

Agency Overview

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is a multimodal transportation agency that is responsible for planning, building and operating the state highway system, including approximately 1,200 miles of the system on Tribal land. ADOT also provides program assistance to twelve Tribal airports and seven Tribal public transit systems.

Tribal Liaisons

ADOT employs two department-wide Tribal Liaisons both of whom coordinate actions to address Tribal transportation policy and statewide issues. They also carry out consultation, coordination and cooperation activities for transportation planning projects. The Liaisons have organized Tribal land areas within Arizona into northern and southern regions of responsibility to provide improved coverage and service.

ADOT Tribal Consultation Policy – Major Collaborative Activities

The following are major actions that address thirteen ADOT consultation policy goals and were conducted with assistance from the Tribal Liaisons in coordination and participation from other department personnel.

Consultation Policy Goal	Goal Objective	Goal Activity/Performance Measure
<p>Develop, build and maintain appropriate Tribal working relationships. (Policies 1, 4 and 9)</p> <p>Encourage mutual understanding of unique cultural and organizational practices among ADOT and Tribes. (Policies 8 and 10)</p>	<p>Reissue contract with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) to: (1) provide ADOT ongoing Tribal technical assistance, (2) host Tribal Transportation Working Group (TWG) meetings, (3) increase information sharing, (4) improve State-Tribal coordination, and (5) to inform Tribal decision makers for improved process implementation of State-Tribal consultation actions and/or transportation projects.</p> <p>Encourage ADOT, Councils of Government, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and stakeholder agency personnel to take training to enhance their knowledge and working relationships with Tribes.</p>	<p>ADOT reissued its FY22 ITCA contract on 11/15/21. TWG Meetings were held on 2/03/22 (10 Tribes represented), 3/10/22 (11 Tribes), 4/07/22 (6 Tribes), 5/05/22 (6 Tribes). Topics: I-10/GRIC Corridor Improvement Project, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Overview, BIL Tribal Transportation Program, AZ Highway Safety Improvement Program, BIL Tribal Transit Program, AZ Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan, AZ Long Range Transportation Plan.</p> <p>The ADOT Tribal Transportation Consultation Online Training Course continues to be offered to ADOT and outside agency personnel. During FY22 there were 372 AZ Tribal Transportation (AZTT) website training web page views.</p>
<p>Consider all Tribal transportation concerns. (Policies 1, 3, 4, 7 and 11)</p>	<p>Record and address Tribal-related comments voiced at State Transportation Board (STB) meetings.</p> <p>Coordinate and convene STB meetings in Tribal communities to accommodate attendance by Tribal officials and community members. Provide Tribal Transportation Update Reports at STB meetings</p>	<p>During FY22 ADOT Tribal Liaisons attended 12 STB meetings. Liaisons also coordinated meetings in the Salt River Pima- Maricopa Indian Community and San Carlos Apache community. There were 21 Tribal-related comments recorded during FY22 compared to 18 in FY21. Follow-up on comments is determined by ADOT leadership and reported to the STB as needed.</p>

	that cover ADOT Tribal outreach and consultation actions.	ADOT Tribal Liaisons also submitted 11 Tribal Transportation Update Reports to the Board.
<p>Provide timely opportunities for communication with Tribes about decisions that may affect them. (Policy 11)</p> <p>Maintain and operate State infrastructure within Tribal lands. (Policy 3)</p> <p>Maintain the appropriate Tribal working relationships to assure the continuous operation of all respective transportation systems. (Policy 4)</p>	Utilize the ADOT Northern and Southern Region Liaisons as point of contact for Tribal-related inquiries, assistance requests and outreach to Tribal governments for ADOT transportation planning projects.	<p>ADOT I-17 and I-19 Broadband Projects initial Tribal outreach was conducted with Yavapai-Apache Tribe in November and in December with Tohono O’odham Nation. ADOT AZ Electric Vehicle Deployment Plan Tribal outreach notification was distributed in June to six Tribes directly impacted. Also ADOT AZ Statewide Rest Area Study Tribal outreach notification was distributed in June to four Tribes directly impacted. Consultation meetings are expected to be held during FY23 for both projects. All 22 Tribes in Arizona are included on the project stakeholder lists.</p> <p>ADOT Tribal Liaisons conducted outreach with 3 Navajo Chapters regarding concerns with US 191, SR 98, US 160 and OJT inquiries.</p>
<p>Improve Tribal consultation for the implementation of the Arizona Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). (Policy 5)</p>	Consult with Tribes on all major projects. Increase participation with the state, local governments, Councils of Government and Metropolitan Planning Organizations for funding and technical assistance on projects that may be included in the Arizona STIP.	The E-STIP Tool continues to be a helpful resource made available to Tribal representatives and a link to the tool is posted on the AZTT website.
<p>Develop, build and maintain appropriate Tribal working relationships. (Policy 1)</p> <p>Maintain and operate State infrastructure within Tribal lands. (Policy 3)</p> <p>Maintain the appropriate Tribal working relationships to assure the continuous operation of all respective transportation systems. (Policy 4)</p>	<p>Increase communication and address Tribal concerns related to facility maintenance needs.</p> <p>Consult and coordinate with Tribes on the implementation of transportation improvement projects that impact the state highway system.</p> <p>Restart meetings of the three ADOT-Tribal Transportation Partnerships.</p>	ADOT-Hopi Tribe Transportation Partnership meetings were restarted during FY22 and were held on 11/8/21, 1/25/22 and 4/5/22. Topics covered were pandemic related challenges, need for HDOT facility, ADOT Long Range Transportation Plan, Planning to Programming process, construction and maintenance projects, Hopi Senom Transit study, and ADOT-Hopi IGA to store buses.
<p>Neither solicit nor assert any claim to federal resources available to Tribes. (Policy 2)</p>	Remove barriers that Tribes may have in accessing funding for transportation projects.	23 USC 202(a)(9) authorizes State DOTs to transfer eligible Federal funds directly to Tribal governments through an Intergovernmental funds transfer agreement. In May the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community made a transfer request which is underway for five projects.

