

Through two-way information sharing, stakeholders and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) join together to develop plans that best meet the ongoing transportation needs of the state. This public involvement guide provides a road map for assuring your voice is not only heard, but makes a difference in moving Michigan forward.

The STIP's Role in Transportation Planning

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a federally required planning document that lists surface transportation projects that state plans to fund with federal aid. It provides information on the programs and projects to which state and local transportation agencies have committed to over the next four years, and verifies that transportation funds are available and sufficient to finance them. Included are all federal-aid transit projects, rural federal-aid road projects, federal-aid road projects in small urban areas, and state trunkline (highway) projects located within Metropolitan Planning Organizations areas.

The primary source of funding for Michigan's transportation programs are federal funds provided under multi-year federal authorization acts. Federal surface transportation funds are generated from federal motor fuel taxes and certain excise taxes, and distributed to states by formula. The STIP is a compilation of transportation projects that will be authorized for funding in fiscal years 2014-2017.

While the project lists tend to generate the most public interest and input, the STIP also includes important information on the transportation planning processes, public involvement, and a financial plan that compares annual resources to new commitments. All components play a role and need to undergo public review.

Choosing Projects

So who chooses the projects? Project prioritization is the result of state and local processes designed to assure the broadest participation in meeting the state's transportation needs. As you will see, there are many



ways to get involved and influence project selection. Michigan's 13 MPOs approve road and bridge projects for the metro areas in the state with populations greater than 50,000. MDOT selects them for the non-MPO areas and Rural Task Forces (RTF) approve transit projects as well as local, non-trunkline work.

To meet its regional transportation needs, each MPO develops a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for its area in cooperation with MDOT and regional partners. MDOT shares its list of priorities with the respective MPO, which in turn conducts its own public involvement and decision-making process to come up with its TIP. The TIPs from all 13 MPOs are incorporated in the MDOT STIP by reference.

STIP projects in the non-MPO or rural areas of Michigan are developed by MDOT in cooperation with local government officials through the rural

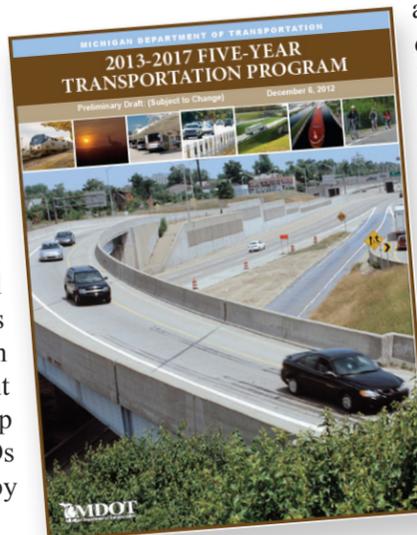
consultation process. MDOT's central and region offices work closely with Regional Planning Agencies (RPA) and rural local officials to address the needs and concerns for the transportation system that are unique to their area.

As mentioned, the STIP is much more than a list of projects. The report also contains information on the federally mandated statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes, the MDOT's transportation goals, a financial plan that compares annual transportation resources to new commitments, and the public participation process for the STIP.

Early and Continuous

STIP public involvement opportunities are as diverse as the processes used to select projects. Project prioritization takes several months to complete and involves multiple opportunities along the way for the public to have an important voice in the process. The most effective way to get involved is to participate in project discussions early, frequently

and strategically with as many decision makers as possible. Participation at MPO, RTF and pre-RTF county meetings is a great way to share in the discussions that shape local decisions. It is also effective for learning what lies ahead for MDOT and the state's transportation needs. You will find various opportunities for providing written and spoken comments during public meetings. Comments shared at meetings will be directed to the appropriate MDOT



staff for consideration and follow up. Dates, times and locations of scheduled public meetings are posted on-line at www.michigan.gov/stip.

Public participation is integral to efficient, effective and responsive transportation decisions. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) values and encourages public involvement throughout its planning processes.



Assistance Available
Need assistance to more fully participate in transportation planning? MDOT and its partnering agencies can help. With seven days advance notice, meeting materials can be provided in alternative formats like large print, audio recordings, signing and language translation.

