

INTRODUCTION

Preface

Locally Administered Projects (LAP) Manual

Purpose

This Locally Administered Projects manual has been written to assist the Local Public Agency (LPA) in the administration of local-let transportation projects, as well as to provide consistency on a statewide basis. It also provides guidance for VDOT staff responsible for supporting these projects.

The manual describes the processes, procedures, documents, authorizations, approvals and certifications that are required in order to receive federal aid and/or state funds for many types of local transportation projects. The information has been compiled from numerous sources and is intended to give a broad overview of local-let activities. This manual should not be used as a substitute for federal and state laws, statutes and regulations for project administration activities using federal funds. Rather, this document is intended to foster the expeditious and lawful delivery of local projects.

While the manual provides detailed guidance for most parts of the project development process, it is not a replacement for regular contact with VDOT staff. Please work closely with the staff of the appropriate VDOT district office for your project.

Organization of the manual

Definitions and acronyms

This section provides a list of frequently used terms and definitions found throughout the manual. Terms are defined as they pertain to this manual.

Symbols

Occasionally, symbols are used – at times with bold or italicized font – in this manual to highlight important information. Generally, the following three symbols are used:



Required submission Important information Must be kept on file

The manual is divided into four parts. Each part contains several chapters which describe the requirements for completing specific project development activities.

Part 1 is focused on overall program development that addresses roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and project initiation. This section details requirements for state-funded projects and delineates differences in certain special programs.

Part one will be helpful to LPAs in understanding VDOT's approach to locally administered projects.

Part one appendices include:

- a flow chart summarizing major activities required to develop a transportation project.
- a federal-aid checklist of tasks necessary to complete various project phases.
- a Local Government Certification for state-aid projects.

Part 2 is focused on project management and provides guidance for project development and construction. This part is organized to reflect the flow of a project from the development of the project administration agreement through construction and project closeout. In each chapter, there is a general discussion section which gives background information, applicability, regulatory requirements and the rationale for the requirements. This is followed by a detailed description of procedures, documents and approvals. In most cases,

general discussion appears at the beginning of each chapter, while details of the process appear later in the chapters. Back-up data appears in appendixes to each chapter.

Part 2 will be helpful to LPAs for day to day project development.

Part 3 addresses standards and practices for functional areas that cut across phases of project delivery including: civil rights, environmental, right of way, structure and bridge, and financial management. Part 3 contains detailed information for each of the functional areas and will be helpful to LPAs in identifying specific requirements.

Generally, in parts 2 and 3 of the manual, the chapters follow this outline:

- *Introductory/Summary/Applicability*
 - *Processes/Procedures*
 - *Table of Key Submittals/Requirements*
- Appendices include chapter specific information*

Part 4 provides a list of required submittals for federally funded projects and contains samples of properly completed submittals.

Effective Date

This document is intended to supersede and replace all previous versions of the guide for the local administration of VDOT projects. All projects with an advertisement date after July 1, 2009, will be developed in accordance with this manual. If provisions found in this manual place an undue hardship on projects scheduled for advertisement before September 30, 2009, VDOT may allow the locality to use guidance from the previous Guide.

Update Process

The LAP Manual will be periodically updated to reflect changes in funding programs, policy, federal and state requirements and statutory changes. When changes are necessary, VDOT posts the updated pages on its [Web site](#), with the latest revision dates listed in the Table of Contents.

Recommending Changes and Updates

LAD staff places a high value on users' suggestions and recommendations for improvement of this manual. Each suggestion will be thoroughly evaluated and referred to the division that is responsible for the chapter or topic where an update has been suggested or when a general update is being considered. Divisions are responsible for preparing necessary updates and they are reviewed by LAD prior to publication.

LAD staff will evaluate and prioritize the sequencing of updates to the manual.

FHWA Coordination

This manual is a fundamental part of VDOT's continued and effective relationship with FHWA for the delivery of federally funded, locally administered projects. The LAP manual was reviewed and approved by the FHWA Virginia Division as the primary source of guidance for locally administered projects prior to publication.

As the LAP manual is a federally approved document, LAD must coordinate changes and updates to the manual with the FHWA Virginia Division. The level of coordination and approval will vary based upon the type of modifications being made to the manual.

Substantive modifications will be reviewed and approved by FHWA prior to publication. Examples of substantive changes include: changes that result in delegation of approval authority, modification of project submittal requirements, or changes in required project documentation by a local participating agency, as

well as any changes in VDOT approval processes. Administrative or procedural modifications do not require FHWA concurrence prior to publication. Examples of administrative or procedural modifications include: changes to administrative procedures, revision of the *Standard Federal-aid Project Administration Agreement*, or changes in references to the CFR / USC, VDOT specifications or standards (**not** the specification or the standard itself).

Annually, VDOT will prepare a summary of all administrative or procedural changes made to the LAP Manual and will provide that summary to FHWA for their information.

Interpretations of LAP Manual Guidance

From time to time, it may become necessary to provide clarification or interpretation of the guidance provided in the LAP Manual. An interpretation may clarify a VDOT business practice, or be legal or statutory in nature, and should be directed to the Local Assistance Division. Such requests may come from localities or from VDOT staff. Local requests should be routed through the assigned VDOT Project Coordinator for resolution. The Local Assistance Division will coordinate, as deemed necessary, with the appropriate central office policy division to provide the necessary clarification.

It may also become necessary to “waive” certain business practices or procedures outlined in the LAP Manual. Only the Director or Assistant Director of the Local Assistance Division can approve any deviation or material change in interpretation from the procedures documented in the LAP Manual. LAD will consult, as deemed necessary, with the appropriate central office policy division to provide “waivers” from VDOT business practice or procedures. Deviations from federal or state law and regulation cannot be considered and such provisions will not be waived.

Note: Please refer to Chapter [12.2.4](#) for the process for **design exceptions and design waivers**.