

Rural Task Force 101

Overview of program

Introduction-

Brief intro of what the program is and funding sources and eligibility

Big picture planning process and here is where the RTF fits into it with it's annual work process

Planning Process/Work flow

RTF Major and Minor Actions

TEDF-D and STBG Projects and Transit project in Jobnet

Funding

Overview of Funding

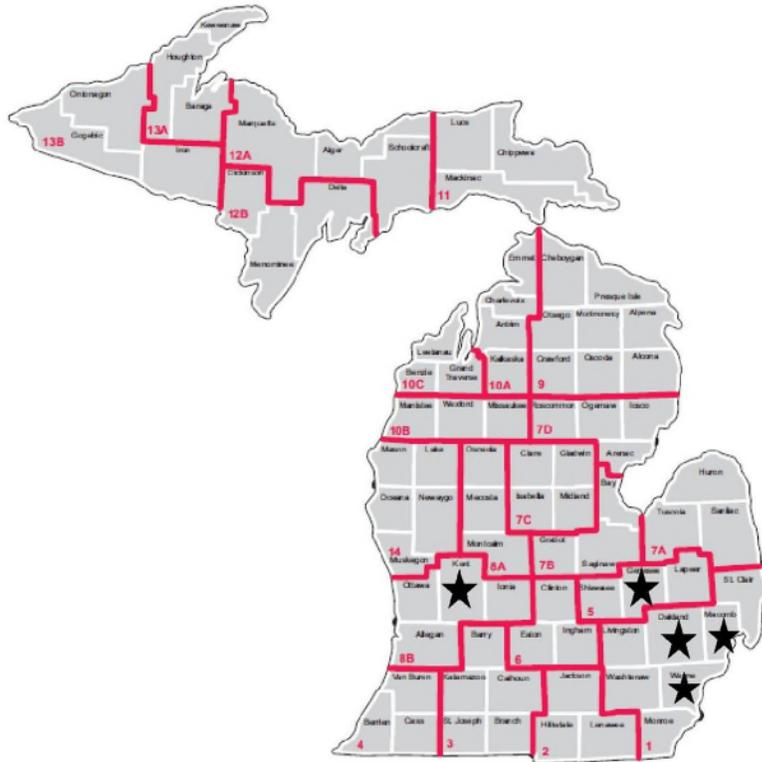
Different ways to use allocated project funding

Resources RTF

RTF Program
Manager Brian Stark

The RTF Program

Rural Task Forces Boundary Map



What is it?

- Michigan's RTF Program was Established in 1987
- Carries out the federally mandated 3-C multimodal transportation planning process in rural areas
- 22 Separate RTF's Throughout the State

What does it do?

- Selects & Funds Rural Transportation Projects and Programs in Counties whose Population is 400,000 or Less

Who is in Charge?

- Rural Task Force Program Advisory Board
- Determines strategic direction of the program to ensure that the planning process is run effectively, and funding is utilized efficiently.

Roles and Responsibilities



Regional Planning Agencies

- Ensure that a 3-C multimodal transportation planning process is being carried out in rural areas of the state.
- Coordinate the development of the RTF fiscal constraint sheet with all members of the rural task force
- Set up meetings, updated fiscal constraint sheet, agenda, and previous meeting minutes
- Program project data sheets (1799 and 1797 forms) in JobNet

County Road Commissions-

- Attend County level and full RTF meetings with projects selected
- Make sure project is correctly added to JobNet by reviewing Smart Report
- Local agencies deliver projects through the LAP process

Transit Agencies

- Attend County level and full RTF meetings with projects selected
- Transit agencies deliver projects through the MDOT Transit process
- Must be in the STIP, should be decided at the April meetings to meet the deadline of May 13th
- Make sure cost savings on other flex projects can only be used by transits by april.

Small Cities and Villages-

- Attend County level and full RTF meetings with projects selected
- Make sure project is correctly added to JobNet by reviewing Smart Report
- Deliver projects through the LAP process

Roles and Responsibilities



MDOT Planning

- Ensure that a 3-C multimodal transportation planning process is being carried out in rural areas of the state.
- MDOT reviews projects for eligibility and consistency with the criteria established for the state's TEDF and the STL Program
- Provide allocation estimates and targets
- Provide information through education and trainings

MDOT-OPT

- Attend full RTF meetings with projects selected
- Review transit projects in Jobnet
- Help with utilizing flexed transit funding

Overview of Funding

- Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG) Fund

Funding is provided to the whole RTF, but an estimated split by County

- Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF-D)

TEDF-D (EDD) funds are tracked by county and balances cannot be negative.

- Fiscal Constraint within funding

All funding must be fiscal constrained for both funding sources

\$64 Million

\$10.5 Million

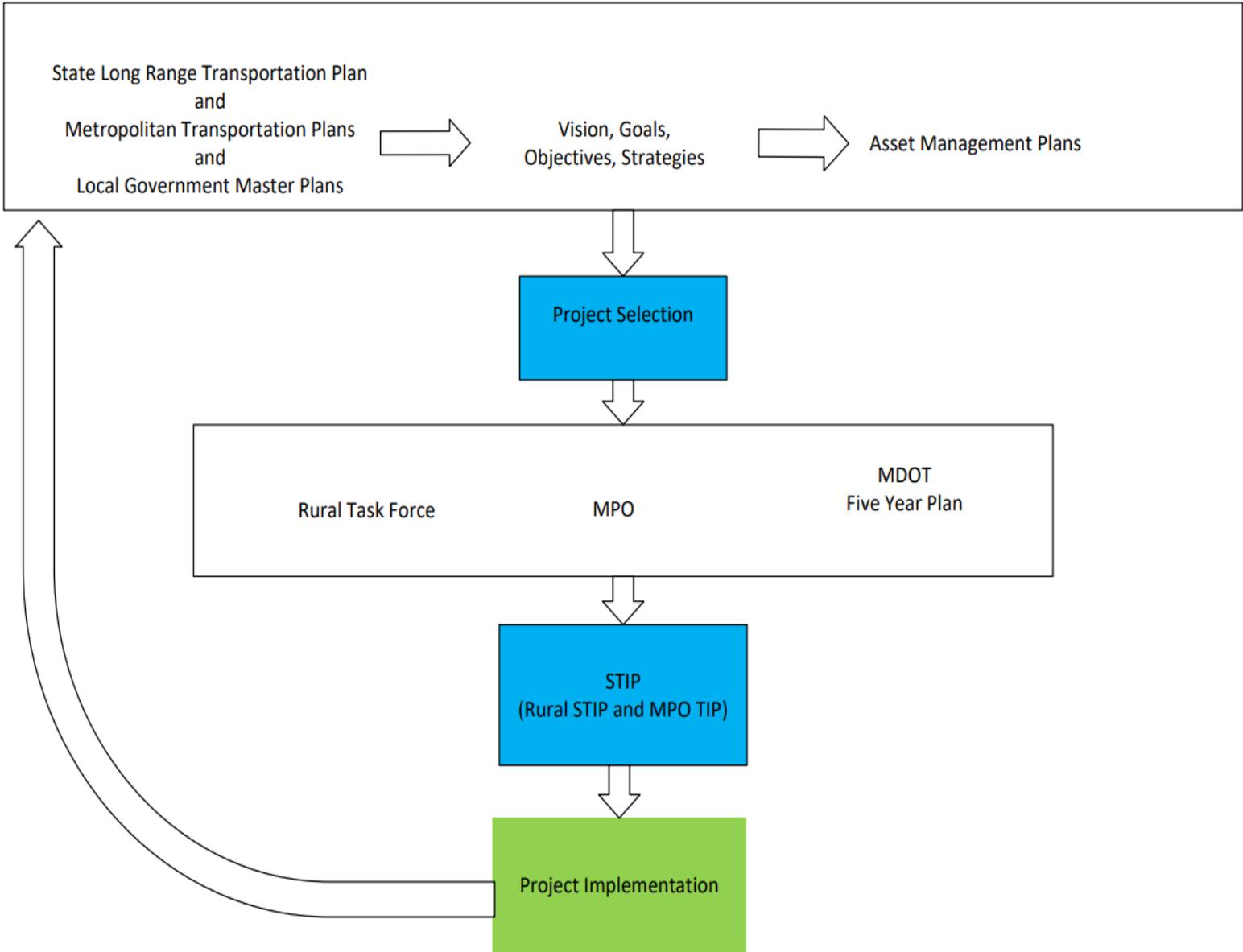
\$74.5 Million

		STP Rural (Y238)	STP flexible (Y240)	STP Total	State D
RTF 1	Livingston	\$776,306	\$173,764	\$950,070	\$98,952
	Monroe	\$699,784	\$237,563	\$937,347	\$135,284
	St. Clair	\$874,123	\$368,917	\$1,243,040	\$210,086
	Washtenaw	\$795,765	\$285,864	\$1,081,629	\$162,789
	RTF 1 Total	\$3,145,978	\$1,066,107	\$4,212,085	\$607,111

