

## I. Introduction

The development of a four year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a requirement of federal transportation legislation, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which was enacted August 10, 2005, as Law 109-59. SAFETEA-LU builds on the initiatives established in two previous pieces of transportation legislation, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA).

As the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area, responsibility for development and maintenance of the regional TIP falls to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC). The TIP identifies the region's highest priority transportation projects, develops a multi-year program of implementation, and identifies available funding (federal and non-federal) for the identified projects. The regional TIP is updated every two years through a cooperative effort of local, state and federal agencies, as well as the general public.

The *2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania* (2009-2012 TIP) identifies the priority highway and transit improvements programmed for advancement from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2012 (federal fiscal years 2009-2012). The 2009-2012 TIP specifies the priorities for the region and includes reasonable estimates of both available funds and anticipated project expenditures.

The TIP lists all transportation projects that intend to use federal funds, as well as non-federally funded projects that are regionally significant. Individual improvement projects must be included on the 2009-2012 TIP to become eligible for federal funding. Not all projects are individually identified however, as small scale projects may be grouped into project line items by project type, to permit fluidity in program implementation. The list of projects is multi-modal, including highway, bridge, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight and ITS-related projects.

The TIP not only lists the specific projects, but also documents the anticipated schedule and cost for each project phase (preliminary engineering, final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction). The TIP identifies the cost and schedule (by year) for each project phase, as well as the total project cost and funding source. The federal, state, local, and private funds are identified for each project as reported by the project sponsors.

The production of the TIP is the culmination of the transportation planning process and represents a consensus among state and regional officials as to what near-term improvements to pursue. Consensus is crucial because, before committing significant sums of money, the federal and state governments require assurances that all interested parties have participated in developing the priorities. A project's inclusion in the TIP signifies regional consensus on the priority of the project and establishes eligibility for federal funding. This consensus is developed through the efforts of two

SPC technical committees – the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) and Transit Operators Committee (TOC) – which work cooperatively to develop the recommended program of projects. Staff representatives from SPC, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the planning departments of each SPC member county and the City of Pittsburgh, and the region's urban and rural transit operators and the general public actively participate in the development and ongoing maintenance of the TIP.

In accordance with federal regulations, the list of projects in the TIP is financially constrained to the amount of funds that are reasonably expected to be available. In order to add projects to the TIP, others must be deferred. As a result, the TIP is not a wish list, but a list of projects for which funding has been identified. The financial guidance used to develop the 2009-2012 TIP is included in Appendix A of this document.

The TIP is authorization to seek funding. A project's presence in the TIP represents a critical step in the authorization of funding to a project. It does not, however, represent a commitment of funds, an obligation to fund, or a grant of funds. Nor is the TIP a final schedule of project implementation. The time frame shown in the TIP is the best estimate at the time of TIP development, which is six to nine months prior to the beginning of the first fiscal year of the TIP period. Projects quite often cannot maintain that schedule and are reprogrammed to later years.

The TIP is not a guarantee of project implementation. Unforeseen problems may arise, such as engineering obstacles, environmental permit conflicts, changes in priorities, and additional financial constraints. These problems can slow a project, cause it to be postponed, or even dropped from further consideration.

Therefore, under the provisions of federal law and regulation, the approved TIP can be modified or amended in various ways in order to add new projects, delete projects, advance projects into the first year, and accommodate cost and phase of work changes or major scope changes to a project. The criteria and procedures for amending the TIP are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) included in Appendix 7 to this document.

Extensive public outreach has been conducted in the development of the 2009-2012 TIP, and public comments are considered fully in the development of the draft program. A detailed discussion of SPC's public outreach activities are detailed in the Public Participation Report. An assessment of the benefits and burdens of the regional long range transportation plan indicates that projects included in the 2009-2012 TIP do not have disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations.

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require that all transportation plans, programs and projects conform to national air quality standards. The 2009-2012 TIP has been tested for conformity and found to meet all requirements, including the critical test that Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx), Carbon Monoxide (CO), and fine particulate matter (PM-2.5) emissions are less than any applicable

budgets or baseline established for all analysis years. Findings of the air quality assessment are presented in the companion document to the 2009-2012 TIP, the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area for the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program.

## **Components of the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program**

The Transportation Improvement Program documentation includes four major elements: this document, the TIP Summary Report; the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area; the Assessment of Benefits and Burdens for the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania; and the Public Participation Report for the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania

### **TIP Summary Report**

This TIP Summary Report describes the development and administration of the program and provides basic information on each programmed project. Sections of this report introduce the air quality conformity process and the opportunities for public involvement that are discussed at length in their respective reports.

Appendices to the TIP Summary Report include:

- *Appendix 1: Financial Plan for the Title I Highway Program* documents the 2009-2012 TIP Title I Financial Plan
- *Appendix 2: Highway Program Project List* identifies the Title I Project Lists for all projects funded individually in the TIP
- *Appendix 3: Title III Public Transportation Program* documents the Title III Transit Program
- *Appendix 4: Turnpike Project List* identifies TIP programming and other funding for Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission projects in Southwestern Pennsylvania that are being advanced during the four-year TIP period
- *Appendix 5: TE/HS/SRTS Project List* identifies an Enhancements Project List that shows the amount of eligible federal funding for approved Transportation Enhancements, Hometown Streets and Safe Routes to School projects
- *Appendix 6: Statewide Interstate Maintenance Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania* identifies a Project List for the State Interstate Maintenance Program in Southwestern Pennsylvania
- *Appendix 7: TIP Revision Procedures* documents the procedures used for making changes to the Transportation Improvement Program, once adopted.

- *Appendix A: Pennsylvania's 2009 Transportation Program Financial Guidance*
- *Appendix B: Changes to the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program in Response to Public Comments* identifies the changes to the 2009-2012 TIP that were made in response to public comments.

### **Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area**

A companion report to the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program, the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area documents compliance of the 2009-2012 TIP and the 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania with requirements of the federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA 90).

### **Environmental Justice Benefits and Burdens Assessment for the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania**

In accordance with Federal Order 12898, SPC has conducted a socio-demographic and geographic assessment of regional transportation investments to determine the fairness of the regional transportation improvement program. The results of this assessment indicate that no individually identifiable population segment or geographic area benefit are disproportionately benefitted (served) or burdened (disrupted and/or inconvenienced) as a result of the proposed transportation investment program.

### **Public Participation Report**

The Public Participation Report is produced upon conclusion of the 30-day public comment period from May 25 through June 27, 2008. The report describes public involvement in the TIP update process and includes a summary of the public comments received, as well as the SPC response to comments received on the 2009-2012 TIP and Air Quality Conformity Determination for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area. The full text of all written and electronic comments received throughout the public involvement process will be included in the Public Participation Report.

### **Amendment to the 2035 Transportation and Development Plan**

In a related action, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission proposes to amend the 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania in order to reflect project phasing and cost information included in this 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program. The public comment period for the proposed 2035 Plan amendment will be coincidental with the 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program. Comments received on the proposed amendment to the 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania will be included in the Public Participation Report.