, such as those programs listed on the request form, but that is not a requirement.

If the county receives federal funds for a transportation project on a county road inside a city, can the city request the TA, or must it be the county?

Generally, the requesting local government unit should be the party receiving the funding. However, if federal funding is benefiting a city through improvements made by the state or county, the city has a strategy to address housing needs in connection with the transportation investment that benefits disadvantaged communities, and the city is willing to commit the time to work with the TA provider, the city should submit the request for TCTA.

Does it have to be Federal DOT funding, or can it be State DOT funding?*

Federal DOT funding that is “passed through” a state government to a county or other local government is considered eligible DOT funding for TCTA.

Are FTA funds related to this TA?*

A local government using Federal Transit Administration funds for a transportation project is eligible to request TCTA. For example, the FTA provides funding for transit-oriented development, which provides a local jurisdiction with opportunities to address local housing needs while preventing displacement.

Our city completed a TIGER 6 transportation project in 2021 and are now planning to use city-owned property nearby for housing redevelopment. Would a project like this be eligible for this TA?*

A transportation investment that creates opportunities for housing production and preservation is eligible for TCTA. However, TCTA is focused on governments that received recent transportation funding and have the opportunity to coordinate their transportation and housing investments to address the needs of members of disadvantaged communities.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS- DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITY

How does HUD define disadvantaged community in the Thriving Communities program?

HUD’s TCTA program uses the same definition of disadvantaged community that DOT uses for its Thriving Communities program. This definition is:

- (1) Any Tribal land or any territory or possession of the United States; and
- (2) Those census tracts:
 - (a) experiencing disproportionate effects (as defined by Executive Order 12898);
 - (b) that contain areas of persistent poverty as defined in 49 U.S.C. section 6702(a)(1);

- (c) that are historically disadvantaged as defined by [DOT's mapping tool for Historically Disadvantaged Communities](#); or
- (d) other federally designated community development zones.

If the housing activity will benefit existing residents and businesses in census tracts that satisfy any of those four definitions, it would be serving a disadvantaged community.

Does my county have to be disadvantaged to request TCTA?

The county does not need to be disadvantaged, but the housing activity related to the transportation project needs to benefit one or more disadvantaged communities within the county.

How is disadvantaged community status determined and is this a requirement?

It is a requirement that the housing activity benefit members of one or more disadvantaged communities in the jurisdiction. The local government requesting TCTA should look at its transportation project and the related housing activity and identify those communities that will be impacted or have the potential to be impacted. The local government staff is familiar with the demographics of residents in the neighborhoods and likely can identify if the neighborhood is one that is disadvantaged. HUD is not requiring the jurisdiction to conduct a specific analysis, but instead describes the geography and demographics of the community. If the staff can determine that the community is identified by DOT as an historically disadvantaged community, knows that the community meets the definition of persistent poverty, or knows that the community is within a designated community development zone, it should include that information in the response to that item in the request form.

The guidance on the website says other federally designated community development zones. Is the Opportunity Zone considered one of these development zones?*

Yes, Opportunity Zones are one of the many types of federally designated community development zones that identifies a Disadvantaged Community for the purposes of TCTA.

Can you provide additional guidance on how to “describe the area impacted by the project(s) described above?”

HUD wants to know the geographic focus of the local government's project, including the disadvantaged communities that it will benefit. The description can identify specific census tracts or list the streets bounding the area or otherwise provide a narrative of the area (maps cannot be uploaded into the form at this time). Demographic details about the existing residents in that geographical area should also be provided. would be beneficial.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS – PROJECTS

Are these projects specific to housing projects? And if so, is there a preference for multifamily development?*

TCTA is designed to provide technical assistance to local governments that want to address housing needs in developing their transportation projects. The four [TA Areas](#) describe the types of housing challenges that TCTA will assist local governments with addressing. The TA may, for example, involve avoiding displacement of families in single family homes as bike and pedestrian paths are developed to revitalize an area, preserving affordability in a multifamily development near an expanding transit line, or identifying vacant land where affordable housing could be built with access to a wide range of resources.

Is there a certain stage that the project must be in?*

There is not a requirement for the project to be in a specific stage. For example, a transportation project may be underway, while the housing component is in the planning stage. The TCTA request form asks the local government to describe what stage the project is in, referring to the project described immediately beforehand for which TA would be beneficial. In the example, it would be the housing component.

Does a project already have to exist?*

No, the project can be in the planning stages.

Must a community already have a DOT project ongoing to apply for TA now?*

The local government must be receiving DOT funding; however, the project can be in the planning stages.

