



Transportation Decisionmaking: Information Tools for Tribal Governments

Tribal Transportation Funding Sources

This summary provides Tribal decisionmakers and planners with a brief overview of Federal funding resources available for Tribal transportation projects. It is a summary of the module *Tribal Transportation Funding Resources* available at http://www.tribalplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/training_series.aspx

What is Financial Planning?

Financial planning is the process of detailing a project's purpose and need by estimating its costs and identifying potential funding sources available. Every project included in the Tribe's long-range transportation plan (LRTP) and Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP)—a prioritized list of transportation projects that the Tribe plans to undertake in the next three to six years—should be included in the financial plan. This critical step helps the Tribe meet one of the most important requirements of the LRTP and TTIP—ensuring that the total cost of the projects does not exceed the amount of money expected to be available for transportation projects. The financial plan can also help support the project when applying for or requesting future transportation funding.

What Federal Funding Sources are Available to Tribes?

There are 36 Federal-aid programs that can be used to fund transportation projects on Tribal lands. Each program has specific criteria for the types of projects that are eligible for Federal-aid funding. Additionally the different programs are administered by specific agencies, with specific and varying rules and regulations associated with how the funds are distributed. Before pursuing funding from any of these programs, Tribal planners should be sure that transportation projects meet the program's eligibility criteria and work with the appropriate responsible agency to see that the application procedures and rules are followed appropriately. Most Federal-aid funding programs require coordination and consultation among all agencies involved in project planning and funding. Depending on the Federal-aid program procedures, this may require coordination between the Federal, State, Tribal, metropolitan, and local governments. The Federal-Aid Highway funds are distributed to the

individual States, who then are responsible to select projects for funding and implementation. Tribes should work with their State's department of transportation to ensure that they understand the eligibility criteria and project selection process and have access to the Federal-aid funding, as appropriate.

Federal-aid programs include:

- *Federal Lands Highway (FLH) Program*— This program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Land Highway (FLH) Division Office. Funds available through FLH program may support projects on Indian lands and on public land owned by the Federal government such as national parks and forests. There are seven different programs each of which provides funding for new roadway infrastructure construction, improvement to existing roadways, and road maintenance. The Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) program is one of the funding groups under the FLH program, but is administered with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Project selection for IRR funds is based on the BIA's IRR Transportation Improvement Program (IRRTIP), which includes each Tribe's highest priority projects.
- *Federal-Aid Highway Program* – This funding source is administered by the FHWA and is the largest Federal-aid transportation funding source, encompassing 23 different programs. Table 1 shows the primary transportation project activities funded through the various FHWA programs.

Table 1: Examples of Federal-Aid Programs that Fund Transportation Activities on Tribal Lands

Program	Administering Agency	Examples of Eligible Activities
Surface Transportation Program	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction • Reconstruction • Rehabilitation • Resurfacing • Restoration and operational improvement for highways
National Highway System	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation of segments of the National Highway System • Construction of eligible transit projects • Bicycle systems and pedestrian walkways • Transportation planning • Participation in natural habitat and wetland mitigation efforts related to eligible projects including mitigation banks and State and regional conservation efforts

Program	Administering Agency	Examples of Eligible Activities
Highway Bridge	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of highway bridge within the corridor of any public road • Rehabilitation to restore the structural integrity and to correct major functional defects of a bridge on any public road • Bridge painting, earthquake protections, and removing damage caused by legally used chemicals such as roadway salt
High-Priority Projects	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Priority Projects listed in Federal legislation • Projects of National and Regional Significance as listed in Federal legislation • National Corridor Infrastructure Improvement listed in Federal legislation
Congestion Mitigation Air Quality	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian and bicycle off-road or on-road facilities • Transportation management and monitoring systems • Traffic management, monitoring and congestion relief strategies • New transit systems and service expansions • New services and program with air quality benefits • Inspection and maintenance programs • Experimental pilot projects and innovative financing
IRR	FHWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation facility planning, research, engineering, construction and reconstruction • Tourism enhancement and recreational development • Vehicular parking area improvements and additions • Interpretive signage installation • Scenic easement and scenic or historic site acquisition • Pedestrian and bicycle on-and-off road system improvements • Provision of transit facilities and services within public lands, national parks and Indian reservations

Where Can I Find More Information?

Staff from the BIA, FLH, FHWA Federal-aid Division Offices, or State departments of transportation can provide more information to Tribes interested in learning more about these funding programs and how to apply for Federal –aid funding programs for their transportation projects.

What is the Transportation Decisionmaking Information Tools for Tribal Governments series?

The eight modules in the *Transportation Decisionmaking Information Tools for Tribal Governments* include:

1. Introduction to Planning
2. Developing a Long-Range Transportation Plan
3. Developing the Transportation Improvement Program
4. Tribal Transportation Funding Resources
5. Public Involvement
6. Data Collection and Use
7. Safety
8. Project Prioritization

Figure 1 shows each of the modules and how they relate to each other.

Figure 1: Modules in the *Transportation Decisionmaking Tools for Tribal Governments* Series



Additional Resources

Transportation Planning Capacity Building Website:
<http://www.planning.dot.gov/tribal.asp>

FHWA Tribal Transportation Planning
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/tribaltrans/index.htm>

- *Public Transportation*– There are four programs, each administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that fund public transportation. Each FTA funding program provides grants for specific populations or localities to offer service to the elderly and people with disabilities; to expand transit in rural and small urban areas; and to provide transit service for commuting to and from work in typically underserved areas.

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