



# Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Report and Fiscal Year 2024 / Fiscal Year 2025 Performance Plan



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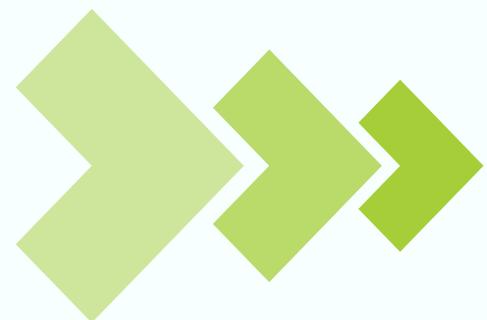
# Overview

The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) is an independent Federal agency charged with improving the transparency, predictability, and outcomes of the Federal environmental review and authorization process for “covered” infrastructure projects. The Permitting Council was established in 2015 by Title 41 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m *et seq.* The Permitting Council is comprised of the Permitting Council Executive Director, who serves as the Council Chair; thirteen Council members who represent Federal permitting agencies (including deputy secretary-level designees of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Army, Commerce, Interior, Energy, Transportation, Defense, Homeland Security, and Housing and Urban Development, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairs of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation); and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Permitting Council was made a permanent Federal agency through enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58). As a now permanent agency, the Permitting Council established its first Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

The Permitting Council is a collaborative body whose members collectively are charged with implementing FAST-41, improving interagency coordination of the Federal environmental review and authorization of FAST-41 covered infrastructure projects, administering, implementing, and enforcing FAST-41, and acting as a Federal center for permitting excellence. Implementation of the Strategic Plan is led by the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff. To accompany implementation of its Strategic Plan, the Permitting Council developed an Agency Performance Report to connect daily agency operations to strategic goals.

This Performance Report documents progress towards the Permitting Council’s Strategic Plan through defined performance indicators to monitor and assess achievement of agency goals and objectives. Each indicator aligns to a strategic objective, providing a means for determining fulfillment of each objective and ultimately strategic goal. The Performance Report identifies goal leaders responsible for driving goal and objective activities and sets an approach and cadence for the consistent and quality measurement of indicators. The Performance Report is updated on an annual basis providing annual reporting on performance indicators and strategic progress.

As a nascent permanent agency with limited full-time staff, the Permitting Council is still developing and establishing internal administrative and operational policies, procedures, and processes. This Performance Report captures the work done thus far to achieve the agency’s goals and objectives and works to refine its measures and targets.





# Strategic Plan Summary

The Permitting Council's strategic plan sets forth the agency's strategic framework comprising the mission statement, strategic vision, and organizational values. The agency's strategic goals and objectives drive the Permitting Council's efforts towards accomplishing the strategic framework.

## Permitting Council Strategic Framework

### Mission

Modernize the Nation's infrastructure and invest in America's future by facilitating transparent, predictable, and coordinated Federal environmental reviews and authorization.

### Strategic Vision

The Permitting Council agencies consistently practice inter-agency collaboration, outreach, and transparency to deliver timely, quality Federal infrastructure decisions.

### Values

We strive to be a trusted partner that brings transparency and good governance to infrastructure permitting.

We strive to be a national Center for Infrastructure Permitting Excellence.

We strive to create and sustain operational excellence.

We strive to foster a culture of continual learning and professional development.

We strive to empower and invest in the infrastructure permitting community.

The Permitting Council’s Strategic Plan articulates the agency’s approach to achieving its mission and broader strategic framework. The agency has four strategic goals with supporting strategic objectives. Performance measures and targets were developed to track and assess progress toward the agency’s strategic goals and objectives.

<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Standardize organizational policies and procedures.</p>	<p><b>Goal 2:</b> Grow and diversify personnel skills, capacity, and experience.</p>	<p><b>Goal 3:</b> Advance implementation of FAST-41.</p>	<p><b>Goal 4:</b> Conduct outreach to expand participation in the FAST-41 program.</p>
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Refine Standard Operating Procedures.</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Disseminate policies and procedures and train employees.</p> <p><b>Objective 3:</b> Establish cadence to enable and nurture continual business process improvement.</p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Recruit and hire diverse staff and capabilities to meet increased infrastructure permitting demands.</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Facilitate growth opportunities to retain talent.</p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Establish and implement updated FAST-41 guidance.</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Develop tools and templates to aid in FAST-41 implementation.</p> <p><b>Objective 3:</b> Update the Permitting Dashboard to ensure transparency and alignment with FAST-41.</p> <p><b>Objective 4:</b> Formalize and offer Permitting Council services.</p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Refine website to solidify web presence.</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Establish and foster new relationships across Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Private Sectors.</p>



# Performance Indicators and Results

Performance measures were developed in close coordination with the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff. Each indicator and associated target was developed to specifically measure the success and/or impact of each strategic objective and ultimately strategic goal. Measures will be assessed at least annually. Meeting these measures and their targets drives implementation of the Permitting Council’s strategic plan.

