

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

## General Information:

The Federal Lands Access Program was established in 23 U.S.C. 204 to improve state and local transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within federal lands for visitors, recreationists and resource users.

## Instructions:

Proposed projects or studies must be located on a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that is located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal lands for which the facility title or maintenance responsibility is vested with a State, county, city, township, tribal, municipal, or local government. The federal share for the Access Program in this call-for-projects is 100 percent based on amended program requirements established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. If there is a shortage of Access Program funds in the state, the PDC may discuss options with the applicant to leverage the match funds towards the project to advance the applied-for scope.

All projects must be submitted using this Eastern Federal Lands (EFL) Access Program Application form. The applicant must be the facility owner, have maintenance responsibility or must supply a letter from the facility owner/maintainer indicating the application is being submitted on their behalf. It is the responsibility of the applicant to supply the necessary information to complete the application to the best of their ability.

Project applications must be sponsored by the appropriate Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) with an application signature and/or letter of support. Attachments such as cost estimates, maps, photos etc. may be included but are limited to 10 pages. Letters supporting the project do NOT count towards the 10 additional pages allowed for application support.

E-mail your completed application package to [Efl.planning@dot.gov](mailto:Efl.planning@dot.gov). If you need assistance in completing this application form or have questions about the program, please contact: Lewis Grimm, PE, FHWA-EFL Planning Team Leader at 703-404-6289 or [Lewis.Grimm@dot.gov](mailto:Lewis.Grimm@dot.gov) or the FHWA PDC member listed on the EFL FLAP web page for the respective state.

## Implementation:

The Programming Decisions Committee (PDC) for each state will review project applications and prioritize them based on weighted selection criteria developed by the PDC. The selection criteria are reflective of needs in that state and Federal regulations and guidelines. Project approval resides with the PDC. The PDC will select a balanced program that maximizes funding and addresses critical needs, in consultation with applicable FLMA's.

Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) may be required depending on FHWA Division providing Stewardship and Oversight (S&O). The project MOA will indicate the project delivery method, funding sources/limitations, scope, schedule, and responsibilities of the project signatories.

Local public agencies that are certified by the State DOT may be permitted to deliver the projects contingent on the joint approval of the FHWA-EFL and the State DOT. Local project delivery will require State DOT S&O.

For partner delivered projects, fund obligations will be requested by phase by the State DOTs following the S&O process. Access program funds will not reimburse work performed prior to execution of the MOA and the PR-2 or FMIS obligation (i.e. Right of Way transfers or Engineering services).

Program goals, eligible activities, application tips and the Call for Projects Standard Operating Procedures (including the selection criteria) for this application are located under the appropriate state on the Federal Lands Highway website.

