



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-7000

**SUBJECT:** Tribal Directory Assessment Tool (TDAT) Enhancement Project

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) would like to make enhancements to its [Tribal Directory Assessment Tool \(TDAT\)](#) and is seeking Tribal feedback. HUD would like to prioritize early and ongoing collaboration to ensure any potential enhancements consider Tribal input to the greatest extent possible. As part of this process, HUD will be holding a series of listening sessions this fall.

HUD's goal with the TDAT enhancement project is to improve system capabilities such as Tribal data integration, data quality, and usability, so that TDAT can serve as a comprehensive and trusted resource of authoritative Tribal data, backed by federally recognized Tribes. This goal cannot be met without your perspective, partnership, and ongoing support of the TDAT enhancement project.

## **Background**

TDAT was developed by HUD's Office of Environment and Energy (OEE) to help users identify federally recognized Tribes that may have an interest in the proposed location of a HUD-assisted project and to provide Tribal contact information to assist users with initiating Section 106 reviews under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA, 54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.). TDAT is intended to improve the consistency and capability of grantees seeking to appropriately and successfully begin meaningful consultation with Tribes and in so doing ensure project considerations are better incorporated into project design.

TDAT is the only publicly available federal database that maintains information on federally recognized Tribes' self-reported Areas of Ancestral Interest and tribal contact information. TDAT facilitates identification and notification of Tribes for consultation on project areas of religious and cultural importance. This allows HUD Grantees to better and more effectively consult with appropriate Tribal partners and leverage Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in project scoping and design as part of the NHPA Section 106 consultative process.

In April 2023, HUD made enhancements to TDAT to address past challenges maintaining up-to-date Tribal information, as well as to improve TDAT's capabilities for data gathering and routine maintenance. However, additional improvements could further TDAT's usefulness and effectiveness. Proposed improvements include expanding geographic information system mapping capabilities, creating a more user-friendly interface, and providing preferred consultation protocols directly inputted by Tribes.

Since TDAT is a publicly available tool, it may be used by parties consulting on projects supported through other federal agencies beyond only HUD. Recognizing its value and potential

to serve as a central Federal database of Tribal Areas of Interest and Tribal points of contact, the Permitting Council (TPC) is funding these TDAT enhancements to improve usability, efficiency, and increase Tribal collaboration on federally funded projects governmentwide. Established in 2015 by Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41), TPC is a unique Federal agency charged with improving the transparency, predictability, and outcomes of the Federal environmental review and authorization process for certain large-scale critical infrastructure projects. Together, HUD and TPC are prioritizing the criticality of ensuring Tribal partners are included in federal decision-making and project outcomes. HUD is committed to making TDAT a tool that provides opportunities for more productive and meaningful consultations with your Tribe.

## **Listening Sessions**

HUD will host a series of listening sessions on **October 17th, November 14th, and December 5th, 2024**. The sessions will include an overview of TDAT's recent enhancements and an opportunity for Tribal comments and questions. Through these listening sessions, HUD hopes to advance its understanding of Tribal perspectives on the challenges, benefits, needs, and opportunities for using TDAT. HUD recognizes that Tribal input and continued collaboration throughout the project is vital for its success. Attached is a list of questions for you to consider in advance of these listening sessions. HUD looks forward to hearing your thoughts on TDAT and the ways it can be improved to support your Tribe.

Each listening sessions begins at **2 PM EASTERN TIME** on each date (you may join the conference 10 minutes prior). **Webex Support: #** (301) 250-7202.

To join the virtual listening session please follow the steps below:

### **October 17, 2024**

*To join the conference, click:*

<https://intellor.webex.com/intellor/j.php?MTID=maf7764b3447eda8b818fccd78760711c>

*Join the Webex event and follow the prompts to connect audio by computer or telephone. If you cannot join by computer, you may dial in by phone only at 1-202-735-3323 with access code 5375502#.*

### **November 14, 2024**

*To join the conference, click:*

<https://intellor.webex.com/intellor/j.php?MTID=me3d4678c177645ee1719f774712a5d4e>

*Join the Webex event and follow the prompts to connect audio by computer or telephone. If you cannot join by computer, you may dial in by phone only at 1-202-735-3323 with access code 7552482#.*

### **December 5, 2024**

*To join the conference, click:*

<https://intellor.webex.com/intellor/j.php?MTID=m0fc9a477f93c90ff6d80112dda9104a2>

*Join the Webex event and follow the prompts to connect audio by computer or telephone. If you cannot join by computer, you may dial in by phone only at 1-202-735-3323 with access code 5121843#.*

(We understand that some people may have difficulty logging into Webex. We recommend that you use the Google Chrome web browser to log in to the meeting.)

OEE welcomes your participation in any of these upcoming sessions and invites you to submit additional questions and comments prior to the sessions. These can be submitted via email to [TDAT\\_info@hud.gov](mailto:TDAT_info@hud.gov). ***The deadline for providing TDAT listening session specific comments and questions is Monday, October 14, 2024.***

Thank you for your continued partnership and collaboration in the effective delivery of HUD's programs in Indian Country.

Sincerely,

Lauren Hayes Knutson for  
Kristin Leahy Fontenot  
Director, Office of Environment and Energy

## **TDAT Enhancement Project – Questions for Consideration**

1. Is your Tribe already aware of the Tribal Directory Assessment Tool (TDAT) and its functions and capabilities to support NHPA Section 106 consultation? If not, what additional information or tools can HUD provide to increase your understanding and utilization of TDAT?
2. What are your observations and questions about providing information for TDAT and how HUD and HUD grantees utilize the system to conduct Tribal consultation?
3. Do these next set of TDAT enhancements pose any capacity or resources challenges to THPOs engaging in Tribal consultations?
4. If you have participated in populating TDAT, are there any challenges or concerns you have experienced with the current system?
5. Who should be responsible for inputting direct Tribal requests and changes into TDAT? Do you have suggestions on who or how many individuals within your Tribe should have access rights? Should there be protocols established to confirm and validate direct Tribal users?
6. What kinds of additional capabilities or information could be included to better support your Tribe, and your consultation needs with Federal agencies and HUD grantees? Are there any potential improvements you can identify as the highest priority (e.g., additional Tribal contact information, additional Tribal mapping layers, such as Tribal lands, or specific data related to significant Tribal resources in certain geographic locations)?
7. Is there any additional information, training, or other assistance HUD can provide your Tribe or other potential users you help us identify regarding use of TDAT?
8. How would you like to be involved in the TDAT enhancement project? Would you like to be included in a Tribal working group focused on developing the scope or be included in user testing once improvements are completed? Would a periodic newsletter or other form of regular communication on updates be established with your Tribe?
9. Do you have any suggestions on how best to collaborate with the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers on this enhancement project?
10. Please share your thoughts about this listening session. Was it useful and how could it be improved?