

Public Participation Report: Response to Public Comments (June 27 – July 27, 2006)

on

DRAFT
2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
for Southwestern Pennsylvania

DRAFT
2006 Air Quality Conformity Determination for the
TIP and the 2030 Plan

PROPOSED
Amendment to the 2030 Transportation and Development
Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania
(North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update)

July, 2006



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I. Introduction

This document presents comments received and responses to comments for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's (SPC) public comment period from June 27 to July 27, 2006 on the:

- *Draft 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Southwestern Pennsylvania*
- *Draft 2006 Air Quality Conformity Determination* for the TIP and 2030 Plan
- Proposed Amendment to the *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania* (North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update)

The Draft 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (Draft 2007-2010 TIP) is comprised of a three document set: the TIP Summary Report, Air Quality Conformity Determination, and Public Participation Report.

The Public Participation Report includes public comment during the year-long Draft 2007-2010 TIP development process and includes the following sections:

1. Summary of Public Comments on the Draft 2007-2010 TIP and the SPC Response
2. Early Public Comment, July-August 2005 (Index of Testimony)
3. Second Public Comment, June-July 2006
4. Written and Electronic Comments on the Draft 2007-2010 TIP (June 27 through July 27, 2006)
5. Documentation of Public Outreach Activities

The report includes by reference ten volumes of testimony presented by SPC to the State Transportation Commission at Joint Public Hearings with SPC on September 11, 2005. This testimony was collected in July and August 2005 at a series of ten public hearings sponsored by the SPC Public Participation Panels (PPPs). Meetings were held in each SPC member government jurisdiction. These volumes are available for public review at SPC's offices and at PennDOT.

Public comments documented in the Public Participation Report include comments on the Draft 2007-2010 TIP and the Draft 2006 Air Quality Conformity Determination as presented for public review from June 27 to July 27, 2006. The summary table of the public comments in Part 1 also includes an SPC response to comments. The air quality conformity results documented in the Air Quality Conformity Determination report include conformity for the *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern*

Pennsylvania (Phase 1 projects are revised to match the updated TIP) as well as conformity for the 2007-2010 TIP.

The Public Participation Report also includes concurrent public involvement activities conducted June 27 to July 27, 2006 for the Proposed Amendment to the *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania* (North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update).

All comments and responses in this Public Participation Report were distributed to members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission for their review, in advance of the July 31, 2006 meeting for action to adopt the 2007-2010 TIP, 2006 Air Quality Conformity Determination, and the Amendment to the *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania* (North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update).

Copies of the 2007-2010 TIP including the Air Quality Conformity Determination and Public Participation Report will be available through the SPC Products and Services Catalog and at www.spcregion.org.

II. Background

Draft 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (Draft 2007-2010 TIP)

SPC began the process of updating the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with a series of public meetings hosted by SPC's Public Participation Panels (PPPs) during July and August 2005. Public meetings were held in each of the ten SPC member counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland). The purpose of the PPP meetings was to solicit public input on transportation priorities for consideration in developing the 2007-2010 TIP.

This early public input is documented in a set of ten Public Participation Reports (SPC, September 2005), which were presented to the State Transportation Commission at a joint public hearing co-hosted with SPC on September 11, 2005. Copies were also provided to the PennDOT District Offices.

PennDOT provided Title I (Surface Transportation Program) TIP Financial Guidance to the statewide MPO and RPO planning partners (for urban and rural planning regions, respectively) in November 2005 after a series of statewide planning meetings beginning in February 2005. The SPC technical committees reviewed the state fiscal allocations and used these revenue estimates in the technical work sessions to develop a fiscally-balanced program.

The Title I (Surface Transportation Program) component of the Draft 2007-2010 TIP includes transportation improvements recommended for implementation with federal Title I funding, state highway and bridge funding, and major improvements funded through other sources during the four-year TIP period. Projects are derived from or are consistent with the region's *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania*.

