
TDOT AERONAUTICS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

IMPORTANT: Beginning with our 9/20/23 funding request deadline for the October PSR & TAC, we [Aeronautics Division] will no longer use FAA funding (NPE or BIL) on Preliminary Study grants.

If Preliminary Studies were programmed in FY 2024, these grants, which are part of our [Method 1 Grant Process](#) (see [October 22, 2022 Development Update](#)), will be **funded with State and local funds only**.

Alternatively, airports can choose [Method 2 Grant Process](#) and proceed without a grant and delay reimbursement until after the environmental finding is complete. The related costs can then be included for reimbursement in the stand-alone design only grant.

EXCEPTIONS: If an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required and will cost \$25,000 or more, then FAA Funding can be awarded on an Environmental Study grant¹. The associated preliminary design work can be included but must be conceptual in nature². Per FAA policy, environmental assessments and environmental impact statements are considered to be planning. This allows a stand-alone grant for an environmental study.

BACKGROUND

We are doing this because the FAA has determined that NPE and BIL funds cannot be granted prior to the environmental finding being completed, aside from the exceptions noted above.

We believe that Preliminary Studies are an important phase in project development which help to define the scope of a project, complete the necessary environmental reviews, and generate a preliminary cost estimate for the project. The information gained through Preliminary Studies helps everyone to make data driven decisions and determine which projects will require review by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission (TAC).

FUTURE FISCAL YEARS

For FY 2025 and forward, we will utilize the State Priority Rating (SPR) Model to prioritize State funding to the highest scoring projects. Preliminary Studies will qualify as Tier 2 projects and will be scored using the SPR Model. The selected projects will be communicated in the final ACIP after programming has concluded. If a project does not score high enough to receive State funding and the Sponsor wants to move forward, then the associated Preliminary Study must be paid for with local funds, or reimbursed through the stand-alone design only grant. Low scoring BIL projects, or ineligible revenue producing projects, will likely need to use the Method 2 Grant Process. Please ensure that NPE and BIL funded projects have been programmed in the ACIP before starting project formulation.

¹ [FAA Order 5100.38D, Change 1, Table S-1.a](#)

² [FAA Order 1050.1 \(latest version\) Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures](#)