

**2015-2018**  
**TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**  
**FOR**  
**SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**



**Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission**

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## 2014

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## **Foreword**

The 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (2015-2018 TIP) was developed under the authority of federal transportation legislation, using program development guidelines developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and its statewide transportation partners. The program covers federal fiscal years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

A public review and comment period was held from June 18, 2014 through July 18, 2014 for the draft program. Public comments received during this period have been reviewed and incorporated into the final program as appropriate. The 2015-2018 TIP becomes final following review and adoption by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) and state and federal funding agencies. Upon adoption, the 2015-2018 TIP will replace the current 2013-2016 TIP (covering fiscal years 2013-2016) and will become effective October 1, 2014.

Official actions to review and consider adoption of the 2015-2018 TIP are as follows:

- Public Comment Period June 18, 2014 through July 18, 2014.
- Commission adoption on July 28, 2014.
- The Commonwealth's State Transportation Commission (STC) approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Twelve Year Program.
- Federal reviews by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in August and September 2014.

The 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania was available on the SPC website at [www.spcregion.org](http://www.spcregion.org) between June 18, 2014, when the public comment period opened, and July 28, 2014, when the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission formally adopted the final program. The current 2013-2016 TIP was also available on the SPC website during this time.

In response to comments received during the public comment period, SPC *may have made* minor changes to the Draft 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program prior to formal action on the 2015-2018 TIP by the Commission on July 28, 2014. Any such changes are identified in Appendix 11 to the Transportation Improvement Program document.



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## **I. Introduction**

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is designated as the agency responsible for a transportation planning process that supports the effective operations, maintenance and improvement of a regional transportation system, including the movement of people and goods, protection and the enhancement of communities and the environment, and continuing development of the regional economy. SPC's transportation planning encompasses the ten counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania and their connection to points beyond the region. It addresses transportation needs for highways, bridges and public transportation; travel by automobile, truck, buses, trains or planes, bicycle or walking; issues with traffic congestion and safety; and access to work, school, shopping, recreation and, of course, our homes.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is one of the principle products of this cooperative, coordinated and comprehensive transportation planning process. The TIP (2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania) documents this intergovernmental process and specifically identifies four years of priority transportation projects – transit operations, maintenance and facilities projects, capital investment in the federal-aid highway network, and other projects (including selected local projects) eligible for various federal or state transportation programs.

Federal and state legislation guides this significant public investment and identifies specific requirements for further official reviews: air quality, environmental justice, financial constraint, public involvement, project prioritization and selection, and program administration. The metropolitan transportation planning process must be certified as compliant with multiple federal requirements including non-discrimination against specific protected groups and classes as required by U.S. Civil Rights laws and evaluated for its impact on low-income and minority populations.

The federal legislative framework for the region's transportation planning processes includes MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), the Clean Air Act, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Specific federal regulatory requirements guiding the TIP development process are identified in a resolution by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission that certifies the MPO transportation planning process. This document introduces many of MAP-21's program requirements and identifies how they affect the regional transportation program. Other selected discretionary programs are also discussed.

The state transportation planning framework includes PA Act 120, PA Act 44, and PA Act 89 of 2013 (primarily funding related), as well as two state guidance documents for the transportation program update: Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance and 2015 Transportation Program General and Procedural

Guidance. The state's guidance documents are referenced throughout the TIP Summary Report and are listed in Appendix 10. The 2015-2018 TIP includes three companion documents: Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area, The Assessment of the Benefits and Burdens of the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (Environmental Justice Report) and the TIP Public Participation Report.

The Air Quality Conformity report documents the process used by SPC for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the 2015-2018 TIP and for the 2040 Long Range Plan. It demonstrates that the TIP and Plan conform to the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act and the applicable criteria and procedures of the Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93).

The Environmental Justice Report documents that no identifiable population segment or geographic areas are disproportionately benefitted (served) or burdened (disrupted and/or inconvenienced) as a result of the proposed transportation investments in the 2015-2018 TIP.

The TIP Public Participation Report is developed after final public comment is received by SPC and documents public involvement in the TIP process, including SPC's response to public comments.

Once the TIP has been adopted, subsequent changes are governed by a STIP MOU (State TIP Memorandum of Understanding) and SPC's TIP Modification Procedures (Appendix 3), the Commission's companion to the state MOU.

The TIP Summary Report includes a TIP Financial Plan for the highway program that identifies budgeted spending during the four-year TIP period (Appendix 4). Projects identified in the TIP are funded in three basic ways: TIP Formula Funds, State Managed Programs and Other Discretionary Programs. The SPC-managed program (TIP Formula Funds) is financially constrained, indicating that anticipated revenues for the four-year TIP period are sufficient to fund the identified TIP projects. When projects are funded through State Managed Programs or Other Discretionary Programs, external program revenues are added to the SPC-managed TIP along with the project. Where noted, many discretionary projects are included in the TIP for planning purposes only (public review or air quality testing), but the original funding agency retains project management responsibility.

The region's transit agencies provide financial analyses that demonstrate their capacity to implement the budgeted programs. The included Transit Financial Capacity documentation certifies that the agencies have the financial capacity to deliver the projects identified in their programs without affecting current operations / service levels (Appendix 5).

