

# Potential Trails Grant FAQ

Greetings,

On May 22, 2025 the MUD held an Open House meeting to gather public feedback on a potential trail project in the neighborhood. We received a great deal of feedback and wanted to provide the most commonly asked questions during the session as well as some additional materials that were requested for those that were unable to attend.

I do not, nor am I permitted to, speak for the rest of the MUD Board. Speaking for myself, I saw no public support in evidence for the potential grant project. The next required step in the process is for the Board to consider a resolution supporting the project which is on the agenda for the May 28, 2025 Board meeting. I will be recommending to the Board that we do not proceed with the resolution and thus, necessarily, do not proceed with this potential trail project (or associated grant).

Warmest regards,  
David Johnson

## **What is the cost of the project? How would it be paid?**

The project as shown at the Open House would be approximately \$2.8 million dollars for which TXDOT would pay approximately \$2.2 million dollars. The 20% share (approximately \$560,000) from the MUD would come not from the annual budget but from the Parks Bond funds approved by residents, the same source that is paying for the new playground but would not interfere with that project in any way.

## **What about ongoing costs?**

As with all MUD facilities, ongoing maintenance would be paid for through MUD funds similar to all other park facilities/amenities.

## **Would there be public access to the trails? Pools/Parks?**

A requirement of the grant of this amount would be 20 year access for the public. Specifically, this would mean that the MUD could not prevent the public from accessing the trails paid for with these dollars.

It is important to note that it only applies to elements paid for with those funds. The public would have zero access to any existing trails not touched by these funds, zero access to the parks, zero access to the pavilions/disc golf course/tennis courts/basketball courts, etc. and zero access to the pools.

It is also important to note that the MUD has never functionally restricted access to the parks or trails. While there are posted signs that direct people that only residents and their guests may use our facilities nothing physically prevents them from doing so. It is also not required for the MUD to advertise to the public the trails are available, only that they not be disallowed from

using them. Further, any criminal or destructive activity would result in a person's expulsion from those trails whether a resident or not.

### **What would be the material used for the trail?**

The presentation at the Open House displayed a concrete trail as that is what has been in the neighborhood's Parks Masterplan for decades. While it was priced that way initially, there would be nothing that prevents us from considering, for example, decomposed granite or some other material.

### **Has this potential project cost money so far?**

Yes. To fully be able to consider the project and what would be entailed, in addition to the costs, it is necessary to have a professional firm update relevant elements of our Parks Master Plan. The MUD assigned this to the firm that has been trusted with the District's park amenities for about 20 years, Hitchcock Design Group. Prior Directors hired Hitchcock Design Group long ago and the firm continues to be a valuable resource in our community. The fee for this work was initially set at \$9,000. Should the resolution not pass, the invoice sent to the MUD will only be for hours worked rather than the full amount.

It is important to note that the money spent for these updates have value completely aside from the potential grant project. The Parks Masterplan is approximately 7 years old, and as noted below many elements were significantly out of date. These updates bring us in alignment with current financial estimates as well as updated layouts and designs.

### **Would the MUD use eminent domain?**

Not in any way. The trails proposed would be entirely on MUD property.

### **Pre-Application**

A request was made to see the information already submitted to TXDOT. The information the MUD submitted was titled a "pre-application" which is a non-binding notice of interest. The MUD submitted, free of any cost, the pre-application as a way to allow further consideration and bring the idea to residents, but did not obligate the MUD to proceed with an application.

The pre-application is included as part of this PDF. The first thing you'll notice is that it's very different (both dollars and trails) from the information presented at the Open House. At the time of the pre-application the details of the potential project hadn't been fully formed and the cost estimates were from the last update to the Parks Masterplan around 2018. Since then the costs have been updated and the details have been better formed, resulting in what was presented at the Open House. Additionally, the source of funds has been updated to the Parks Bond and any sort of proposal for connecting to neighboring spaces (retail, neighborhoods, trails, etc.) has been removed since the pre-application.

### **Additional Attachments**

To help visualize the project for those that couldn't make it to the Open House, we've included the visuals that were on display. One is a map of the proposed trails marked in orange. The other is a cross section showing the potential trails and the potential bridges across the creek.













# 2025 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Call for Projects

## Preliminary Application (PA)

Deadline to Submit PA: February 21, 2025

### Project Sponsor

[Link to PA Instructions](#)

#### 1. Contact information

Local Government/Project Sponsor Name: Block House Municipal Utility District  
Contact Person: David Johnson Title: Director  
Street Address: 2600 S Block House Dr. City: Leander  
Zip Code: 78641 Office Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: djohnson@blockhousemudtx.gov  
Other partnering entities: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Identify population area (based on project location)

An eligible project sponsor may represent a sub-area within its jurisdictional boundaries. Example: a County sponsors a project located within the boundaries of a City, Census Designated Place, Village, or Unincorporated Area – use the smaller population area where the project is located. For population numbers, use [Census data](#) from the 2020 Decennial Census.