The Permitting Council aims to see steady increases towards its targets each year. If any targets are achieved prior to the end of the strategic plan, the Permitting Council will continue to maintain its performance. The table below lists the FY 2023 performance measures. As a newly permanent Federal agency, the Permitting Council continues to evolve its work necessitating refined and new measures. The Permitting Council Executive Director and staff felt there was a need to address the growing maturity of the Agency through improved measures and targets in FY 2024. Those improvements and targets have been addressed in a separate table at the end of this report through measures being added and current measures being adjusted in support of FY 2024 targets developed as part of the Permitting Council 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

#	MEASURE	MEASURE RATIONALE	FY 2023 TARGET	FY 2023 ACTUAL
<b>Goal 1: Standardize organizational policies and procedures.</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Refine Standard Operating Procedures.</b>				
1.1	Percentage of Process Library developed.	The Permitting Council develops a process library which identifies all needed organizational processes to ensure compliance. These policies and procedures are then prioritized and developed, working towards a comprehensive process library.	55%	37%
<b>Objective 2: Disseminate policies and procedures and train employees.</b>				
1.2	Percentage of new policies and procedures briefed to agency employees.	The Permitting Council develops necessary policies and procedures. This documentation is only useful when staff are aware and trained on policies and procedures for consistent implementation and compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and policies. Staff are trained through formal training, meetings, and dissemination of documents and work instructions.	90%	100%

<b>Objective 3: Establish cadence to enable and nurture continual business process improvement.</b>				
1.3	Number of executed business process improvements.	The Permitting Council works to continually improve its processes and procedures to create efficiencies in executing its mission. Such improvements include process automation, streamlined reviews, and collaboration tools/software.	3	2
<b>Goal 2: Grow and diversify personnel skills, capacity, and experience.</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Recruit and hire diverse staff and capabilities to meet increased infrastructure permitting demands.</b>				
2.1	Percentage of full-time equivalents (FTEs) hired and onboarded.	The Permitting Council leverages staff to execute its mission. The agency's ability to effectively hire and retain diverse staff supports its ability to achieve the needs of the organization.	85%	62%
<b>Objective 2: Facilitate growth opportunities to retain talent.</b>				
2.2	Percentage of employees leveraging individual professional development opportunities.	Professional development contributes to organizational capabilities and staff retention. Development includes agency-wide training, individual development plans, growth activities/responsibilities, training courses, and certifications.	60%	63%
2.3	Number of professional development opportunities offered to agency employees.	The Permitting Council advocates for growth opportunities to support its mission and its staff, ensuring ample opportunities for development in various formats. Development opportunities may be lunch and learns, third-party training, and facilitated course offerings.	8	16
<b>Goal 3: Advance implementation of FAST-41.</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Establish and implement updated FAST-41 guidance.</b>				
3.1	Number of guidance, procedures, memos, and trainings to support FAST-41 implementation.	The Permitting Council provides detailed guidance to aid Departments and Agencies in implementing FAST-41. The agency promotes this guidance through its Federal outreach and engagement efforts such as the Chief Environmental Review and Permitting Officer (CERPO) working group. The Permitting Council may supplement its guidance through the issuance of additional guidance documents or Executive Director memos.	30	24
<b>Objective 2: Develop tools and templates to aid in FAST-41 implementation.</b>				
3.2	Number of tools and templates developed.	The Permitting Council develops tools and templates for agencies and stakeholders to leverage throughout the permitting process, helping agencies to more efficiently implement FAST-41. As a unique collaborator across the Federal Government on infrastructure	5	5

		<p>permitting, the Permitting Council can provide valuable insights and aids for FAST-41 implementation. In working with agencies, the Permitting Council identifies common challenges and/or lessons learned to inform best practices and additional tools and templates.</p>		
<b>Objective 3: Update the Permitting Dashboard to ensure transparency and alignment with FAST-41.</b>				
3.3	Number of Permitting Dashboard updates or refinements deployed.	To ensure the Permitting Dashboard is maximizing covered project transparency and aligns with the FAST-41 statute, the Permitting Council monitors user experience and feedback from agencies, project sponsors and other stakeholders. Updates and refinements to the dashboard are developed and implemented based on the feedback to further enhance user experience, transparency and compliance.	50	53
3.4	No more than 25% of active FAST-41 covered projects on the Permitting Dashboard with permitting timetables extended by 60 days.	The Permitting Council, including its members, are responsible to provide shared-responsibility that incentivizes agencies to ensure accuracy and timeliness of project timetables and to coordinate their efforts for success.	<25%	35%
<b>Objective 4: Formalize and offer Permitting Council services.</b>				
3.5	Number of services provided to support FAST-41 implementation.	The Permitting Council is designed to advance FAST-41 implementation and improve the permitting processes through a variety of services to distinct audiences. The Permitting Council services support the infrastructure permitting community.	10	8
<b>Goal 4: Conduct outreach to expand participation in the FAST-41 program.</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Refine website to solidify web presence.</b>				
4.1	Average number of unique viewers on the Permitting Council website.	Tracking website impressions informs the Permitting Council if outreach and communications efforts are generating traction and engagement on our website, which houses information, tools, resources, and the Dashboard. A dedicated website will direct stakeholders to resources for infrastructure permitting information and will help solidify the Permitting Council's role as a value-added partner within the permitting infrastructure community.	500	500

