



Memorandum

To: Richland County Subdivisions
From: Jotika Shetty
Subject: Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) State Capital Improvements Funds and Local Transportation Improvement Program (Round 32)
Date: May 31, 2017

Infrastructure Applications:

It is once again time to begin planning for applications for funding for infrastructure projects from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC). For Round 32 the process will be similar to previous years, in that projects will need to be submitted to the Richland County Regional Planning Commission in October for prioritization prior to being presented to the District 16 Integrating Committee in November.

Project information should be submitted to the Regional Planning Commission office no later than October 13, 2017 at 4:00 PM, so that the Regional Planning Commission can begin to prioritize the projects at its October 25, 2017 meeting. Approximately \$11 million will be available to District 16 for allocation in Round 32.

I have attached a copy of the District 16 project rating sheet that is the same as that which was used last year. The OPWC has made the application available online to download from the Internet in Word or WordPerfect format. Their web site address is: www.pwc.state.oh.us. This is the only application to be used. It is preferred that the application be filled on a computer as some of the fields self-populate.

Your October submission to the Richland County Regional Planning Commission does not have to be in the form of a complete application, but rather, the six (6) pages of the application are needed along with the engineers cost estimate and weighted useful life. If your application is approved by the District, you will have approximately one month to perfect and polish the final application. Capital Improvement Reports (CIR) are no longer required by the District

Please consider asking for a loan to cover some or all of your funding needs. By combining a grant request with a request for a loan you make your application somewhat more competitive in the District's scoring system. In prioritizing Richland County projects, some voters on the Regional Planning Commission also have a favorable view of an applicant's willingness to

request a loan. Loans are given at 0% interest, and may now be for up to 30 years, if the infrastructure being improved has that useful life.

Special consideration is given by the District to “loan-only” applications. Please indicate somewhere on the front of the application that it is a “loan- only application”.

If your community is eligible for the small government funding please pay particular attention to the Small Government Commission criteria when completing your application. In the case you do not receive District funding, a preliminary Small Government score is required. Please be ready to pre-score your project using the Small Government criteria.

Tips for a Competitive Application:

An infrastructure project application has two hurdles on its way to receiving funding. The first is receiving a high point score on the District 16 Project Evaluation Rating and the second is being selected as a high priority project in Richland County.

Tips for Scoring Well on the District 16 Project Evaluation Rating Form:

1. Applications should try to exceed the minimum 10% local matching funds requirement. The use of non-OPWC is the most heavily weighted component of the District 16 rating system (Factor F on the rating sheet). There are 20 possible points for this factor, of the total of 62 available for non-discretionary points. A project proposing only the minimum 10% local match will get 2 points, while an application proposing 50% from local or other non-OPWC sources will get 10 points and 75% local will receive 15 points.
2. Maximize the “repair and replacement” aspects of a project. The program was approved by voters based on the need to replace Ohio’s aging infrastructure, and the scoring system was built to recognize this need. Most projects can be considered repair and replacement even if it seems like there is substantial new construction. Replacing a 12’ wide bridge with a 24 foot wide bridge should be all repair and replacement as the new width meets standards. The same consideration can be made for widening and realigning a dangerous stretch of road. Making sewer or water improvements that do not increase capacity, but meet new standards can generally be considered repair and replacement.
3. Factor C on the rating system deals with age and condition. Please try to include the information in the application about age and condition, so the score can be maximized.

Tips for Gaining A High Priority From The Richland County Regional Planning Commission:

Over 50 government, business and civic leaders in Richland County will vote on prioritizing the projects. Each individual has their own thoughts and reasons for selecting certain projects for a high priority. The County’s priority for a project is used to assign “discretionary” points at the District level. There are 15 discretionary points available. Here are several observations that may help guide your application development:

1. Projects only involving repaving are eligible but are usually not very competitive. Applications that combine safety improvements with repaving and widening are more

competitive. Avoiding repaving only projects will also help village and township projects that may go on to compete for Small Government funding at the State level, where just repaving projects cannot compete.

2. Some may give higher priority to applications requesting loans.
3. Applicants should maximize the other funds applied to a project. In recent years, most applications in Richland County offered more than the minimum 10% matching local funding. Typical applications offer 50% funding to match the OPWC grants and loans.
4. Each applicant will be given several minutes to present their project to the Richland County Regional Planning Commission membership at their October 25th meeting. Not only should the physical need for the proposed project be described to the group, but also the need in the context of applicant's other infrastructure needs and the ongoing effort to deal with all needs. *Although the RCRPC has not established any standards for the project presentations, I suggest that each presenter should be prepared to explain the following:*
 - *Why the OPWC grant and/or loan is necessary and appropriate. Is the application just being made because there are funds potentially available to save local dollars, or do pressing needs and deteriorating conditions preclude waiting until conventional revenue streams catch up with the need?*
 - *If it is a sewer or water project, has the community adjusted rates to support capital improvements?*
 - *What would take place if the application is not approved this year?*

Advisory from OPWC regarding approving applications:

Readiness to Proceed: Projects with delayed schedules for engineering, bidding and construction will be questioned and possibly returned for re-submission in a future program year if they will not proceed during the current program year.

Generally, projects not scheduled to be under construction by June 30, 2019 will be rejected by the Commission.

Projects involving the Ohio Department of Transportation must use the ODOT "sale" date. All ODOT project schedules are confirmed with ODOT. ODOT projects with schedules that lend themselves to a future program year will be rejected by the Commission.

Engineering Costs: Engineering costs, as a percentage of construction costs, are closely reviewed. Justification for elevated engineering costs may be required.

Training Workshop:

A training workshop by the State and District is scheduled on June 29th from 9.00 AM to 12.00 PM at the Longview Center, 1495 W Longview Ave. Mansfield OH 44906.

If you have any questions or need any other information, please call 419-774-6202