ADOT will promote Airport Development Grants when considered mutually appropriate by ADOT and the appropriate Native Nation/Tribal Government. (Policy 6)	Engage in a spirit of cooperation and coordination, partner stakeholders agree to fund joint projects. Pursue funding through State and Federal programs.	During FY22 ADOT initiated a PDCA and conducted Tribal outreach to encourage Tribal airport project requests through the SAF. Outreach was initiated with the 12 Tribal airports and on 4/27/22 ADOT met with five Tribal Airport Managers. Followup project actions are underway and the PDCA will become a standard process in FY23.
Identify available resources to jointly/individually fund projects that benefit the State and Tribes. (Policy 7)	Conduct a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) process that encourages Tribal project requests under the State Aviation Fund (SAF).	
Conduct technical training, when appropriate and as resources allow. (Policy 8)	Encourage Tribal police departments to begin utilizing the ADOT Traffic Records and Criminal Software (TraCS) program to enter data into the State crash report database.	The GRIC continues to move forward with technical aspects for use of the TraCS program. A training session was held with GRIC PD on 5/12/22. Also the newly hired ADOT Tribal Liaison attended this TraCS training to be educated on the development and implementation phases involved and to be a resource to Tribes.
Assist Tribal governments to implement transportation programs by providing technical assistance. (Policy 13)	Maintain the AZ Tribal Transportation website to share transportation resource information with the Tribes, outside agencies and the general public.	During FY22 overall there were 11,903 AZTT website pageviews.
Share appropriate technical information and data with the Tribes. (Policy 12)		

Recommendations from Tribal representatives:

Recommendations for safety improvements on US70 within the San Carlos Apache Reservation, SR264 on the Hopi Reservation, and US 191 on the Navajo Nation were received through tribal-related comments during State Transportation Board meetings. Follow-up actions on the recommendations have been initiated.

Revisions to Tribal Consultation Policy:

ADOT's Tribal Consultation Policy was last updated and approved on March 25, 2021. Future policy updates will be made per input received from ADOT management and/or tribal leadership pursuant to A.R.S. 41-2051(C). The current policy may be viewed at <http://aztribaltransportation.org/policies.asp>.

Liaison Challenges:

The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing consultation activity challenge for ADOT Tribal Liaisons due to Tribal executive order restrictions involving Tribal office closures and limitations on large gatherings (in-person project meetings, transportation partnership meetings and public involvement meetings). Restrictions have been lifted to a certain extent by some Tribes and the Liaisons continue to conduct virtual business meetings as needed.

The Liaisons have also encountered delays in response or no response from Tribes when the Department is following up on requests or inquiries. Another challenge for Liaisons is the unmentioned Tribal outreach activities occurring in other offices within the Department. Efforts are underway to improve internal ADOT communication.

In April 2022 Ermalinda Gene, former ADOT Northern Region Tribal Liaison, retired from ADOT and in March ADOT hired Paula Brown as the new Tribal Liaison. Ms. Brown is transitioning into her new role and all aspects of the job including the facilitation of tribal communication and consultation processes with Tribal governments across the entirety of ADOT. There were also a considerable amount of tribal-related issues and inquiries that were ongoing prior to Ms. Gene's departure and those need to be researched and addressed.

For questions or more information contact:

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