**Objective 2: Establish and foster new relationships across Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Private Sectors.**

4.2	Number of collaborations established or maintained with other organizations.	Collaborations demonstrate the Permitting Council's growth in meaningful engagement on FAST-41, which supports more awareness and participation in FAST-41. The Permitting Council engages in relationships to support the agency's mission such as interagency agreements and tribal engagements.	20	24
4.3	Number of outreach events with agency participation.	The Permitting Council conducts outreach across all aspects of the permitting community to raise awareness of and participation in the FAST-41 program. Outreach includes Federal, state, local, and tribal entities, as well as outreach by topics such as sectors.	40	37
4.4	Number of projects added to the Permitting Dashboard.	The Permitting Council aims to grow awareness and participation in FAST-41. A component of successful outreach and relationship building is seen when projects leverage the FAST-41 process and publish the permitting timetables on the Permitting Dashboard.	25	7



# Performance Summary

This fiscal year, the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff worked to implement the strategic plan, which focused on standing up programs, processes, and critical organizational infrastructure. The Permitting Council prioritized performance metrics and adjusting programs to best carry out the agency's strategic plan.

Achieving performance goals requires full agency commitment. The Permitting Council's Executive Director leads the implementation of the strategic plan and the related performance goals through the Permitting Council Executive Director and, as necessary, with the assistance of the Permitting Council members. The Permitting Council Executive Director works to implement the performance goals, and the Executive Director delegates responsibility for aspects of execution. The Permitting Council Executive Director maintains a lean organizational structure that enables close collaboration across the agency to meet performance goals. Each performance goal has a designated lead with supporting agency resources.

Additionally, with an agency mission driven by collaborative relationships, many of the Permitting Council's strategic goals require extensive interagency coordination. Each Permitting Council member supports the agency's strategic and performance goals in many ways which can include identifying and promoting permitting best practices, and seeking opportunities to provide cross-cutting improvements in the environmental review, permitting, and authorization process.

The sections below detail the agency's performance in achieving each of its goals, as well as any challenges and strategies to support enhanced performance.

## **Goal 1: Standardize organizational policies and procedures.**

**Goal Leader:** Associate Director of Administration

In FY 2023, the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff continued to focus on building the Permitting Council's essential organizational functions through the development of necessary



procedures and policies to operate a permanent Federal agency. The Permitting Council Executive Director executed a prioritized inventory of mandatory and necessary Federal agency policies for development and implementation. In FY 2023, the agency developed and implemented seven policies. The agency formalized many of its budget and financial related policies. The agency updated its contingency plan for agency operations in absence of appropriations as required. Additionally, the agency developed its policy and procedures to ensure compliance with the Anti-Deficiency Act. The increased financial controls advances agency compliance and promotes more effective budgeting activities. The Permitting Council Executive Director and staff also addressed employee-focused policies and procedures including our performance management procedures, Equal Employment Opportunity policy, as well as formalizing our onboarding and offboarding to provide a consistent experience for employees and a comprehensive approach to these activities for the agency. As appropriate, the agency has communicated the policies, standard operating procedures, and training,, to all Permitting Council staff, including detailees and supporting contract staff. Further, the agency was able to deploy innovative efficiencies. Specifically, the agency implemented new internal processes for routine requests and approvals that was able to further automate routing and approvals. This reduced the administrative burden and saved employees time for routine tasks.

The agency continues its focus on maturing its internal policies and processes. To further advance these efforts, Permitting Council staff regularly engages with the Small Agency Council to obtain best practices and lessons learned for tailoring policies and procedures in a small agency environment. The Permitting Council will leverage this engagement to help advance policy and procedure development throughout FY 2024. Additionally, in support of FAST-41 implementation, the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff are focusing on developing procedures specific to improve implementation of FAST-41.

### **Challenges**

The Permitting Council continues to face the challenge of balancing multiple priorities and requirements that can at times impact the progress of policy and procedure development. For example, with the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, the Permitting Council received \$350 million, available until FY 2031, to implement FAST-41. As such, significant resources were directed towards standing up the Environmental Review Improvement Fund (ERIF) Assistance Program to provide financial assistance that advances FAST-41 implementation and support initiatives that promote the agency as a center for permitting excellence. To help address policy and procedure development during FY 2023, the Permitting Council brought on contract staff to assist which enabled the rapid development of several policies slated to be completed in FY 2024.



