



Illinois Department of Transportation

Departmental Policy

OPP-01: CONSULTATION WITH NON-METROPOLITAN LOCAL OFFICIALS

Effective Date: May 4, 2021
Scheduled Review: May 4, 2026
Approved By: Bieneman, Doss

1. POLICY

It is the policy of the Illinois Department of Transportation to promote a dynamic and effective working relationship with all local agencies in rural and small urban areas. The department recognizes the importance of the state-local partnership in delivering a safe and efficient transportation system. In Illinois, the coordination of transportation activities between the state and local officials includes the entire transportation planning, programming, and implementation process. While the consultation process in urbanized areas is very structured, state coordination with local agencies in rural and small urban areas follows a process that is more flexible in order to meet the needs of local officials.

The department proposes a consultation process that builds on its current efforts to work with local officials in rural areas. Utilizing current outreach methods, the department will implement this process by consulting with local officials on the following sections described below: Funding, planning, programming, project development, and other coordinated activities

2. PERSONS AFFECTED

Office of Highways Project Implementation
Office of Intermodal Project Implementation
Office of Planning and Programming

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a process for the Office of Planning and Programming to work with non-metropolitan planning areas and obtain input from smaller, local communities.

4. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. Funding

Rural and small urban areas' highways are funded from essentially the same sources that fund all highway investments in Illinois. For other modes of transportation, some funding categories distinguish between urbanized areas and rural/small urban areas. In addition to various locally generated revenues, the federal and state funding sources that are available for rural and small urban transportation activities include

1) Federal Highway Funding

Federal highway funding sources include; National Highway Performance Program; Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Railway-

Highway Crossings Program; National Highway Freight Program, Metropolitan Planning Program, and Statewide Planning and Research funds.

The division of non-discretionary federal highway funds between the state and local agencies is determined by a formula that has been negotiated between the department and representatives of the local agencies (the Illinois Municipal League, the Illinois Association of County Engineers, etc.). In like manner, the division of non-discretionary state highway (Motor Fuel Tax) funds between the state and local agencies is determined by a formula negotiated between the state and local agencies (including township officials) and codified by state statute.

2) Federal Transit Funding

Federal transit funding sources include: Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307), Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Formula Grant for Rural Areas (Section 5311), State of Good Repair (Section 5337), Bus and Bus Facilities Formula (Section 5330), and New Starts (Section 5309).

The allocation of non-discretionary transit funds to the various rural and small urban transit providers is accomplished by an evaluation of population, regional distribution, ability to provide local resources, and age of rolling stock.

The allocation of all discretionary funds is determined by the specific criteria established for the various federal and state discretionary programs. When appropriate, the department will seek input and comment from officials from all local units of government, urban and rural, regarding these programs.

3) Federal Aviation Funding

The Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF), created by the Airport and Airway Revenue Act of 1970, provides funding for the federal commitment to the nation's aviation system through several aviation-related excise taxes. Funding currently comes from collections related to passenger tickets, passenger flight segments, international arrivals/departures, cargo waybills, aviation fuels, and frequent flyer mile awards from non-airline sources like credit cards.

4) Federal Rail Funding

The Illinois Rail Freight Program (RFP) was established in the General Assembly's Illinois Administrative Code, Title 92, Chapter 1, Part 800, in 1983 to facilitate government investments in rail service that provide for statewide economic development. The program provides low-interest loans to finance rail improvements. Funding for the program is provided through two revolving loan funds: The Rail Freight Repayment Fund, which utilizes federal funds from the former Local Rail Freight Assistance Program, and the State Loan Repayment fund, which utilizes state funds from past General Revenue Fund appropriations.

5) State Highway Funding

State highway funding sources include: Illinois Motor Fuel Tax (MFT); Economic Development Program; Truck Access Route Program; County Consolidated Program; Needy Township Program; High Growth Cities Program; Township Bridge Program; Park Roads Program; Illinois

Transportation Enhancement Program Funds; State Planning Funds; and State Matching Assistance Program, and capital program funding.

The allocation of the state share of certain funds is accomplished through the state highway programming process (see below). The distribution of the local share of the non-discretionary highway funds to the various local recipients is accomplished by formulas that utilize criteria such as population and roadway miles. Each local agency, in turn, develops its own program to utilize these funds.

6) State Transit Funding

State transit funding sources include: Capital Assistance (GRF and Series B Bonds); State Operating Assistance; Fare Reimbursement for students, elderly persons and persons with disabilities; Rural Transit Assistance Program; and State Technical Studies.

7) State Aviation Funding

There are two sources of state funding for airport improvement projects: Series B Bonds and Road Funds. These sources are used to match federal funds and for the State-Local Program.

B. Planning

The [Illinois State Long Range Transportation Plan](#) provides the strategic direction for realizing the department vision. The department's vision for transportation in Illinois is that all modes be integrated, coordinated, planned, and built with the idea that present and future travel options are user focused, economically supportive, ecologically sensitive, and information centric. Updates to this plan will be developed in coordination with all transportation stakeholders including among others, residents, businesses, local, state, and federal officials and agencies, and transportation operators. This coordination will include public forums as well as outreach meetings.

The Plan contains not only policies and goals but also actions which the department will pursue to make these goals a reality. Many of these actions will require outreach and coordination with our transportation stakeholders as well, in order for the goals of the plan to be achieved.

C. Programming

Coordination and consultation with local officials in rural and small urban areas will occur at different levels, depending on the program in question. For the state highway program, local officials will have an opportunity to provide input directly to the department during the development of the program and indirectly, through their state representatives and senators, during the legislative review of the program.

