TAP Grant Awards Announced

The Oklahoma Transportation Commission approved $7.5 million for 21 local projects as part of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) at their March 4 meeting. The program is federally funded and administered by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). Eligible applicants were communities with less than 5,000 population and required at least 20 percent local match.

Funding for TAP is designated for projects like sidewalks, pedestrian and bicycle trails, streetscapes, safe routes to school and environmental or historical preservation projects. TAP came about in 2012, when the U.S. Congress approved the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act which consolidated several previous transportation enhancement, trail and safe routes to school project categories into one program to allow more flexibility at the state and local levels.

NODA/NORTPO communities receiving funding included Cherokee (ADA compliant sidewalk and a paved shared use trail), Kaw City (new sidewalks and walking trail), Newkirk (fitness path concept – phase I), and Okeene (ADA compliant sidewalk improvements connecting schools). Others applied but this year’s TAP application process was very competitive (71 eligible project applications totaling approximately $36 million). The department worked with Oklahoma’s 11 regional planning districts to review and recommend projects, taking regional priorities and available funding into consideration.

See the map and full list of TAP funded projects at www.odot.org/tap.

Ray “Toby” Walker Retires

Congratulations to Toby Walker for 41 years of dedicated service to Alfalfa County. You have seen a lot of change over the years and have contributed to the betterment of Alfalfa County as a county employee and District 3 Commissioner. As an active member of the NODA Board of Trustees, we are glad you have chosen to continue serving as an At-Large Member.

We wish you the best of luck on your retirement.
FY19 REAP Awardee Training

On January 16, 2019, eighteen entities gathered to learn how to manage their REAP funded project. Covered areas include how to request funds, go out for bid, complete forms and close the project. Clerks, city managers, fire chiefs, supervisors, commissioners and mayors teamed up for a Snowman Building game. Not only was the activity fun, but it brought home the need to work together to accomplish goals. Thank you all for attending, working together and the dedication you have to your work and community.

REAP Funds Help Lucien FD with Training Equipment Purchase

Lucien Fire Department, sponsored by Noble County, received an FY19 REAP grant to purchase an extrication training system and three manikins. In the past year, Lucien FD and other surrounding departments have experienced vehicle collisions involving patients that needed extrication. REAP funding has allowed Lucien FD to purchase vital training equipment that will potentially improve their hands-on experience and acquire muscle memory of what to do at a vehicle accident. Fire Chief Jerry Smith thanks NODA and Noble County for the opportunity and funding. We are happy to have provided much needed equipment and thank our legislators for their continued support of the REAP program.
NODA's First Rural Fire Coordinator Reunites With His First Vehicle Placement

The year was 1982 when OK Forestry Service contracted with NODA for support in running a Rural Fire Defense program. NODA's Executive Director Chuck Arnold searched for an individual who could work closely with communities and rural fire departments to provide expertise and experience in solving local problems related to equipment, staffing, and funding. Larry Zerger, retired Enid firefighter (22 yr. service) was offered the position and NODA's Rural Fire Defense program was off and running. Little did Mr. Zerger know the positive impact his role would have on the 70 fire departments in the NODA District. He served another 22 years as the NODA Rural Fire Coordinator and retired in 2005.

Visiting with Larry was a joy. During our visit, he shared the story of the first vehicle placed under the DOD Federal Excess Physical Property (FEPP) agreement. NODA received a letter from Mayor Merl Wanzer of the Town of Hitchcock in 1982. The letter addressed the need the Hitchcock Fire Dept. had for more equipment. After researching what the DOD had available in excess equipment, Larry reached out to Fire Chief Ronnie Wray and they met together and traveled to the Oklahoma Forestry Rural Fire Defense Yard in Goldsby, OK. They found a 1968 Dodge 2 ton truck that fit the bill. The truck was repurposed and outfitted to be a new grass rig firefighting machine and placed in service later that year. The government’s acquisition cost (AC) for this truck was $4,333.00. Under the FEPP agreement, the equipment is still the property of the federal government. Larry explained it as “forever on loan to the Hitchcock Fire Department.”

Today the Hitchcock Fire Dept. is under the care of Fire Chief Perry Scheffler. His 35 years of service has brought about a lot of positive change to the department. Chief Scheffler has utilized the Rural Fire Defense programs to increase his fleet. The newest addition, placed in 2015, is a 1998 Stewart Stevenson 5 ton heavy brush truck. The AC was $142,132.00. This vehicle, lovingly called “Sweet Thing”, has a Firefighter Property (FFP) agreement that allows the title to pass to the Hitchcock Fire Department and become their permanent property. “Every fire department needs a Perry Scheffler,” says Mr. Zerger.

