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# Local Bridge Funding Guidance



## Grant Programs to Guide Local Governments for Effective Investment of Bridge Funds

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) serves the 10-county Southwestern Pennsylvania region as the official Metropolitan Planning Organization, Local Development District, and Economic Development District. SPC's Transportation Department meets federal mandates with the publication of a long-range (20-year) transportation plan and the establishment of a short-range (4-year) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). SPC is committed to assisting our local governments and agencies in the preparation, planning, and execution of their community's priority projects and investments. The information within this document will provide local governments with information on resources that may fund local bridge projects.



### Inside this Program Guide:

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- **Bridges Off the Federal Aid System**
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- **Multimodal Transportation Funds**
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- **County Act 13 Funds for At-Risk Bridges**
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- **Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program**
- **Historic Truss Bridge Management**
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# Funding Process

As the MPO of the Southwestern Pennsylvania region, SPC is required to develop the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) every two years. The TIP identifies the region's highest priority transportation projects that are programmed to advance within a four year time period. The TIP includes a variety of investments towards improving the transportation network including roadways, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transportation and other transportation related projects and programs. SPC uses a continuing, collaborative, and comprehensive approach in developing the TIP. In each PennDOT district in the SPC region, a multidisciplinary group of planning partners representing PennDOT, transit providers, TMAs and member jurisdictions is utilized to submit and provide input on TIP candidate projects. Candidate bridge projects are evaluated utilizing bridge asset management systems that consider current bridge conditions and recommended treatment options. Each work group consists of representatives from each county, PennDOT, and SPC staff. Through the work group meetings, SPC leads a collaborative process to review both carryover and new candidate projects in development of the region's TIP update.

Local entities such as municipalities, townships, and boroughs should work with their respective county planning departments in developing TIP candidate bridge projects for considering TIP funds. Due to funding constraints, SPC encourages local entities to explore other sources of funds to address local bridge infrastructure. This local bridge funding guidance document provides resources for local entities seeking funding for local bridges.



## Number of Locally Owned Bridges in the SPC Region

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| <b>District 10</b> | <b>586</b>  |
| Armstrong          | 136         |
| Butler             | 294         |
| Indiana            | 156         |
| <b>District 11</b> | <b>1074</b> |
| Allegheny          | 796         |
| Beaver             | 122         |
| Lawrence           | 156         |
| <b>District 12</b> | <b>1072</b> |
| Fayette            | 226         |
| Greene             | 180         |
| Washington         | 328         |
| Westmoreland       | 338         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>2732</b> |

# Federal Bridge Funds

The Federal-Aid System identifies roadways and bridges that are eligible to receive federal highway funds. Authorized by Congress, these funds provides bridges on federally designated highways with an opportunity to undergo rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. However, there are some federal highway funds that can be used on local bridges. These programs include the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) and the Bridges off the Federal-Aid System Program (BOF). The following sections provide details on both the STBP and BOF program. Since these funds are required to be programmed onto the TIP. Bridges that use these funds must adhere to all federal regulations pertaining to programming and project development. For more information pertaining to local project administration and delivery consult PennDOT's Publication 740.

(Publication 740- <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/pubsforms/Publications/PUB%20740.pdf>)

## Surface Transportation Block Program

**Purpose:** The FAST Act provides flexible spending to address transportation needs on any federal-aid highway, bridge, and tunnel project on any public road. Bridge projects that are eligible for STP funds include preservation and improvement of bridge condition and performance on any bridge on any public road. If a state is not compliant with national bridge inspection standards established by the Secretary, a portion of these funds must be used to correct this issue.

**Eligibility:** Bridges on the Federal Aid STP Network. Visit <https://arcg.is/KLXTa> for information regarding funding network.

**Match/Funding:** 80% Federal Match; In some cases, the remaining 20% is often met with 15% State and 5% Local.

**Website:** <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm#g>

## Bridges Off The Federal-Aid System Program

**Purpose:** The Bridges off the Federal-Aid System (BOF) program provides federal funding to bridges that are located off the Federal-Aid Network and meet the National Bridge Inventory (NBI) Length Criterion of 20 feet. These funds can be used for bridge replacement, rehabilitation, and maintenance projects. In most cases, BOF funds have been used for bridge replacement projects in the SPC region.

**Eligibility:** PennDOT; Counties; Municipalities. Visit <https://arcg.is/KLXTa> for information regarding funding network.

**Match/Funding:** 80% Federal Match; In some cases, remaining 20% is often met with 15% State and 5% Local.

**Website:** <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/160307.cfm#g>

# State and Local Bridge Funding Resources

This section outlines both state and local bridge funds made available to localities to expedite and advance local bridge projects. State and local funds are made available through different funding channels such as competitive grant programs, bridge infrastructure loans, and disbursement of fees to local government. Bridges receiving state funds would need to work with SPC/PennDOT to determine if these bridges would need to be on the state capital budget.

