

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
PROCEDURES FOR 2017-2020 STIP AND TIP MODIFICATIONS  
Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**PURPOSE**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a set of procedures to be used in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for processing Revisions to the 2017-2020 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and in this case between PennDOT and the Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO.

**Definitions**

- ***Administrative Modification*** is a minor revision to a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- ***Amendment*** is a revision to a TIP or STIP that involves a major change to a project included in a TIP or STIP.
- ***Betterment*** consists of structural overlays, drainage, signage and guiderail to existing roadway [preferably within the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT) right-of-way] to maintain and bring the infrastructure to current design standards for that classification of highway. This may involve full depth base repair, shoulder widening, increased lane widths, correction of super-elevation, as well as, drainage improvements and guide rail updates.
- ***Change in Scope*** is a substantial alteration to the original intent or function of a programmed project.
- ***Cooperating Parties*** include PennDOT, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and transit agencies.
- ***Fiscal Constraint Chart*** is an Excel spreadsheet that depicts the transfer of funds from one source of funding to a donee project or projects and that nets to zero.
- ***Interstate Management (IM) Program*** is the PennDOT four year listing of statewide interstate maintenance projects.
- ***Investment Plan*** is PennDOT's ongoing assessments and re-evaluation of data associated with the Transportation Investment decisions ensuring that each dollar invested is being directed to meet the strategic decisions and that enhances the overall performance of the Commonwealth's Transportation system. The regional targets were set with a continued focus on maintaining assets with the following priorities: Bridges on the NHS, Roadway conditions on the NHS, Bridges on the balance of the system; and Roadway conditions on the balance of the system.
- ***Keystone Corridor (Pennsylvania portion)*** is the in-State and commuter rail service funded by PennDOT and FTA on the Amtrak rail line that runs between Philadelphia, PA and Harrisburg, PA.

- **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** is a document prepared by a Planning Partner delineating the transportation plan for a minimum of twenty years for the MPO region as defined in the federal planning regulations [23 CFR § 450.322 (c)].
- **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Lapse** is where a Planning Partner's LRTP has not been updated in accordance with the cycles defined in the federal planning regulations [23 CFR § 450.322 (c)].
- **New Project** is a project that is not programmed in the current STIP/TIP, and does not have previous obligations from a prior STIP/TIP.
- **Planning Partner** is one of the following: MPOs, RPOs, or independent counties. The MPO is defined as an urban area over 200,000 in population charged with transportation planning; in this region the MPO is composed of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.
- **Public Participation Plan (PPP)** is a documented broad-based public involvement process that describes how the Planning Partner will involve and engage the public in the transportation planning process to ensure that the concerns of stakeholders are identified and addressed in the development of transportation plans and programs.
- **Rapid Bridge Replacement (RBR) Initiative** (developed via a Public Private Partnership – P3) will follow the **Statewide Managed Program** guidance in the administration of the program. For example, the RBR Initiative project rollouts, independent of time intervals, will be considered an amendment on the STIP. Placement of RBR projects and or line items on regional TIPs will be considered as an administrative action for each MPO/RPO.
- **Reserve Line Item** holds funds that are not dedicated to a specific project(s) and may be used to cover cost increases or add a new project or project phase(s).
- **Revision** is either an Amendment or an Administrative Modification to the STIP/TIP.
- **Statewide Managed Program (Statewide Program)** includes those transportation improvements or projects that are managed on the STIP including project selection, at the PennDOT Central office level, with possible regional Planning Partner input and solicitation. Examples include but are not limited to IM, HSIP, RRX, "TAP", Green Light Go, ARLE, Multi-modal, Recreational Trails and Keystone Corridor projects. The Interstate Management Program will remain its own individual program.
- **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** is the first four years of the twelve year statewide transportation improvement program.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is the first four years of the twelve year transportation improvement program.
- **Twelve Year Program (TYP)** is the twelve year transportation improvement program.

### **What is a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?**

The STIP constitutes a list of projects to be implemented over a four-year period. It is comprised of regional TIPs developed by the Planning Partners and Statewide Programs developed by PennDOT. The STIP is the official transportation improvement program document mandated by Federal statute and recognized by FHWA and FTA. The Commonwealth's Twelve Year Program which incorporates the TIPs and STIP is updated every two years as required by state law.

## **How and When is a STIP/TIP Developed?**

See General and Procedural Guidance dated January 5, 2016 attached.

### **STIP/TIP Administration**

FHWA and FTA will only authorize projects and approve grants for projects that are programmed in the current approved STIP. If a Planning Partner, Transit Agency, or PennDOT wishes to proceed with a project not programmed on the TIP, a revision must be made.

