

PlanWorks *Better planning. Better projects.* **Systematic web-based resource that supports collaborative decision making to deliver projects that meet environmental, community, and mobility needs.**

New resource helps agencies better evaluate and integrate project goals in cost- and time-efficient ways

Transportation agencies are responsible for being stewards of environmental and community concerns, while delivering transportation projects in ways that support a community’s vision. This dual role can be challenging: integrating economic, environmental, and community needs can be time-consuming, and requires effective and collaborative decision making in order to keep projects on schedule. To support the decision-making process, transportation practitioners need a systematic decision support framework that integrates the community’s needs into planning, design, and development of transportation projects.

PlanWorks: Better Planning. Better Projects. is a web-based resource that supports collaborative decision making in the transportation planning and project development process. Available at <https://fhwaapps.fhwa.dot.gov/planworks/>, *PlanWorks* suggests when and how to engage cross-disciplinary partners and stakeholder groups and provides a framework on which to build consensus.

The Solution

PlanWorks helps transportation planners, transportation engineers, environmental resource specialists, and other stakeholders identify and overcome barriers when plans and projects of all scales encounter roadblocks.

PlanWorks provides detailed information about key decisions made during long-range planning, corridor planning, programming, and environmental review. *PlanWorks* helps users understand what information is needed at each key decision, how that information is used, how key decisions in one process relate to key decisions in other processes, and how the decisions can have an impact on project outcomes.

PlanWorks has four major components:

- ▶ Decision Guide – A troubleshooting guide describing the common decision points and opportunities for cooperation in the transportation planning and environmental review process. For each of the key decision points, *PlanWorks* provides policy and stakeholder questions, data needs, case studies and examples, and links to tools that can help support the decision.

New planning resource helps advance highway capacity projects

FOCUS AREA:
Capacity (C01)

Systematic web-based resource with decision guide, assessment tools, information on special topics, and a resource library.

Save Money

- Proven strategies for reducing delays save development costs.



- Collaborative processes that identify optimal improvements ensure prudent investment of resources over time.

Save Time

- Strategically managed planning and environmental review processes expedite schedules.



- ▶ Assessments – Interactive assessment tools that enable project stakeholders to identify opportunities to work together, improve interagency cooperation, and expedite project delivery. Assessments can be taken online, or downloaded and used offline collaboratively.
- ▶ Applications – A series of special topics that provide specific information and approaches for how these topics can be considered in the collaborative decision-making framework. Applications include performance measures, visioning, freight, and many other emerging and complex topics.
- ▶ Library - A resource library containing relevant case studies and reports of successful interagency cooperation in the transportation planning and environmental review process.

The Benefits

PlanWorks brings discipline and consistency to processes and projects, helps avoid project delays, improves the administrative record for projects, and bolsters the effectiveness of project development/delivery. By ensuring the right people are engaged at the right time with the right information, these strategies and performance measures can help generate better clarity about project goals with *PlanWorks*, you can:

- ▶ Identify and overcome barriers when plans and projects of all scales hit roadblocks.
- ▶ Access detailed information about decisions made in long-range planning, corridor planning, programming, or environmental review.
- ▶ Diagnose specific barriers and strategies to address those through improved collaboration.
- ▶ Integrate new and emerging topics into the decision-making process.

How can you learn more?

The website for *PlanWorks: Better Planning. Better Projects.* is available at <https://fhwaapps.fhwa.dot.gov/planworks/>.

PlanWorks is based on initial research conducted by the Transportation Research Board, which created *Transportation for Communities - Advancing Projects through Partnerships* (also known as TCAPP). The TRB report, *A Framework for Collaborative Decision Making on Additions to Highway Capacity*, is available online at <http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/166046.aspx>.

For more information, contact Gary Jensen at FHWA, gary.jensen@dot.gov; Reena Mathews at FHWA, reena.mathews@dot.gov; Larry Anderson at FHWA, larry.anderson@dot.gov; and Matt Hardy at AASHTO, mhardy@aaashto.org.



About SHRP2 Implementation

The second Strategic Highway Research Program is a national partnership of key transportation organizations: the Federal Highway Administration, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and the Transportation Research Board. Together, these partners conduct research and deploy products that will help the transportation community enhance the productivity, boost the efficiency, increase the safety, and improve the reliability of the Nation's highway system.

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