How Do Transportation Projects Become a Reality?

TPO
OCALA MARION
TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

Transportation projects come in a wide variety of sizes, types, and budgets. These can range from building new roads, resurfacing current roads and bridges, to building bike trails and installing new traffic signals.

When funded with state and federal transportation dollars, projects can be completed in a few years to as long as several decades. Some of the major factors are based on complexity, public involvement, regulations, land availability and funding.

The two major steps for planning and developing transportation projects through the Ocala Marion Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) are the: **TPO Planning Process** and the **Project Development Process**.

TPO PLANNING PROCESS

Long Range Planning → **Short Range Planning**

"Need": A project is first identified as a 'Need' based on current community plans or programs and also by citizens, professionals and leaders or through analysis by the TPO. The project may be located on a state facility (Florida Department of Transportation), county facility (Marion) or municipal facility (Ocala, Belleview, Dunnellon) facility such as a bridge, road or trail.

"Needs Plan": Once identified as a "Need", the project must go through a careful vetting process to ensure it is supported by the community; is reflected in local plans; and is approved by elected leaders. A project is then is eligible to be included in the Needs Plan of the TPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This process happens every five years.

Cost-Feasible: A "Needs Plan" project is further prioritized based on available funding and if it effectively supports the vision and goals of the community. A project is then identified in the LRTP Cost-Feasible Plan, to be funded and completed within the next 5 to 25 years.
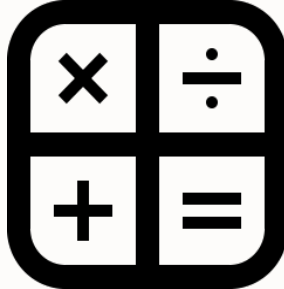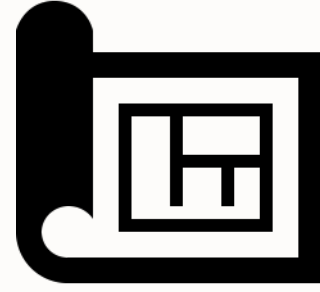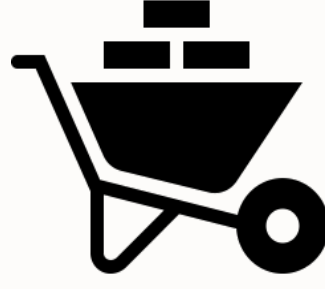
A project in the Cost-Feasible Plan is selected to be "Programmed" for completion based on priority ranking through the TPO's annual List of Priority Projects (LOPP) and determined by FDOT.

Programming may include some and not all funding to complete the project, requiring phases over multiple years. Through this process, the project is identified in the TPO's five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Project Development Process starts with planning studies and/or technical analysis and ends with a completed project.

A project identified in the TPO's LRTP and TIP also progresses through development phases based on type, complexity, environmental and social factors, and state and federal regulations. Projects may require some or all of the following development phases.

1. Planning level study (e.g. corridor study)
Assess existing and potential future conditions, conduct public involvement

2. Environmental Analysis (e.g. Project Development and Environmental - PD&E Study)
Determine environmental, social and economic impacts

3. Engineering Analysis -
Field and technical analysis (e.g. traffic, drainage)

4. Design
Specification and detailed construction plans

5. Right-of-Way
Negotiate/purchase properties needed to construct

6. Construction
Project is built and delivered

7. Operations and Maintenance
Ongoing maintenance and management of the facility

Notes:

The Ocala Marion TPO does not manage projects. The TPO's primary role is to ensure local priorities are being met while following federal or state requirements. If a project is on a state facility, then FDOT usually manages the project development.

If a project is located on a county or municipal facility, a local government manages the project. The TPO manages some corridor type studies to advance projects in their respective project development phases.

More Information:

For more information about transportation planning at the TPO, please review the following Fact Sheets at www.OcalaMarionTPO.org:

- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP),
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the
- List of Priority Projects (LOPP)