

Development of the Transportation Improvement Program and the Annual List of Obligated Projects

TPB PROCESS

The TPB's TIP spans four fiscal years and is updated biennially. The FY 2023–2026 was developed with the assistance of the three state-level DOTs, the region's transit agencies, and staff from local jurisdictions. The development and review of each TIP is coordinated through the TPB Technical Committee. The TPB Community Advisory Committee also plays a role by serving as the host for the TPB's Public Forums on the development of each TIP. The last two Public Forums have been held in tandem with some of our state DOT's public information events. Due to the global pandemic, the most recent forum on the development of the FY 2023 – 2026 TIP was held virtually which allowed all our DOT partners to invite members of the public to join. With the increased publicity provided by the DOTs and the ease of participating virtually, attendance by non-CAC members at the last two forums has increased 10-fold over previous events.

Upon receiving federal approval of the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the Plan and TIP, our state-level DOT partners submit their updated or amended STIPs for US DOT approval. Following that, the TPB's TIP is amended and modified continuously. TPB staff published a schedule of alternating amendment and administrative modification periods which is used to send a "Call for Amendments" email to all implementing agencies each month. Those amendments are usually presented to and approved by the TPB Steering Committee each month.

In October of each year, the TPB asks its implementing and operating member agencies to submit their lists of projects and programs that received federal obligations over the previous federal fiscal year. At the conclusion of the 2019 Federal Review, TPB received a commendation for compiling this listing of federally obligated projects into a consistent format across the three state-level jurisdictions.

IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2019 REVIEW

TPB staff have completed implementation of the Project InfoTrak (or, just "InfoTrak") LRTP & TIP project database, using a SaaS platform provided by consultant, EcoInteractive, LLC. Project InfoTrak has improved the development of the TIP in many ways, including:

- **Demonstrating Financial Constraint:** InfoTrak allows us to collect revenue projections from implementing agencies covering the 4-year period of the TIP and beyond through the horizon year of the LRTP. The financial constraint module then compares those revenues against planned project and program expenditures, allowing TPB staff to verify that its TIP and LRTP are financially constrained.
- **Broader Stakeholder Access:** InfoTrak gives a wide range of stakeholders access to the same project and programming information. Local agency staff and project managers are now empowered to support their implementing agencies by updating their own project and program records directly in the Project InfoTrak database without the delay or integrity perils of multiple agency-to-agency data transmissions. At the other end of the TIP development and approval process the region's state DOTs can now submit their STIPs and amendments directly to their respective federal partners from within InfoTrak. Those FHWA and FTA partners can in turn, review and approve STIP amendments within the same platform, expediting the process.
- **Enhanced Amendment Reporting:** InfoTrak provides TPB staff with several report format options such as the Amendment Summary report and the Fund Change Detail Report that give TPB decision-makers, members of the public, federal partners, and other stakeholders a

precise, line-by-line description of every dollar amount change broken down by source, fiscal year, and project phase. STIP amendments are also posted with each relevant TIP Amendment Action.

- **Project Record Versioning:** InfoTrak stores historical data on projects as they are amended and modified over time from the earliest planning stages through completion of construction in the TIP.
- **Visualizing with Project Maps:** Individual project maps are included on all applicable TIP (and LRTP) project description forms and are used in an interactive mapping tool on the public-facing Project InfoTrak website. The searchable LRTP & TIP project database provides access to the latest approved versions of project records as amended and modified well past the initial adoption.
- **Improved Financial Analysis:** The InfoTrak software platform includes many automated tables and reports that used to take hours of staff time to assemble, including programmed funding in the TIP broken down by funding source, fiscal year, and project phase.
- **Obligation Reporting:** EcoInteractive's software platform has access to nightly downloads from FHWA's FMIS database – one of its biggest selling points. Rather than simply asking for each agency to provide their list of projects as-is, TPB staff is now able to make this annual request for obligated funding by providing each of the DOTs with a baseline FMIS report and asking the agencies to review and provide corrections or updates as necessary (currently not all TIP project records have FAP #s which requires some manual data record matching).

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

- **Platform Upgrade:** One of the biggest benefits of using a subscription software service like the one provided by EcoInteractive, LLC is that TPB staff and other users will have access to a wide variety of new service modules, ongoing product and service improvements, and even entire platform upgrades at the same contracted price-point. In August of 2023, Project InfoTrak will be transitioned to an upgraded platform with many new benefits, including:
 - Fully customizable queries and reports generated on the fly by all user types
 - More TPB staff administrative capabilities to add values to fields such as new funding sources, member agencies, project types, and any other future federal requirements to which the TPB's process may need to adapt
 - Enhanced mapping tool that allows for users to create project study areas and new roadway alignments rather than features constrained to existing routes
- **Obligation Reporting:**
 - TPB staff plans to enhance the documentation of the Annual List of Federally Obligated Projects to include more analytical data looking at linkages between federal obligations and environmental justice and similar equity issues.
 - TPB staff will continue to work with the implementing agencies to update their FAP #s and reduce the number of obligated funding records that require manual matching.
 - TPB Staff have learned that unlike FMIS, FTA's TrAMs database does not permit external connections for data retrieval. We hope to continue to work with our consultant EcoInteractive and our partners at FTA to find a solution that will permit us to have access to federal obligations for the region's transit projects and programs that is on par with our current access to FHWA data.