

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program

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### **What is the IRTIP?**

The federally required Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), called the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program (IRTIP), is a comprehensive listing of transportation projects that receive federal funds in the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development, as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the eight county Indianapolis Region, prepares the IRTIP every two years for adoption by the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council. The IRTIP covers a four year period and must be fiscally constrained. In addition, the IRTIP includes all locally funded projects that are considered regionally significant or that intend to be used as a local match to a future federally funded project. Adoption of the IRTIP must include an opportunity for public comment prior to adoption.

Member jurisdictions (in good standing) within the MPA are eligible to submit funding applications for a wide variety of surface transportation related activities. Transit, highway, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian projects are included in the IRTIP. In addition, all regionally significant projects, regardless of funding source are included in the IRTIP and must be consistent with the current Long Range Transportation Plan.

## **How are projects selected for the IRTIP?**

Projects from a variety of funding sources are incorporated into the IRTIP after going through a project selection process unique to the funding category and the agency. State and most transit projects are included in the IRTIP after these projects are approved for funding by INDOT and IndyGo, or FTA respectively. Urban Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects all go through unique project selection processes before being incorporated into the IRTIP. Please see the MPO's online [application packet](#) for more information.

If local agencies are required to contribute a local match portion of a project from local funds, these funds must be committed by the appropriate agencies before the projects are included in the IRTIP. In addition, all large road widening and other regionally significant projects must be consistent with the current conforming Long Range Transportation Plan.

## **Who is involved in developing the IRTIP?**

Many organizations are involved in the development and adoption of the IRTIP. One such organization, the Indianapolis Regional Transportation Council (IRTC), is an intergovernmental organization consisting of appointed representatives from transportation agencies in the Indianapolis MPA, including all municipalities in the area, the Indianapolis Airport Authority, the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo), and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

In addition to the Technical and Policy Committees of the IRTC, an Administrative Committee serves as an ad hoc committee to the Policy Committee and is comprised of members selected from the Policy Committee. The Administrative Committee, reviews staff recommendations and draft IRTIPs and makes their recommendations to the full IRTC.

## **What is "Fiscal constraint?"**

Federal regulations require the IRTIP to be financially constrained, specifically:

*"The TIP shall be financially constrained by year and include a financial plan that demonstrates which projects can be implemented using current revenue sources and which projects are to be implemented using proposed revenue sources."*

The financial plan must be developed in cooperation with the state and transit operators. INDOT and IndyGo must provide the IMPO with estimates of available federal and state funds, which the IMPO utilizes in developing the financial plan. Only projects for which funding can reasonably be expected to be available for can be included in the IRTIP.

In developing the financial analysis, the IMPO must take into account all projects and strategies funded under Title 23, U.S.C., the Federal Transit Act, other federal funds, local sources, state assistance, and private participation.

## **What is “Air Quality Conformity” and what does it mean to have a “Conforming IRTIP?”**

Air quality conformity refers to federal regulations that require MPOs to assess the impact of the projects contained in the TIP on the region’s air quality. The Indianapolis MPA lies within or partly within areas previously classified as non-attainment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In July of 2013, the 9-county area including Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion Morgan and Shelby counties was classified as *in attainment* of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone (2008 8-hour standard). Further, in the same month, the 5-county area including Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion and Morgan counties was classified as *maintenance* for the fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) under the 1997 annual standard. As a result, the current IRTIP is not subject to a conformity determination due to the Indianapolis region’s current air quality status. The EPA website has additional information.

## **How can the public stay informed of changes to the IRTIP?**

The public is given an opportunity to review the draft IRTIP during a 30-day comment period. The public is also given an opportunity to comment on new IRTIPs and formal amendments at a public hearing. All IRTIP amendments are available for public review and comment for a period of ten days and all administrative amendments and modifications are available on the MPO’s website.

In addition to the MPO’s [Public Participation Plan](#), the Metropolitan Indianapolis Transportation Improvement Program database, known as MiTIP, allows the public to view programmed transportation projects contained in the IRTIP on-line. MiTIP represents the most current version of the IRTIP at any given time. Please click on the Public Access Portal below to be redirected to the public MiTIP website.



## **What kind of projects can be submitted for inclusion in the IRTIP?**

First and foremost, any potential roadway project must be a part of the Federal Aid system, meaning it is Federally classified as a collector or higher. This includes proposed new roadways. A [functional classification map](#) is online. Local roads, private roads, and neighborhood streets are not eligible for use of the MPO’s Federal allocation of funds. However, any bridge, on or off the system within the urbanized area is eligible for federal funds.

The MPO's four federal funding categories each have their own eligibility requirements and restrictions. As a result, refer to the table below for a general idea of funding types and eligibility:

## Federal Transportation Funding Categories



	<b>STBG</b> Surface Transportation Block Grant <small>FHWA Fact Sheet: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1SRIK0H">http://1.usa.gov/1SRIK0H</a></small>	<b>CMAQ</b> Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality <small><a href="http://1.usa.gov/1rtbFt7">http://1.usa.gov/1rtbFt7</a></small>	<b>HSIP</b> Highway Safety Improvement Program <small><a href="http://1.usa.gov/1QNFYj0">http://1.usa.gov/1QNFYj0</a></small>	<b>TAP</b> Transportation Alternatives Program <small><a href="http://1.usa.gov/1q20Gpe">http://1.usa.gov/1q20Gpe</a></small>	
Urbanized Area	✓	✓	✓	✓	Is this funding for projects in the Urbanized Area?
Metropolitan Planning Area	—	✓	✓	—	Is this funding for projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area and the Urbanized Area?
Match Rate	20%	20%	10%	20%	What local match is required to receive federal funds?
Possible 100%	—	✓	✓	—	Is 100% federal funding possible?
Eligibility Determination	—	✓	✓	✓	Are projects submitted to INDOT or FHWA for eligibility review?
Eligible Project Types		(Non-Recreational)			Bike/Pedestrian Enhancement
					Bridge Projects
					Freight Enhancement
					Intersections
					Planning/Study
					Roads (New or Expansion)
					Roads (Rehab or Reconstruction)
					Safety Upgrades and Signs
					Signals
					Transit Enhancement

### How do I submit a project for inclusion in the IRTIP?

Any Local Public Agency (LPA) in good standing within the Indianapolis MPA that currently has a full-time employee (not consultant) certified by INDOT as an Employee in Responsible Charge (ERC) can submit a project application when calls for projects are open. This includes transit agencies and county, city, and town governments. In addition, all INDOT federally funded projects must be included in the IRTIP, even though typically, they are not seeking competitive funds.

Private individuals and organizations may recommend projects to a local public agency if the project is sponsored by the LPA in which the project is located. The IRTIP is a reimbursement program and thus only those LPAs which can enter into an agreement with INDOT can apply for federal transportation funds. The project application must be submitted by the sponsoring LPA via the MPO's MiTIP website. Calls for projects are dependent on the funding program and availability of funds and typically occur on an annual basis in late September or early October.