

The Transportation Improvement Program and the Long Range Plan are vastly different yet closely related documents.

The LRP sets out the vision of the region and identifies critical long term issues that the region must address over time. This document takes considerable time to forge, building consensus among disparate communities. For large regions this can typically take 2 to 3 years to do properly. With such effort and expense, the document should stand for a number of years, perhaps even a decade, with periodic updates to reflect minor changes.

TIP is the is the short term implementation of the LRP. However, it is much more than that. It is the vehicle on which the partnership between the region and the state has been carried. The dynamic nature of the project development process and the need to manage resources requires a close working relationship between the state and its many regions. The TIP has been the mechanism that has allowed the MPO to be a part of this process. While years ago states were reluctant to close contact with the MPOs, time and the federal TIP requirements have opened up new relationships. The TIP needs to be dynamic, subject to frequent change by mutual consent. But a bi-annual update is also necessary to give the collective of the state and its MPOs the opportunity to reassess the program and rematch the projects to available funding. Therefore, it is absolutely contrary to all that has been achieved through ISTEA and TEA21 to consider merging the TIP and LRP into one document. This would either force the LRP to be revised too often or the TIP to become irrelevant. KEEP THESE TWO DOCUMENTS SEPARATE. Nothing of value is achieved by combining them.