Something to Think About

- Scenarios-
 - Project 1:
 - Funding- Road Project
 - STBG- \$800,000, TEDF-D- \$50,000, and Local- \$150,000
 - Project 2:
 - Funding- Road Project with TEDF-D funding
 - TEDF- \$400,000 and Local-\$100,000
 - Project 3:
 - Funding- Transit Project
 - STBG- \$100,000 and State- \$25,000

How the Rural Task Force Fits into the Statewide Planning Process



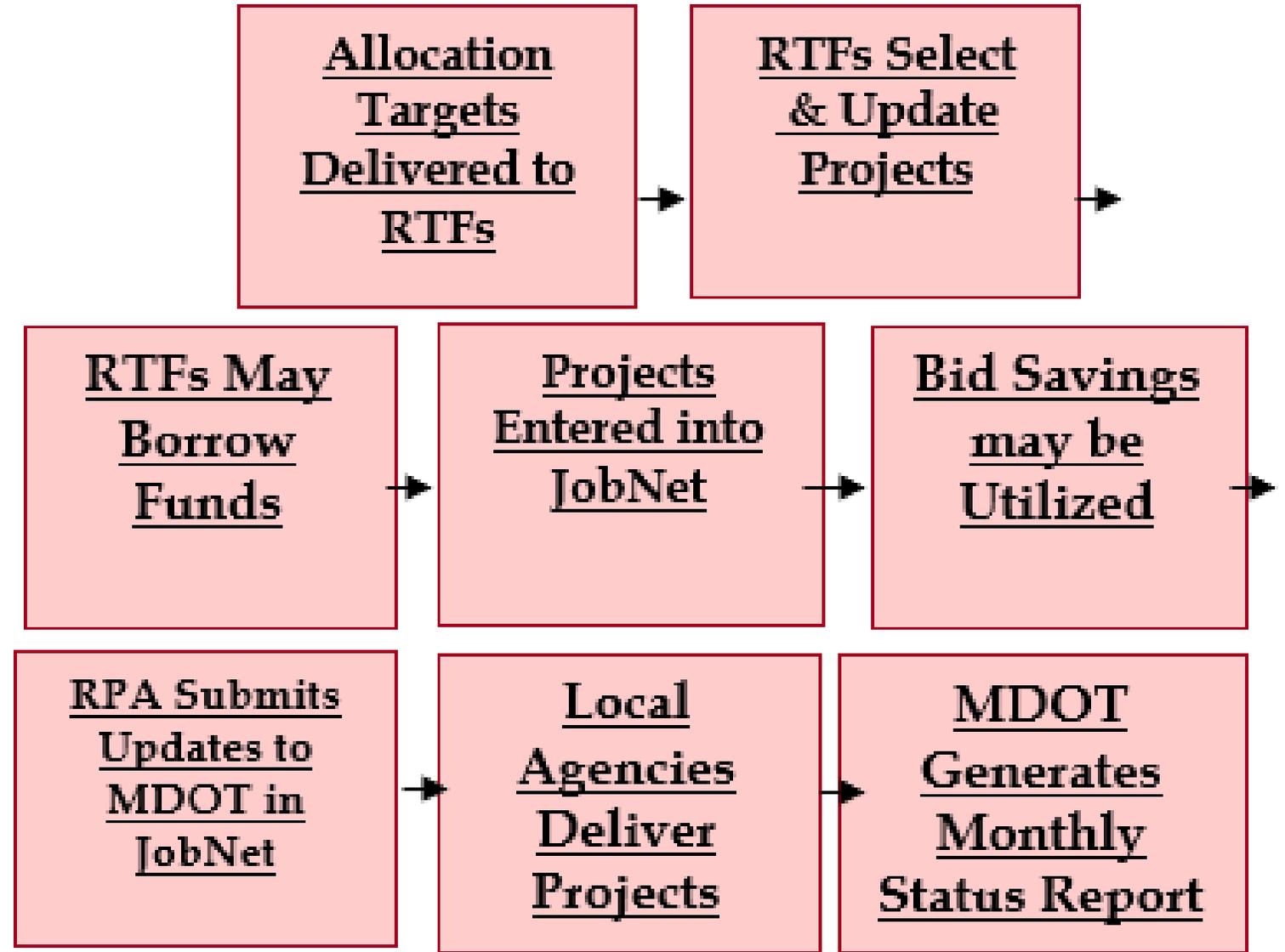


RTF Program and STIP Planning Process



- There are Two Large-Scale Planning Processes Present for RTFs
 - Job Selection Planning process (RTF process)
 - Follow 3C Planning Process (continuous, comprehensive, cooperative)
 - Public Involvement while selecting/adjusting jobs.
 - Opportunity for local officials to give comment on jobs.
 - Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Planning Process (Federal approval Process)
 - All jobs utilizing federal funds must be included in the STIP to be eligible for federal funding under 23 USC and 49 USC 53.
 - STIP are approved by FHWA and FTA
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RTF Annual Workflow Chart



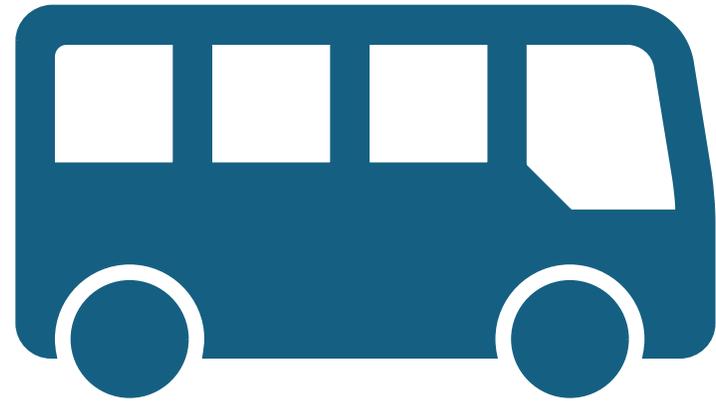
RTF Meetings

- Local county-level meetings mark the beginning of the cooperative project selection process.
 - The local county committee consists of three or more members: a representative of the County Road Commission, a representative from cities/villages, and transit agency
 - Required at the beginning of the STIP process
- Regional rural task force meetings continue the cooperative project selection process,
 - It is highly recommended that each rural task force meets three times a fiscal year at a minimum
 - One representative from each county's road commission, and one representative for all small cities/villages, and one representative for all transit agencies within that county.
- Additional meetings when needed.



STBG-Funded Road Projects

- STBG funds may be programmed to any federal aid eligible activity that MDOT LAP has the ability to contract for.
 - [LAP Federal Eligibility Guidelines](#)
- Each RTF committee may choose to put additional restrictions on the type of projects that the STBG funds are used on. For example, the individual RTF can decide to restrict the use of STBG to construction only if they feel that this is the best way to achieve the goals of their RTF.

