**Pima Association of Government – Transportation**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### General

**1. How will the tool be used?**

The Transportation Investment Analysis (TIA) tool will be used in the development of long-range transportation plans to provide data-driven insight. Specifically, the tool will help to compare the potential impacts and benefits of different transportation projects among different areas of the greater Tucson region. This will not only help transportation planners and local officials but will also make it easier for citizens, business owners and other stakeholders to see the return on their tax investments.

**2. How will communities benefit from the use of the tool?**

Needs on the transportation system far exceed available funding to pay for them, and the recent COVID-19 crisis, for example, is expected to exacerbate the funding gap. This tool is designed to assist communities in prioritizing limited transportation dollars on projects that help to enhance the economic impact to the region.

**3. Who will use the tool?**

Initially, the tool will be used and tested by transportation planners and others at PAG, the region’s metropolitan planning organization, with input from municipalities, tribal governments, Pima County, the state and others. In the future, a public facing tool could be considered so that voters can explore the various projects and their potential impacts and benefits.

**4. How often will the tool be used?**

Initially, we anticipate that the tool will be used and developed for PAG’s next long-range transportation plan update, scheduled to begin in 2021 or 2022. This will beta-test the tool for additional use cases, including the biennial development of PAG’s Transportation Improvement Program as well as other regional transportation planning efforts.

**5. Can this tool be applied to other use cases?**

Potentially, the tool could be applied to other use cases, but it’s too early to know. Results of the beta test will help determine how the tool can be applied to other use cases.

### Tool development

**6. How much will it cost to build and operate the tool?**

The costs to build and operate the tool are still being evaluated.

**7. Who builds the tool’s algorithms?**

We anticipate that the tool’s algorithms will be developed through collaboration between PAG and the ASU/ASW Smart City Cloud Innovation team.

**8. Who determines the algorithm inputs?**

For initial tool development and testing, the algorithm inputs will be determined by PAG and the ASU/AWS Smart City Cloud Innovation Center team. However, we anticipate seeking feedback from a broader audience in later stages of the tool’s development and use.

**9. What will/should be the inputs?**

A wide variety of data sources typically used for transportation planning and economic analyses will be used for the algorithm inputs. For example, this may include traffic counts, project cost estimates, data on demographics, wages and occupations, land use and zoning information, and many other inputs.

**10. How does the tool interpret the data?**

How the tool will interpret the data is still being evaluated.

### Accuracy and security

**11. How do we validate/trust the results of the tool and security of the data?**

Various aspects of the tool will be documented, such as in a reference manual or a methodology report, so that other tool users can independently generate the same results by following the step-by-step procedures. The data will be sourced from government entities as well as from publicly available information gathered by trustworthy sources. Moreover, no data products that include personally identifying information will be used. Standard security practices will be employed to prevent unauthorized access to, and manipulation of, the tool.

**12. What QA processes will be in place?**

Internal reviews of both inputs and outputs by PAG staff members will help to assure quality.

**13. How do you guarantee integrity/validity/accuracy of the systems?**

To generate high quality results, only accurate and current data sources will be used. These standards will be considered whenever additional data sources are suggested for inclusion in the tool. Since tools like this can only provide estimates and projections to model reality and cannot represent real world conditions perfectly, it’s important to note these limitations when interpreting any of the results.

### Miscellaneous

**14. Can the data/access be sold?**

We anticipate that the tool could be made open source. Additionally, PAG could create a revenue generating model in the future, as appropriate.

**15. Will this technology steal jobs?**

No. The tool will supplement existing planning and analysis processes and is not intended to replace the role of PAG staff and others. Moreover, the transportation project prioritization generally occurs with input from elected leaders and citizens’ committees established by various jurisdictions.

**16. What happens if the outputs are not used?**

The tool is intended to provide decision support as one input of a multi-step and multi-faceted process. If the outputs are not used, the tool can be considered for the next transportation planning process.

**17. What other factors are used to inform transportation investment decisions?**

Many factors inform transportation investment decisions. These include public input, jurisdiction needs and priorities, available funding, traffic safety and congestion, air quality, return on investment, and many others. All of these are considered when developing transportation plans and making investment decisions that are approved by elected leaders.