The TIP includes project lists and descriptions for these programs:

- TIP Formula Funds
  - NHPP, STP, HSIP, CMAQ, TAP (Appendix 6)
- State Managed Programs
  - Federal and State Transit (Appendix 7)
  - Interstate, Spike (Appendix 8)
- Other Discretionary Programs
  - Federal Earmarks, Turnpike Commission Capital Maintenance, and selected other projects (Appendix 9)

The 2015-2018 TIP includes references to additional information to improve program reporting and understanding in a number of ways:

- Enhanced use of and ties to federal and state planning references
- Information on additional program materials, detail on planning processes and analysis of TIP program impacts
- Supplemental non-federal processes for identifying and maintaining projects with 100% state funding; with the addition of PA Act 89 resources the state programming has become an increasingly important part of the TIP
- Program and project information for discretionary projects
- Integration and presentation of highway and transit program materials; parallel project formats and descriptive highlights facilitate reader understanding across the programs
- Additional project detail through PennDOT web applications - MPMS IQ and TIP Visualization

## **II. Transportation Program Planning Framework**

The 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (2015-2018 TIP) documents the short-term (four-year) transportation program for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) manages a cooperative, coordinated and comprehensive transportation planning process consisting of multiple federal, state and regional planning partners who, together with the public and interested parties, develop and approve the final program. Federal and state legislation provides much of the planning framework for the region's transportation program development process and the 2015-2018 TIP.

Federal and state transportation revenues are distributed through multiple transportation programs, each with specific goals and program standards. Programs are managed at the federal, state or regional level depending on the program. The TIP represents a compilation of projects identified through these separate sources.

Statewide planning partners have jointly developed financial and procedural guidance to support TIP development across the state's planning regions. For the SPC region, the 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania (2040 Plan) – the region's adopted long range plan - provides additional program guidance consistent with federal and state legislation.

### **Federal and State Planning Framework**

Federal and state legislation provides much of the planning framework for the region's transportation program development process and the 2015-2018 TIP. MAP-21, the Clean Air Act, and reauthorization of the federal transportation program (anticipated in 2014) provide substantial federal context for the region's transportation program. PA Act 120 (1970), PA Act 44 (2007) and the recently enacted PA Act 89 provide the legislative context for the state transportation program. The TIP is a compilation of projects made possible through various transportation programs established in the federal and state legislation.

### **Federal Transportation Legislation**

The region's current transportation program, the 2013-2016 TIP, was developed under previous federal transportation legislation (SAFETEA-LU) before Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21), went into effect. MAP-21 was initiated in October 2012 as a two-year program and is scheduled to expire in September 2014. The design of the 2015-2018 TIP follows MAP-21 guidance, but its implementation will be affected by transportation reauthorization legislation still under development.

Statewide TIP design assumes that sufficient federal revenues will be provided to continue the proposed four-year program at current spending levels.

The Clean Air Act establishes National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and assigns certain responsibilities to state and local governments to meet these standards. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has promulgated transportation conformity regulations to address Clean Air Act requirements. SPC is responsible under these regulations for testing its long range plan and TIP to ensure that these programs will not worsen regional air quality. A summary of SPC's conformity process and findings are presented in a later section of this report, and are explained in detail in the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2015-2018 TIP.

***Important MAP-21 Changes from SAFETEA-LU.*** MAP-21 included two important changes from the previous SAFETEA-LU legislation that directly impact TIP program design. MAP-21 focused highway funding primarily on the National Highway System (NHS)<sup>1</sup>. The National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) doubled in size, while funding for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) remained virtually the same. The second major change, elimination of the Federal Bridge Program, now requires federal bridge projects to compete for funding through the NHPP and STP programs. Although dropping the bridge program provides greater funding flexibility in overall program design, it also reduces by about half the total number of STP-network projects that can be funded. While NHS bridges can be accommodated in the expanded program, support for roads and bridges on the STP network is now problematic and must be covered by increased support from state or other programs. This change in network-based funding has an uneven impact of urban areas versus rural areas. Urban areas generally have a higher density of NHS roads and bridges and will benefit from NHPP funding increases. Rural areas are more vulnerable to NHS-STP funding changes because more of their facilities are on the STP network. Off-systems bridge projects remain eligible for STP funding but may be especially vulnerable in the reconfigured funding environment. STP projects and off-system bridges are both important programming elements in the SPC region.

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of federal TIP discussions the highway network can be divided into three classes. The National Highway System (NHS) is the core national transportation network and includes the Interstate System, other expressways and select additional (major) transportation arteries. The NHS carries the bulk of the nation's vehicle traffic and freight. NHS projects are funded through the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP). The mid-level network can be called the Surface Transportation Program (STP) network – or more technically, “other non-NHS roadways included in the federal –aid network.” In basic terms the STP network includes the remaining federal-aid roads eligible for funding from the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP). In Pennsylvania the STP network includes most but not all state-owned roadways not on the NHS. From the federal perspective, all other facilities, most of them owned by various local governments, can be considered as “Off-System”.

