

**Office of Federal Lands Highway with Federal Lands Management Agencies**  
**Innovation and Research Council (IRC) Charter**  
**Established June 1, 2021**  
***Amended December 1, 2023***

The establishment of the Innovation and Research Council (IRC) blends the activities of the Office of Federal Lands Highways (FLH), Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMA) and Tribes that are related to ensuring effective and efficient project delivery to the transportation system on Federal and Tribal Lands. The IRC brings together representatives from all these agencies and tribes to lead innovation and research in transportation for the benefit of their tribal and federally managed lands. The IRC is supported by two committees, the a) Innovation and b) Research Heightened Utility and Deployment (HUDs). They are known as the iHUD and rHUD.

**Purpose**

This Charter establishes the Innovation and Research Council and defines its mission, scope, membership, and administration.

**Vision**

The IRC fosters a collaborative culture for identification and rapid implementation of innovations to efficiently deliver a high-quality transportation system for its property owners and customer experience.

The IRC fosters a collaborative culture for identification of transportation research problem statements (needs) and implementation of research conclusions, if applicable, that support the mission(s) of member organizations.

**Scope**

The objectives of the IRC are to identify and recommend ways that technologies and practices can enable land management agencies to more successfully respond to key issues and challenges that impact their transportation program. The IRC acts as a catalyst for the identification and rapid deployment of technologies, techniques (questionable) and tactics that have been demonstrated in "real world" applications and can offer improved performance/effectiveness on their lands. The blend of partners and stakeholders on IRC enable it to:

- act as a liaison among the stakeholders represented by the membership and provide a forum for those stakeholders on current and emerging issues in the transportation sector.
- provide a forum for discussing and proposing solutions to transportation-related problems.
- develop a process to identify technologies, tactics and techniques on which to focus implementation efforts.
- mobilize champions within the partners who are committed to the evaluation and implementation of identified technologies, tactics and techniques.
- provide leadership to promote and support rapid implementation of technologies, tactics and techniques.
- monitor performance to ensure innovations and research conclusions, when applicable, move into standard practice.
- share information with all stakeholders through meetings, workshops, and conferences.

- share achievements and collaborate with the National STIC Network to learn about innovations being advanced throughout the country (i.e. participate in National STIC Network meetings, EDC Regional Summits, Innovation Peer Exchanges, etc.).
- advise the land management agencies on the implementation of other Federal Highway Administration research and innovation programs and how they may benefit members.
- Identify opportunities to pool and/or leverage other funding sources, where available and makes sense for the council.

## Membership

IRC is a group of executive level representatives from various FLMAs committed to comprehensively and strategically considering all sources of innovation and research. The IRC brings together stakeholders that represent transportation market forces to work together to lead change. The broader the diversity of the membership represented on the IRC, the greater the opportunity to be comprehensive in performing the actions noted above, the IRC will best be served by membership that reflects a balanced cross-section of transportation interests, including entities from various geographic locations and agencies of varying size. Membership will include the following organizations:

- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Department of the Interior
- Federal Lands Highway
- National Park Service
- Surface Deployment and Distribution Command
- The Presidio Trust
- Tribal Transportation Program Coordinating Committee (TTPCC)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service

The IRC reserves membership for three Tribal representatives:

- One Tribal member of the TTPCC and nominated by the TTPCC
- One Tribal member with backing and support from national or regional tribal organization/committees
- One tribal representative based on their research program/project experience and knowledge
- Representatives are tribal member, and are tribal leaders or representatives of tribal transportation departments.

Updates to membership organizations will be foreseeably static but may be adjusted in response to related activities, e.g., reauthorization. The co-chairs will seek consensus, and once achieved, new member organizations will be invited by the FLH to participate on the IRC, as appropriate.

The IRC will be co-chaired by a rotating FLMA Executive level representative and a permanent FLH-HQ representative, the Assistant Administrator for Federal Lands Highway. The presiding FLMA co-chair holds the seat for two years starting on the federal fiscal year cycle. FLMA partner agencies wishing to be co-chair will self-nominate and make it known to the IRC in July preceding the end of the current co-chair's term. The FLMA co-chair is selected amongst their peers by majority vote in August. The new co-chair will be engaged in transition activities and co-lead the following IRC meeting.

The roster of executive level representatives, their alternatives, and each organization's iHUD and rHUD representatives will be published annually by October 1, the start of the federal fiscal year.

