

II. Background

Draft 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (Draft 2005-2008 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 2003. Public meetings were held in each of the ten SPC member counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland). Public testimony for the City of Pittsburgh and for Allegheny County was collected at a series of open house sessions at various locations around the county and in downtown Pittsburgh. The purpose of the PPP meetings was to solicit public testimony on transportation priorities for consideration in developing the update of the Draft 2005-2008 TIP. This early public input was documented in a set of ten Public Participation Reports (SPC, September 2003) that were presented to the State Transportation Commission at a joint public hearing co-hosted with SPC on September 11, 2003. 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 2003 after a series of statewide planning meetings beginning in February 2003. The SPC technical committees reviewed the state fiscal allocations and derivative fiscal tables for the SPC member counties. These revenue estimates were useful in the technical work sessions to develop fiscally-balanced project lists.

The Title I (Surface Transportation Program) component of the Draft 2005-2008 TIP includes transportation improvements recommended for implementation with TEA-21 Title I funding, State highway and bridge funding, as well as 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 (Transit) component of the Draft 2005-2008 TIP identifies the transit improvements recommended for advancement with federal and non-federal assistance during the program period. Projects are to be derived from or be consistent with the region's adopted transportation plan. 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 2004 including proposed project lists for each county, PENNDOT District and transit agency. The preliminary program was submitted to PENNDOT for review. In March, PENNDOT responded by sending SPC a proposed program, which through a cooperative process was developed into the fiscally balanced, negotiated project list for the SPC region by

the end of March 2004. The negotiated program was then tested for conformity with the Clean Air Act during the month of April. The resulting Draft 2005-2008 TIP was documented as a TIP “Summary Report” and Air Quality Conformity Determination, which were ready for public review in early May 2004.

2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania Draft Addendum, Financial Plan Update (2030 Plan Draft Addendum)

The *2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania* was adopted by SPC on July 31, 2003. The 2030 Plan Draft Addendum expands and updates portions of *Chapter 11, Financing* and replaces pages 247 and 248 in the original document.

Additional information has been provided for both formula and non-formula funding sources. The formula funds have been updated to reflect increased revenues provided in federal SAFETEA legislation. Non-formula fiscal projections have been updated to reflect conservative fiscal assumptions for federal earmarks, Appalachian Highway System, and state Economic Development Set-Aside and Spike programs, based on historic funding experience in these programs. These changes result in an overall decrease in revenues from non-formula funding sources. An increase in expected formula funds from SAFETEA, however, has been identified that substantially offsets the decline in non-formula revenue estimates.

The offsetting fiscal changes do not affect the SPC-approved project lists or air quality conformity determination, but more accurately reflect reasonably available funding streams and strategies for plan implementation.

Draft 2004 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 in the Spring of 2004 for making the transportation-related conformity determination for the Draft 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania (Draft 2005-2008 TIP), and reaffirming conformity for the 2030 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania (the 2030 Plan). 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 2004 conformity determination; travel simulations developed for the 2004 conformity determination; the process used to estimate emissions for Fayette, Greene and Lawrence Counties; and significant conformity findings and conclusions.

The Draft 2005-2008 TIP, 2030 Plan Draft Addendum and Air Quality Conformity Determination were completed and distributed in accordance with SPC's Public Involvement Policy for a 30-day public review period from May 10 through June 8, 2004. Copies of the documents were sent to the following sites for public examination: the SPC Public Document Review Network (66 public libraries geographically distributed across the region), 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 authorities, 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 May and June 2004, the SPC Public Participation Panels advertised and hosted a series of public meetings to collect additional public testimony reacting to the Draft 2005-2008 TIP, 2030 Plan Draft Addendum and Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination. Written and electronic comments were received through June 8, 2004.