## **State Transportation Legislation**

PA Act 120 of 1970 established the State Transportation Commission and requirements for a PA Twelve Year Transportation Program. PA Act 44 of 2007 established a number of state programs, including several of the current transit programs. PA Act 89 was enacted in November 2013 as a state multimodal funding measure. The legislation passed as the 2015 transportation program development process was nearing completion. In January 2014, the state reissued financial guidance updating the distribution of state funding to reflect the five-year phase-in of Act 89 revenues.

Act 89 allocates additional revenues to metropolitan and rural planning regions in the state highway and bridge programs, thereby allowing the retention of many STP projects that would otherwise have been removed from the program. The program of 100% state-funded highway projects identified in the 2015-2018 TIP is based almost entirely on these additional revenues. The significant highway and bridge increases also enabled a transfer to the transit programs of Act 44 (former) highway/bridge monies. Act 89 also had a substantial impact on program design for State Managed Programs such as the Interstate Program, as well as the Secretary's Discretionary Highway (Spike) Program.

Generally, Act 44 transportation revenues are generated by Turnpike Commission tolls and are used to support state transit programs. Act 89's other state revenue increases support the expanded state highway and bridge programs.

Over the years, federal and state program requirements have been realigned such that a single planning process meets the requirements of both federal and state transportation programs.

## **Federal and State Transportation Programs**

Federal and state transportation programs can be separated into three basic types depending on the project selection processes used to identify projects for the TIP: TIP Formula Funds, State Managed Programs and Other Discretionary Programs.

### **TIP Formula Funds**

Multiple federal and state programs provide funding to statewide planning regions (large urban, small urban, rural) based on formal funding rules. This type of regular TIP funding is often called 'formula funding' because it is distributed to metropolitan and rural regions based on defined needs-based formulas and criteria. Regional planning agencies manage these funds through their regional TIPs using established planning

processes. Funding sources can be either federal or state, highway or transit programs. Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance further describes these programs and funding formulas.

SPC manages the TIP development process for the ten-county Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area, including project selection decisions for these TIP Formula Funds.

***Federal Formula Fund Programs.*** The 2015-2018 TIP includes federal funding allocated to the SPC region through a number of federal highway and transit programs:

- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

***State Formula Fund Programs.*** The 2015-2018 TIP includes state funding allocated to the SPC region through the state highway program and state bridge program. New Act 89 monies in the TIP generated an almost tenfold increase in the state highway program compared to the current program; the state bridge program nearly doubled. Project decisions for these TIP formula funds are made at the regional level through cooperative planning processes established by regional planning organizations. TIP projects funded with 100% state resources have become a significant TIP investment category.

### **State Managed Programs**

Multiple federal and state programs provide funding to the state either directly or as a formula set-aside. PennDOT is the (state) recipient responsible for program management/project selection decisions for State Managed Programs.

***Federal Highway Programs.*** The PA Interstate Program identifies statewide projects that represent a significant regional TIP investment in the area with identified projects. PennDOT (Harrisburg) shares project information with the regional planning partners for public information purposes, but makes project selection and management decisions from Harrisburg. This management pattern also applies to Rail Crossing projects. The federal Highway Safety and Transportation Alternatives Programs have state components that parallel formula-funded programs managed at the regional level.

**Federal Transit Programs.** The federal transit programs, FTA Section 5307 and FTA Section 5311, are technically formula funding programs, but the project selection decisions are managed by the PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation (Harrisburg). While transit agencies in the SPC region may be designated as direct recipients of the federal funds, non-federal matching funds provided by the state are now more significant than federal funding in delivering projects through these programs.

**State Transit Programs.** PA Act 89 provided a more reliable, dedicated and sufficient revenue source for Pennsylvania public transportation programs (transit programs), that stabilized programs established under PA Act 44 as well as adding a New Initiatives Program (Section 1518). The new transit revenues resolved the issue of structural operating deficits across the state and eliminated transit service reductions scheduled for the next fiscal year. The Pennsylvania Shared Ride Program is managed by the state and funded by proceeds from the Pennsylvania lottery.

**Secretary's Discretionary Highway Program (Federal STP).** Also called the 'Spike Program.' The Spike Program is funded through a 20% set-aside from the federal STP program, or about \$150 million statewide in the 2015-2018 TIP. The PA Secretary of Transportation makes project selection decisions; projects are managed through the regional transportation programs.

**Statewide Reserve (Federal NHPP).** The Statewide NHPP Reserve is funded by a 20% set-aside from the federal NHPP program. Although it is not officially considered as Spike Program funding, decision-making and project management are similar to the Spike Program. Also similar to the Spike Program, the NHPP Reserve increases PennDOT's capacity to address NHPP projects too large to fund within a region's allocation of TIP Formula Funds. Project selection is based on asset management principles, supporting projects on the enhanced NHS network with a priority on pavement and bridge preservation, and fixing poor pavements and structurally deficient (SD) bridges.

