

The Supporting Statement

Introduction: The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) will conduct a survey to compile a list of Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS). This new information collection, titled “*Survey on Projects of National and Regional Significance*” is required by *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century* (MAP-21), Section 1120(1).

Part A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

Section 1120 of MAP-21 requires the Secretary to submit a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate regarding PNRS, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the MAP-21. The report will contain a comprehensive list of each project of national and regional significance that has been compiled through a survey of State departments of transportation. To compile a comprehensive list of projects intended by Congress, FHWA will survey all eligible applicant groups for the PNRS program; this includes State departments of transportation, transit agencies, tribal governments, and multi-state or multi-jurisdictional groups.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used:

This information will be used by the USDOT to conduct an analysis to classify projects as regionally or nationally significant and to make recommendations in the report to Congress on financing for eligible project costs. The US DOT/FHWA is not able to verify information submitted by the states/respondents. The US DOT will summarize information submitted by the respondents based on an assessment of the likelihood that a project will:

- significantly improve the performance of the Federal-aid highway system, nationally or regionally;
- Generate national economic benefits that reasonably exceed the costs of the projects, including increased access to jobs, labor, and other critical economic inputs; Reduce long-term congestion, including impacts in the State, region, and the United States, and increase speed, reliability, and accessibility of the movement of people or freight;
- and improve transportation safety, including reducing transportation accidents, and
- can be supported by an acceptable degree of non-Federal financial commitments.

The output of the review and analysis process will result in project responses being categorized in the TIERS described below. It is anticipated that all three tiers will be discussed in the report to Congress.

TIER 1 – Projects in this tier meet the basic eligibility for the PNRS program. For purposes of this survey, basic eligibility refers to SAFETEA-LU Section 1301 (c) and (d). In addition, projects in this tier will also be supported with quantitative data that includes, but is not be limited to: benefit and cost data; information from preliminary studies and design documents that supports how the project will reduce congestion and improve safety and demonstration of non-federal financial commitments.

TIER 2 - Projects in this tier meet basic eligibility and may be classified as PNRS subject to additional documentation.

TIER 3 – Projects in this tier do not meet basic eligibility.

3. Extent of automated information collection:

This Survey will be web-based, allowing for ease of response, as well as electronic collating and synthesizing of information provided by respondents. Follow up contact with respondents may be required to clarify information submitted or request missing or incomplete information.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

With regard to the use of existing information on PNRS projects in each state, no previous compilation exists. Existing reports on PNRS only include information on projects that were funded under Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). MAP-21 specifically directs the USDOT to include in the report to Congress a comprehensive list of each project of national and regional significance that has been compiled through a survey of State departments of transportation, the agencies to which the Paperwork Reduction Act pertains.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

There is no anticipated burden on small businesses.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

There are no anticipated consequences or program impacts to performing the anticipated data collection activity.

7. Special circumstances:

While not directed to do so in the legislation, FHWA believes surveying all eligible applicants will result in the comprehensive list required by MAP 21. FHWA interprets that State departments of transportation were intended as the minimum group to be surveyed.

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

The publication date for the Federal Register notice that solicited public comments for a 60-day period was on May 20, 2013. Attachment B summarizes the comments received during the 60-day period and FHWA's response to the comments.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents:

No payments or gifts are proposed to be provided to respondents.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

Participation in survey is voluntary and the content of responses is not intended to include propriety or confidential information. Respondents will be asked to identify the agency providing the response. At the discretion of the respondent, contact information for follow up clarification of information could be provided. The report would disclose only the agency submitting the information as identifying information.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

This collection does not intend to collect sensitive information.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

Estimated Number of respondents:

State Departments of Transportation = 52

Transit Agencies = 50

Tribal Governments = 10

Multi-state or multi-jurisdictional groups = 10

Burden hours

80 hours/State Department of Transportation = 4,160 hours

40 hours/Transit Agency = 2,000 hours

10 hours/Tribal Government = 100

20 hours/ Multi-state or multi-jurisdictional groups = 200

Total burden hours = 6,460 (as allocated above).

Because there is no funding or grant awards associated with this survey, the USDOT strongly encourages states and respondents not to collect new information, but instead to respond using existing data and information. The burden hours are estimated assuming there will be limited to no collection of new information.

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

This is a one-time requirement.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

The cost of this element of work required under MAP-21, Section 1120(1) is approximately \$300,000 for costs related to preparation, distribution, and summarizing the results of the review by a consultant and incidental costs. The US DOT/FHWA is not able to verify info and is only summarizing reports from states and respondents and is not responsible for the actual numbers or statements provided by respondents.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

This is a new request for information collection.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

The results of the review should be published within 24 months of enactment of MAP-21, as a submission to Congress.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval:

Approval for not displaying the expiration date is not being requested.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

No exception to the certification statement is being requested.