1) The State Highway Program

The [Proposed Highway Improvement Program](#), also referred to as the Multi-Year Program (MYP), is a fiscally constrained six-year program that details how it will invest transportation dollars in the state and local highway system, that includes lists of projects the department intends to accomplish over the next six years. The MYP is developed on an annual basis and is consistent with the policies and goals identified in the [State Long Range Transportation Plan](#).

Once resource allocation has been accomplished, the department's five regional engineers through the nine district offices develop, prioritize, and submit candidate projects based on the needs of each district. It is at this point that the ongoing coordination with local officials (discussed below) will come into play.

Currently, each district maintains a continuous and cooperative relationship with state and local elected officials within the district. Regular meetings are held with mayors, municipal engineers, county board members, county engineers, township highway supervisors, and state legislators to exchange information about needed improvements on the state highway system. During these meetings, local input will be sought to modify proposed improvements, suggest new ones, and convey local opposition to any state proposals.

In many instances, local agencies coordinate with the district offices on projects that involve both state and local jurisdiction. In these cases, the total project scope along with state-local cost sharing activities will be negotiated.

Once the districts submit their candidate projects to the central office, the program is assembled and evaluated. The Governor then approves the program for release and it is submitted to members of the Illinois General Assembly for their review and input.

2) The Local Roads Program

All municipalities, townships and counties develop their own local street and highway program to utilize the federal and state highway funds they receive. Local agencies will often supplement this program with locally generated funds. The local portion of the highway improvement program is developed using locally determined needs and priorities. The federal and state funded portion of the local program will be coordinated through the department to ensure that projects are eligible for the various funding sources, that applicable state and federal standards policies and procedures are met, and that the work is coordinated with state projects.

3) The Public Transportation Program

All rural and small urban transit providers receive federal operating assistance and are eligible for state and federal capital grants, when funds are available. Those rural and small urban transit providers that qualify under state statute also receive state operating assistance.

Similar to the local roads program, the public transportation program for rural and small urban areas is developed using locally determined needs and priorities. The various transit providers submit operating budgets and capital needs. The department reviews these budgets and capital needs individually with each provider. Funding will be provided at levels to maintain existing service and to accommodate strategic expansions of service.

4) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

This final step in the surface transportation programming process provides an additional opportunity for local official input. At this point, all three programs discussed above are integrated and subjected to a statewide public involvement process.

D. Project Development

The department has developed methods for involving stakeholders in its decisions, and the department's [Context Sensitive Solutions](#) (CSS) policy makes involving stakeholders a regular process for projects involving new construction, reconstruction, and major expansion of transportation facilities. The department defines CSS as an interdisciplinary approach that seeks effective, multi-modal transportation solutions by working with stakeholders to develop, build, and maintain cost-effective transportation facilities which fit into and reflect the project's surroundings – its "context." Through early, frequent, and meaningful communication with stakeholders, and a flexible and creative approach to design, the resulting projects should improve safety and mobility for the traveling public, while seeking to preserve and enhance the scenic, economic, historic, and natural qualities of the settings through which they pass. The CSS approach involves stakeholders early and often throughout the process, especially before major decisions are made. The information gained from partnering with stakeholders is then used by the department to craft an informed solution to the transportation issue. This informed solution should also be a consensus solution, between stakeholders and the department.

For local agency highway projects, each department district office has dedicated staff to assist local officials in the planning, development, and implementation of state and federal funded local highway projects. These offices will coordinate with rural officials on their projects.

For public transportation, applications for transit funding will follow a public process. This process allows for public and local official input into the planning and implementation of public transportation services in rural and small urban areas. In addition, all applications and grant constraints will be approved by the local governing board of the public transportation operator.

E. Other Coordination Activities

The department will be actively involved in statewide organizations representing municipalities, counties, and townships. The Bureau of Local Roads will participate on an ongoing and continuous basis with several of the standing committees of each of these organizations. These committees and organizations meet with the Secretary, the Deputy Secretaries, the Director of Highways Project Implementation/Chief Engineer, and the Directors of the various Offices as needed throughout the year. These meetings will address a broad range of transportation policy issues and will provide local officials regular access to the principal decision makers within the department.

The department will be an active participant in statewide conferences hosted by the Illinois Association of County Engineers, the Illinois Municipal League, the American Public Works Association, and the Township Officials of Illinois. In addition, district offices will host regular meetings with all the local agencies in their area.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The following outlines the individual and office responsibilities to ensure compliance with the provisions of this directive and its appendixes (if applicable):

- A. The **Office of Planning and Programming** (OPP) is responsible for maintaining this directive and the associated manual or procedures. OPP is also responsible for gathering input when making funding determinations, developing plans and programs, and during project development.

B. The Offices of Highways Project Implementation and Intermodal Project Implementation are responsible for adhering to this policy and communicating any project funding changes to the Office of Planning and Programming

6. REVISION HISTORY

This directive includes the following changes:

- Updated section 4.A.5. State Highway funding to remove Grade Crossing Protection Program, and add Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program and capital program funding;
- Updated language within section 4.C.1. The State Highway Program and changes references for the State Transportation Plan to the State Long Range Transportation Plan; and
- Reformatted into new departmental policy template; removed references to Office of Program Development due to reorganization; corrected hyperlinks.

Archive versions of this and all directives are available by contacting the Document Services Unit in the Bureau of Business Services at DOT.Policy@illinois.gov.

7. CLOSING NOTICE

Supersedes: Departmental Policy OPP-01: Consultation with Non-Metropolitan Local Officials Policy, Effective April 28, 2016

Attachment(s): N/A