At more than \$700 million statewide in this TIP investment cycle, the NHPP Reserve is nearly five times larger than the Spike Program. This program is a response by the PA planning partners to MAP-21's network-based funding changes. Managing this funding as a statewide reserve helps PennDOT to continue support in the regional TIPs for STP projects that might otherwise have been dropped from the program. The SPC region receives investment from both the Spike Program and NHPP Reserve.

## Other Discretionary Programs

**Federal Discretionary Programs.** The transportation program sometimes includes projects selected for federal funding outside the regional and state coordinated TIP processes. Federal earmarks have been a significant project funding source in past transportation reauthorization bills and annual congressional budgets, although not in the MAP-21 period. The Transportation Community and System Preservation (TCSP), American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (stimulus), and Ferryboat Discretionary Programs are examples of now inactive programs that have provided funding for specific federally-selected projects. The TIGER program is an active program where local project sponsors compete for federal funding on a program-by-program basis. Program cycles and project selection standards are managed by the federal program manager on a program-by-program basis depending on available funding. The SPC TIP has included projects from each of the aforementioned programs.

**State Discretionary Programs.** A new State Discretionary Program was established using a set-aside from Act 89 state highway funding. This funding is awarded at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation. Selected projects are managed through the regional TIPs. Project selection decisions and project cost changes are not reviewable by FHWA. The new discretionary program exceeds \$600 million for the 2015-2018 TIP four times larger compared to the existing Spike Program at about \$150 million.

Projects are sometimes added to regional TIPs through state discretionary programs such as the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiatives (PCTI) program. Program cycles and project selection standards are managed by the state on a program-by-program basis dependent on available funding.

## Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance/ General and Procedural Guidance

Pennsylvania's Planning Partners – MPOs, RPOs, FHWA, FTA, the State Transportation Commission and PennDOT collaborate in the development of the Financial Guidance and the General and Procedural Guidance informing the statewide TIP development process. This guidance includes useful background information, policies established for use by the partners in the development of regional transportation programs, and program assumptions.

The General and Procedural Guidance identifies the purpose of the planning program and the roles and responsibilities of various intergovernmental planning partners. It includes a 'Transportation Program Development and Project Delivery Process' flowchart from the PennDOT Design Manual (Publication 10A / DM-1A) that places TIP Project Identification within the broader process of identifying overall transportation needs and delivering final projects through the TIP.

The General and Procedural Guidance section identifies additional federal, state and region-level resources that provide a more comprehensive planning context for TIP development and coordination needs. It also provides an introduction to federal and state planning requirements, background on various federal and state programs for highways and transit, and highlights requirements for Public Involvement, Financial Planning (financial constraint), Information Sharing, and Performance-Based Planning.

The development procedures section identifies the process steps leading to a final TIP, includes technical requirements for defining projects and line items, and presents other program-specific requirements. It includes a program development schedule and TIP checklist of the multiple elements that define a completed TIP. Instructions for making changes to the transportation program after its adoption are also provided.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission resolution self-certifying the transportation planning process is based on the model MPO resolution provided in the guidance. The SPC TIP Modification Procedures are adapted from (and consistent with) the State TIP Modification Procedures. Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance describes the procedures for determining statewide financial allocations of available federal and state transportation funding. It identifies set-asides for State Managed Programs, and funding formulas and distribution tables allocating funding to metropolitan and rural planning organizations. Where program funding is allocated by formula, the guidance identifies the weighted criteria and their usage. The guidance includes federal and state formula funds, and highway and transit programs. Several federal and state discretionary programs are also identified along with general provisions for their use. Projects introduced by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission receive special attention separate from TIP Formula Funds, State Managed Programs or Other Discretionary Programs.

## SPC's Long Range Plan

Federal law requires that each MPO develop a transportation plan with at least a 20-year horizon. A long range plan provides the context for the shorter term investments programmed in the four-year TIP, and it aids in the continuity of the planning process needed to achieve project implementation in pursuit of a regional vision over multiple TIP cycles.

The Regional Vision identified in the 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania (2040 Plan) identifies sixteen Plan Policy Statements based on three organizing principles: *Regional Places*, *Regional Connections* and *Regional Activities*. They provide policy guidance furthering the Plan's highlighted purposes:

- To maximize regional assets and infrastructure to achieve balanced, cost effective growth;
- To capitalize on investments in existing communities; and
- To strengthen quality job creation and regional economic competitiveness.

The SPC planning program captures in the 2040 Plan the broad vision for the region. The TIP and UPWP (transportation) and CEDS (economic development) and related programs are the major tools available to SPC for implementing the 2040 Plan's policy goals.

### **III. Regulatory Compliance**

Over the years, federal and state program requirements have been realigned such that a single planning process meets the requirements of both federal and state transportation programs. When TIP development is completed through SPC, the approved transportation program is submitted to the federal and state funding agencies for review. SPC certifies compliance with the federal planning requirements. The TIP provides additional required documentation in several planning areas: Clean Air Act requirements, Environmental Justice, Financial Constraint / Transit Financial Capacity, and Public Participation.