Please call:
517-373-9534

or Call toll-free:
877-499-6232 V/TTY,
or FAX:
517-335-6004 V/TTY,
517-373-9255

or Contact:

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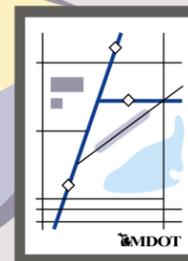
MDOT: Providing the highest quality integrated transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life.



Prepared by: MDOT Graphic Design & Mapping Unit
Bureaus\transportation planning\statewide planning division\
Guide to influencing MDOT Stip (6/13 bw)

Get Involved!

Your Guide to Influencing MDOT's Transportation Improvement Program



From goal setting to prioritizing projects to environmental clearance, the public plays an important role in shaping Michigan's transportation system.

Get Involved!



Get Involved Tip #1

MDOT planners, and region and Transportation Service Center (TSC) engineers often are present at local council, commission and other government meetings to present project concepts, answer questions and receive input from participants. During STIP development, these meetings help MDOT gather input on project priorities. They also can be an excellent opportunity to discuss preliminary project details and influence things like traffic management plans, detours and staging as projects move from concept to construction.

Get Involved Tip #2

The more involved you are in the workings of your local governments, the better able you are to shape transportation decisions and foster relationships with city managers, township supervisors, road commission engineers and MDOT region and TSC contacts to learn what's ahead and make your needs known. Don't wait. The earlier you get involved, the better.

Get Involved Tip #3

MDOT publishes its Five-Year Transportation Program (5-YTP) in December for 30 days of public review and comment. This review period is especially important during STIP preparation, since the first through fourth years of the 5-YTP comprise MDOT's trunkline projects in the next STIP. The list appears on MDOT's 5-YTP Web site as an interactive map where the public may comment on specific projects. The State Transportation Commission will approve the next 5-YTP at its January 2014 meeting, another opportunity for you to comment publicly on MDOT's transportation priorities.

Get Involved Tip #4

Since many decisions that go into STIP development are local, attend your local MPO, RTF or Small Urban Committee meetings to have the greatest voice in project prioritization. Transportation decisions move along in the planning process more slowly than quickly, so the earlier you get involved the better. Learn when the meetings are scheduled at www.michigan.gov/stip. Don't wait until projects break ground to express yourself.

MDOT's STIP Partners

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - a transportation policy-making body of representatives from local government and transportation agencies with authority and responsibility in metropolitan planning areas with populations greater than 50,000. Members may include counties, cities, townships, airports, transit agencies, intermediate school districts, community colleges and universities. There are 13 MPOs in Michigan. They submit their projects separately in a TIP that is referenced in the STIP.

Rural Task Force (RTF) - a multi-county decision-making body that chooses how federal dollars are spent on local road and transit projects in a rural geographical area with population under 40,000. Members include one representative from a city/village, transit agency and road commission in each county. There are 22 RTFs statewide. Projects approved by the RTFs are included in the STIP.

Small Urban Task Force - A decision-making body comprised of cities, villages, transit agencies and road commissions located within or that service urban areas that have a population of 5,000 to 50,000. The committee selects road and transit capital projects for funding consideration under MDOT's Small Urban Program included in the STIP. There are 55 in Michigan.

The Annual Call and Five-Year Transportation Program

The STIP cycle begins with MDOT's Annual Call for (Highway) Projects, which adds a new year of state road and bridge projects to the annual 5-YTP. During the Call for Projects, MDOT's 21 TSCs located throughout the state communicate with RTFs, county road commissions, MPOs, cities, and villages to evaluate a list of prospective projects. This advanced notice of potential projects gives local agencies an opportunity to comment and influence such things as scheduling in order to coordinate proposed work with local projects and events.

The 5-YTP is an excellent example of MDOT's ongoing effort to encourage early involvement in developing projects for the STIP. It is an integrated multi-modal program that implements the goals and policies outlined by the State Transportation Commission, emphasizing preservation of the transportation system and providing safe mobility to Michigan's citizens.

Besides providing a list of road and bridge projects planned for the next five

years, the document addresses investment strategies, funding assumptions, and economic benefits and impacts for the various modes, including highways, public transit, rail, aviation, marine, and non-motorized transportation. It is a major effort to keep the general public and local planning agencies throughout the state informed early in the process of project and program development. It also provides an excellent opportunity for the public to influence the department's priorities and the development of projects for inclusion in subsequent STIPs.

