

 DEPARTMENTAL POLICY State of Tennessee Department of Transportation	Policy Number : 170-02
	Effective Date: July 1, 2022
Approved By: <i>Joseph Galbato, III</i> Joseph Galbato, III (Jun 6, 2022 08:40 CDT)	Supersedes: July 1, 2021
SUBJECT: Direction of the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission	

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Aeronautics Division.

AUTHORITY: [T.C.A. § 4-3-2303](#) and [§ 42-2-209](#). If any portion of this policy conflicts with applicable State or Federal laws or regulations, that portion shall be considered void. The remainder of this policy shall not be affected thereby and shall remain in full force and effect.

[T.C.A. § 42-2-301](#) provides that the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission (TAC) shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Commissioner of Transportation (Commissioner) and shall have the duty and responsibility to assist in the formulation of relevant policy planning.

RELATED POLICY: TDOT Policy 170-01, Tennessee Aeronautics Commission Members’ Status.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines rendering financial assistance to airports in Tennessee under State and Federal funding programs, in accordance with Title 42, Chapter 2, Part 2, of the Tennessee Code.

APPLICATION: This policy shall be followed by the Aeronautics Division in administering State and Federal funding programs for airports and by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission in making recommendations to the Commissioner regarding the funding of airport projects in Tennessee.

DEFINITIONS:

“Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP)” is a Department of Transportation document that serves as the primary planning tool for identifying and prioritizing critical airport development and associated capital needs for Tennessee Airports by programming state and federal funds for projects based on statewide priorities and the department’s annual budget. This document is reviewed by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission annually.

“Airport Improvement” means acquisition, construction, or improvement of any airport, air navigation facility, aviation easement or the acquisition, lighting, marking or elimination of any airport hazard.

“Airport Sponsor” means the public agency owning a public use airport.

“Commercial Service Airports” means airports that have scheduled airline service and 10,000 or more annual passengers.

“Final Project Formulation” means Project Formulation activities (e.g., final design and bidding, land appraisals, obstruction and hazard mitigation design and bidding) which subsequently lead to the intended

Airport Improvement project.

“General Aviation Airports” means airports that do not serve scheduled passenger service.

“Preliminary Project Formulation” means activities such as studies, surveys, schematic or conceptual design, and airport layout plan updates or other planning documents, necessary for the development of an Airport Improvement project, but do not subsequently lead to the intended Airport Improvement without Final Project Formulation.

“Project Formulation” means activities directly related to the development of a project. These are activities that are normally conducted before the project starts and would not have been conducted otherwise. Examples of project formulation activities include, but are not limited to: field surveys, soil borings, plans and specifications, project related airport layout plan revisions, aeronautical studies, grant administrative expenses for the project, benefit-cost analysis, environmental studies, land appraisals and review appraisals, title examination, relocation plans, construction and air navigation equipment procurement such as advertising for bids and bid tabulation/analysis, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) project specific goal formulation.

“Tennessee Aeronautics Commission” or “TAC” means the five-member advisory board created by [T.C.A. § 42-2-301](#) and assigned the duties of assisting the Commissioner in the formulation of relevant policy planning and approving or disapproving proposed changes in the state airport system plan.

POLICY:

Airport Improvement Program

Establishing Program Requirements

The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission will annually review program eligibility requirements, participation rates, and program funding levels. Upon review, the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission will recommend revisions to the Commissioner for final approval.

Funding Approvals and Prioritization

All State funding decisions will be prioritized and preference given to projects addressing safety, security, preservation/maintenance, and/or compliance with Federal and State standards. Projects associated with economic development, increased capacity, or modernization will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Grant issuance will adhere to Federal and State guidelines.

Funding requests from Commercial Services Airports, or from General Aviation Airports for airport maintenance equipment, Preliminary Project Formulation, Final Project Formulation less than \$50,000, and Airport Improvements will be considered by the Tennessee Aeronautics Division without review by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission. The Director of the Tennessee Aeronautics Division will recommend Federal and/or State funding approval or denial to the Commissioner.

Funding requests for Final Project Formulation greater than or equal to \$50,000 will be considered by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission at their next scheduled public meeting. The TAC will recommend Federal and/or State funding approval or denial to the Commissioner

Funding Participation Rates

Participation for General Aviation Airports: Participation rates for Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants will be a maximum of ninety percent (90%) federal funding, unless exceptions apply. The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission may recommend a split in the remaining ten percent (10%) of funding at five percent (5%) by the State and five percent (5%) by local funding sources. The Tennessee

Aeronautics Commission may recommend that the State's participation rate be up to ninety-five percent (95%) on eligible projects.

Participation for Commercial Service Airports: Participation rates for Federal grants will be at a maximum of ninety percent (90%) federal funding, unless exceptions apply. The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission may recommend a split in the remaining ten percent (10%) of funding at five percent (5%) by the State and five percent (5%) by local funding sources. The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission may recommend that the State's participation rate be up to ninety-five percent (95%) on eligible projects.

State Funding Eligibility Requirements: Airports must meet the following criteria to qualify for State funding.

1. The airport must hold a valid license from the Tennessee Aeronautics Division.
2. An Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) containing a list of potential airport projects must be on file with the Tennessee Aeronautics Division and must be updated annually by the specified date (General Aviation Airports only).
3. The airport fuel tax report for the previous quarter must have been properly submitted to the Tennessee Department of Revenue.
4. Project requests must be made by the responsible elected official or representative of the Airport during the approved Tennessee Aeronautics Commission meeting, if applicable.
5. Projects must be identified on the Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) and the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) for review and approval by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission. Projects not listed at the time of the request will be reviewed by the Tennessee Aeronautics Division for eligibility and need on a case-by-case basis.
6. For privately owned airports, State funds will only be granted to those projects that add to airport safety. The privately owned airport must be open to the public to be eligible for State funds.

TAC Role in Other Statewide Funding Programs

Pavement Maintenance/Preservation Program

The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission shall review and recommend statewide funding annually for pavement maintenance/preservation at general aviation airports meeting the State funding eligibility requirements. The Tennessee Aeronautics Division shall establish guidelines and administer the program.

Airport Maintenance

The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission shall review and recommend statewide funding annually for the annual maintenance program for general aviation airports meeting the State funding eligibility requirements. The Tennessee Aeronautics Division shall establish guidelines and administer the program.

Education and Outreach

The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission shall review and recommend statewide funding annually for educational and outreach programs that advance aviation. The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission shall recommend eligibility requirements and the funding levels annually. The Tennessee Aeronautics Division shall establish guidelines and administer the program.

Automated Weather Observing System

The Tennessee Aeronautics Commission shall review and recommend statewide funding annually for the Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) program. The Tennessee Aeronautics Division shall establish guidelines and administer the program.