As part of the TIP update process, regional planning organizations are responsible for reviewing their transportation planning processes to ensure they are being carried out in accordance with all applicable federal requirements, and that local processes to enhance the participation of the general public, including the transportation disadvantaged, has been followed in the development of the TIP and long range plan update. SPC has conducted this process review and included the SPC Resolution to Certify the Transportation Planning Process (Appendix 1). The SPC process is informed by Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program General and Procedural Guidance.

#### **Federal Clean Air Act Requirements**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated several areas within Southwestern Pennsylvania that are not in attainment of one or more National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The designated nonattainment areas in the region include:

- PM<sub>10</sub> (one designated area – five municipalities within Allegheny County)
- Carbon monoxide (one designated area – City of Pittsburgh's Central Business District)
- 8-hour ozone (one designated area covering seven of the ten counties within SPC's planning area)
- Annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> (three separate areas that, combined, cover five entire counties and parts of four other counties within SPC's planning area)
- Daily PM<sub>2.5</sub> (the same three areas designated nonattainment for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual standard)

A companion document to this report, the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area, documents the process used by SPC for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the TIP and Plan. It also demonstrates that SPC's adopted transportation plans, programs, and projects within

each nonattainment area conform to the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act and the applicable criteria and procedures of the Transportation Conformity Rule.

## **Environmental Justice**

Executive Order 12898 mandates federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice (EJ) analysis in their policies, programs and activities. Building from the framework of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ensures nondiscrimination in federal programs, EJ directives address how low-income and minority populations are affected by the actions of the federal government. In their publication, *An Overview of Transportation and Environmental Justice*, the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) outlines their three main objectives stemming from this mandate:

- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations;
- Ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
- Prevent the denial of, reduction in or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

SPC prepares a Report on Environmental Justice as a companion document to the TIP report. The report summarizes multiple analyses, outcomes and activities that are part of the region's planning process, including both a participatory component and a technical component. A review of SPC's public outreach and opportunities for the citizens of the Southwestern Pennsylvania region to participate in transportation planning is included in this report, with further information detailed in SPC's Public Participation Report. The report also evaluates the distributive effects of the 2015-2018 TIP by assessing the geographic distribution of the benefits and burdens of the regional transportation system to protected populations.

## **TIP Financial Constraint / Transit Financial Capacity**

Federal regulations require a financially-constrained transportation program (23 CFR Part 450.324 and FTA Circular 7008.1A). There must be a reasonable expectation that sufficient revenue (federal, state and local matching funds) will be available to cover the total cost of projects identified in the TIP. Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance identifies for multiple federal and state funding sources the amounts expected to be available in the 2015-2018 TIP. Highway and transit components of the TIP are developed within this financial framework. Regarding local funding, project sponsors must document funding sources for projects and phases proposed for TIP years 1 and 2 before they can be considered as TIP candidates.

Financial constraint for the Highway Component of the TIP is reviewable at the state level in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). A financial summary of the financially-constrained SPC highway program is presented in Appendix 4.

Transit guidance requires sponsors of local transit projects to determine their financial capacity to undertake projects involving the acquisition, operation and maintenance of facilities and equipment partially funded by the federal government, and that such improvements can be managed in addition to operating and maintaining the existing transit system. Transit service providers in the SPC region document this financial capacity in Appendix 5. Transit project sponsors use SPC's public involvement process as the required public comment period for their financial capacity documents.

## **Public Participation**

The SPC public participation process is spelled out in its Public Participation Plan. A discussion of public outreach activities associated with the SPC TIP Update is detailed in the TIP Public Participation Report, which is produced upon conclusion of the SPC TIP public comment period. For the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, this public comment period extended from June 18 through July 18, 2014. The Report on Public Participation includes the public meeting schedule and meeting locations (10), and copies of public advertisements identifying provisions for persons with disabilities and/or needs related to sight, hearing or language. The report also includes a summary of the public comments submitted, an SPC response to these comments and the full text of all written and electronic comments received through the public involvement process.

The materials presented for public review included The Draft 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, and three companion documents: the draft Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area; The draft Benefits and Burdens Assessment for the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (Report on Environmental Justice); and the Update to the 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania. This complete set of TIP resources was available for review on the SPC website ([www.spcregion.org](http://www.spcregion.org)), at SPC's offices, through member planning agencies and at a selected network of public libraries across the region. A list of libraries participating in SPC's public document review network is available in SPC's Public Participation Plan.

On an ongoing basis, SPC also conducts targeted outreach to groups serving persons with disabilities, transportation-dependent populations, and other groups with particular

transportation needs (elderly, low-income groups). Panels and member planning departments are instrumental in providing referrals for the additional outreach.

## **TIP Modification Procedures**

The transportation program must continue to be responsive to necessary programming changes after TIP adoption. Changes to the TIP are enacted through TIP Modification Procedures adopted at both the regional and state levels. Changes to projects or line items are monitored by the Planning Partners through SPC's technical committees (TTC/TOC) and are the subject of various program status reports. The SPC TIP Modification Procedures are included in Appendix 3. A process flow diagram is also provided to help project sponsors determine how specific modification requests will be administered.

The TIP Modification Procedures introduce streamlined supplemental processes for identifying and maintaining projects with 100% state funding. These non-federal projects are exempt from federal review requirements. With the addition of significant state funding through PA Act 89 the programming process for these projects has become an increasingly important part of the TIP.