## Appropriation 183 Funds

**Purpose:** State Appropriation 183 state funds are used for the rehabilitation, reconstruction, and replacement of state bridges. Typically these funds are used to match federal funds on PennDOT bridge projects.

**Eligibility:** PennDOT.

**Match/Funding:** The ratio of state funds applied depends upon the scope of work and if federal funds are applied to the project. If federal funds are applied, the state's ratio can range from 10% to 15%. If no federal funds are being applied, then the state funding ratio can be 80%.

## Multimodal Transportation Fund

**Purpose:** The Multimodal Transportation Fund provides grants to improve transportation assets that enhance communities, bicycle and pedestrian, transit revitalization, and bridge projects. Regarding bridge projects, these funds can be used for right of way acquisition, construction, capital equipment, clearing and preparation of land, demolition of structures, environmental site assessment and studies, engineering, design and inspection costs, professional services (not to exceed 10% of the grant award), administrative costs (not to exceed 2% of the grant award), and project contingencies (not to exceed 5% of the grant award).

**Eligibility:** Counties; Municipalities; Townships; Boroughs; Councils of Governments; Businesses; Economic Development Organizations; Public Transportation Agencies; Rail Freight; Passenger Rail; and Ports

**Match/Funding:** Grants are made available to projects that have a total cost between \$100,000 and \$3,000,000. The match for local entities is up to 30% of the cost. Matching funds shall consist only of cash contributions, however, allocated fees/taxes paid directly to the local governments (i.e. Liquid fuel taxes) may be used as a local match if the project is an eligible use of those funds. Under certain conditions, the cost from pre-construction activities can be used as part of the matching funds.

**Website:** <https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/MultimodalProgram/Pages/default.aspx>

## PennDOT Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB)

**Purpose:** The PIB program provides low-interest loans to accelerate priority transportation projects. Loan emphasis is on construction projects, but other project phases such as design, right-of-way acquisition, and transportation equipment purchases will be considered. Bridge projects financed by the PIB include rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance equipment.

**Eligibility:** Counties; Municipalities, Townships, Boroughs, Transportation Authorities; Economic Development Agencies; Non-Profit Organizations; and Private Corporations

**Deadline:** Applications may be submitted at any time and are considered on an ongoing basis.

**Match/Funding:** For equipment loans, a 50% match is required. There are no match requirements for all other loans. PIB will finance up to 100% of the costs, including borrowing costs such as attorney fees or any other costs associated with completing the loan.

**Website:** <http://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/PA-Infrastructure-Bank.aspx>

# State and Local Bridge Funding Resources

## Butler County Infrastructure Bank (BCIB)

**Purpose:** The Butler County Infrastructure Bank Program provides reduced interest loan financing for eligible project costs to support infrastructure and other improvements projects county wide. Eligible bridge projects include construction, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance and repair of bridges.

**Eligibility:** Butler County Municipalities; Municipal Authorities (May require credit support from a local government unit).

**Match/Funding:** The maximum term for a BCIB loan is 10 years, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Commissioners. Eligible applicants may be awarded at a fixed reduced interest rate for the 10 year term equal to a 1.5% interest rate subsidy on the financing secured by the County.

**Website:** <http://www.co.butler.pa.us/bc-infrabank>

## County Act 13 Funds for At-Risk Bridges

**Purpose:** County Act 13 Funds allocates a portion of the Marcellus Shale Impact Fee to the Marcellus Legacy Fund under the Highway Bridge Improvement Restricted Account in the Motor License Fund. Funds are used to fund locally owned, at-risk, deteriorated bridge replacement or rehabilitation projects. Preventative maintenance and bridge inspections are not eligible for these funds.

**Eligibility:** Counties.

**Match/Funding:** Act 13 Funds are issued to counties, therefore, they are considered local funds. These funds may be used as local match on a TIP project if applicable.

**Website:** <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/bureaus/PlanningResearch/Act13Guidance.pdf>

## County Act 44 Funds

**Purpose:** Act 44 Funds can be expended for the purposes of construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and repair of county-owned bridges only. These funds can also be used for bridge inspections and bridge engineering costs.

**Eligibility:** Counties.

**Match/Funding:** Allocations are made on the first business day in December and are allocated into an account that is separate from the County Liquid Fuels Fund. Total amount of funding is based on the ratio of the square footage of the deck area of county-owned bridges to the total square footage of county-owned bridges throughout PA.