<https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs-access>

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

Project Name: <input type="text" value="Appalachian Trail Rte 40 Alt Pedestrian Crossing"/>		Route Number: <input type="text" value="U.S. Route 40A"/>	
Facility Owner: <input type="text" value="Maryland DOT, State Highway Administration"/>		Facility Maintainer: <input type="text" value="Maryland DOT, State Highway Administration"/>	
Requested Project Delivery Agency: <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Federal Lands (EFLHD) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State DOT <input type="checkbox"/> Local Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>			
Functional Classification: <input type="checkbox"/> National Highway System <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arterial <input type="checkbox"/> Major Collector <input type="checkbox"/> Minor Collector <input type="checkbox"/> Local Road <input type="checkbox"/> Other		Project Design Standards: <input type="checkbox"/> AASHTO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State DOT <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Lands Highway (FLH)	
Type of Project Proposed: (Check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Project <input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Expansion/ Enhancement <input type="checkbox"/> Other  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Design  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Engineering <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental (NEPA Document) <input type="checkbox"/> Right of Way  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Construction  <input type="checkbox"/> Paving, road base or surface course projects <input type="checkbox"/> Safety enhancements or structures <input type="checkbox"/> Minor drainage <input type="checkbox"/> Major concrete structures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bicycle/pedestrian facility <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Engineering  <input type="checkbox"/> Planning/Technical Study or Research  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. Intermodal or transit facilities, ITS, HSIP, environmental mitigation)  If Other, specify: <input type="text"/>		<u>Estimated Project Budget</u>  Preliminary Engineering: <input type="text" value="\$150,000"/> Construction Engineering: <input type="text"/> Construction Cost: <input type="text" value="\$400,000"/> Right-of-Way: <input type="text"/> Other Costs: <input type="text"/> Total Project Cost: <input type="text" value="\$550,000"/>  <u>Project Funding</u>  Requested FLAP Funds: <input type="text" value="\$550,000"/> Partner Funds <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Other: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Total Project Cost: <input type="text" value="\$550,000"/>	
Project Location:  City: <input type="text" value="Middletown"/> County: <input type="text" value="Frederick County"/> State: <input type="text" value="Maryland"/> Latitude/Longitude <input type="text" value="39.4844/-77.6195"/> Congressional District(s) <input type="text" value="Maryland District 06"/>		Benefitting Federal Land Unit(s) <input type="text" value="Appalachian National Scenic Trail"/>  Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) managing the above unit(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Land Management <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and Wildlife Service <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Park Service <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers <input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. DOD, )  Specify <input type="text"/>	
Project Applicant:  Name: <input type="text" value="Christy Bernal"/> Position: <input type="text" value="Discretionary Grants Rotation"/> Agency: <input type="text" value="MD Dept of Transportation State Highway Administration"/> Phone: <input type="text" value="(410) 545-5659"/> E-mail: <input type="text" value="CBernal@mdot.maryland.gov"/> Address: <input type="text" value="707 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21202"/>		FLMA Signature of Project Acknowledgement & Concurrence <input type="text"/>  Name: <input type="text" value="Kurt Speers"/> Title: <input type="text" value="Acting Superintendent"/> Phone: <input type="text" value="(540) 784-0301"/> E-mail: <input type="text" value="Kurt_Speers@nps.gov"/>	

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

## Prioritization Factors:

- FLMA, StateDOT, and facility owner agree that the project is an Economic/Visitation Generator. ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Project is consistent with the metropolitan, statewide and/or regional planning process. ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Project is consistent with currently adopted agency plans. ☒ Yes ☐ No
- If local delivery is requested, the applicant is certified by the State DOT to administer local agency projects following Federal Highway Administration requirements. ☐ Yes ☐ No

## Project Development Status

	Not Started	In Progress	Completed	N/A	Completion Date/Comments
Project on TIP/STIP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will be added to TIP/STIP if awarded
Right of Way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROW costs not anticipated, delineation to be done during PE
Utilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant utility impacts not anticipated
Preliminary Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Late 2027
NEPA Document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Early 2027
Permits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Early 2027
Anticipated Delivery Calendar Year:	2028				
Latest Possible Delivery Calendar Year	2029				

## Resource Protection:

Please identify any impacts to known natural, cultural or physical resources associated with this project. (Check all that apply)

Negative Impact      Positive Impact

- |                          |                                     |  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Wetlands/Water Resources                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Threatened & Endangered Species                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Species of concern/state listed                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other biological resources (fisheries, rookeries)            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Wild & Scenic River (or other state classifications)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Non-attainment areas (air quality)                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Historic & archeological resources                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Native American areas/concerns                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Wilderness or roadless areas                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Parks & recreation areas/wildlife refuge [Section 4(f) 6(f)] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Hazardous materials/contamination site                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Air, noise, and/or visual impacts                            |

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

---

## 1. Project Description

Please provide a summary of the purpose and need for the proposed project. Provide a detailed description of the project activities that would be funded with Access Program funds. Describe the overall design concept, any unusual design elements, design standards, and any work affecting structures (bridges and major culverts). Include widths, surfacing type, earthwork needs or roadside safety features. Include options and funding breakdown for scaling/phasing the project, if applicable.