## **Goal 2: Grow and diversify personnel skills, capacity, and experience.**

**Goal Leader:** Associate Director of Administration

Coming out of the FY 2022 pause on hiring due to FAST-41 hiring authority discussions with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), much of FY 2023 focused on outlining its future organizational structure. The Executive Director led the development of the agency's organizational structure with input from employees. With a more defined organizational structure, the Permitting Council focused on developing Position Descriptions. As a newly permanent Federal agency, the agency took extensive efforts to develop thoughtful and comprehensive position descriptions to serve the current and future needs of the agency. The Permitting Council developed positions to support implementation of FAST-41, support for the agency's new effort to support transfers of ERIF funds to federal agencies and state, local, and Tribal governments, and to further the role of the agency as a federal center for permitting excellence, as well as administrative support. The Permitting Council also focused on building internal capacity through increased training opportunities. Through proactive offerings of training opportunities, the Permitting Council significantly increased the number of employees participating in growth opportunities through training, conferences, and similar offerings. Employees leveraged individual, team, and agency-wide training that addressed soft skills and role-specific capacity building.

Heading into FY 2024, the Permitting Council is extensively focused on recruitment and hiring towards its planned staff of 42 positions. The first priority for FY 2024 hiring is an Human Resource Officer who will help drive agency recruitment and hiring for additional positions. Another agency priority hire is a permitting, planning and policy lead, who will support the agency's role as a center for permitting excellence and help shape the agency's efforts on best practices, permitting policy, and permitting improvements. Additionally, the Permitting Council plans to recruit additional staff that include:

Infrastructure Project Advisors to directly coordinate implementation of FAST-41 and coordinate across stakeholders for timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations;

Outreach and Public Engagement Specialist to advance the Permitting Council's strategic communication efforts includes taking advantage of outreach and engagement activities that bring greater awareness of FAST-41 and more stakeholders to advance the conversation on permitting efficiencies and excellence;

Program Management Specialists to assist in critical FAST-41 program activities to include management of the ERIF Assistance Program.

### **Challenges**

The Permitting Council made significant progress in realizing and executing against its organizational vision. The timeline of recruitment and staffing was delayed with the transition of the agency's Executive Director. This transition adjusted execution of staffing activities to effectively transition-in new leadership and incorporate the vision of the new Executive Director. The agency quickly worked to incorporate these adjustments into the staffing plan and began developing position descriptions. While an agency priority, the Permitting Council still faced resource constraints that impacted how quickly the position descriptions and recruitment efforts proceed. For FY 2024, the agency anticipates this timeline to accelerate with the recruitment and hiring of an HR Officer as the first priority hire.

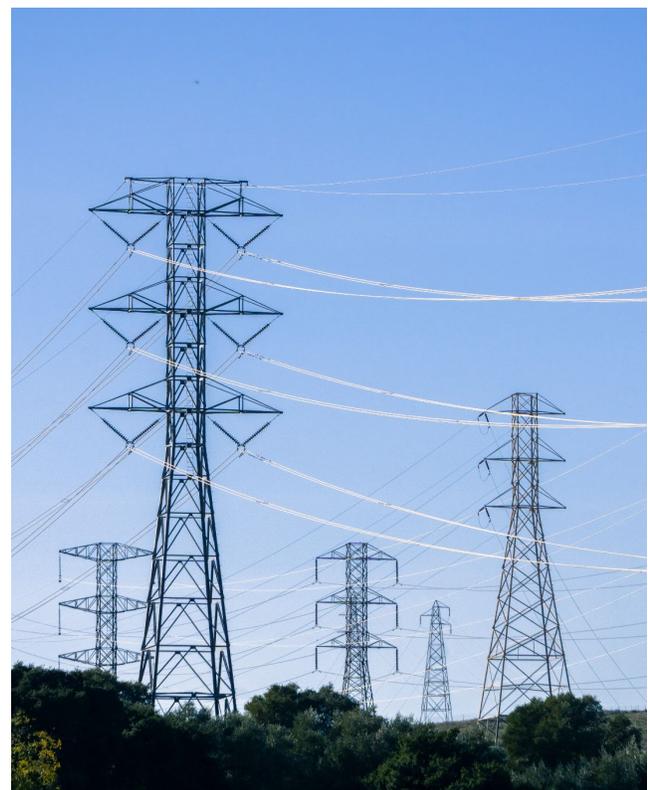
## **Goal 3: Advance implementation of FAST-41.**

**Goal Leader:** Infrastructure Portfolio Manager

In FY 2023 Permitting Council staff focused on several aspects of advanced implementation of FAST-41. These aspects included:

Development of FAST-41 Performance Schedules (FPS) for six FAST-41 sectors and subsectors;

- Electricity Transmission
- Interstate Natural Gas Pipelines
- Solar
- Non-Federal Hydropower - Licenses
- Wind - Other than Federal Offshore



- Nuclear Power Plant – Combined (Construction and Operating) License

Issuance of two Executive Director Memoranda:

1. Providing guidance for permitting timetable management in the event of a government shutdown;
2. Providing guidance to agencies with respect to requesting Executive Director authorization for modifications of the permitting timetable by greater than 30 days for FAST-41 covered projects.

Implementation of the updated 2021 Data Management Guide (DMG), which provides a standard operating procedure for agencies to implement the FAST-41 requirements related to establishing, maintaining, modifying, and completing FAST-41 covered project permitting timetables, and maintaining related required information on the Permitting Dashboard;

Monthly dashboard administrator meetings that incorporated targeted trainings for Permitting Council member agencies on the updated DMG and associated refinements to the Permitting Dashboard;

The Recommended Best Practices for Fiscal Year 2023 and the quarterly Agency Performance Reports to Congress;

Assisting the OMB Director and CEQ Chair in issuing and implementing the Biden-Harris Permitting Action Plan,; and

Updating 2017 FAST-41 Guidance with the OMB Director and CEQ Chair.