Location Name: Block House Municipal Utility District Population size: 6,700

#### 3. Is the project within the boundaries of a [Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\)](#)?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If the project is within a MPO boundary, is the project within a Census Urbanized Area greater than 200,000, designated as a [Transportation Management Area](#)?

☐ Yes ☒ No

### Project Information

#### 4. Project name: Block House Park Connectivity Project

Be concise and logical.

#### 5. Eligible project type

Projects may include multiple project types; select all types that apply. (See instructions for details.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bikeway improvements                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other bicycle, pedestrian, or micromobility infrastructure installations   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shared use path improvements              | <input type="checkbox"/> Boulevard improvements to enhance pedestrian, bicyclist and transit access |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian improvements                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improvements for non-motorized transportation safety |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning document                                    |   |

#### 6. Project location

Projects may include multiple project locations; select all types that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On/along a TxDOT maintained roadway                   | <input type="checkbox"/> On/along a non-TxDOT roadway |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not within the right-of-way of any roadway |   |

#### 7. Provide a Google map link: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1fWYh1gLHWpedE62JRC6Q3cf5Cy1QKgE&usp=sharing>

See PA instructions for recommended tutorial links and minimum requirements.



## 8. Preliminary Scope of Work

Briefly describe the project, including project location, limits, facility type, and width. Descriptions that exceed the space provided below are not acceptable. (See instructions for details.)

This project aims to construct approximately 28,200 linear feet of new, 8-foot wide multi-use trails composed of decomposed granite and concrete within the Block House Municipal Utility District. The trails will strategically link existing parks, greenspaces, schools, and planned retail centers, enhancing connectivity and accessibility for residents. Furthermore, the project will ensure seamless integration with the existing county trail system, expanding regional recreational opportunities. Comprehensive signage will be installed along the new trails to improve wayfinding and safety for all users.

## 9. Project Category

Select the project category the Project Sponsor is interested in pursuing for this application. Please refer to the [Project Category Decision Tree](#) for additional assistance.

COMMUNITY BASED – preliminary engineering and construction activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LARGE SCALE – preliminary engineering and construction activities for large projects of more than \$5 million in estimated costs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
NETWORK ENHANCEMENTS – light construction/ installation for quick turnaround projects with limited or no design and no right of way acquisition.	<input type="checkbox"/>
NON-INFRASTRUCTURE – planning documents to assist communities of any size develop non-motorized transportation networks	<input type="checkbox"/>

*NOTE: For all projects a minimum 20% local match is required; however, project sponsors may be eligible for a reduction in the local match. See Program Guide for additional information.*

## 10. Project costs

Provide a planning cost estimate for the total estimated cost for the following project activities:

Estimated cost to prepare planning document/conceptual design: (Non-infrastructure projects only)	\$ 0
Estimated cost to prepare construction plans, specifications, and estimates:	\$ 153,400
Estimated cost to prepare environmental documentation:	\$ 0
Estimated cost to acquire right-of-way:	\$ 0
Estimated construction cost:	\$ 1,534,000
Total project cost estimate:	\$ 1,687,400
Estimated Local Match (20% of above costs):	\$ 337,480

Estimated Local match is calculated after #11 completed. Attach a copy of the cost estimate. The breakdown of federal, state, and local percentages will be determined in Step 2 of the application process, if authorized to proceed.

## 11. Transportation Development Credits

If a project sponsor is in an economically disadvantaged county or its population is less than 200,000 and meets certain economic criteria, they are eligible for Transportation Development Credits that allow for 100% federal TA funds to be applied to the project in lieu of a local match. Refer to the map ([link](#)). Is the project sponsor eligible for Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) for this project?

☐ Yes ☒ No



## 12. Preferred TxDOT Involvement in Implementation Phase

If this project were awarded funding, in addition to TxDOT's oversight role, would the project sponsor prefer the TxDOT District manage any phases of the project?

☒ None    ☐ Unsure    ☐ Non-Infrastructure    ☐ Construction    ☐ Design and Construction

## 13. Local match

Identify source(s) of local matching funds: Municipal Budget

Examples include municipal budget, Transportation Development Credits, or donated funds from a third-party.

## 14. Project complexity

Is this project in a locally or regionally approved planning document?

(May include City/County/MPO, master/comprehensive, bicycle/pedestrian, capital improvement, or other transportation plans.)

☒ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project reduce automobile traffic capacity or require a limitation to property access?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project cross a railroad (RR) or is the project within 100-feet of RR right-of-way?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project require utility relocations?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will this project require acquisition of right-of-way or an easement (e.g. utility or railroad), or relocation?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project require land purchased or improved with Land and Water Conservation Funds?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project require land in: (Check all appropriate boxes)

Publicly owned: ☒ Park(s), ☒ Recreation area(s), ☐ Wildlife/waterfowl refuge(s),  
OR ☐ Publicly/privately owned historical or archeological sites?

☒ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project be located within or around properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project be located within range and/or potential habitat of state or federally protected species?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Is there a likely possibility of encountering hazardous materials?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project require placement of fill in wetlands or waters of the U.S.?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk

Will the project be located in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge/Contributing Zone or Coastal Management Zone?

☐ Yes    ☒ No    ☐ Unk