This project will improve safety for the Appalachian Trail users and visitors at the U.S. Route 40 Alternative (Alt.) road crossing. The project location connects Maryland's South Mountain State Park to land owned by the National Park Service (NPS) via the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Route 40 Alt. is owned and maintained by Maryland Department of Transportation (DOT) State Highway Administration (SHA) and has an annual average daily traffic of 8,401. The crossing is a direct midblock crossing in an area with parking lots, a historic inn, church, and some interactive exhibits. The existing crossing has safety challenges including vertical and horizontal curves for vehicles approaching the crossing, which minimize sight lines for drivers. Currently, only trail crossing warning signage is provided at the crossing for eastbound drivers and 350 feet in advance of the crossing for westbound drivers. Any other infrastructure that would improve safety is not present. The crossing includes 50 feet of roadway exposure as pedestrians traverse three vehicle lanes to get to the far edge of the road.

Maryland DOT is requesting \$550,000 in FLAP funds for this project to design and construct safety enhancements at the crossing.

The proposed improvements will be subject to the design process, however, may consist of relocating the crossing approximately 100-feet to the west to increase sight lines, adding a painted crosswalk, a concrete median refuge island, and a curb extension along the southern curb to remove a driveway acceleration lane in the eastbound direction. This may include minor earthwork and resurfacing. Additional signage and pavement markings, including Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at the crossing and advanced flashing warning signage, are also proposed.

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

## 2. Safety Benefits

Please describe how this project addresses issues related to safety. Will the project improve safety for all user groups (pedestrians, bicycles, motor vehicles, etc.)? Will this project improve identified crash sites or hazardous conditions (road safety audits or engineering assessments)? Please provide crash data if available.

The project is expected to improve safety by decreasing approach speeds, providing enhanced signage indicating a crossing, and establishing a safe waiting area between the eastbound and westbound travel lanes. The project follows recommendations of the Federal Highway Administration's National Roadway Safety Strategy by proposing to implement proven safety countermeasures such as enhanced signing, a high visibility crosswalk pattern, and a pedestrian refuge island to reduce the chances of a pedestrian crash.

The project site was also the subject of an *Appalachian Trail Crossing Safety Assessment* by NPS and the US DOT Volpe Center after having been identified as a safety concern by the NPS and FHWA Eastern Federal Lands. Key safety challenges at the crossing location include the vertical and horizontal curves approaching the location, limited sight distances, and the presence of an acceleration lane that pedestrians must cross. This project's proposed improvements were identified by the *Crossing Safety Assessment* and include relocating the crossing away from the curves to improve visibility.

In addition to enhancing safety for pedestrians, improvements for motor vehicles and cyclists can also be expected along Route 40 Alt. due to slower traffic speeds as vehicles approach the crossing area. Pedestrian safety will be improved by the relocation of the crossing for improved sight lines along the road, the installation of a high visibility crosswalk, advanced warning signs, RRFBs, and a median island. These will increase the visibility of the crossing location and pedestrians in the roadway.

Maryland DOT crash data indicates four vehicle crashes have occurred in the vicinity of the project location between 2019 and 2023 due to driver error and wet conditions. This indicates a safety issue, which could affect pedestrians who may enter the roadway in all conditions and face distracted drivers. This project proposes increasing the visibility of the crossing to provide more notice to drivers, potentially preventing future crashes with pedestrians.

## 3. Accessibility and Mobility Benefits

Please describe how the proposed project routes are connected to a FLMA inventory route. Describe how the project addresses the need on FLMA plan, State or County Comprehensive Plan. Include any public involvement efforts to date. Describe how the proposed project will fill missing links in the network, remove travel restrictions or bottlenecks. How will the plan improve mode choice, explore and enhance transit systems (i.e. operation and maintenance of transit facilities, etc.)? Will the project reduce traffic congestion; enhance visitor mobility and accessibility?

The project area connects the Appalachian Trail, which is a federally designated National Scenic Trail located on NPS land to the north of the project site, across a state-managed highway. The project will improve a link in the Appalachian Trail by providing a safer connection across the road, reducing the risk of abrupt stops or crashes disrupting travel. The project will improve visitor mobility by increasing ease of movement for pedestrians. The project may also reduce road congestion by limiting the unpredictability for drivers to yield to pedestrians in the roadway.

