

The annual List of Priority Projects (LOPP) is a critical step in the process of planning, programming and implementing the highest priority transportation projects within the Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (LSMPO) planning area. The LOPP is the bridge between the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the annual selection of projects to program for funding in FDOT's Five-Year Work Program and LSMPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- » Projects in the LOPP are the highest priority unfunded needs in the MPO area.
- » Each MPO is required to annually develop a LOPP and submit it to FDOT, along with the necessary project information.
- » The 2021 LOPP will be used by FDOT to determine projects that might be added to the FY 2022/23 – 2026/27 Tentative Five-Year Work Program. It will similarly guide LSMPO's development of the TIP for the same period.

## The LOPP Structure

The LSMPO LOPP is divided into two categories. Tier 1 consists of the Top 20 highest priority projects. Tier 2 includes other LSMPO priorities, categorized by phase, that have not yet advanced into Tier 1. Additionally, the LOPP includes special purpose lists for modal projects and, as needed, project lists for certain funding programs. The LOPP structure is:

- » **Tier 1**
  - Top 20 Priorities
- » **Tier 2**
  - Construction Project (CST) Priorities
  - Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW) Priorities
  - Design Project Priorities
  - Project Development & Environment Study (PD&E) Priorities
  - Planning Study Priorities
- » **Special Purpose – Modal**
  - Trail Priorities – Combined list of all trail priorities in Tier 1 and Tier 2. Includes a separate ranking of trail projects as a group.
  - Transit Priorities
- » **Special Purpose – Funding Program Project Lists**
  - As warranted, lists of projects by certain funding programs will be included

## The LOPP Process

The LOPP is a continuous annual process with the highest priority unfunded projects advancing, phase by phase.

- » A new project will typically be added to the LOPP in Tier 2 unless special circumstances warrant it being added directly to Tier 1. As a Tier 2 project advances forward in priority, its successive phases will move into Tier 1 and ultimately into the Work Program and TIP. For example, if a project's design phase from Tier 1 moves into the Work Program/TIP for funding, the construction phase of that project can advance from Tier 2 into Tier 1.
- » After a Tier 1 project has been fully funded in the Work Program/TIP through construction, it is no longer on the LOPP, opening a space for another project to enter Tier 1.
- » A project in the LOPP can be ranked higher and advance more quickly if matching funding from the local government is available.

## Program Stability

From year to year, the highest priority projects in the LOPP will typically remain at the top of the list until they move forward to be programmed for funding in the Work Program and TIP. This consistency over the long-term provides greater predictability for local sponsors, improves coordination with FDOT, and increases priority project success.

## Foundation for Project Success

Partnerships are fundamental to the success of transportation project planning and implementation. Your agency is a critical partner in the effort to provide transportation in the LSMPO Planning Area that meets the needs of residents, visitors and businesses. It is important to coordinate closely and communicate regularly with LSMPO, FDOT, and, for municipalities, the respective county government.

For the LOPP, your agency plays a pivotal in ensuring project success through the following:

1. **Complete and Accurate Information** – Ensure that a complete and updated FDOT Project Information Application is on-file or submitted for each project. LSMPO will use a project screening process to aid you in making this determination (see Submitting Projects below).
2. **Project Prioritization** – If your agency is submitting multiple projects, be prepared to provide the approved priority rank for each project when the LOPP is being developed. For example, the top priority should be ranked 1, the next priority should be ranked 2, etc. Local agency ranking is critical because it is a leading factor in determining a project's priority in the LOPP.
3. **Planning Alignment** – Ensure that any project submitted is consistent with your agency's Local Government Comprehensive Plan and the LSMPO Long Range Transportation Plan. It is also important that project information is the same throughout planning documents, so be attentive to providing consistent description, termini, cost estimates, etc.
4. **Local Support** – Clearly define and state any matching funds that your local agency will commit to the project.
5. **Other Funding** – If your agency intends to pursue a particular grant or funding program for the project, please be sure to indicate this on the Project Screening Form.
6. **Responsiveness** – Respond in a timely manner to any information requests from LSMPO or FDOT to ensure the greatest success for your project.

## Submitting Projects

An FDOT Project Information Application (PIA) needs to be completed or on-file for all projects being submitted for funding consideration. If a Tier 1 (Top 20) project has a PIA that was completed for the most recent LOPP, it may only be necessary to update key information rather than completing an entirely new application. For example, estimated project costs and project schedule should be revised accordingly.

*To begin the process for the 2021 LOPP...* submit a Project Screening Form for each of the highest priority projects that your agency would like to include in the LOPP. Even if a project is in the current LOPP, please submit a Project Screening Form to assist the MPO in determining if a new PIA should be completed or the current one needs to be updated. The goal of the Project Screening Form is to provide an efficient approach to filter projects and direct local agency effort to the development of only the necessary applications and information.

The Project Screening Form is targeted to providing information such as the following:

- » Project name
- » Project type
- » Project description and limits
- » Requested phase and estimated cost
- » Confirmation that the project is consistent with the local agency's comprehensive plan and LSMPO's Long Range Transportation Plan
- » Position of the project in the current LOPP
  - Tier 1 (Top 20) project
  - Tier 2 project
  - Not in the current LOPP
- » Potential grant and funding sources being pursued to develop the project

LSMPO will review the submitted Project Screening Forms to identify which projects will require new PIAs and request those new applications from the local agency. The submitted PIAs will then be reviewed through a Project Sufficiency Checklist. The PIA requires more extensive information such as project purpose and need, detailed project cost and schedule information, and related documents and studies, so that FDOT can evaluate the project effectively.

Please note that projects receiving federal funding will often be administered as Local Agency Program (LAP) projects. If so, the project will need to meet statewide and District 5 LAP requirements. Visit [www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/lap/d5-lap](http://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/lap/d5-lap) for more information. Regardless of funding source, accurate project information will be critical to ensure that the project can move forward with FDOT. Use the Project Sufficiency Checklist to scrutinize the project detail you are providing. This will firmly position the project for future project intake meetings and help avoid last minute information requests by FDOT to meet requirements.

## **LOPP Prioritization**

Projects within the LOPP should advance: the preservation of existing transportation infrastructure; enhancement of Florida’s economic competitiveness; and improvement of travel choices to ensure mobility (s. 339.175(8), Florida Statutes). LSMPO will conduct a review and prioritization of submitted projects to ensure that they advance these goals and consider the following:

- » Transportation priorities identified by LSMPO, local governments and FDOT
- » LSMPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- » The applicable Local Government Comprehensive Plan
- » FDOT’s Strategic Intermodal System Plan (s. 339.64, F.S.)
- » Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) priorities (s. 339.2819(4), F.S.)
- » Recommendations from the Congestion Management Process
- » LSMPO’s Public Participation Plan
- » Support for economic vitality, community development, business functionality, and creation or retention of employment opportunities

## **2021 LOPP – Schedule at a Glance**

Lopp Kickoff Workshop	November 20,2020
Call for Projects - Screening	November 2020 - January 2021
Technical Assistance Meetings with Sponsors	January 2021
Project Information Review	February 2021
Project Prioritization	March 2021
Committee/Board Approval	June 2021
Submission to FDOT	By June 2021

## **For Questions**

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