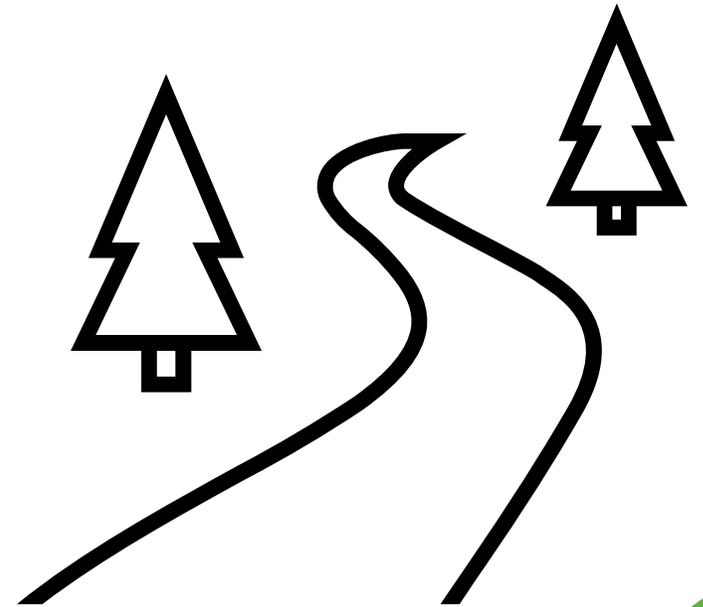


STBG-Funded Transit Projects

- Capital costs for transit projects eligible for assistance under chapter 53 of title 49, including but not limited to:
 - Bus & Van Purchases, Rehabilitation, Lease, and Shelters
 - Support & Administrative Vehicles
 - Vehicle Equipment
 - Computer Equipment
 - Maintenance Equipment
 - Facility Construction, Improvements, and Purchases
- Transit Research, Development, and Technology Transfer.
- A full list of eligible projects can be found in the [RTE Guidelines](#).

TEDF Category D-Fund Program

- The project must be on either a Proposed All Season Route or an All-Season Route which meet all the criteria below and has been vetted and approved by the Rural Task Force (RTF) committee.
 - The project must be essential to the creation of an all-season road.
 - Routes must begin and end at an existing all-season road or highway interchange or point-of-loading origin.
 - The project must be located on a rural primary road or major street.
 - The project must be eligible for federal-aid and on existing hard surface.
 - Unless waived by the Rural Task Force
 - The project must meet all-season construction standards.
 - Projects will be coordinated with TEDF-Category F projects.
- A full list of eligibility standards can be found in the RTF Guidelines and the MDO TEDF-D Webpage.
 - [MDOT TEDF-D Webpage](#)





Additional Information

- TEDF-D (EDD) funds are tracked by county and balances cannot be negative.
- 3-year rolling average
- All- Season Routes
 - TEDF-D and F All-Season Map ([TEDF D MAP](#))

RTF Project
Selection

RTF
Process

Project
Changes

RTF Project Selection

- RTF are responsible for developing and managing a project list that minimally covers the STIP years.
- Projects seeking federal STBG funding must be included in the STIP
- Projects selected by the RTF committee to be included in the STIP must be evaluated and selected based on either:
 - An established project selection criterion developed through the task force or
 - Greatest needs of the region through a consensus decision-making process
- Projects that only include TEDF Category D and local funds will be programmed into JobNet as S/TIP exempt.
 - This accommodates project obligation, award, closeout and monitoring

RTF Project Selection

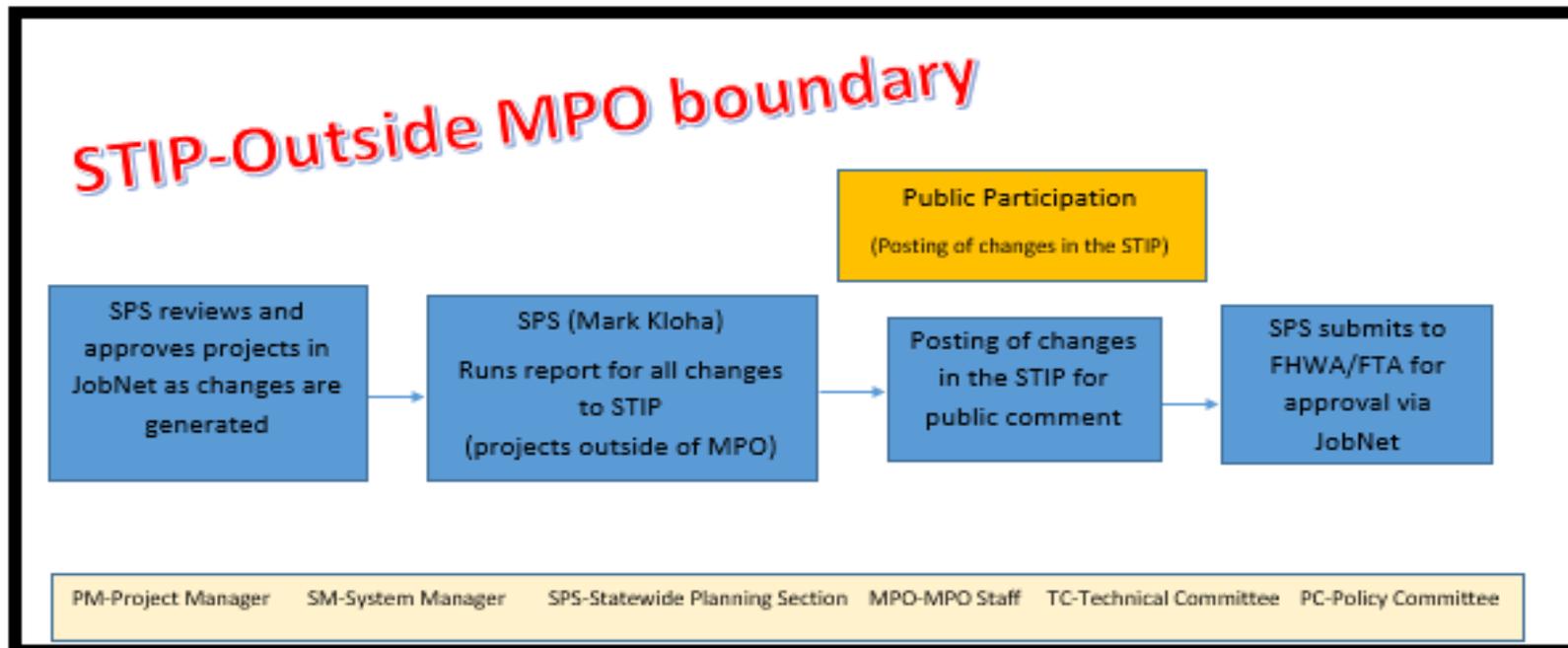
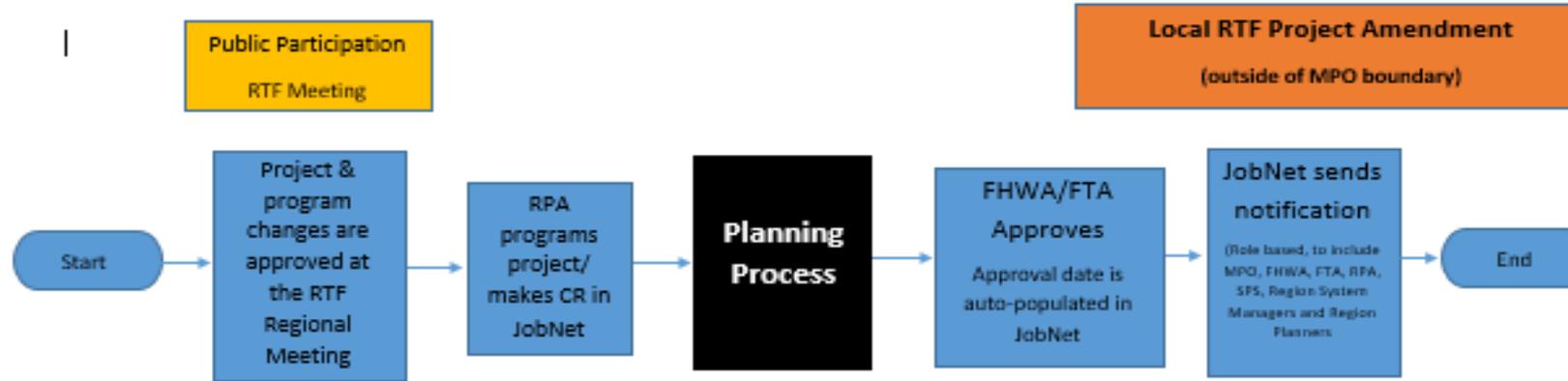
- All agencies which are eligible to receive RTF funding must be given reasonable consideration for funding
- RTFs can select projects outside of the STIP years
- The Fiscal Constraint sheet is a record of projects selected by the RTF committee. JobNet must match the fiscal constraint sheet.