The Federal Statewide and Metropolitan Planning regulations contained in 23 CFR § 450 govern the provisions of the STIP and of individual MPO TIPs, related to STIP and TIP revisions, and other actions taken to revise the TIP. The intent of this Federal regulation is to acknowledge the relative significance, importance, and/or complexity of individual programming actions. Federal Transportation Planning Regulations 23 CFR § 450.324 permits the use of alternative procedures by the cooperating parties to effectively manage actions encountered during a given TIP cycle. The Federal Transportation Planning Regulations require that any alternative procedures be agreed upon, and such alternative procedures be documented and included in the TIP document.

All revisions must maintain year-to-year fiscal constraint [23 CFR § 450.324 (e), (h) & (i)] for each of the four years of the STIP/TIP. All revisions shall account for year of expenditure, and maintain the estimated total cost of the project or project phase within the time period [i.e., fiscal year(s)] contemplated for completion of the project, which may extend beyond the four years of the STIP/TIP. The arbitrary reduction of the overall cost of a project, or project phase(s), shall not be utilized for the advancement of another project.

In addition, STIP/TIP revisions must be consistent with PennDOT's Investment Plan priorities, the Planning Partner's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and must correspond to the adopted provisions of the Planning Partner's Public Participation Plan (PPP). A reasonable opportunity for public review and comment shall be provided for significant revisions to the STIP/TIP.

If a revision adds a project, deletes a project, or impacts the schedule or scope of work of an air quality significant project in a nonattainment or maintenance area, a new air quality conformity determination will be required if deemed appropriate by the PennDOT Air Quality Interagency Consultation Group. If a new conformity determination is deemed necessary, an amendment to the region's LRTP shall also be developed and approved by the MPO/RPO. The modified conformity determination would then be based on the amended LRTP conformity analysis and public involvement procedures consistent with the region's PPP shall be required.

If a Planning Partner's LRTP lapses due to the fact that the LRTP has not been updated in accordance with the planning cycle defined in the federal planning regulations, then the provisions of this MOU will not be utilized for that Planning Partner. During a LRTP lapse, all STIP/TIP revisions within that planning region, where the LRTP lapse occurred, will be treated as amendments and require Federal approval. There will be no administrative modifications for that Planning Partner until the LRTP is in compliance with the federal planning cycle.

If August Redistribution of Federal Highway Funds adds, advances, or adjusts Federal funding for a project, Planning Partners will be notified of the Administrative Modification by PennDOT.

### **Modifications – Amendments and Administrative Actions**

An *Amendment* is a STIP/TIP revision that:

- Affects air quality conformity regardless of the cost of the project or the funding source;
- Adds a new project or deletes a project that utilizes Federal funds from a line item that exceed the thresholds listed below and exclude those Federally-funded Statewide Program projects;
- Adds a new project phase(s) or increases a current project phase or deletes a project phase (s) or decreases a current project phase that utilizes Federal funds where the revision exceeds the following thresholds:
  - \$5 million for the Interstate Management (IM) Program (Managed at the Statewide level by PennDOT, changes will be presented as information items at the Planning Partner Level)
  - \$1 million for other Federally-funded Statewide Programs
  - \$3 million for the LLTS MPO
- Involves a Change in the Scope of Work to a project(s) that would:
  - Result in an air quality conformity reevaluation,
  - Result in a revised total project estimate that exceeds the thresholds established between PennDOT and the Planning Partner (not to exceed any Federally-funded threshold contained in this MOU),
  - Results in a Change in the Scope of Work on any Federally-funded project that is significant enough to essentially constitute a New Project.
- During a Planning Partner LRTP lapse, all STIP/TIP revisions within that planning region will be treated as amendments and the below administrative modifications will not be utilized (or in effect).

The initial submission and approval process of the Federally-funded Statewide Program will be considered an amendment (subsequent placement of these individual projects or line items on respective planning partner TIPs will be considered an administrative action).

Approval by the MPO/RPO is required for Amendments. The MPO/RPO must then request PennDOT Central Office approval using the e-STIP process. A Fiscal Constraint Chart (FCC) must be provided (in Excel format) which summarizes the before, requested adjustments, after changes, and comments explaining the reason for the adjustment(s) along with an updated TIP. The PennDOT Central Office will review, approve, and forward to the appropriate Federal agency for review and approval, with a courtesy copy to the other Federal agency.

In the case of the IM Program and other Federally-funded statewide programs, approval by PennDOT's Program Management Committee (PMC) and FHWA is required.

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An **Administrative Action** is a STIP/TIP revision that:

- Adds a project from a funding initiative or line item that utilizes 100 percent State or non-Federal funding; or regional TIP placement of the Federally-funded Statewide Program or Federal funds from a statewide line item that do not exceed the thresholds established by the Planning Partner;
- Adds a project for emergency repairs to roadways or bridges, except those involving substantial, functional, location, or capacity changes;
- Draws down or returns funding from an existing STIP/TIP Reserve Line Item and does not exceed the threshold established in the MOU between PennDOT and the LLTS MPO Planning Partner;
- Adds Federal or state capital funds from low bid savings, deobligations, release of encumbrances, or savings on programmed phases to another programmed project phase or line item.