The Permitting Council staff initiated development of the FPS issued in 2023 by identifying the common environmental reviews and authorizations for each sector and subsector, which are referred to as “actions” for this purpose. Permitting Council staff then used Permitting Dashboard data from completed FAST-41 covered projects to establish nominal durations for each action and the intermediate steps within a particular action. The Permitting Council staff will continue to collaborate with FAST-41 member agencies to synthesize historical project data, as well as agency regulations, policies, and processes to capture projected permitting authorization timelines by sector and subsector, with a goal of issuing additional sector-specific schedules in FY 2024.

The Permitting Council is required to issue annual recommendations on best practices for improving the Federal permitting process for FAST-41 covered projects.<sup>1</sup> In FY 2023 the Permitting Council reissued all best practices issued from FY 2018 to FY 2022 as “look back” to provide a basis on which to move toward more impactful, evidence-based, and

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<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-1(c)(2)(B).

actionable best practices that improve the Federal permitting process for covered projects. This consolidated list of best practices was intended to be used as a resource to inform agencies' reporting to OMB and Congress. This approach provided an opportunity for Permitting Council agencies to revisit established best practices, identify redundancies, and reflect on which have been the most successful in improving the Federal permitting process for covered projects. For FY 2024, the Permitting Council is issuing best practices under a subset of the ten categories identified in the statute. Issuing best practices under only selected categories will allow affected agencies to focus their efforts and to collect meaningful implementation data and information. The best practices for FY 2024 are intended to be actionable and measurable, and the Permitting Council will assess impacts of best practices across the Federal agencies.

The Permitting Council remains focused on maximizing cross-agency engagement. Emphasizing robust participation in regular meetings and focused workshops by agency CERPOs and their support staff, the Permitting Council is improving Federal agency coordination and communication on infrastructure permitting.

The Permitting Council Executive Director and staff also made numerous updates and refinements to the internal-facing Permitting Dashboard for FAST-41 projects to improve the user experience including the following:

**Access control:** Extended session timeout to allow user additional idle time before termination of active session.

**Dataset enhancements:** Enhanced internal timetable page to allow users ability to directly input alternative completion dates in one location.

- Public dataset improvement by clearly denoting which dates are alternative completion dates and/or under Executive Director review.

**Enhanced processes:** Made extensive updates to the FAST-41 project section of the Permitting Dashboard process to improve reporting through development of Coordinated Project Plan (CPP) single entry point.

The Permitting Council also advances FAST-41 implementation and helps improve the permitting processes through a variety of services to distinct audiences. These services support the infrastructure permitting community. In FY 2023 the agency assisted Federal agencies in improving their permitting processes by providing direct technical support, issue elevation and resolution services, and other solutions to address permitting challenges such as staffing, training, best practices, and facilitating cross-agency hiring). The Permitting Council Executive Director and staff also serve Congress by providing technical assistance on legislative efforts and submitting quarterly reports on agency implementation of FAST-41.

In FY 2024, the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff will continue to advance implementation of FAST-41 including providing additional updates to the DMG, continuing to update and refine the Permitting Dashboard, issuing Recommended Best Practices for Fiscal Year 2024 and Performance Schedules for the FAST-41 sectors, and, working with the OMB Director and CEQ Chair, to issue new FAST-41 agency implementation guidance. Additionally, the Executive Director developed the ERIF Assistance Program which provides funding to agencies that support more timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 projects.

## **Challenges**

The Permitting Council and Federal agencies faced two primary challenges in implementing FAST-41: staffing in response to Administration initiatives in the complex offshore wind sector and the integration of FAST-41 procedures into agency environmental review and authorization processes for covered projects.

In March 2021, the Administration set a target to deploy 30 Gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind by 2030. In September 2022, the Administration strengthened that goal to include an additional 15 GW of floating offshore wind technology by 2035. Although the Permitting Council is working with the agencies that are reviewing these projects to help meet these goals, significant resource challenges exist to meet the permitting targets, such as staffing. In order to help meet the Administration's priorities the Permitting Council Executive Director is partnering with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for cross-governmental hiring actions to provide agencies a collective pool of highly qualified candidates for expedited hiring. Initial efforts focus on project management needs that are tailored to FAST-41 projects and permitting management experience.

Additionally, until the Permitting Council became a permanent agency, there was little incentive for member agencies to invest resources in fully integrating the FAST-41 requirements into their existing environmental review and authorization processes. Following the enactment of the IIJA, the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff has been proactively assisting Federal agencies to more fully integrate FAST-41 into their existing processes through training, tools development, and updates and refinements to the Permitting Dashboard.

The Permitting Council Executive Director and staff continue to use root cause analysis and the development of innovative countermeasures to overcome the staffing and integration challenges across the federal family.