RTF Project
Selection

STIP
Process

Project
Changes

Rural Projects: Outside MPO boundary

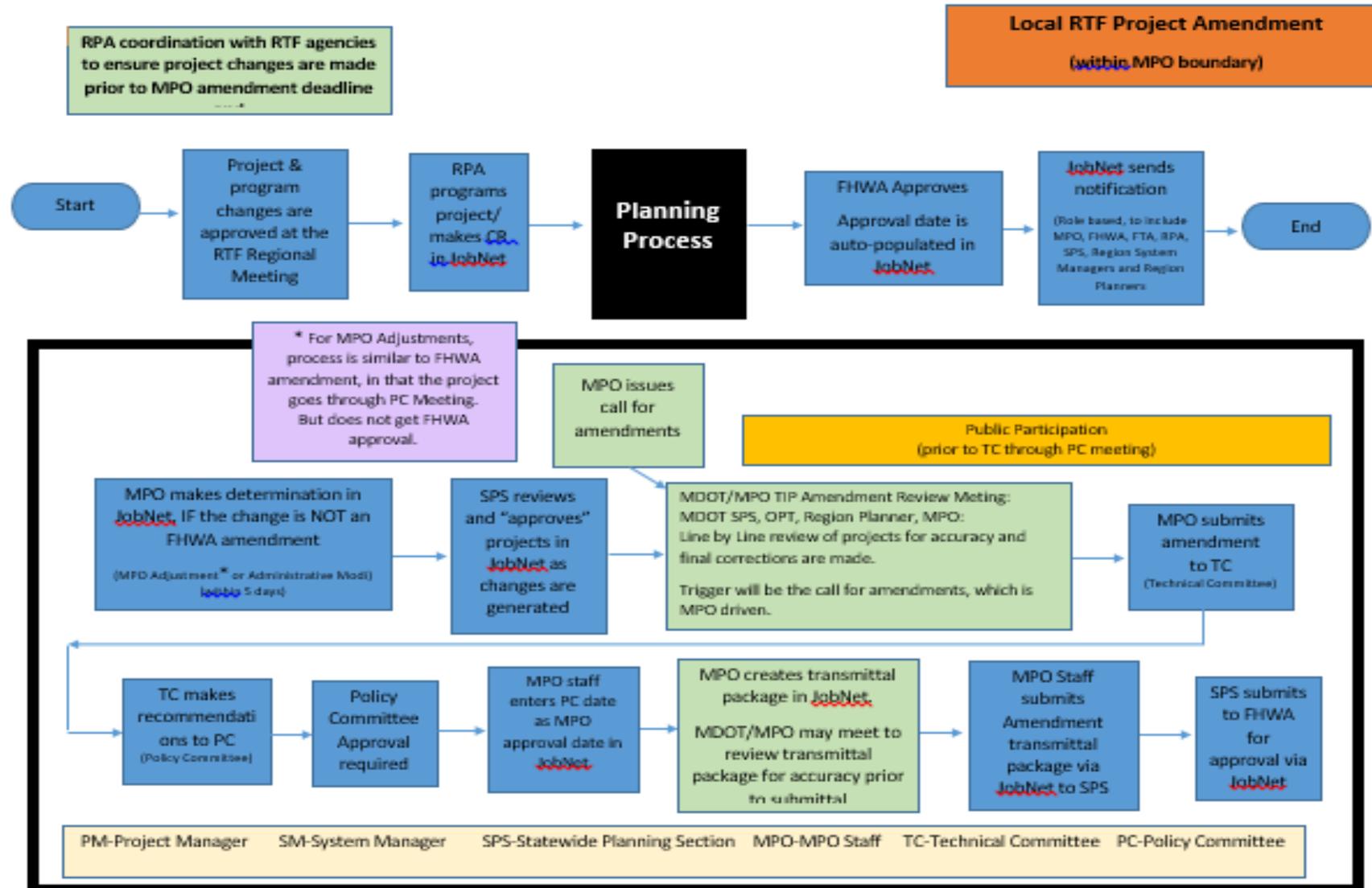


Rural STIP Amendment Schedule

- Approximately every other month
- Consider the Rural STIP amendment schedule when arranging RTF meetings
- Allow time for submission of 1799/1797 Data Sheet and for the RPA to program in JobNet



Process within MPO boundary



MPO TIP Amendment Cycle

- If your RTF boundary overlaps an MPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) also consider the MPO TIP amendment schedule when arranging RTF meetings
 - MPO TIP amendment schedule varies by MPO
 - Contact the MPO staff for their schedule
- Allow time for submission of 1799/1797 Data Sheet and for the RPA to program in JobNet

RTF Project
Selection

STIP Process

Project
Changes

Project Changes Prior to Obligation



The type of change will determine what type of coordination and approval is required



RTF - Major/Minor



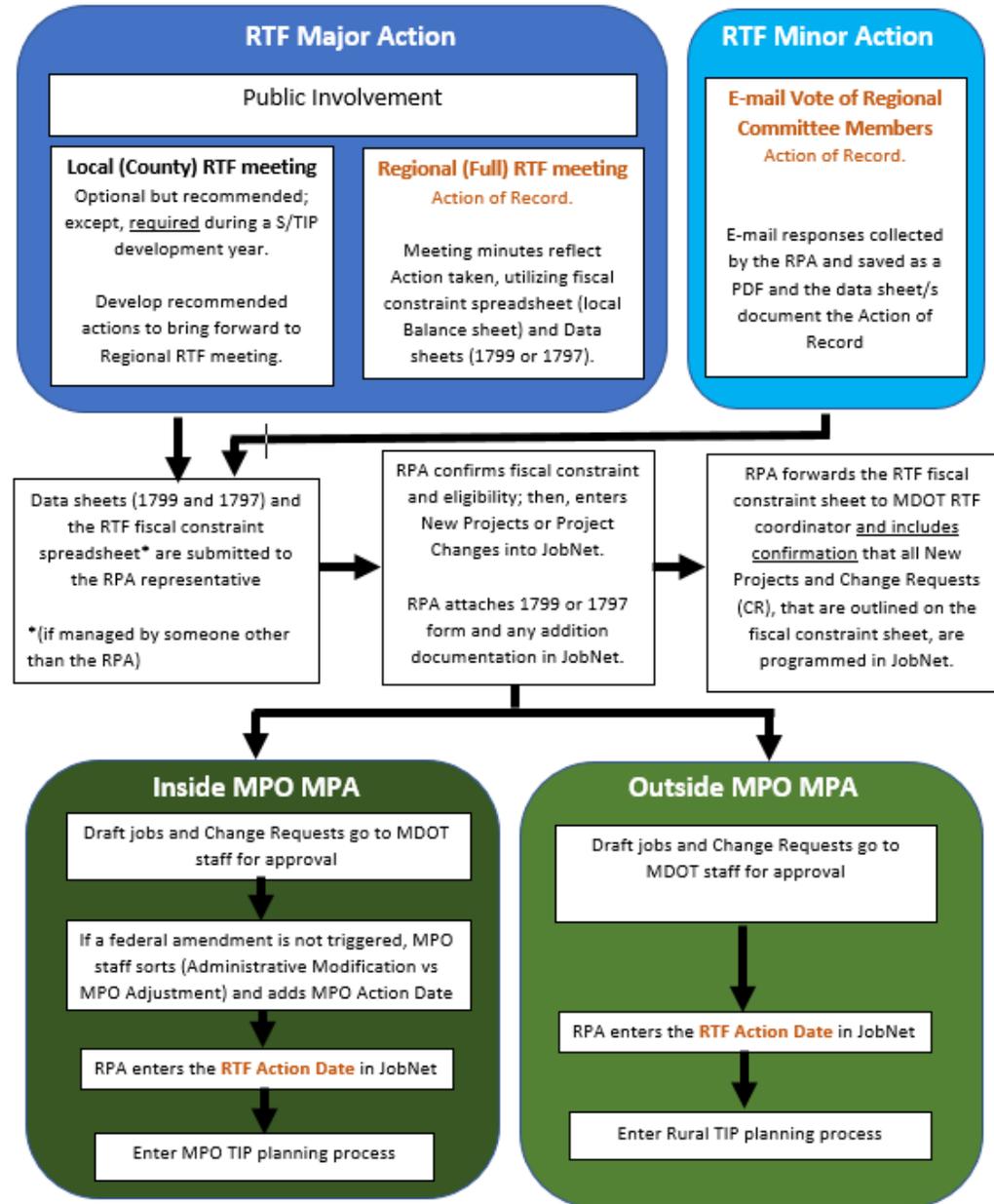
STIP – Amendments/Administrative Modification



