



IMPO-Funding and Project Selection

Background:

Every Urbanized Area with a population of 50,000 or more (as defined by the US Census) is required by federal regulations to have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPOs are responsible for conducting a "continuing, cooperative and comprehensive" transportation planning process. A successful MPO planning process is a prerequisite to the region to receive certain funds for transit, active transportation, and roadway improvements.

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO) is the designated MPO for Central Indiana. The IMPO creates and implements short and long range plans to advance the region's goals in transportation, economic development, housing, safety, sustainability, and other quality of life issues. The IMPO is also responsible for tracking and distributing certain transportation funds for roads, transit, trails, and other means of moving people and goods around Central Indiana.

Among other tasks, the IMPO tracks and distributes funds through a program known as the [Indianapolis Regional Transportation Improvement Program \(IRTIP\)](#) or TIP for short. The TIP is a four-year plan for Central Indiana infrastructure. Depending on the type of project, the TIP tracks, schedules, and funds projects in Central Indiana based on regional priorities and cooperative input from communities. In addition to tracking funds, each year the IMPO receives approximately \$48 million in funding to distribute directly through the TIP and help fund transportation projects across the region.

The process to receive IMPO-managed funding is highly competitive. To select projects to receive the IMPO's funding the IMPO issues an annual "call-for-projects". During the call-for-projects local public agencies (typically cities, towns, counties, and transit organizations) choose projects to submit for consideration by completing a data-driven application and committing to fund at least 20% of the project cost via other non-IMPO managed sources. The IMPO then selects projects for funding based on the funding goals adopted by the IMPO's Transportation Policy Committee, based on state and federal regulation on the funding programs, and based on their rank after a scoring process.

Funding Programs and Goals

When developing the list of recommended projects to receive IMPO-managed funding, the IMPO is guided by the goals of the region's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the goals of federal transportation programs, and the scores of projects judged through the IMPO's IRTIP scoring criteria. The overarching goal of this selection method is to select high-quality and high impact project that help the region meet its goals as we continuously improve our built environment to improve quality of life for all residents. This selection method is also intended to be collaborative including input from local agencies, elected officials, and the community while meeting state and federal regulations.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2050 MTP)

The projects in the IRTIP must also be consistent with the region's twenty-year vision for transportation known as the [Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#) (2050 MTP). While the MTP sets long-term plans and goals, The TIP is meant to bring the MTP to life in in the short term and the documents are directly linked. Projects that may negatively impacts air quality (such as road expansions) may not be funded in the TIP if they are not already approved in the MTP. Additionally, the MTP sets goals for our much of the IMPO's funding should go to different types of projects. The MTP's "resource allocation goals" for the distribution of IMPO-managed funds are 27% of funds towards pavement preservation, 20% towards expansion, 18% towards bridge

preservation, 18% for operations and maintenance, 10% towards transit, and 7% towards bike and pedestrian projects. Because the IMPO does not fund operations and maintenance through the TIP program, that allocation goal is distributed proportionately to the other goal areas.

POLICY GOALS	MTP 2050 Target %	Adjusted Target %
Pavement Preservation	27%	32.40%
Bridge Preservation	18%	22.86%
Expansion	20%	25.24%
Bike and Pedestrian Projects	7%	7.70%
Transit	10%	11.80%
Operations and Maintenance	18%	0.00%
Other	0%	0.00%

Federal Programs:

The federal government's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) distributes several key funding programs to regional agencies like the IMPO. When applying for IMPO-managed funding local public agencies apply for funding under one of these categories. These include:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds are the largest source of federal funding for the IMPO and may be used for a wide range of project types including road, transit, bike and pedestrian projects.
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are the second largest source of revenue for projects. Funds can only be used on projects that improve air quality. Project examples include bus purchases and congestion reduction projects.
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds can be used only for projects and plans that improve the safety of the network, including roundabouts, signage projects, and safety studies.
- The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) primarily serves to fund nonmotorized transportation modes. Project examples include trails and streetscape improvements.
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds are designed to support projects that reduce transportation emissions, defined as carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from on-road highway sources
- Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) funds are intended to cover the cost difference to add resiliency elements to transportation projects.

In August of 2020, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO) signed an agreement with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to exchange the IMPO's annual allocation of Federal transportation program funds for State funds to fund projects in this region. This agreement means the IMPO is using state funds for its IMPO-managed funding programs and is not required to use the exact eligibility criteria of the above programs. Nevertheless, the IMPO attempts to remain closely aligned with federal programs when determining the distribution of IMPO-managed funds. Thus, the IMPO distributes funding closely aligned to project types that could be funded by the distribution of each federal program if we were using those federal fund programs. This target may change year by year as determined by our state and federal partners.

For the 2026 call-for-projects the IMPO agencies applied for projects under these categories and the IMPO allocated funding so that approximately 62% of project fell within an STBG eligible project categories and goals, 12% within HSIP eligible project categories and goals, 17% within CMAQ/CRP eligible project categories and goals, and 9% in TA eligible project categories and goals. PROTECT funds were not allocated to Indiana's MPOs and therefore PROTECT eligible project categories and goals and were not considered.

A full list of eligible project types under each category is available in the [IMPO Funding Guide](#).

Scoring Criteria:

The IMPO's project recommendations are based on [selection criteria](#) that score each project received for consideration. Each project is scored on a 100-point scale with each funding category (STBG, CMAQ, HSIP, TAP) having its own selection criteria. The overall goal of the scoring is to select the highest quality and highest impact projects in that funding category. Because many project types are eligible for multiple funding programs, the MPO considers the entire allocation available to assess how the resource allocation goals are reflected in the project selection.

Policy Compliance

While not factored into the project selection process itself, projects selected for funding may be required to follow additional policies. The MPO's Complete Streets Policy was adopted in 2014 and amended in October 2016. The IMPO Complete Streets Policy applies to the IMPO's IMPO-funded Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects and requires certain design elements (like a sidewalk) to ensure every project reasonably and safely serves all current and potential users. For more information see our [complete streets page](#).

In addition to the IMPO's complete street policies, local public agencies that receive funding must be in good standing with the State of Indiana with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and all related statutes as well as the relevant aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

On August 17, 2022 the IMPO's Transportation Policy Committee adopted a [Vision Zero policy](#) committing to the goal of reducing serious and fatal crashes by 35% by the year 2040. While this is an IMPO policy, this commitment has not yet been incorporated into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or TIP project selection process. Staff expects policies to reflect this commitment to be proposed during the Metropolitan Transportation Plan update in 2023.

2026 Project Recommendations:

Between September 1, 2022 and October 28, 2022 the IMPO hosted a call for projects and accepted applications for funding for projects that will go to a local letting no later than June 2026. This call for projects will award approximately \$47.5M for transportation projects across the Metropolitan Planning Area. The IMPO received 59 project applications from 17 LPAs totaling \$183 million in requested funds. The attached recommendation includes funding 16 projects from 7 LPAs totaling \$46.7M.

The IMPO Transportation Policy Committee is being asked to review the recommended project list at their February 15 meeting and vote on adoption of Resolution 23-IMPO-002. If adopted, Resolution 23-IMPO-002 will authorize IMPO staff to provide funding to the list of recommended projects.