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# 1990 Bridge Grant Program

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Reference Number: CTAS-838

The 1990 Bridge Grant Program enables the county highway department to replace or rehabilitate certain bridges when the commissioner finds that a bridge is structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. T.C.A. § 54-4-503. Typically, the state share is no more than 80% of the approved project cost and the local government share must be at least 20% of the approved project cost, and may be provided by local government funds and in-kind project work approved by the commissioner, or either of them, wholly or partly. However, the County Bridge Relief Act of 2014, Public Chapter 573, authorized counties to use unexpended state-aid bridge grant funds to pay the county portion of project costs. The Act required counties to provide at least two percent of the project cost from county funds or in-kind contributions. This funding formula was initially available for projects initiated in fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16 but was put in place permanently in 2016. T.C.A. § 54-4-507.

In order to participate in the program, the county highway department must be in compliance with any Department of Transportation recommendations concerning the posting and enforcement of load limits, and the closure of structures, based on the National Bridge Inspection Standards (including ineligibility for a geographic area to participate for the following fiscal year if no county in the area has taken necessary action to assure maximum utilization of the program). T.C.A. § 54-4-504. Once the local governments in a geographic area have addressed project priorities established by the Commissioner of Transportation, application may be made for permission to expend moneys allocated for other roadway purposes. The Commissioner must approve any such expenditure and may require that certain conditions be met in conjunction with the expenditure. T.C.A. § 54-4-506. Projects undertaken under this program must be maintained by the county or other local government where the project lies. T.C.A. § 54-4-508. If the local government fails to maintain these projects in accordance with reasonable standards established by the Commissioner of Transportation, the Commissioner may withhold all funds otherwise available under the bridge program until the insufficiently maintained project is restored to proper condition.

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