Rural STIP and MPO TIPs

RTF Major and Minor Action Process

Rural Task Force Workflow



RTF Minor Action & Email Vote

Minor Actions

- Road Agency brings Project Changes to RPA and Submits Updated 1799 or 1797 form
- RPA Sends E-Mail to the Regional RTF Committee Requesting a Vote.
- RPA Collects the Responses as a Record of Action.
- RPA Creates a Change Request in JobNet
- RPA Forwards the Record of Action to MDOT RTF Coordinator
- Remember, Minor Actions Can be Done at RTF Meetings as well.

RTF Major Action & Regional RTF Meetings

- RTF Major Actions require a Public Regional RTF Meeting
- Road/Transit agency works with RPA to submit updated 1799/1797 form
- A Standard RTF Regional Meeting is Held
 - Ensuring the Major Action is Presented and Acted Upon is Most Essential
- Following Approval of the Major Action the Change is Programed into JobNet.



What requires only an RTF Major?

- Job Additions/Deletions
- Moving a job from the approved job list to the illustrative list
- Major Phase cost changes
 - Federal Funded jobs: 25% of FEDERAL participating cost change (+/-)
 - Only TEDF Category D jobs: 25% of STATE participating cost change (+/-)
- Major Scope Changes: Job name/route/location change
- Major limit changes (1/2 mile or more)
- Major Work Type changes
- Repurposing of cost savings from a flexed transit job, for job that is NOT shown on illustrative list or current job list.

What requires only an RTF Minor Action (E-mail vote)?

- Minor Phase Cost Changes
 - Federal Funded jobs: <25% FEDERAL participating cost change (+/-)
 - Only TEDF Category D jobs: <25% STATE participating cost change (+/-)
 - Minor Scope and Limit Changes Less than ½ mile
 - Minor Changes to Type of Work
 - FY Change, Within the Current STIP Cycle
 - Move from the Illustrative List to the Approved Job List
 - Repurposing of cost savings from a flexed transit job, for job that IS shown on the illustrative list and current job list.
- 



Major & Minor Actions, A Recap

- What Is a Major or Minor Action
 - Changes to projects that result in a different job package than originally approved.
- What do I have to do?
 - RTF Major Action requires a response at a Regional Rural Task Force meeting and Public Involvement
 - RTF Minor Actions do not require public involvement and can be handled with an e-mail vote of the Regional RTF committee.
 - Technical Corrections do not require public involvement or a vote and can be handled through an informational e-mail.
- Further info can be found in the RTF guidelines, Appendix F



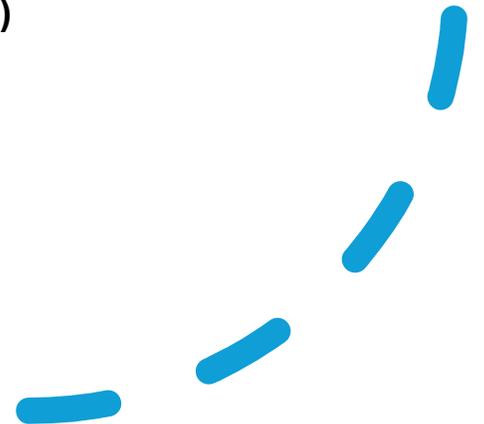
But What About a Technical Correction?

- What Is a Technical Correction?
 - Fixes something that was programmed in JobNet, entered into a spreadsheet incorrectly, or a typographical error.
 - The correction fixes the record so that it matches what was approved by the RTF.
- Generally, there is no action required by the RTF committee for Technical Corrections.
 - Depending on the magnitude of the correction the RPA should inform the committee of the correction.
- Technical Corrections can be done at RTF Meetings as well.

Line Item or General Program Account

- **Previously:** One General Program Account (GPA) for the whole RTF program in the Rural STIP
- **Now:** 6 GPAs for Rural STIP and 6 GPAs available for each MPO TIP
 1. Local Bridge
 2. Local Road
 3. Local Livability and Sustainability
 4. Local Traffic Operations and Safety
 5. Transit Capital
 6. Transit Operations

Work type and location determines GPA (not funding type)





Constraints for GPA projects

- **Reconstruction projects cannot be included in a GPA**
 - See GPA guidance for GPA eligible work types
 - Accurate Work type is critical, as criteria is contained within JobNet
- **Projects containing Advance Construct funding cannot be included**
 - Cannot be a new road, capacity (expansion or reduction)
 - Cannot be funded with an earmark
 - Must be a categorical exclusion and Air Quality neutral



Strategies for managing amendments

- Know if your project is in a GPA or if it is a line item in the STIP
- Understand the triggers for a federal amendment
- An MPO can impose additional criteria that would require approval by their Policy Board (MPO Adjustment)

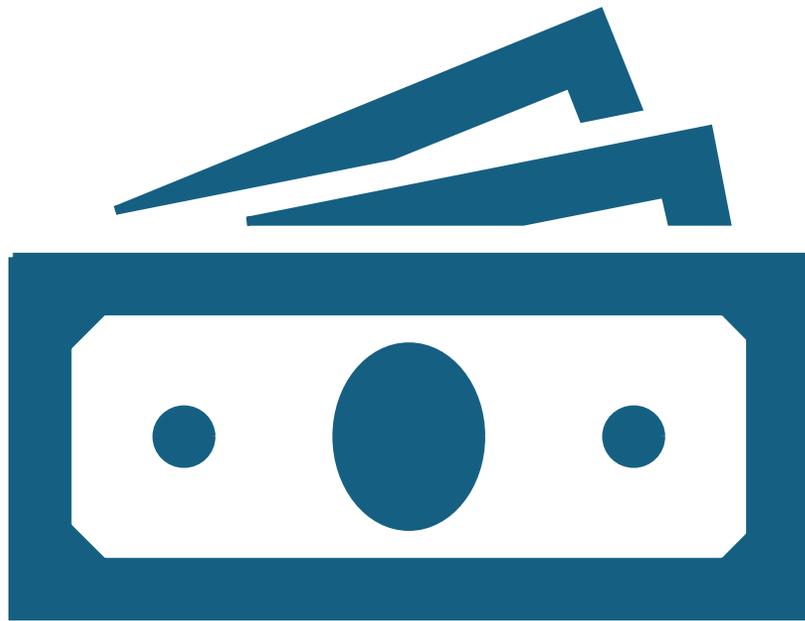


Strategies for managing amendments (Cont.)