## Goal 4: Conduct outreach to expand participation in the FAST-41 program.

**Goal Leader:** Director of Communications

During FY 2023, the Permitting Council Executive Director increased communications capacity to begin assembling the building blocks of a strategic communications plan, encompassing branding, key message development, materials creation, website construction, and video production. With outreach efforts presenting a more coordinated and defined identity of the Permitting Council, engagement will help drive awareness of and participation in FAST-41. The Permitting Council is in the early stages of these communications efforts and anticipates extensive progress in FY 2024.

The Permitting Council exceeded its collaboration goal to develop meaningful relationships that support more timely and efficient permitting reviews and authorizations. Most notably, the Executive Director partnered with several Federal agencies through the ERIF Assistance Program to address bottlenecks to reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 projects and other permitting challenges. Additionally, the Executive Director created and funded a partnership with the Office of Personnel Management for cross-governmental hiring actions to provide agencies a collective pool of highly qualified candidates for expedited hiring. Initial efforts focus on project management needs that are tailored to FAST-41 projects and permitting experience.

During FY 2023 the Director of Public Engagement was detailed to the White House to address Administration priorities, resulting in reduced capacity to conduct outreach activities. Additionally, with significant foundational work taking place in FY 2023, the Permitting Council had more limited outreach events, thus not meeting its target. Despite these challenges, the Permitting Council engaged in several outreach activities with various stakeholders throughout the year. Those engagements include activities like the National Governors Association's Broadband Leaders Workshop. This workshop brought together state and federal officials with industry leaders to brainstorm best practices and share lessons learned for the permitting of broadband infrastructure projects. Other outreach activities include the Permitting Council hosting a session at the U.S. Department of Commerce's SelectUSA Summit, bringing together a panel of project sponsors to speak about the benefits of FAST-41 as they guide their projects through the federal permitting process. Finally, the Permitting Council transitioned Executive Directors in July 2023, allowing extensive engagement with the Permitting Council members themselves to understand agency-specific challenges and opportunities pertaining to FAST-41.

Through the consistent and focused efforts of the Executive Director, staff, and the Permitting Council members, the Permitting Council increased its portfolio of actively

covered projects by over 25 percent, adding seven new projects from across the country to the Federal Permitting Dashboard. This accomplishment signals an increasing awareness of the value of FAST-41 “covered project” status, including the benefits of transparency, predictability, accountability, and coordination in the Federal environmental review and authorization process that come from developing and actively managing public-facing project permitting timetables and managing them according to FAST-41’s timetable management requirements.

The seven projects added to the Permitting Dashboard during FY 2023 also represent an expansion in the sectors using FAST-41, notably including projects in the broadband, critical minerals, and carbon capture sectors. Additionally, the first ever Tribal-sponsored projects were added to the Federal Permitting Dashboard as FAST-41 covered projects. This growth of FAST-41 projects underscores the value of the benefits afforded to covered projects and highlights the successful outreach and project management efforts of the Permitting Council to increase the awareness of FAST-41 and advance its implementation.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Permitting Council focuses on timely environmental review decisions regardless of the outcome of the decisions. As a result, in FY 2023 the Permitting Council shepherded the completion of five FAST-41 covered projects with outcomes ranging from permitting cancellation to approval, with and subsequent groundbreaking for construction. Completed project reviews include Kulning Wind, Alaska LNG, Mountain Valley Pipeline, Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion, and Sunzia Transmission.

Although adding 7 projects to the Permitting Dashboard reflected solid growth, it fell short of the stretch goal of 25 new projects set at the start of the year. This discrepancy is due in part to a shift in approach to anticipated FAST-41 “transparency” projects. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided the Executive Director new authority to direct an agency to add non-FAST-41 covered projects to the Dashboard in the interest of transparency. Transparency projects are not subject to FAST-41 covered project requirements, as they are directed for posting, not voluntarily seeking coverage. In accordance with the Biden-Harris Permitting Action Plan Implementation Guidance, agencies provided potential transparency projects across multiple sectors for posting



consideration. Upon extensive review of the proposed transparency projects, the Executive Director in consultation with the Permitting Council members elected to not post any “transparency” projects during FY 2023 and instead continues to coordinate with Permitting Council members to identify candidate projects.

Looking to FY 2024, the Permitting Council has hired a new Director of Public Engagement which will allow for increased capacity to identify, target, and conduct more robust outreach. The Permitting Council plans to participate in several relevant conferences and information sharing forums to help understand the challenges in Federal permitting, as well as educate and inform the permitting community about FAST-41. Additionally, these conference and outreach events provide an opportunity for the Permitting Council to conduct focused workshops for more informal engagement with FAST-41 practitioners, project sponsors, and project review specialists. The Permitting Council also anticipates launching its own website with clear information and resources supporting FAST-41 implementation.

**Challenges:**

In FY 2023, the Permitting Council remained constrained by a website that is operated and maintained by the Department of Transportation. The Permitting Council is planning for a more robust, agency-specific web presence in FY 2024 to help create an independent identity. With a new director in FY 2024, we anticipate increased outreach and engagement represented by greater web presence, collaboration, and ultimately FAST-41 projects.





