

Statewide Partnership Program

Outstanding Project Needs



Following the passage of the 2023 Transportation Modernization Act, the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) released its first fiscally constrained 10-Year Project Plan. This new process represents an evolution in philosophy at TDOT regarding how we fund and deliver transportation projects. We have taken a critical eye to our projects statewide with the mindset of **"what gets started, gets finished"** to better serve Tennessee with greater accountability and communication.

As part of TDOT's 10-Year Project Planning process, the Statewide Partnership Program (SPP) is a critical avenue for local stakeholders to provide input on their priorities to better inform the annual reassessment of TDOT's 10-Year Project Plan. The program supports local authorities in **maximizing funding dollars** for critical local mobility and economic development needs.

TDOT is committed to working with Tennessee's local jurisdictions, municipalities, and counties through their respective MPOs and RPOs to identify priorities and **accelerate projects with identified local funding and support**. Accordingly, all submissions gathered through this process will be evaluated for inclusion in TDOT's updated 10-Year Project Plan, which will be released in Spring 2026. All project proposals will be evaluated based on performance, deliverability, and cost. TDOT intends to prioritize projects that are MPO and RPO priorities and represent **a significant financial investment by locals** with funds that efficiently leverage non-state funding sources. The SPP is primarily meant as a first step in the planning process to gather data on local needs, priorities, and ability to partner with TDOT. Think of this new process as "open enrollment" for TDOT projects; rather than communities advocating for their priorities at disparate and ad-hoc times throughout the year, this structure allows for standardized information to be provided during a specific period. While submissions gathered are not guaranteed to receive funding, all information provided is essential in the development of future 10-Year Plans and for TDOT to better understand, and further communicate, the outstanding critical transportation funding needs in Tennessee.

When you're ready to engage, contact your MPO/ RPO coordinator or TDOT Office of Community Transportation (OCT) representative for the next steps.

Eligible Projects

- Highway Capacity (e.g., lane addition, roadway extension)
- Highway ITS/system operations (e.g., technology upgrades, operation)
- Highway safety (e.g., roadway geometric, design, or operation improvements targeted to a safety need)
- Major bridge project (e.g., replacement or reconstruction)
- Major pavement project (e.g., rehab or reconstruction)
- Projects currently included in an MPO TIP for funding consideration are encouraged. The MPO TIP would be listed as the source for committed funding.

2025 Timeline

- **June 27 – August 29**
Accepting applications
- **September - October**
Engage with communities seeking State Infrastructure Fund (SIF) leveraging support in conjunction with the SPP
- **October-Spring 2026**
Apply prioritization process and program projects
- **Spring 2026**
Present updated 10-Year Plan



For More Information, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), visit the Statewide Partnership Program webpage.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much SPP funding is available?

The SPP is not a grant. The purpose is to achieve two primary objectives:

1. Advance needed highway improvements in communities in Tennessee for which funding locally has already been identified, secured, or committed on projects that are already underway or can be delivered in TDOT's updated 10-year plan.
2. Holistically understand the needs of the state in terms of highway transportation investments that are already in the project development process and/or that communities see as a priority and have already begun to commit funding on to advance.

As TDOT updates the 10-Year Plan, the department will use the SPP submissions to determine if TDOT funding can help advance these projects in the next 10 years. All submissions will be used to communicate the outstanding transportation funding needs of the State.

How does the State Infrastructure Fund work with the Statewide Partnership Program?

As communities across the state look for out of the box ways to fund infrastructure one solution that TDOT pitched to the state legislature this past budget cycle was the revitalization of the State Infrastructure Fund (SIF). This program provides low to no-interest loans for local municipalities to access for their transportation network.

While TDOT is still redeveloping this program, TDOT envisions this allowing entities to participate in the Statewide Partnership Program who would not otherwise have the capital to contribute, or for municipalities across the state to access dollars for multimodal projects across the state at a better interest rate than they would receive at the market.

It is the department's intent to allow communities the ability to use the SPP and SIF in conjunction to get much needed highway and bridge projects out the door quicker.

What is the process to take out a State Infrastructure Fund loan if I intend to use that as my partnership contribution?

TDOT was appropriated \$50 million to use toward the State Infrastructure Fund which is for multimodal purposes. More information will become available as the program is developed, but in the interim please indicate your interest in participating through the application. TDOT staff will reach out to the point of contact listed with information as it becomes available.

Why should I submit a project?

If your community intends to request TDOT partnership on a project, this is the means to submit that information, even if previously submitted.

With a philosophy of "what gets started, gets finished" TDOT must understand projects that are already in the project development process, and/or where a community requires TDOT funding. TDOT's 10-Year Plan is intended to see projects to completion. In the past, funding on projects was not comprehensively budgeted which has led to long delays in projects advancing and not having sufficient funding for completion of the project. If a community is relying on TDOT funding for their project, TDOT needs to know of that through this process to better inform our annually updated 10-Year Project Plan.

Does the project need to be in a plan or STIP/TIP?

While a project does not need to be in a current STIP/TIP to be submitted as part of the SPP, projects that are in a current STIP/TIP are likely further along in the project development process and that will factor into TDOT's review as the 10-Year Project Plan is updated.

Who can submit?

The SPP is for local jurisdictions, municipalities, and counties, and we are asking communities to work with their respective MPO or RPO to ensure project submittals are in their region's long-range transportation plan and/or to ensure that these regional entities are aware of needs within their region.

Is there a minimum cost requirement for a project to be considered?

No, the goal of the SPP is to understand highway investment needs in Tennessee for which communities are invested, and to advance projects for which significant investments have already been made locally or that a community is willing to contribute at a level that illustrates the importance of the project to their area.

If I don't submit by August 29th, can I submit later in the year?

TDOT is realigning its processes to have an annual SPP period that is aligned with the annual update of the 10-Year Project Plan. You must submit this cycle; otherwise, you will have to wait until 2026 when we open the SPP window again. This is the time and place to submit project requests to TDOT.

TDOT also acknowledges that Tennessee is, fortunately, a rapidly growing state, because of our sound economic policies and pro-business environment. TDOT works closely with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) to ensure communities are provided with infrastructure needs if communities attract significant economic development projects. Should such projects be proposed outside of this new planning window, TDOT will of course coordinate with ECD to ensure economic development projects are supported.

I see a project in the current 10-Year Plan that is in an out-year. If my community wants to see that project delivered sooner, should I submit a SPP application for that project if my community is willing to bring funding to the table?

Projects in the current 10-Year Plan are fiscally constrained (meaning funding is available for that project in a certain year based on TDOT's available funds). If a community was able to bring local, private, or STBG local or urban funds to the table for that project it is feasible that the project in the current 10-Year Plan could occur sooner.

