

Federal Lands Management Agency Coordination in Transportation Planning and Programming



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Comprehensive transportation planning can provide tremendous benefits by helping to create systems that best meet user needs. Coordination among transportation agencies, State Departments of Transportation (State DOTs), Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMAs) including military installations, provides opportunities for better transportation planning and programming decisions.

This compendium provides insights, identifies effective practices, and resources that can assist State DOTs, MPOs and FLMAs to work together to address transportation needs that benefit all partners and support continued coordination among agencies.



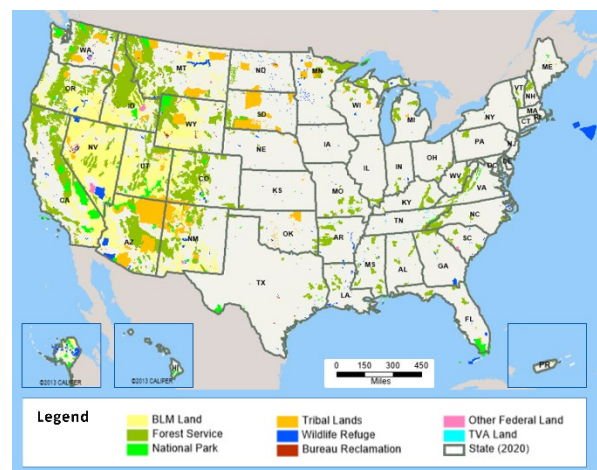
Recognizing the Importance of Planning Coordination

A robust coordination process improves participant satisfaction and engenders better transportation planning outcomes. The first step in engaging partner agencies is to recognize the value of coordinating transportation planning for improved overall effectiveness of the transportation system to meet common goals. This includes understanding the differences in agency priorities, processes, agencies' role, and available resources to engage in effective coordination.

Agency Identification

Knowing who to coordinate with is critical for successful transportation planning and programming processes. There are three main considerations when identifying State DOT, MPO or FLMA stakeholders:

- Identify the agency(s) located within your planning area.
- Understand the differences in each agency structure and how transportation decisions are made.
- Identify who to contact within each agency.



Source: <https://hepgis-usdot.hub.arcgis.com>

Effective Practice: FHWA's Office of Planning offers an interactive map that enables users to select FLMAs, MPOs and State layers to help clarify where agency boundaries may overlap. The map uses adjusted MPO planning area boundary data from the 2020 census. <https://hepgis-usdot.hub.arcgis.com/apps/3c2eafae27c346c48079eb9bd58dec6d/explore>

Engagement Methodologies

Engagement methodologies vary among agencies. For States and MPOs, the methodology for engagement is generally outlined in their Public Participation/Involvement Plan, which is generally available to all stakeholders and the public on the agency's website. Understanding each agency's engagement methodology helps partners to know when and how to coordinate effectively when an invitation is extended.

Effective Practice: Proactive coordination increases engagement in the transportation planning process. An engagement tracker can help an agency keep records of who has been contacted for coordination, who provides responses, captures feedback, indicates how feedback is addressed, and includes notes and recommendations to improve future coordination opportunities.

Agency Participation in Transportation Planning Coordination

Building lasting institutional relationships among FLMAs, State DOTs and MPOs, outside of coordination requirements is the best approach to successful coordination in the transportation planning and programming processes. There are four key considerations when extending an invitation for coordination. These include:

- Limitation of staff available to participate in coordination opportunities
- Level of priority for transportation planning at the local level
- Perceived value of participating in coordination opportunities
- How agency structure determines transportation decision-making and coordination

FHWA's Role for Agency Coordination in the Transportation Planning Processes

FHWA provides a wide range of resources and expertise to help improve Agency coordination in the transportation planning and programming processes. Federal-aid Divisions assist State DOTs and MPOs, while Federal Lands Highway Divisions (FLHD) provide assistance to FLMAs. The topic of coordination is an agency priority with new and expanding tools and resources to ensure agencies have what they need to successfully engage one another in planning and programming coordination activities.

Effective Practice: Federal-aid Divisions will often engage FLHD during Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification review processes to assist and expand understanding between the MPO, State DOT and others by focusing on opportunities to coordinate with the specific FLMAs located in each TMA planning area.



Source: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/about>

Resources

FHWA's GIS in Transportation Program: Interactive GIS Mapping Tool: <https://hepgis.fhwa.dot.gov/fhwagis/#>

Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program: FLMA Planning Coordination- https://www.planning.dot.gov/planning/topic_FLMA_coordination.aspx

Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program: MPO and FLMA Databases- https://www.planning.dot.gov/resource_hub.aspx

Federal Lands Planning Program: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs-planning>

Federal Lands Access Program: <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/flap>

State Long Range Transportation Plans and Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs: <https://www.planning.dot.gov/stateplans/>