- Get project updates programmed in JobNet as soon as possible, even if you don't have complete information
- Insignificant changes are administrative modifications and do not require a federal amendment
- Project changes are cumulative
 - If you make a 20% change in project cost and then 10% (equals 30%) it will trigger a federal amendment



Jump to JobNet and
project data sheets



Funding

Something to Think About

- Scenarios-
 - Project 1:
 - Funding- Road Project
 - STBG- \$800,000, Local- \$150,000, and \$50,000
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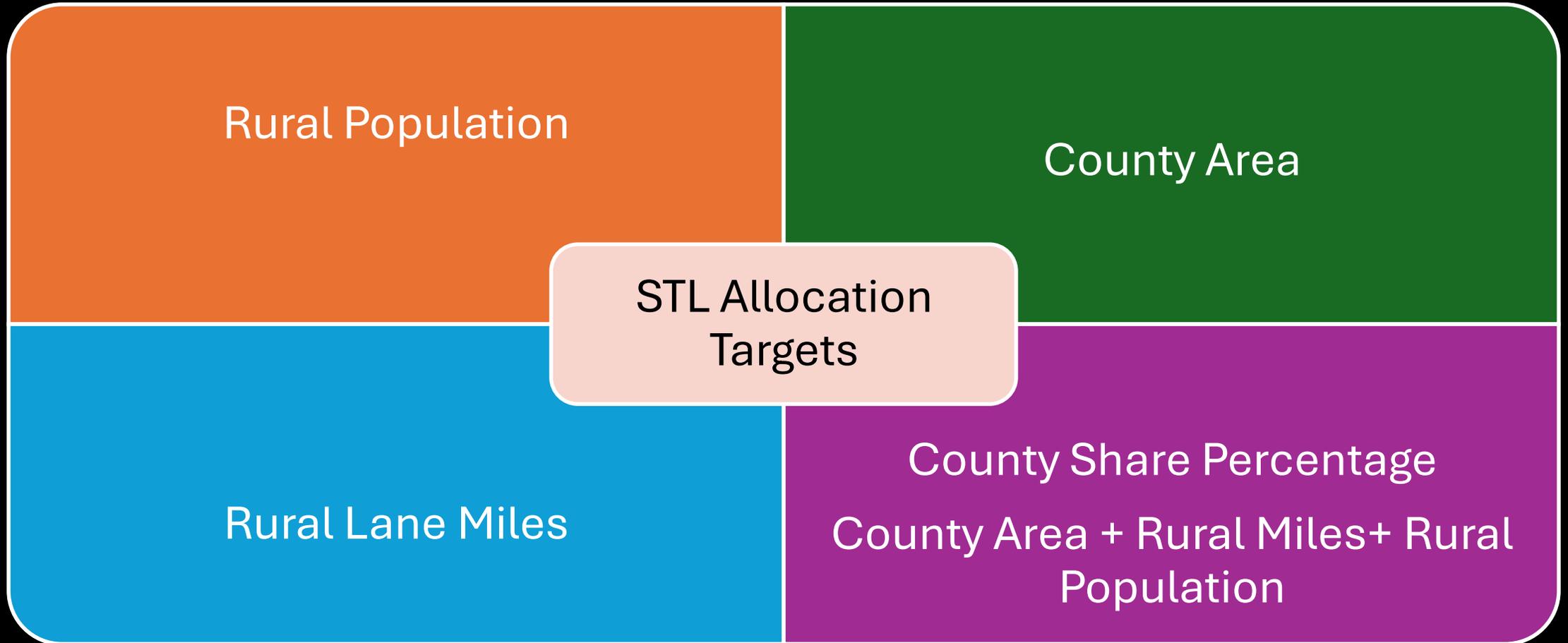
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Rural(STBG)

- **Purpose:** To provide funding for transportation projects which:
 - To preserve and improve the conditions and performance of federal aid highways and transit capital projects, including terminals and facilities.
- **Eligible Recipients:** Eligible applicants are county, city, or village road agencies and transit agencies in counties with a population of less than 400,000.
- **Eligible Project Costs:** STBG funds may be programmed to any federal aid eligible activity that MDOT LAP has the ability to contract for. Transit capital projects are also eligible.
- **Required Match:** 20% local or state match
 - Sliding scale 18.15 can be utilized on any road or bridge project
 - TEDF-D funding can match STBG funding (only for road projects)
- **Application Process:** None. Projects must be approved in the STIP.
- **Project Selection:** Eligible recipients present proposed transportation projects to Rural Task Forces (RTF) for review and funding recommendation. Projects selected by the RTF are administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

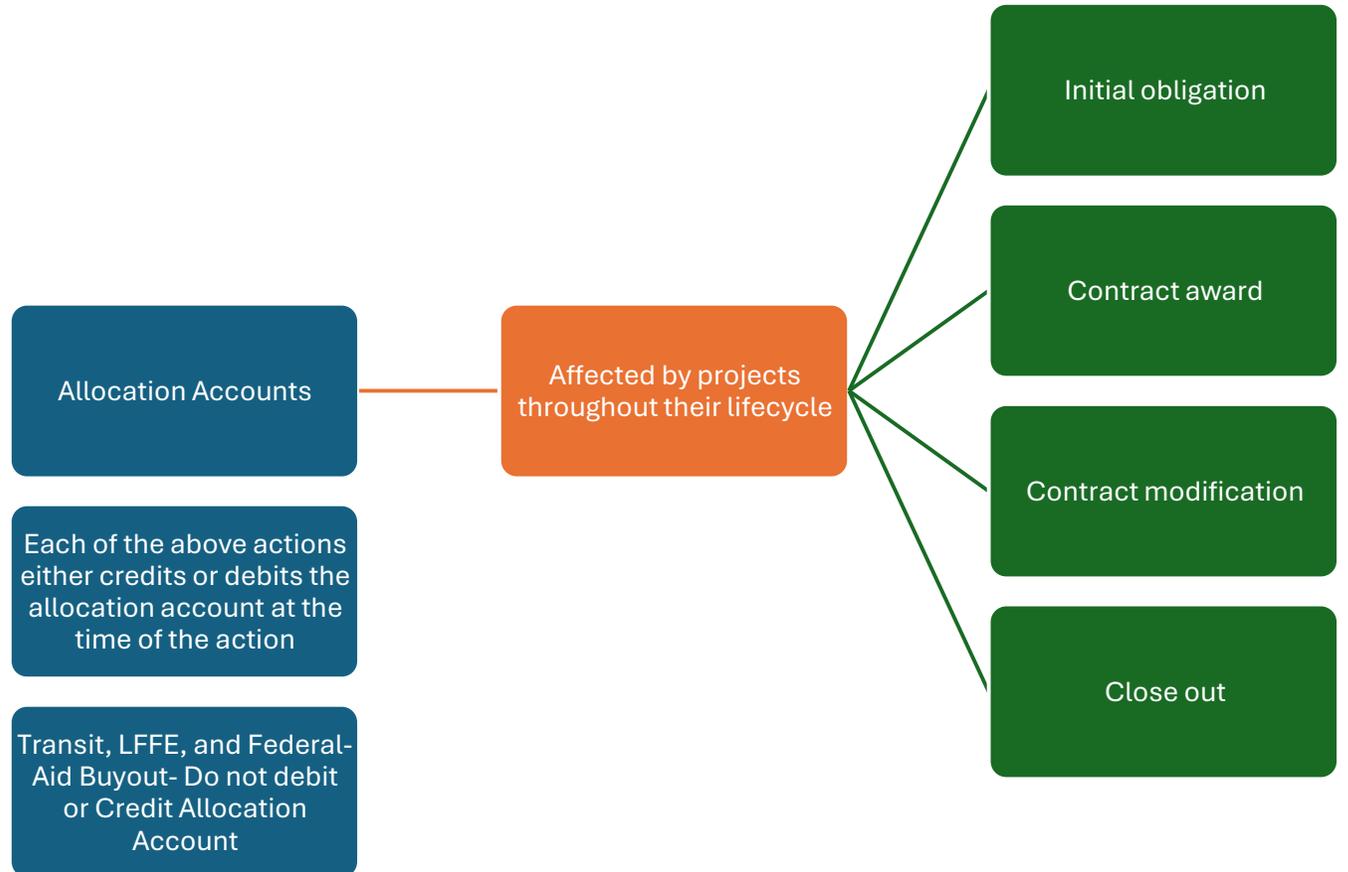
Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF)

-
- **Purpose:** To provide funding for transportation projects which:
 - Complement the existing state trunkline system with improvements on connecting local routes that have high commercial traffic
 - Minimize disruptions that result from seasonal load restrictions
 - **Eligible Recipients:** Eligible applicants are county, city, or village road agencies in counties with a population of less than 400,000.
 - **Eligible Project Costs:** Category D funds must be used only for construction.
 - **Required Match:** 20% local, non-TEDF match is required.
 - Can be utilized with STBG funding
 - **Application Process:** None. Funds are distributed to eligible recipients based on their eligible mileage.
 - **Project Selection:** Eligible recipients present proposed transportation projects to Rural Task Forces (RTF) for review and funding recommendation. Projects selected by the RTF are administered by MDOT.