The experiences and expertise provided from 50+ years of service between these two individuals has left their mark on our state and rural fire districts. We are thankful to have worked with them.
River Road Rural Fire Receives Assistance on New Tanker Truck

Fire Chief Greg Williams of the River Road Rural Fire District signed an agreement with the OK Dept. of Ag., Food and Forestry, to receive firefighting property from the US Dept. of Defense through the NODA Rural Fire Defense Program. They have received two pieces of equipment: 2006 Sterling sleeper with a long wheelbase and a 2013 E.D. Etnyre & Co Tank (pictured below). Funding was needed to combine the two pieces of equipment into one useable tanker truck. Chief Williams worked with Kay County to sponsor them for a FY19 REAP grant, which they were awarded. They are now under way to completing their mission of adding to their fleet. Thank you to all involved for your sponsorship and support of the REAP and Rural Fire Defense programs.

Cherokee Strip Transit Receives Section 5339a Grant

On March 6, 2019, the Cherokee Strip Transit (CST) received seven ADA Dodge Grand Caravan minivans utilizing Section 5339a Grant funds in the amount of $235,043.00. The total cost of the project was $281,133, with NODA providing local match funds. These new vehicles come at a good time as CST’s fleet has high mileage vehicles that can now be replaced. In this delivery, CST received two minivans with rear entry wheelchair accessibility and five with side entry wheelchair accessibility. Three of the minivans have a new feature of a stow and go ramp.

CST has also been awarded a Section 5339b Grant that will be used to purchase 13 more ADA vehicles, but have not received the notice to proceed.

4th Annual Bedlam Chili Cook Off

On January 4, 2019, NODA, CST and CED#8 staff gathered for a bedlam battle of chefs. Chili representing both OU and OSU tantalized our taste buds. Judging the contest were Marc Bolz, NODA President, Matt Emmerson, spouse to NODA Finance/HR Director, and Robert Rival, ODOT. Vicki Eggers celebrates her second win with a chili that she just threw together.

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OSFA Legislative Reception

On March 27, 2019, the annual OK State Firefighter Association (OSFA) Legislative Reception was held at the Firefighter Museum in Oklahoma City. Rep. Mike Sanders shared on Facebook about the “fun evening” and spending time with “great friends” and “outstanding Oklahoma Rural Fire Coordinators”.

NORTHERN OKLAHOMA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2901 N Van Buren • Enid, OK 73703
Making a Difference in Northern Oklahoma

We provide opportunities to improve the quality of life in our eight county region - Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Major and Noble.

For more information about NODA services, contact us at (580)237-4810 or nodanet.org.

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Staff Installs Traffic Counters

NODA staff braved the threat of rain to install traffic counters at three locations in Woodward on March 12, assisted by City of Woodward street department employees. The counters will remain up at least 30 days to collect data on the amount of vehicles traveling those streets.

The counters are a project for Northern Oklahoma Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NORTPO), a division of NODA. Four units and the necessary equipment were purchased with federal funds to assist communities in evaluating some of their transportation needs. The counters can collect data on the number of vehicles traveling, or more sophisticated information such as type of vehicle (bicycle, car, truck, semi-tractor trailer, etc.), time of day, day of the week, direction traveled, etc. This data can document a community’s transportation needs by showing the amount of traffic traveling on a specific street or road. Data collected will also be shared with Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation.

Kaw City and Okeene Industrial Park have requested traffic counts once the Woodward counts are completed. If any other communities are interested they can contact Payton Herron at NODA to get on the list.

2019 OARC Legislative Reception

On February 26, 2019, legislators and sub-state directors gathered to discuss key issues at the Faculty House, OU Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. The event was hosted by Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils (OARC). Several legislative priorities were shared including population increase and more funding in the REAP program, increase in funding for the Rural Fire Protection program and an increase in funding for state appropriated funds to COGs.

Cleo Springs’ Clerk, Dixie Weber, has decided to retirement after 30+ years of dedicated service to her community.

A Retirement Party will be held on June 27, 2019, from 2-4 PM at the Camp House Community Building, in Cleo Springs.

ATTENTION ALL FIRE DEPARTMENTS!
Operational Funding paperwork is due April 30, 2019, to the NODA office.