### **Meetings**

The IRC will meet, at a minimum, twice a year at a time and place or platform set by the Co-Chairs. In addition, the IRC may be convened to address time-critical topics as deemed necessary by the Co-Chairs.

To maximize the cohesion of the IRC and maintain its momentum, executive members are expected to attend all meetings. Attendance may be in person or any two-way, interactive communications means, such as conference call or video conference. If necessary, a member may be represented by a designated alternate.

Current iHUD and rHUD members are invited to observe IRC meetings. In addition, executive members may invite observers to the IRC meetings from their organizations.

Records will be generated, stored, and distributed and managed by FLH. FLH will distribute meeting notes to contacts on the official roster. Meeting summaries will be posted on the FLH website for public viewing.

Agendas are developed, managed, and distributed by FLH as generated from input received by iHUD, rHUD committees and previous topics-of-note from the IRC. The agenda includes standard business items as well as open discussion and presentation.

Subject matter experts (SMEs) and other advisors may be invited to attend specific IRC meetings as suggested by the IRC members prior to the meeting occurring. The purpose of the (SME) guest attendance is intentional and beneficial to the IRC.

### **Subcommittees**

The IRC will work closely with the Innovation Heightened Utility and Development (iHUD) and the Research HUD (rHUD) to listen, act on suggestions, and provide feedback to these working groups.

### **Innovation and Research Identification, Evaluation, and Implementation**

The IRC enables all participants to evaluate and reach consensus on the recommendations from the subcommittees. Consensus is defined as the iterative process towards gaining support and is achieved when those most concerned are comfortable with the path chosen. The use of consensus building is an example of the collaborative nature of the IRC: a group committed to finding balance and arriving at a solution that is amenable to all parties. When consensus is not imminent, IRC members will petition the co-chairs to begin a voting process. Each agency has one (1) vote, and that vote shall have veto power.

This process provides collective and transparent approach to the allocation of resources for innovation and research deployment and communicates the need to change current practice, leading to greater acceptance among the transportation community for innovation and research implementation.

### **Outreach and Communication**

The IRC can most effectively share innovation and research conclusion deployment efforts and successes with the FLMA community, public, and stakeholders by sharing and collaborating. Communicating the

impact and benefits of implementing innovations and research conclusions within the agency organizations and tribal governments, can demonstrate to leaders, the traveling public, and customers that taxpayer dollars are being efficiently utilized and impacts and benefits of implementing innovation and research conclusions are being shared with all partners. The IRC shares information amongst its members through reporting at meetings, and sharing news briefs and technical briefs, as warranted.

To ensure these outcomes are shared effectively, the IRC directs the iHUD and rHUD to collectively develop communication and outreach plans. The IRC will approve these plans.

### **Measuring Success**

By setting deployment and tech transfer goals, the IRC communicates amongst its members the expected outcome and results from innovation and research and encourages successful implementation. The IRC directs the iHUD and rHUD to collectively develop steps and success metrics that carryout the outcome expectations of the IRC. Progress is routinely communicated to the IRC by the iHUD and rHUD.

Progress toward meeting the goals are shared with members at IRC meetings and used to provide information for the outreach and communication activities. The IRC is encouraged to consider a strategic plan that describes innovation pursuits and research problem statements/projects, including but not limited to individualized Road Maps by discipline; measured transferability of innovation and research amongst partners; workforce development and skills development for the emerging workforce; and deployed innovation and research.

### **Amendments**


Amendments to this Charter are at the will its members. Suggestions for amendments will be proposed, vetted, and determined by the IRC as necessary.

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Innovation and Research Council (IRC) Charter  
Established June 1, 2021**

**Signatures:**

**Co-Chairs:**

***Permanent co-chair: Federal Lands Highway Division, Federal Highway Administration***


**BRIAN JEFFERY  
FOUCH**  Digitally signed by BRIAN  
JEFFERY FOUCH  
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***Rotating co-chair, August 2022-August 2024 National Park Service***


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**Executive Members:**

***Bureau of Reclamation***

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***Bureau of Land Management***

**Barbara L.  
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***Bureau of Indian Affairs***

***Department of the Interior***

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***The Presidio Trust***

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Amy

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***Surface Deployment and Distribution Command***

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***U.S. Army Corps of Engineers***

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**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

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CYNTHIA MARTINEZ  
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**U.S. Forest Service**

EHAB  
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**Tribal Nations**