## IV. Transportation Improvement Program Overview

Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program General and Procedural Guidance includes a *Transportation Program Development Process Diagram* (Figure 1.1 from the PennDOT Design Manual (DM-1A)) that provides a general overview of the transportation planning process. The *Program Development and Administration* section of the Guidance identifies TIP development procedures, project requirements, rules for line items, and program-specific requirements. Although the identified references are specific to the development of the highway program at the general level these process steps also apply to the transit program.

### Transportation Improvement Program Summary

The SPC 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, or 2015-2018 TIP, includes a prioritized list of projects recommended for implementation over a four-year period. The TIP is updated every two years. The program must be financially constrained, meaning that the cost of the proposed improvement program may not exceed the funds available for project completion. SPC, in consultation with PennDOT, the transit operators, and other project sponsors and interested parties, must prioritize and select projects for the program. The State Twelve Year Program (TYP) and SPC's 2040 Plan are complementary planning tools for managing future project needs. The TIP is the first four-year period for both the TYP and long range plan. TIP projects are derived from the long range plan consistent with the region's overall vision.

The 2015-2018 TIP identifies projects funded through TIP Formula Funds, State Managed Programs and Other Discretionary Programs. The TIP is responsible for managing only the projects using TIP Formula Funds. For projects funded through State Managed Programs and Other Discretionary Programs, in most cases the original funding agency remains responsible for managing the project and covering any increase in project costs; information on these projects is presented in the TIP for planning purposes only.

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Responsible Agency</u>	<u>Project List</u>
TIP Formula Funds	SPC	Appendix 6
State Managed (transit)	PennDOT (transit)	Appendix 7
State Managed Programs	PennDOT (highway)	Appendix 8
Other Discretionary Programs	Various	Appendix 9

Projects selected by SPC using TIP Formula Funds are identified in Appendix 6 (highway project lists). The highway projects are presented by investment type – highway preservation and reconstruction, bridge preservation and replacement, highway safety, operations, CMAQ, and transportation alternatives / other.

Transit projects are identified in Appendix 7 (transit project lists). The federal urban and rural transit programs include TIP Formula Funds, but the state manages the final project selection process. This hybrid project selection process is described in the TIP development section.

Federal and state transportation programs included in the TIP are identified in the program section of the TIP Summary Report. Additional program information is available in Appendix 10, Planning References. The project lists include links to detailed project information and to project mapping where available. The project links make use of the PennDOT web applications, MPMS IQ and TIP Visualizer, to provide up-to-date project information linked to the PennDOT project database. The TIP information and monthly changes are available through the TIP section of the SPC website.

**General TIP Procedures.** The major funding source for the SPC TIP is Formula Funds provided through MAP-21 and allocated to the 2015-2018 TIP through Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance. This funding is administered through FHWA and FTA. State funds made available by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are provided to match federal funding using program-dependent funding ratios.

With the passage of PA Act 89, a large number of state highway and bridge projects are now funded with 100% state funds. Because these projects are not subject to federal review, the SPC TIP Modification Procedures have been adjusted to streamline approvals for changes to state projects.

Local counties, municipalities, private developers and toll authorities may also participate in project funding, either as a source of matching funds for federal dollars, or as the sole funding source for specific projects.

The TIP Formula Funds include a number of federal and state transportation programs. SPC manages the project selection processes associated with these programs, as well as project cost or schedule changes during the project delivery period.

Federal law requires that all TIPs must be financially constrained to the amount of revenue that reasonably can be expected to be available. This fiscal requirement applies to TIP Formula Funds allocated to the region's TIP. Decision-making is always difficult given the large number of candidate projects and the limited fiscal capacity.

The preliminary TIP is developed using a process where projects that are identified but not fully completed in the preceding TIP have first priority for funding. The cost of completing each of these continuing projects is updated and, if funding is available, their full costs are provided for in the subsequent TIP. A review is performed to ensure project sponsors do not carry over to the next TIP any project that is no longer needed and that the cost and schedule for the carryover project is realistic. Projects are reviewed to ensure that the local match is available. Project sponsors may voluntarily drop lower priority projects from the program to create capacity to cover cost increases for other existing projects or to add a new higher-priority project.

Every year, a large number of transportation projects are proposed to SPC for possible inclusion in the TIP. The region's transportation partners screen the new proposals to assure consistency with the long range plan, determine whether they satisfy relevant program standards, and for qualifying projects, identify the projects that fit into a prioritized and fiscally constrained program. Many qualifying projects are deferred to subsequent TIPs because of the limited fiscal capacity.

Once the TIP has been approved at the regional level, it is submitted to PennDOT for approval by the Governor, as well as to the U.S. DOT. MAP-21 also requires that TIP projects be incorporated into a state TIP (or STIP), which compiles projects from throughout the Commonwealth.

As conditions change, SPC makes adjustments in the TIP periodically through its technical committees. The Transit Operators Committee and Transportation Technical Committee meet monthly to review and consider changes in project status, schedule, cost, scope, or funding source. Any necessary changes are made using the TIP Modification Procedures identified in Appendix 3. The process flow diagram describes the administrative process for any requested changes. Where required, TIP changes are reviewed and approved by SPC, PennDOT, and U.S. DOT.