# Performance Data Accuracy and Reliability

The Permitting Council measures each indicator annually and ensures the accuracy and reliability of the data within the Agency Performance Plan. The Permitting Council Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director oversee data collection and ensure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRA).

**Data Collection:** Data collection is overseen by the Deputy Executive Director with all data collectors affirming the accuracy of the data. Data validation is done by the Deputy Executive Director. Any issues in reliability results in pulling the data calculations again to ensure accuracy.

**Data Sources:** Data collected is from official sources and records of the Permitting Council. Data may be extrapolated from larger data sets to support data collection for agency performance. All data for the agency performance report is then reviewed, aggregated, and maintained. As a small agency, the Permitting Council maintains its own records and systems and also leverages systems and data managed by other Federal agencies. Specifically, the Permitting Dashboard is maintained by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The Permitting Council coordinates with DOT to ensure data integrity, reviewing and validating data almost weekly with DOT. Additionally, personnel data is maintained on systems owned and operated by GSA. This information is also reviewed routinely to ensure accuracy. The agency coordinates with these external partners to gather necessary data that informs the agency's performance. Some data may be collected from internal, non-public sources.

**Data Limitations:** Data managed by the Permitting Council Executive Director and staff are subject to potential errors based on extrapolation, individual observation, or inaccurate execution of data collection. Data provided by Permitting Council member agencies, such as information posted to the Permitting Dashboard, are limited based on the veracity of the inputs. Additionally, as a small Federal agency, the Deputy Executive Director is able to oversee all data collection to promote data integrity.

The table below details the data sources used to derive the baseline for each performance measure.

#	MEASURE	DATA SOURCE(S)
1.1	Percentage of Process Library developed.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
1.2	Percentage of new policies and procedures briefed to agency employees.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
1.3	Number of executed business process improvements.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
2.1	Percentage of full-time equivalents (FTEs) hired and onboarded.	HRLinks, managed by GSA
2.2	Percentage of employees leveraging individual professional development opportunities.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
2.3	Number of professional development opportunities offered to agency employees.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
3.1	Number of guidance, procedures, memos, and training to support FAST-41 implementation.	Permitting Council MAX.gov and Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
3.2	Number of tools and templates developed.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
3.3	Number of Permitting Dashboard updates or refinements deployed.	Permitting Dashboard, managed by DOT
3.4	No more than 25% of active FAST-41 covered projects on the Permitting Dashboard with permitting timetables extended by 60 days.	Permitting Dashboard, managed by DOT
3.5	Number of services provided to support FAST-41 implementation.	Permitting Council MAX.gov and Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
4.1	Number of unique monthly viewers on the Permitting Council website.	<a href="https://www.permitting.gov">https://www.permitting.gov</a> , maintained by DOT
4.2	Number of collaborations established or maintained with other organizations.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System, Permitting Council Executive Director and staff financial management system, maintained by GSA
4.3	Number of outreach events with agency participation.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System
4.4	Number of projects added to the Permitting Dashboard.	Permitting Dashboard



# FY 2024 and FY 2025 Performance Plan

As a new agency, the Permitting Council continually refines and develops its activities and initiatives. With this growth and maturity stems the need to evolve the associated performance measures and targets to best align and evaluate the agency’s work against its statute and strategic goals. Learning from the Permitting Council’s first performance report, measures and targets for FY 2024 have been refined. The table below provides a comprehensive list of measures and targets for FY 2024 and FY 2025 with notes adjustments of new measures in support of the Permitting Council 2022–2026 Strategic Plan.

#	Status	Measure	Description	Data Source	FY 2024 Target	FY 2025 Target
<b>Goal 1: Standardize organizational policies and procedures.</b>						
<b>Objective 1: Refine Standard Operating Procedures.</b>						
1.1	No Change	Percentage of Process Library developed.	The Permitting Council develops a process library which identifies all needed organizational processes to ensure compliance with applicable Federal agency requirements. These policies and procedures are then prioritized and developed, working towards a comprehensive process library.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	30%	45%
<b>Objective 2: Disseminate policies and procedures and train employees.</b>						
1.2	No Change	Percentage of new policies and procedures briefed to agency employees.	The Permitting Council develops necessary policies and procedures. This documentation is only useful when staff are aware and trained on policies and procedures for consistent implementation and compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and policies. Staff are trained through formal training, meetings, and dissemination of documents and work instructions.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	100%	100%

1.3	Revised	Number of executed business process improvements per quarter.	The Permitting Council works to continually improve its processes and procedures to create efficiencies in executing its mission. Such improvements include process automation, streamlined reviews, and collaboration tools/software.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	4	4
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**Goal 2: Grow and diversify personnel skills, capacity, and experience.**

**Objective 1: Recruit and hire diverse staff and capabilities to meet increased infrastructure permitting demands.**

2.1	No Change	Percentage of full-time equivalents (FTEs) hired and onboarded.	The Permitting Council leverages staff to execute its mission. The agency's ability to effectively hire and retain diverse staff supports its ability to achieve the needs of the organization.	HRLinks, managed by GSA	75%	85%
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**Objective 2: Facilitate growth opportunities to retain talent.**