How and When is Funding Received



Project Level





Allocation Account

- Projects are constrained by your allocation target
- Pro Rata vs Lump Sum
- Available balances includes current year apportionment (Allocation Target) and carryover
- Available balance is first come first serve within the RTF



Road Obligation Authority

- August 1st Guarantee
 - Need a fully biddable package
- Two things to get a project through
 - Funding in your allocation account
 - Obligation
 - Need a fully biddable package

Transit Obligation Authority



Projects selected at the local level and approved by RTF or Small Urban committees



Must be in the STIP, should be decided at the April meetings to meet the deadline of third Wednesday in May



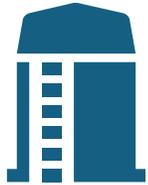
IMPORTANT! COST SAVINGS ON OTHER FLEX PROJECTS CAN ONLY BE USED BY TRANSITS BY APRIL.



Possible Strategies – are all these after obligation?

- RTF could rule that the federal portion of engineer's estimates are capped and any increase in total project cost has to be made up with local funds.
- RTF can borrow allocation from other RTFs
- Projects can be Advance Construct
- Project closeouts affect allocation balance too

What is Pro-Rata vs Lump Sum



Lump Sum (Capped)



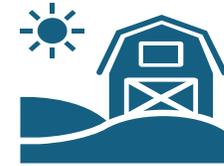
Advantages

Defined amount of STP-Rural and State-D for each project

No projects will use more than its share

The RTF will have sufficient funding allocation for approved projects

Funding percentages are set at obligation to use the STP Rural and/or State-D more rapidly (example to follow)



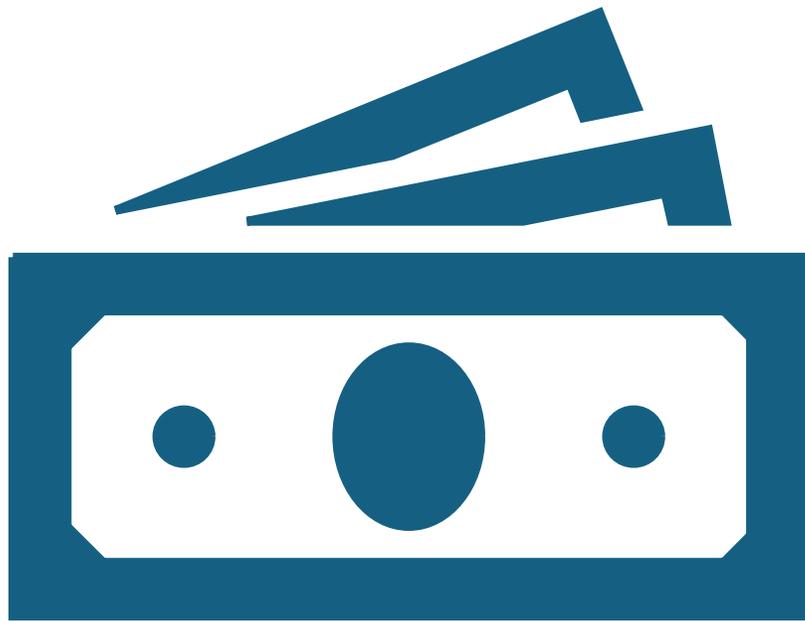
Disadvantages

The local agency is financially responsible for all costs after the cap(s) is reached on STP-Rural and/or State-D

Approved extras and overruns are only covered by STP-Rural and/or State-D if the cap(s) has not been reached. If the cap(s) has been reached, all costs above the cap(s) are 100% local.

What is Pro-Rata vs Lump Sum

-
- Advantages
 - All participating costs are funded at the percentages set at obligation
 - Approved extras and overruns are funded at the same percentages
 - Disadvantages
 - More work on RTF members to track costs and manage program
 - The projects submitted to MDOT toward the end of the year may not be funded in the year programmed
 - Requires the RTF members to monitor costs of their approved projects
 - Requires the RTF members to communicate with each other on project costs regularly so any needed program adjustments can be made.



Different ways to use
allocated project funding

Something to Think About

- Scenarios-
 - Project 1:
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 - STBG- \$800,000, Local- \$150,000, and \$50,000
 - Project 2:
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 - Project 3:
 - Funding- Transit Project
 - STBG- \$100,000 and State- \$25,000



Additional Funding Programs

- Local Federal Fund Exchange (LFFE)
- Federal-Aid Buyout
- TEDF-D Direct grant program
 - The criteria for the TEDF-D funding
- Within and between RTFs
 - STBG funds can be transferred between RTF with an agreement
 - Since TEDF-D are by County they can be transferred within the RTF
 - Can be loaned between any County with an agreement and must be paid back with TEDF-D funding
- Bid Savings

Local Federal Fund Exchange (LFFE)

- Project selection completed through RTF process
 - Exchanges based on STBG programmed in the Sellers STIP projects
 - Federal funds obligated in the year of agreement
- Non-federal funds can be banked for two years
- Agreements should be in place by March 31st to ensure obligation of Buyer's project/s
- Can use the agreement template if you wish but does not count as exchange and MDOT will not track

Federal-Aid Buyout

- The purpose of the Federal Aid Buyout Program is to allow flexibility and enable the most efficient use of federal highway aid and other transportation dollars.
- State money will be exchanged at a rate of 90 cents per dollar
- Local agencies will follow the current MPO or RTF project selection process
- All exchanged funds must be expended within three years
- The federal aid buyout program is limited to the construction phase of a project.
 - Must be included in the STIP

Federal-Aid Buyout

- Based on analysis of budget estimates MDOT has identified adequate state funding for the Federal-Aid Buyout Program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027. The FY 2027 program call for exchanges will follow this schedule.
 - Call information letter and materials distributed December 2, 2025
 - Call for Exchanges Opens January 6, 2026
 - Exchange Requests Due January 23, 2026
 - Draft Awarded Exchange list posted for review February 3, 2026
- Final Awarded Exchanges posted March 3, 2026

State D Direct Grant

RTF / Direct Grant Process Steps

Verify that the project is an eligible route and that allocation is available

Local Road Agency contacts the RTF

TEDF staff will request agreement based on the STIP programming of the project and request obligation

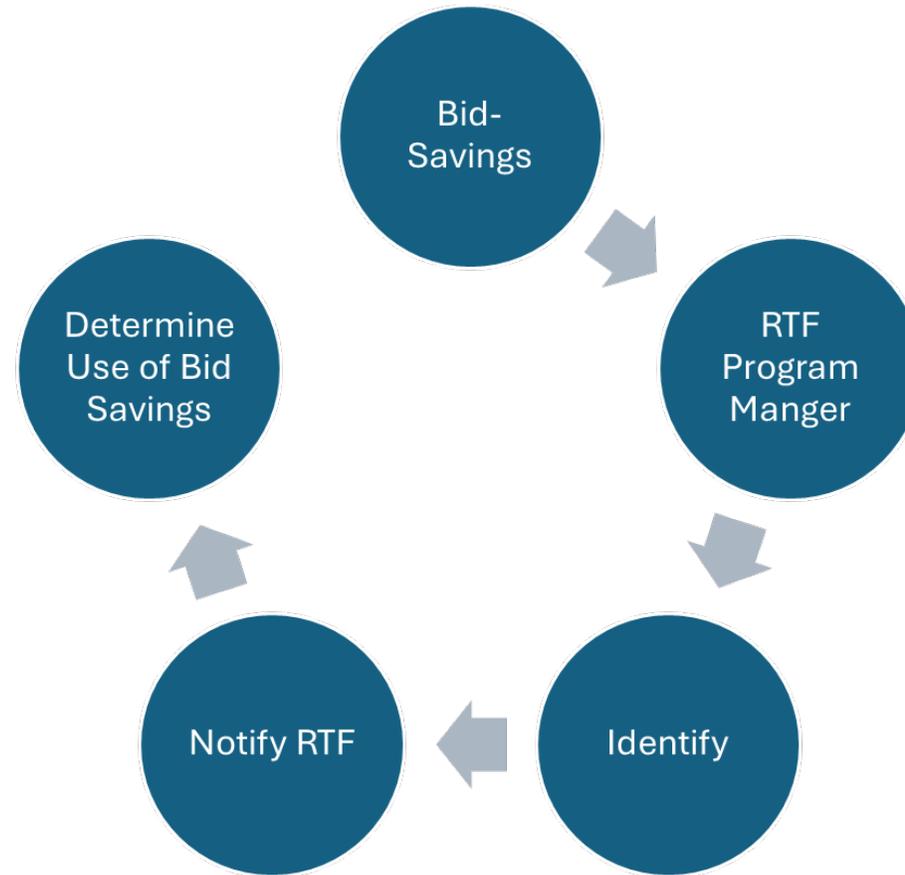
The local Road Agency puts project out to bid through their local letting process, and can enter into contract