In air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas such as Southwestern Pennsylvania, regional TIPs must be shown to conform to provisions of the federal Clean Air Act. The TIP and accompanying Air Quality Conformity Report are also available for public review and comment before final adoption.

## **Role of the TTC and TOC in TIP Development**

The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) is responsible for developing and recommending the highway component of the TIP to the Commission. Preliminary highway project lists for the 2015-2018 TIP were developed through regional work group meetings of TTC members within each PennDOT District. The TTC appointed

subcommittees to develop recommended project lists for the CMAQ Program and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The TTC is also responsible for monitoring and maintaining project details and is authorized to approve minor TIP amendments.

The Transit Operators Committee (TOC) is responsible for developing and recommending the transit component of the TIP to the Commission. Development of the transit program is different from the highway program in that there are direct relationships between local transit service providers and federal and state funding agencies (FTA and PennDOT). The TOC oversees the TIP development process in which most of the work is accomplished independently by the local transit agencies.

The TOC is responsible for monitoring and maintaining project detail and is authorized to approve minor amendments to the public transportation programs.

## **SPC TIP Development Process**

SPC developed its regular transportation program based on TIP Formula Funds made available to SPC through Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance. Multiple work groups were established through the TTC and TOC and tasked with program development. The resulting financially -constrained project lists are identified in the highway project lists (Appendix 6) and transit project lists (Appendix 7).

**Highway Projects.** TIP development work groups held sets of 5 meetings in each of the three PennDOT Engineering Districts (10, 11 and 12) in the SPC region. Meeting participation included the TTC members from each District.

**CMAQ Projects.** Projects programmed for CMAQ funding were recommended through SPC's CMAQ Evaluation Committee (CEC). The process is described in the SPC CMAQ Program Guidelines. The CEC includes representatives from SPC's standing committees (Transit Operators Committee and Transportation Technical Committee) local air quality regulatory agencies, pedestrian-bicycle interest groups, freight industry representatives, and the region's Transportation Management Associations. The CEC solicited, evaluated and prioritized candidate projects proposed for CMAQ funding. All of the projects selected for CMAQ funding are included in the highway project list (Appendix 6) because the CMAQ Program is administered through the Federal Highway Administration.

**TAP Projects.** The TTC established the TAP Evaluation Committee to develop and recommend TAP projects to the TTC and the Commission. Project selection for the SPC TAP program will be underway through September 2014, with new TAP projects

added to the 2015-2018 TIP (as TIP amendments) as specific projects are identified. The SPC TAP development process is modeled after the State TAP Selection Process and closely follows the Pennsylvania TAP Program Guidance.

**Transit Projects.** TOC member transit service providers generate project requests within the fiscal limits of separate urban and rural financial program guidance. The TOC compiles and reviews project submissions that are included in the TIP for approval by the Commission. Urban program guidance is provided through a special work group that reports to the TOC. The work group translates Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance for urban program formula funding (Section 5307) into agency-specific estimates useful in preparing urban operating budgets and capital project lists. Rural Section 5311 budgets for individual rural transit service providers are determined by the PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation (BPT) and transmitted directly to the rural providers.

For eligible transit projects competing for highway program funding, the TTC selects the projects or line items and recommends them to the Commission.

The federal urban and rural transit programs are funded with TIP Formula Funds. Transit project sponsors develop programs of projects that are fiscally constrained to the federal funding total for their agency. Each project also includes a proposed amount of state matching funds and a small local agency share. The BPT manages the final project selection by deciding the level of state funding to commit to each identified project. Transit projects are listed in Appendix 7.

## **Project Evaluation and Project Prioritization**

While there are many factors that go into identifying and prioritizing transportation projects, the main areas for consideration are: local needs, regional needs and priorities, technical project evaluation, available funding, and project deliverability. Project deliverability also considers the complexity of the project and its status in clearing federal NEPA reviews. Pre-TIP planning steps are identified in the SPC TIP Work Group Procedures. The information included in the project review helps decision-makers weigh the costs and benefits of projects, including their impact on congestion, freight, economic development, safety, accessibility, the environment, and the physical condition of the existing transportation system, among other factors.

Technical project evaluations were conducted by the District TIP work groups, CMAQ Evaluation Committee and TAP Evaluation Committee for all projects that were considered for inclusion in the 2015-2018 TIP. Evaluation criteria are described in the

program guidance materials for the CMAQ and TAP Programs. Evaluation criteria for candidate highway projects are described in the SPC Project Evaluation Procedures.

## **Discretionary and Other Programs**

Discretionary Funding Programs provide TIP access to funding sources beyond the regular TIP funding (SPC TIP Formula Funds). Discretionary programs include a number of external programs where the federal or state program managers make project decisions based on defined non-TIP program standards. For ease of description, the TIP identifies three types of Discretionary Programs: State Managed Programs, State Discretionary Programs, and Other Discretionary Programs. In the first two cases PennDOT (Harrisburg) manages the project selection processes and informs regional planning agencies of projects and activities in their respective planning regions. The third category is a miscellaneous collection of other funding sources. The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission is an example of an ‘Other Discretionary Program.’