2.2	No Change	Percentage of employees leveraging individual professional development opportunities.	Professional development contributes to organizational capabilities and staff retention. Development includes agency-wide training, individual development plans, growth activities/responsibilities, training courses, and certifications.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	75%	80%
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2.3	Revised	Number of development and training opportunities offered to Permitting Council member agencies.	The Permitting Council advocates for growth opportunities to support its mission and its staff, ensuring ample opportunities for development in various formats. Development opportunities may be lunch and learns, third-party training, and facilitated course offerings.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	16	16
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2.4	New	Employee Retention Rate of permanent, career staff	The Permitting Council fosters an environment that promotes employee development and satisfaction through retained employees.	Permitting Council HR system (HR Links) and eOPF	85%	85%
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**Goal 3: Advance implementation of FAST-41.**

**Objective 1: Establish and implement updated FAST-41 guidance.**

3.1	Revised	Number of guidance, procedures, memos, and trainings to	The Permitting Council provides detailed guidance to aid Departments and Agencies in implementing FAST-41. The agency promotes this guidance	Permitting Council MAX.gov and Permitting Council Executive Director and staff	30	30
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		support FAST-41 implementation.	through its Federal outreach and engagement efforts. The Permitting Council will work with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Chair and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) Director to update FAST-41 guidance to include recent statutory provisions. The Permitting Council Executive Director.	Internal Record Management System		
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**Objective 2: Develop tools and templates to aid in FAST-41 implementation.**

3.2	No Change	Number of tools and templates developed.	The Permitting Council develops tools and templates for agencies and stakeholders to leverage throughout the permitting process, helping agencies to more efficiently implement FAST-41 and complete environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 projects. As a unique collaborator across the Federal Government on infrastructure permitting, the Permitting Council can provide valuable insights and aids for FAST-41 implementation. In working with agencies, the Permitting Council identifies common challenges and/or lessons learned to inform best practices and additional tools and templates.	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	5	5
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**Objective 3: Update the Permitting Dashboard to ensure transparency and alignment with FAST-41.**

3.3	No Change	Number of Permitting Dashboard updates or refinements deployed.	To ensure the Permitting Dashboard is maximizing covered project transparency and aligns with the FAST-41 statute, the Permitting Council monitors user experience and feedback from agencies, project sponsors and other stakeholders. Updates and refinements to the dashboard are developed and implemented based on the feedback to further enhance user experience, transparency and compliance.	Permitting Dashboard, managed by DOT	50	50
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3.4	Revised	No more than 25% of active FAST-41 covered projects on the Permitting Dashboard with permitting timetables extended by 60 days.	The Permitting Council Members have a shared responsibility to incentivize agencies to ensure accuracy and timeliness of project timetables and to coordinate their efforts for successful timetable management.	Permitting Dashboard, managed by DOT	25%	25%
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**Objective 4: Formalize and offer Permitting Council services.**

3.5	No Change	Number of services provided to support FAST-41 implementation.	The Permitting Council is designed to advance FAST-41 implementation and improve the permitting processes through a variety of services to distinct audiences. The Permitting Council services support the infrastructure permitting community.	Permitting Council MAX.gov and Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	10	10
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**Goal 4: Conduct outreach to expand participation in the FAST-41 program.**

**Objective 1: Refine website to solidify web presence.**

4.1	No Change	Average number of unique viewers on the Permitting Council website.	Tracking website impressions informs the Permitting Council if outreach and communications efforts are generating traction and engagement on our website, which houses information, tools, resources, and the Dashboard. A dedicated website will direct stakeholders to resources for infrastructure permitting information and will help the Permitting Council fulfill its role as a value-added partner within the permitting infrastructure community.	<a href="https://www.permitting.gov">https://www.permitting.gov</a> , maintained by DOT	575	600
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**Objective 2: Establish and foster new relationships across Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Private Sectors.**

4.2	No Change	Number of collaborations established or maintained with other organizations.	Collaborations demonstrate the Permitting Council's growth in meaningful engagement on FAST-41 which supports more awareness and participation in FAST-41. The Permitting Council engages in relationships to support the agency's mission such as interagency agreements and tribal	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System, Permitting Council Executive Director and staff financial	20	20
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			engagements.	management system, maintained by GSA		
4.3	No Change	Number of outreach events with agency participation.	The Permitting Council conducts outreach across all aspects of the permitting community to raise awareness of and participation in the FAST-41 program. Outreach includes Federal, state, local, and tribal entities, as well as outreach by topics such as sectors	Permitting Council Executive Director and staff Internal Record Management System	40	45
4.4	Revised	Number of projects added to the Permitting Dashboard	The Permitting Council aims to grow awareness and participation in FAST-41. A component of successful outreach and relationship building is seen when potential project sponsors engagements lead to submission of an application for FAST-41 coverage.	Permitting Dashboard	10	10