The document is posted on MDOT's Web site at www.michigan.gov/mdot5yearplan and is printed upon request. Additionally, the road and bridge projects are plotted on a Web-based interactive state map with location, type of work, construction year, and contact information on each project. The public can easily view projects of interest, comment on them, or suggest additional needed improvements.

Get Involved Tip #5

Want to know which projects MDOT is planning for the next five years?

View them on a map at www.michigan.gov/mdot5yearplan or request a printed copy at 517-373-9534.

Tell MDOT what you think!

Building the STIP

After the State Transportation Commission approves the final 5-YTP, MDOT planners develop the STIP list from road and bridge projects included in years one through four of the 5-YTP that are not part of an MPO TIP. Again, each of the 13 MPOs prepares its own STIP list of state and local projects; they are included by reference in MDOT's STIP. Besides trunkline road and bridge projects, the STIP includes federal-aid transit and local road and bridge projects approved by local RTFs and Small Urban Committees.

Though MDOT does not own or operate transit and intercity passenger bus services in the state, it does assist providers with obtaining funds needed for capital improvements. Rural public transit projects in the STIP must be approved by the local RTF or be recommended to MDOT by the Small Urban Committee in urbanized areas with populations of 5,000 to 50,000.

As MDOT moves forward with STIP development, MPOs do the same with their TIPs. The STIPs and TIPs are evaluated for air quality conformity, environmental justice analysis, and environmental considerations, and reported in the draft STIP. MDOT finalizes the draft STIP document and releases it for a 30-day public comment period. MPOs conduct a similar involvement process before approving their TIP and submitting it to MDOT for inclusion in the STIP.

MDOT places the draft document on-line on the STIP Web site and makes it available at MDOT region and TSC offices as well as to MPOs and RPAs. MDOT and RPAs notify local government agencies, transportation

advocacy groups, and interested public of the availability of the draft document. Local libraries also may assist by including a link to the document through their Web sites.

At the conclusion of the 30-day comment period, MDOT staff review the comments received to determine the final STIP narrative and project list. Comments and requests for transportation improvements not included in the draft document are noted and shared with region and TSC staff for consideration in future project lists. MDOT concludes the public involvement for the STIP by preparing a document that summarizes and responds to the comments received. The final STIP is scheduled for submittal to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in August. As the final STIP is developed, if it becomes apparent that there are significant differences from the draft STIP, MDOT makes the document available for another public review prior to submittal to the FHWA/FTA.

Get Involved Tip #6

Your final opportunity to comment on the 2014-2017 STIP will occur in August 2013 when the draft document is released for review and comment. Remember that the projects included in the lists have been scrutinized by MDOT and local agencies throughout several months of planning. Tell MDOT if the list does not include a project you would like to see. It is never too late to make your voice heard. Projects that do not appear can always be included in the next STIP. Stay involved along the way to assure your voice is heard.

Amending the STIP

The STIP is completely updated every two to three years, but it may undergo annual changes due to shifts in priorities and funding. MDOT periodically vets these changes with the public by listing them on the Web site at www.michigan.gov/stip and encouraging public comment. Transportation planning agencies are notified of the amendments as well before they are forwarded to the respective federal agencies for approval.

Amendments to the project lists in metropolitan areas are the responsibility of individual MPOs, which follow procedures detailed in their public participation plans. MDOT region planners and engineers work closely with MPOs to address needed changes between formal STIP cycles. The amendments must go through a similar committee approval process that is

subject to public participation.

MDOT projects in rural areas are presented to the public through the annual RTF process. While RTFs are not required to vote on MDOT projects like MPOs, MDOT region and TSC offices communicate regularly and share changes as they occur with the appropriate local transportation agencies and RTFs. MDOT's annual Call for Projects and 5-YTP provide an excellent way for stakeholders to provide ongoing input and recommend changes in priority to influence the next round of STIP development. MDOT strives to keep the lines of communication open throughout the STIP cycle and beyond to assure that its plans fully address the current transportation needs of the entire state.