**State Managed Programs (SMP).** SMPs include the Interstate Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Program. The Urban Area Formula Program (FTA Section 5307) and Rural Transit Assistance Program (FTA Section 5311) are also managed at the state level as SMPs. Program funding totals and a program description are provided in Pennsylvania’s 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance. Projects are selected and managed by the state and identified in regional TIPs for planning information.

Project Lists for State Managed Programs are included in Appendix 8. Additional planning considerations for the State Managed Programs include:

- Interstate Project List. PennDOT (Harrisburg) has identified an extensive list of interstate projects in the SPC region funded through the Interstate SMP.
- Transit Project Lists. Transit projects identified in the 2015-2018 TIP (Appendix 7) represent a request to PennDOT for the state funding match. SPC approval of the transit project list does not ensure that individual projects will receive funding. PennDOT will notify SPC of the projects that receive state funding support. If the level of project support is different from the 2015-2018 TIP request, SPC would need to respond by amending the TIP.
- There is no State HSIP Project List (SMP) at this time. PennDOT has not determined a schedule for identifying state HSIP priorities. PennDOT will notify SPC of any selected projects so that the projects can be added to the 2015-2018 TIP.
- There is no Rail Safety Project List (SMP) at this time. PennDOT has not determined a schedule for identifying state rail safety priorities. PennDOT will

notify SPC of any selected projects so that the projects can be added to the 2015-2018 TIP.

- There is no State TAP Project List (SMP) at this time. The State TAP program is a statewide competition with anticipated project selections by September 30, 2014. PennDOT will notify SPC of any selected projects so that the projects can be added to the 2015-2018 TIP.

**State Discretionary Programs.** Several programs are identified as State Discretionary Programs. Funding information and a program description are provided Pennsylvania's 2015 Transportation Program Financial Guidance except as noted. Projects are selected and managed by the state and identified in regional TIPs for planning information.

- Secretary's Discretionary Highway Program (Spike Program). The Spike Program is funded by a 20% set-aside from the federal STP program. The project list for the Spike Program is included in Appendix 8.
- Statewide NHPP Reserve. This program is funded by a 20% set-aside from the federal NHPP program. NHPP reserve projects are identified in the TIP Highway Project Lists. NHPP revenues in the 2015-2018 TIP have been increased by total cost of the NHPP Reserve projects.
- State Highway Reserve. This program is funded through a set-aside from the State Highway Program.
- Shared Ride Program. This program is funded by state transit funds.

The Project List for the Spike Program is included in Appendix 8. There is no separate project list for the Statewide NHPP Reserve or State Highway Reserve. When these projects are selected by the state and added to the TIP, project funding is additional to the region's allocation of TIP Formula Funds.

A P3 Bridge Program approved in PA Act 89 is expected to be implemented later in 2014, with the state selecting up to 60 new small bridges to add to the 2015-2018 TIP. The state program is expected to fund at least 50% of the total program cost, the remainder coming from regional TIPs. The 2015-2018 TIP includes a reserve line item (funding) in anticipation of P3 Bridge Program implementation.

Similarly, identification of projects through the State Managed Programs and State Discretionary Programs is expected later. Two new programs were created, a \$718 million State Reserve (NHPP) and a \$607 State Highway Reserve. The new reserves represent about 15% of the overall state program total. Management systems and procedures are being developed for the new programs.

**Other Discretionary Programs.** Several miscellaneous programs are included as Other Discretionary Programs: Federal Earmarks, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission Projects, and the federal TIGER Program. One project, the SR18 Relocation project in Beaver County is funded with 100% private money through a major corporation.

The program funding sources for these projects are typically distinct from regular TIP or State Discretionary funding sources. Program cycles may be separated from the TIP cycle or may be irregular, active only on the occasion that funding becomes available. As with other discretionary funding, the projects generally appear in the TIP as planning information, except when noted. The SPC TIP does not manage the funding program. SPC updates project information only as new status reports are received from the project managers.

**Project List for Federal Earmarks.** There are 32 earmarks in the SPC region that are still available for use; most of them were established when SAFETEA-LU was adopted in 2005.

**Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) Projects.** The PTC identifies two types of projects in the SPC TIP; capital maintenance on the Turnpike Mainline including the ongoing effort to modernize the original highway (I-76) and widen it to six lanes, and projects implementing the Pennsylvania Legislature's toll-facility expansion program. Appendix 9 includes the PTC Capital Maintenance Project List and a project summary sheet for the PTC's Turnpike expansion project from US-22 to I-79.

**Federal TIGER Program.** To be considered for program funding an application must indicate that the project is identified in the TIP. Appendix 9 includes a project summary sheet for a proposed project by the Sports and Exhibition Authority (SEA), a joint public authority of the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. The I-579 Cap project is an extension of the Commission-approved Lower Hill District Redevelopment Project.

Project lists/information sheets for these Other Discretionary Programs are included in Appendix 9.