The Title III (Public Transportation) component of the Draft 2007-2010 TIP identifies the transit improvements recommended for advancement with federal and non-federal assistance during the program period. Projects are derived from or are consistent with the region's *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania*. The TIP must specify the area's priorities, and must reflect reasonable estimates of available funds and anticipated costs. Transit improvement projects must be included on the TIP in order to be eligible for federal funding.

SPC's technical committees completed preliminary TIP project lists in February 2006 including proposed project lists for each county, PennDOT District and transit agency. The preliminary program was submitted to PennDOT for review. In May, PennDOT responded by sending SPC a proposed program, which was developed through a

cooperative process into the fiscally-balanced project list for the SPC region by the end of May 2006. The program was then tested for conformity with the Clean Air Act. The resulting Draft 2007-2010 TIP was documented as the TIP Summary Report and Air Quality Conformity Determination, which were ready for public review in late June 2006.

North Shore LRT Connector, Financial Plan Update to the 2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania

The *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania* was adopted by SPC on July 31, 2003. The North Shore LRT Connector, Financial Plan Update revises the financial plan for this project.

Draft 2006 Air Quality Conformity Determination for the TIP and 2030 Plan (Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination)

The Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination documents the process used by SPC for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the Draft 2007-2010 TIP, and reaffirming conformity for the *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania*. The conformity determination that resulted from this process is based upon criteria and procedures described in EPA's Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93).

The Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination presents an overview of pertinent provisions of the CAAA 90 and the conformity requirements; a summary of SPC's transportation modeling process; methods used to develop emissions estimates for the 2006 conformity determination; travel simulations developed for the 2006 conformity determination; the process used to estimate emissions for Fayette, Greene and Lawrence Counties; and significant conformity findings and conclusions.

The Draft 2007-2010 TIP, Air Quality Conformity Determination and North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update were completed and distributed in accordance with SPC's Public Involvement Policy for a 30-day public review period from June 27 through July 27, 2006. Copies of the documents were sent to the following sites for public review: the SPC Public Document Review Network (66 public libraries geographically distributed across the region), SPC's offices, the County Planning Departments of each member county and the Pittsburgh Department of City Planning. Copies were also provided to the PPP Chairs, the ten regional transit operators, PennDOT Central Office, Offices of PennDOT Districts 10-0, 11-0 and 12-0, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Allegheny County Health Department. Documents were also available for public review on the SPC website (www.spcregion.org).

In June and July 2006, the SPC Public Participation Panels advertised and hosted a series of ten public meetings to collect additional public testimony on the Draft 2007-2010 TIP, Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination and North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update. Written and electronic comments were received June 27 through July 27, 2006.

III. Organization of Report

This report includes a Summary of Public Comments and the Response to Public Comments, presented as three separate tables that identify all comments received by SPC on the Draft 2007-2010 TIP, Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination and North Shore LRT Connector Financial Plan Update. SPC staff has responded to each comment and shared both the comments and responses with the County Commissioners and other SPC Commissioners, PennDOT Districts, the County Planning Departments of each member county and the Pittsburgh Department of City Planning, and the region's transit authorities.

- **Part 1** includes the Summary of Public Comments and the Response to Public Comments.
- **Part 2** includes meeting summaries from the June and July 2006 PPP public comment meetings.
- **Part 3** includes a comment listing of the public testimony received during the initial PPP meetings during July and August 2005.
- **Part 4** includes copies of the written and electronic comments that were received during the June-July 2006 public comment period.
- **Part 5** includes documentation of the public outreach activities. It identifies the meeting schedule, lists the newspaper advertisements of the meetings, and provides samples of relevant outreach materials including the list of public libraries in the Public Document Review Network.

Because the SPC TIP is part of the Statewide TIP and the first four years of the State Twelve Year Program, the public comments for the Draft 2007-2010 TIP apply to these state documents as well.