Administrative Actions do not affect air quality conformity nor involve a significant change in the scope of work to a project(s) that would trigger an air quality conformity re-evaluation; does not exceed the threshold established in the MOU between PennDOT and the Planning Partner, or the threshold established by this MOU (as detailed in the Amendment Section); and does not result in a Change in Scope on any Federally-funded project that is significant enough to essentially constitute a New Project.

**Administrative Actions do not require Federal approval.** PennDOT and the Planning Partner will work cooperatively to address and respond to any FHWA and/or FTA comment(s). FHWA and FTA reserve the right to question any administrative action that is not consistent with Federal regulations or with this MOU where Federal funds are being utilized.

All revisions shall be identified and grouped as one action on a FCC demonstrating both project and program fiscal constraint. The identified grouping of projects (the entire Amendment action) will require approval by the Cooperating Parties. In the case that a project phase is pushed out of the TIP period, the Planning Partner will demonstrate, through a Fiscal Constraint Chart, fiscal balance of the subject project phase on the second period of the respective Planning Partners' Long Range Transportation Plan.

### **Programming of Keystone Corridor Funding**

The Keystone Corridor (Pennsylvania portion) rail line extends from Philadelphia, PA to Harrisburg, PA. Keystone Corridor projects are funded within the three contiguous large UZAs – Harrisburg, Lancaster, and Philadelphia. The entire amount of Federal funds applied to Keystone Corridor Projects shall be programmed on the TIP of the UZA from which the funds originate. If the Project is located in a UZA that is not the UZA from which the funds originate, then the Project shall be listed in the TIP (of the UZA where the Project is located) as a “Keystone Corridor Project”, the particular use of the funding and amount shall be noted in the project description, and the funding amount shall be entered as \$0. The funds should only be noted for information and air quality conformity determination purposes, but not programmed, in the TIP where the Project is located in order to avoid the double counting of programmed funds

within the two TIPs. For instance, if Federal funding from the Lancaster UZA is applied to the restoration of a Keystone Corridor station located in the Philadelphia UZA, then the full amount of the Federal funding for the Project shall be programmed on the Lancaster TIP, and for information and air quality conformity purposes, the Project shall also be listed on the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) TIP as “Keystone Corridor Station Restoration” along with notations per-above and the Federal funding amount will be listed as \$0

### **Programming Statewide Managed Funds**

Projects funded by FTA programs and delivered via Governor’s apportionment are selected by PennDOT pursuant to the Pennsylvania State Management Plan approved by the FTA. These projects should be programmed within the TIP of the urbanized area where the project is located

### **Financial Constraint**

Demonstration of STIP/TIP financial constraint to FHWA and FTA takes place through the summary of recent Administrative Modifications and proposed Amendments. Real time versions of the STIP/TIP are available to FHWA and FTA through the PennDOT Multimodal Project Management System (MPMS).

### **STIP/TIP Financial Reporting**

At the end of each quarter, PennDOT will provide each Planning Partner with a STIP/TIP Financial report of actual Federal obligations and state encumbrances for highway/bridge and transit programs in their region. At the end of the Federal Fiscal Year, the PennDOT report card can be used by the Planning Partners as the basis for compiling information in order to meet the Federal Annual Listing of Obligated Project requirement. The STIP/TIP Financial Report provided to FHWA and FTA will also include the FHWA Planning Performance Measure – “percent of STIP/TIP projects advanced per year” on a Statewide and Planning Partner basis. A summary report detailing this information will be provided no later than 30 days after the end of a Federal Fiscal Year.

### **TIP Modification Procedures**

As the LLTS MPO’s TIP is adopted, this MOU will be included with the TIP documentation. The MOU will clarify how the LLTS MPO will address all TIP modifications. In all cases, individual Planning Partner modification procedures will be developed under the guidance umbrella of this document. If the LLTS MPO elects to set more stringent procedures, then FHWA and FTA will adhere to those more restrictive procedures.

This document will serve as the basis for PennDOT when addressing federally funded Statewide Program TIP modifications.

This Memorandum of Understanding will begin October 1, 2016, and remain in effect until September 30, 2018, unless revised or terminated. Furthermore, it is agreed that this MOU will be reaffirmed every two years.

We, the undersigned hereby agree to the above procedures and principles.

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George J. Roberts, Chairman  
LLTS MPO- Coordinating Committee

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Date

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Steve Pitoniak, Chairman  
LLTS MPO- Technical Committee

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Date

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Larry S. Shifflet, Director  
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

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Date