Local Road Agency submits to TEDF final project accounting form
If the amount of TEDF Category D funds were not expended on the project at rate 80% TEDF D funds the Local Road Agency must repay the difference to MDOT and that amount will be credited to their TEDF allocation account

Bid-Savings

- **Identify Bid Savings**
- Review the **Bid Savings Report** for projects that came in **under estimate**.
- Confirm the amount of savings available for each project.
- **Check Eligibility**
- Does the savings meet **Bid Savings Criteria**?
 - Example: At least **50% of total allocations awarded** before using savings.
 - **Carryover funds** (e.g., \$1,000,000 in your example).
 - **Notify Stakeholders**
- Confirm compliance with RTF guidelines.
- Inform the **RTF Program Manager** and the RTF committee that bid savings are available.
- Options for using bid savings:
 - **Add to a Transit Project**
 - **Add to a Road Project**
 - **Transfer to another RTF**
 - **Utilize on an ACC (Advance Construct Conversion) project**
 - **Apply to a project other than construction** (if allowed by program rules).
 - **Document Decision**
- Record how funds will be used and ensure it aligns with **RTF policy** and **MDOT guidelines**.

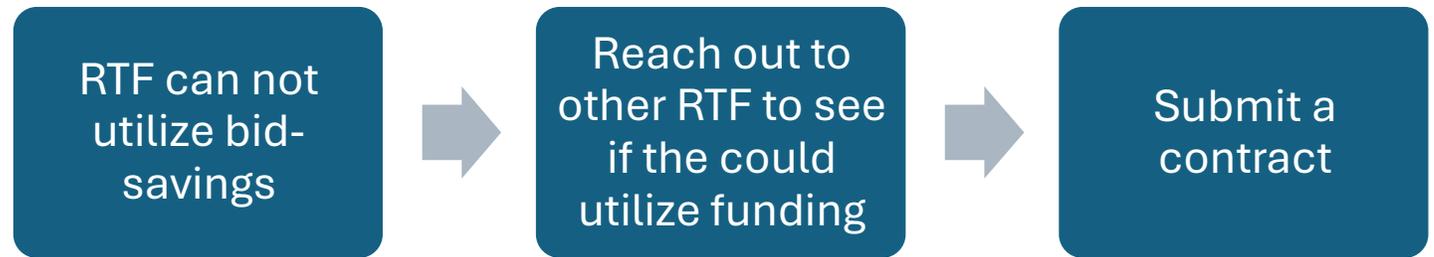
Bid Savings



Bid Savings:
Transfer to
another Project
or Transit
Project



Bid Savings Transfer to another RTF



Bid Savings AC/ACC Project

Does RTF have
an AC/ACC
project



Identify Bid-
Savings



Submit 1799 to
move from ACC
FY to current FY

Bid Savings Project Other than Construction



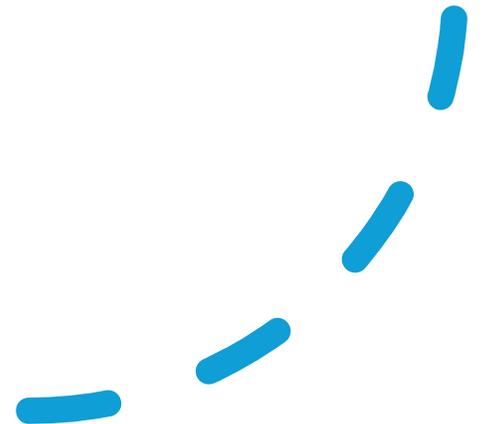


Keeping Track of Things

- Local Agency Balance Report
 - RTF Monthly Status Report
 - Fiscal Constraint Sheet
 - Together all of the documents provide a holistic view of the status of the RTF
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Fiscal Constraint Sheet

- Serves as the RTF and RPA way of tracking projects
 - Can track projects through their lifecycle
- Must be fiscally constrained
- Updated and sent with Monthly Report



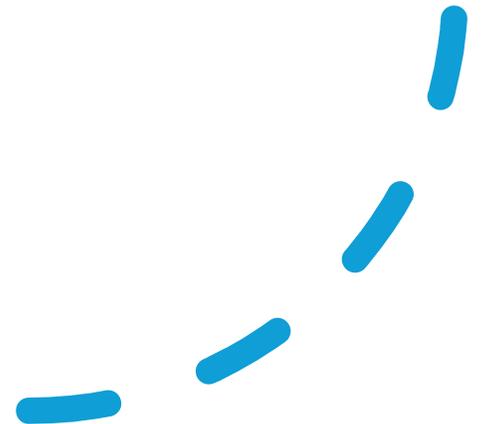


Fiscal Constraint Sheet

- Jump to Fiscal Constraint Sheet reports
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LABR

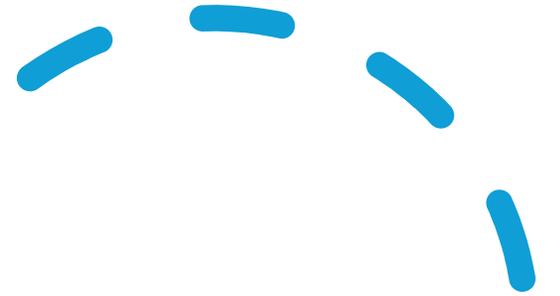
- Sent out each month to distribution list
- Provides financial information on current allocations, obligated projects, and details of current and previous projects awarded amounts





LABR
Example
(Summary)

- Jump to LABR reports



RTF Monthly Status Report

- Pulled from JobNet
- Sent out to distribution list each month
- Provides information on what projects are currently programmed in JobNet



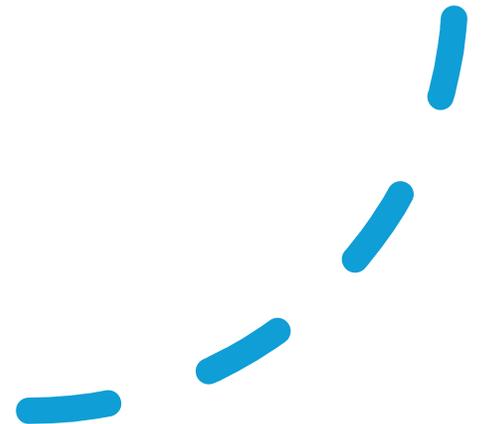


RTF Monthly Report Example

- [Jump to RTF Monthly Reports](#)
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Bid Savings Report

- Provided starting in March with RTF monthly status report
- Indicates if the RTF has any funding available to be reprogrammed
- Jump to Bid Savings reports



How Do They All Work Together?

- Together all of the documents provide a holistic view of the status of the RTF
- LABR helps fill in the gaps for the Monthly Status Report
- Monthly Status Report represents what is put in JobNet from the Fiscal Constraint Sheet
- The Fiscal Constraint sheet helps the RTF's keep track of what is
- The Bid Savings Report utilizes all the reports.

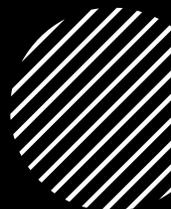


Resources

- MDOT Website
 - <https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/grant-programs/rural>
 - Provides information to public about RTF
- WWW.MichiganRTF.com Website hosted by CRA
 - Website Links to varying resources and recordings of trainings provided by MDOT
 - Where Monthly RTF meeting recordings are stored
- Program Advisory Board (PAB)
 - PAB Created in 2014
 - PAB Meetings are held quarterly
 - MDOT hosted RTF Education Meetings are held Monthly
 - Notification is sent out through GOV Delivery (Get Signed UP!)



Contact Information



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