**Website:** <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/Pub%209.pdf>

## Act 89 Funds

**Purpose:** Act 89 Funds are allocated to each county for construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and repair of county-owned bridges as well as bridge inspections and bridge engineering cost.

**Eligibility:** Counties

**Match/Funding:** Funds are allocated on the first business day in June and December of each year.

**Website:** <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/Pub%209.pdf>



# State and Local Bridge Funding Resources

## Community Development Block Grants

**Purpose:** The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides funding and assistance for community development activities for federally designated communities. Eligibility requirements include an entitlement program which provides annual funding to designated municipalities that is available to all municipalities that are not direct federal recipients of CDBG funds and State Act 179 entitlement municipalities with a population less than 10,000. Eligible activities include improvements.

**Eligibility:** Counties; Municipalities; Townships; Boroughs.

**Match/Funding:** Minimum award of \$100,000 with no ceiling limit. 70% of each grant must be used for activities that benefit low-and-moderate-income persons.

**Website:** <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/community-development-block-grant-cdbg/>

## County and Municipal Liquid Fuels Allocations

**Purpose:** Municipal and county liquid fuel allocations are funds given to respective entities for infrastructure projects. Accepted bridge projects may include construction, reconstruction, maintenance of bridges, Right-of-Way acquisition, bridge equipment, salary and benefits of road crews or employees performing work on county-owned bridges, and engineering and administrative costs. A full list of eligible activities can be found on visiting the the following link.

**Eligibility:** Counties; Municipalities; Townships; Boroughs.

**Match/Funding:** Municipal Liquid Fuels are distributed to eligible municipalities each March. County Liquid Fuels are distributed to eligible counties each June and December. It is possible for a county to allocate funds from their distribution to political subdivision for bridge projects.

**Website:** <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/Pub%209.pdf>

## PA Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program

**Purpose:** The PA Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program provides education, technical assistance, and grant funding to locally owned public roads. This program is designed to reduce environmental impacts from public roads and to provide relief for maintenance costs to local governments. Funds can be used to replace undersized bridge structures that are prone to flooding, have high maintenance cost, and impede aquatic life.

**Eligibility:** Mostly townships, municipalities, or boroughs apply, however, the program is open to any state or local public road-owning entity.

**Match/Funding:** \$28 Million to Conservation Districts in 65 counties with \$8 million earmarked to paved low volume roads.

**Website:** <http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/pa-program-resources>

# State and Local Bridge Funding Resources

## Historic Truss Bridge Management

**Purpose:** PennDOT's Historic Truss Program provides funding to historic truss bridges that extends the useful life through routing maintenance and repair or to reuse the bridge for a different transportation need such as bicycle and/or pedestrian infrastructure.

**Eligibility:** Bridges must be extant historic metal truss bridges and included in the Historic Truss Bridge Management Plan.

**Match/Funding:** The Historic Truss Bridge Management Plan anticipates the development of partnership opportunities with agencies and non-profits organizations.

**Website:** <https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Cultural%20Resources/Historic%20Bridges/Pages/default.aspx>

## Local Technical Assistance Program

**Purpose:** The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) provides courses to municipalities to share transportation knowledge, improve road and bridge maintenance and safety skills and put research and new technology into practice at the municipal level. For bridge related courses, LTAP offers bridge maintenance & inspection course to help municipalities identify their responsibilities of being a bridge owner and bridge maintenance practices.

**Eligibility:** Municipalities

**Match/Funding:** Courses are offered at little to no cost to municipalities.

**Website:** <https://gis.penndot.gov/LTAP/default.aspx>



## Calendar of Programs Anticipated Application and Distribution\*

| Jan  | Feb    | March  | April  | May    | June   | July  | Aug  | Sept | Oct  | Nov  | Dec    |
|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|------|------|------|--------|
|      |        |        |        |        |        |       |      | MTF  | MTF  | MTF  |        |
| PIB  | PIB    | PIB    | PIB    | PIB    | PIB    | PIB   | PIB  | PIB  | PIB  | PIB  | PIB    |
|      | ACT 13 | ACT 13 | ACT 13 | ACT 13 |        |       |      |      |      |      |        |
|      |        |        |        |        |        |       |      |      |      |      | ACT 44 |
|      |        |        |        |        | ACT 89 |       |      |      |      |      | ACT 89 |
| CDBG | CDBG   | CDBG   | CDBG   | CDBG   | CDBG   | CDBG  | CDBG | CDBG | CDBG | CDBG | CDBG   |
|      |        |        |        |        | LFA    |       |      |      |      |      | LFA    |
|      |        |        |        |        |        | DGLVM |      |      |      |      |        |

\*Funding programs and the agencies that administer them oftentimes will alter anticipated application periods. Contact these agencies directly or SPC for up-to-date application information.

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