



TEN TIPS is a new series from the APA Transportation Planning Division's Emerging Professionals Group. Each installment of the series includes tips from experienced transportation planning professionals aimed at helping students and new planners navigate the industry.

Understanding Funding Options

1. Money is scarce and there will always be a greater need than resources. **Focus on the absolute best projects possible to gain access to funding.** *Chris Comeau, AICP CTP, Transportation Planner, Bellingham Public Works Engineering*
2. **Read and listen to webinars.** *Anonymous*
3. Grants can be really useful to getting projects done, however **be clear on the requirements for the administration and reporting.** Some grants may not be worth the time spent in administration. *Cynthia Hoyle, FAICP, Alta Planning + Design*
4. **Find webinar opportunities from different organization such as FHWA, FTA, AMPO, etc.** *Anonymous*
5. Available **funding varies in different areas of the country.** Seasoned professionals are often familiar with the wide variety of sources out there and many webinars / training opportunities are available when new or different sources pop up. *Shelby Powell, AICP, Deputy Director, NC Capital Area MPO*
6. Funding changes, albeit slowly. Knowledge of federal programs is useful nationwide, so **concentrate on learning about federal programs first.** *Dharm Guruswamy, AICP CTP, Corrective Action Plans Program Manager, FTA WMATA Safety Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*
7. Search for “innovative financing” and read about all the different types of funding. Also **check out different “project delivery methods”** as there are many funding options associated with those as well. *Marsha Anderson Bomar, AICP, Senior Principal, Stantec*
8. The only good plan is an implementable one. It is important for planners to have an understanding of not only how funding works, but **understand how to use multiple funding sources** to develop their communities projects. *Dan Haake, AICP, Freight/Rail Planner VI, CDM Smith*
9. **Explore public-private partnerships.** This funding structure, when used correctly, provides the possibility of gaining access to favorable public sector interest rates while shifting the risk to the private sector. Be careful as this can be a complex deal structure and is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Make sure the P3 requirements align with the project goals. *Anonymous*
10. **New funding sources, such as TIGER Grants, favor shovel-ready projects.** Be aware of grant requirements and ensure that projects are advanced to the required point to ensure it is competitive for the available funding. *Anonymous*