This project is a priority for the NPS Northeast Region office. The NPS National Transportation Strategy and the Northeast Regional Transportation Plan both prioritize safety as a central goal nationally and regionally. This project fits into these safety goals, which considers the interactions between pedestrians and motorized vehicles. The NPS Northeast Region has programmed the Appalachian National Scenic Trail road crossings, which includes this Route 40 Alt. crossing, into their regional 5-year plan.

Public outreach will be completed as part of the NEPA process. Two engagement sessions with partner organizations were conducted in 2025 as part of efforts by the NPS to develop the *Crossing Safety Assessment* of the location. These sessions included participants from the NPS, US DOT Volpe Center, Maryland DOT, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Washington County, and Frederick County. These meetings identified safety concerns at the site and resulted in the recommended safety improvements proposed in this application.

# Eastern Federal Lands Access Program Project Application

## 4. Preservation Benefits

Will this project improve a National Bridge Inventory System (NBIS) deficient bridge rating? How will the project improve surface conditions? Will the project reduce operating costs? How will the project contribute to the protection or enhancement of specific natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic resources?

The Appalachian Trail is a public footpath that follows more than 2,100 miles of Appalachian Mountain ridgelines between Maine and Georgia. The Appalachian Trail is federally recognized as a route of outstanding recreation opportunity and designated as a National Scenic Trail. This project will protect historic and cultural resources associated with the Appalachian Trail and add a pedestrian facility within the existing current footprint to maintain and enhance access and connectivity.

Maryland Department of Natural Resources recently purchased land to the immediate west of the project area, which includes the historic Old South Mountain Inn. The proposed trail diversion will move the crossing further west to have pedestrians cross at a location with longer sight distances. The design of the minor trail diversion will also consider the opportunity to enhance the connection to cultural and historic resources for trail users by bringing them closer to the historic Old South Mountain Inn site which is proposed to be used as a South Mountain State Park visitor center by Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). While this project doesn't directly reduce operating costs, it will improve the functioning of the roadway by clearly delineating space for pedestrians and bicyclists from space for motorized vehicles.

## 5. Economic Development Benefits

Please describe how this project will attract tourism/visitation. Will the project address more than one Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) area? How will this project influence economic development? How will this project address visitor mobility, access, and experience? Explain if/how the local or regional community is economically dependent on access to the federal land and the proposed transportation facility.

The Appalachian Trail attracts thousands of thru-hikers, and 3 million section and day hikers annually. This project will support economic development in neighboring communities by facilitating a safer connection for the Appalachian Trail, which has the potential to improve visitor experience and increase visitation. The Town of Boonsboro is located approximately 2 miles from the project location via Route 40 Alt. Visitors to the trailhead for the Appalachian Trail next to this crossing can easily go to the town and support local businesses such as inns, museums, grocery stores, and restaurants. A safer, more comfortable experience traversing the trail and road crossings can promote visitation to the area and investment in local communities.

In combination with this project, the new South Mountain State Park visitor center will promote visitation to this area. This region is already popular with thru-hikers and section hikers due to the Washington Monument and a campground with amenities, such as showers, located approximately 1.5 miles to the north of the project location by trail. Recreation is a contributor to the Frederick County tourism economy, with visitors investing \$78 million in recreation in 2023. Increasing safety and comfort for hikers on this local section of the trail can bring more visitation to the region and create more opportunities for supporting the local economy.

## 6. Sustainability and Environmental Quality Benefits

Please describe how the proposed project contributes to the environmental goals and objectives of the Federal Land Management Plan or other applicable land management plan. How will the proposed project avoid/minimize/mitigate potential impacts to environmental or cultural resources? Will the project improve fish passage and/or wildlife connectivity? How does the proposed project contribute to the use of sustainable energy sources for transportation?

The proposed project contributes to NPS' environmental goal to Protect Resources from the NPS Northeast Region office's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP specifically identifies this objective to maintain culturally significant transportation assets in good condition and manage visitation/access to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to park resources. The proposed project, which will encourage people to use the appropriate crossing location and discourage social trails which degrade natural resources, is in line with this goal.

The project is expected to avoid major impacts on the environment or cultural resources. The project will remove a small area of pavement and convert it back to natural landscape.