HOW DOES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HELP US?

What are the benefits of participating in TCTA?

TCTA can provide local government staff with skills and tools to enable them to address critical housing needs while supporting equitable economic development in deploying transportation investments. TCTA can help build stronger communities by supporting community engagement in implementing housing strategies.

Government staff can learn from other jurisdictions doing similar projects through peer cohorts. Agency staff can develop better relationships with other public sector agencies, with community groups, and with private and nonprofit actors through TCTA.

Would TCTA pay for our city to hire a consultant?

No. The TCTA program does not provide funds to local governments to hire consultants. Under the TCTA program, cities may request technical assistance that is provided by HUD-funded TA providers. Local governments should request TCTA for a specific project or need that aligns with one or more of the TA Focus Areas. The TCTA program does not directly fund local governments' projects.

How long will the TA engagement last?*

The length of the TA engagement will depend on the scope of the TA request. The length of TA engagements varies.

Who are the TA providers? If selected, who would we be working with?*

Currently two teams of TA providers are working on TCTA: Abt Associates, in partnership with Alabama A&M University, EPR PC, Equitable Cities, and National Housing Trust; and ICF, in partnership with Smart Growth America, Partnership for Southern Equity, and Morgan State University. The TA provider will identify the appropriate team members to work with the local government's staff after the specific TA need has been identified.

Is technical assistance provided to the government or the community?

TCTA is provided to a local government to help it address housing needs in connection with transportation investments that will provide broader community benefits.

Is TCTA available to local governments to assist them in the public engagement required for federally funded projects?

Under TCTA, local governments may request TA to improve coordination among public entities and locally based organizations in ways that support a holistic and regional approach to housing and transportation. This may include TA that helps local governments conduct community outreach to inform local transportation and housing plans. However, TCTA does not identify public engagement as a specific focus area.

Does TCTA fund infrastructure projects?*

No funding is provided to local governments through TCTA. TCTA is a resource to help local governments develop additional skills and access valuable tools to better address housing needs in connection with their infrastructure projects.

Our Housing and Community Development Department just recently developed a HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, would this Technical Assistance program be of service in that effort?

A local government that is working, for example, to preserve housing with its HOME-ARP funds could benefit from TCTA as it coordinates these efforts with transportation funding it has received.

SELECTION FOR RECEIVING TA

When will we find out if we were selected to receive TCTA?

HUD anticipates reviewing initial TCTA requests after March 15th. There is not a specific date on which decisions will be made. Furthermore, requests received after March 15th will be reviewed on a rolling basis. It is anticipated the TA providers will begin working with local governments in Summer 2023.

How many communities will HUD select to receive TCTA?

The specific number of local governments that can receive TCTA will depend on the assessment of the needs of individual jurisdictions in relation to the available capacity of TA providers. HUD anticipates serving 30-40 jurisdictions.

Is any support available for those who are not selected for direct technical assistance?

Tools and other resources produced through TCTA will be shared broadly to benefit local governments that are not direct recipients of TCTA.

Do you have an estimated likelihood of requests being approved? Have many requests already been submitted?*

The number of TCTA requests approved will depend on available funding and the capacity constraints of the TA providers' staff. At this time, HUD does not have an anticipated number of requests that will be approved. Depending on the nature of the request, assistance will be offered via different methods, some of which may serve multiple local governments at once (e.g., training on a specific topic or participation in a peer cohort).

OTHER FEDERAL THRIVING COMMUNITIES PROGRAMS

Is HUD's TCTA program the same as the U.S. Department of Transportation Thriving Communities program?

No. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Thriving Communities program facilitates the planning and development of transportation and community revitalization activities and provides tools to ensure that under-resourced communities can access the historic funding provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. More information can be found [here](#).

How does HUD's TCTA program relate to DOT's Thriving Communities program and the Environmental Protection Agency's Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers?

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Energy, and other federal agencies are also providing technical assistance under the banner of "Thriving Communities." HUD's TCTA is specifically focused on integrating housing and transportation planning to support disadvantaged communities as UGLGs design and implement infrastructure plans.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION

Where is the link for the TCTA request form?*

The [TCTA request form](#) can be accessed through the Thriving Communities webpages on either [HUD.gov](https://www.hud.gov) or [HUDExchange.info](https://www.hudexchange.info).

Are we able to schedule a call with staff to ask more detailed questions?*

Please send any questions to the TCTA team at ThrivingCommunitiesTA@hud.gov.

If we have any questions, who can we contact?*

Please email the HUD TCTA team at ThrivingCommunitiesTA@hud.gov.