



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Michigan Division

October 27, 2010

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In Reply Refer To:
HAD-MI

Ms. Susan P. Mortel
Director of the Bureau of Transportation Planning (B340)
Michigan Department of Transportation
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Ms. Mortel:

FHWA and FTA jointly reviewed and approve the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for fiscal years 2011-2014; including all of the urbanized area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) by reference, as requested in MDOT's letter dated October 27, 2010. This approval of the STIP is effective October 27, 2010, and covers the federally funded projects, which may be advanced following regular Federal-aid procedures.

In coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we jointly reviewed the air quality analysis for the TIPs in non-attainment and maintenance areas and find they are in conformance with the transportation related requirements of the 1990 CAAA and the regulations for determining conformity of transportation plans and programs to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality as contained in 40 CFR Part 93. A new conformity finding will be required in any air quality area if a TIP is modified by adding or deleting non-exempt projects, or if any of the triggering events specified in 40 CFR 93.104 occur.

Over the past year we sincerely appreciate the efforts to improve the STIP development and maintenance process, including: the financial plan, treatment of advance construction (AC) starts and conversions, procedures for maintaining financial constraint, and a uniform update schedule. We also appreciate the continued emphasis of the Department to further refine the e-STIP process and look forward to assisting you in your increased efforts planned for FY 2011 to create a more fully automated STIP.

As discussed with your staff, we look forward to working with you and the MPOs to revitalize the financial working group, provide training on sound financial planning processes, and develop a financial plan template for the use in the State Long Range Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plans, STIP, and TIPs. We are excited to see how our agencies' participation in a fiscal constraint peer exchange earlier this month will benefit these efforts.

Your letter notes that MDOT AC projects were not identified as AC in the e-files submitted for the FY 2011-2014 STIP as was agreed to last November (see your letter dated November 5, 2009). We appreciate the working file that was submitted to us for our use while MDOT updates the appropriate e-files to reflect AC projects. It was



agreed by our offices that this update would be done for the November, 2010, amendment cycle, to be submitted for our action in January, 2011.

Also noted in your letter is the inclusion of the FY 2011 State Executive Budget revenue increase of \$84 million dollars to the STIP financial plan. We understand that no project commitments have been included in the STIP to utilize this additional funding at this time, but that they will be included in future STIP amendments.

Additional comments on the STIP process are attached. These comments address MDOT administrative modification procedures, the use of new GPAs, and the public involvement procedures. Each comment requests action over the next few months. We look forward to working with Department staff on these items moving forward.

If there are any questions concerning our actions on the STIP or MPO TIPs, please contact Rachael Tupica, FHWA, at (517) 702-1829 or Stewart McKenzie, FTA at (312) 353-2866.

Sincerely,

for: 
Russell L. Jorgenson
Division Administrator

cc: Susan Mortel, MDOT Planning (B340)
Marisol Simon, FTA
Michael Leslie, EPA

Document:

File Directory: J:/GroupWise Files
File Name: RT Approval of FY 2011-2014 STIP.doc



Attachment 1

1. Administrative Modification and Amendment Process - We request that MDOT define their administrative modification versus amendment policies for updating the MDOT projects in the rural portion of the STIP. Questions on this topic occur frequently. Each MPO has developed such definitions and it is clear that such definitions apply to local projects, please document MDOT's endorsement and use of the MPO definitions for MDOT projects in urbanized areas. Please also document the policies used to update the local projects listed in the rural portion of the STIP.

We request that this be given a high priority so that such definitions be in place by January 15, 2011.

2. General Program Account (GPA) Lists - In the FY 2011-2014 STIP there were some new and revised GPAs. We provided comments on these GPAs, though discussions were not fully completed before the submittal of the STIP. There were a couple of GPAs in particular that we needed more discussion on: Trunkline Pre-Construction Phases and Trunkline Highway Rehab and Reconstruct GPA.

We would like to work the Department to investigate the utility and effectiveness of all of these new GPAs in June, 2011.

3a. Public Involvement - We assume that the entire STIP document was not presented or available to the public during the public participation phase due to the timing of the submittal of this document to FHWA and the subsequent updates since that submittal. It is in the best interest of all parties if the entire STIP document can be made available to the public during the participation phase and we would like to work with you to find an acceptable process for making this happen.

3b. The STIP document refers to the current version of *Michigan's Statewide Planning Process Participation Plan* that was published in April 2006. We had requested an update of this document before the development of the FY 2011-2014 STIP to identify specific procedures that would be used to engage the public instead of a menu of options that could be followed, but no update was completed. This document is an important tool for describing how and when the public can get involved during SLRP and STIP updates. An April 8, 2009 email from our office provided STIP Public Involvement Plan Review Questions and a summary of the requirements of 23 CFR 450.210(a), the provisions for statewide public participation for the SLRP and STIP and. A copy of this summary can be found below. A letter from you, dated April 28, 2009, stated that your Public Involvement Plan should be updated prior to the next STIP cycle to accurately reflect what you currently do to involve the public in the transportation planning process.

We request immediate attention to this update and that a draft copy of the updated Public Involvement Plan be made available to our office by April 1, 2011 before it is sent out for the required 45-day public comment period. This timeline is important so that the updated procedures can be implemented for the development of the 2013-2016 STIP.



STIP Public Involvement Plan Review Questions	Summary of 23 CFR 450.210(a) Provisions
<p>1. When is the first opportunity for the public to be involved in the STIP development process?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How will the public be notified of this opportunity? What information will provide with the notice and how will the public access additional information? Will the information be available electronically? What is the specific purpose of this opportunity and what form will it take? How will this opportunity accommodate those traditionally underserved? How will the public provide input in response to this opportunity? If the opportunity involves a meeting (or a visit to an office) will such meeting(s) be held at convenient and accessible locations and times? How much advance notice will be provided and how long will the input/comment period? How will the information received be recorded and used in the decision making process? How will input be acknowledged? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities Provide timely information about transportation issues Provide timely information about decision making processes Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points Ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times Use visualization techniques Make public information available in electronically accessible format Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input Process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process Allow 45 calendar days for public review before the procedures and any major revisions to existing procedures are adopted
<p>2. What other opportunities and at what other points in STIP development process will public input will be sought? (Repeat sub questions a-j from above for each opportunity.)</p>	
<p>3. What will be the final opportunity for the public to review the full STIP document before it is submitted for approval? (Repeat sub questions a-j from approve)</p>	
<p>4. What visualization techniques will be used throughout the STIP development public involvement process?</p>	
<p>5. How and when will the effectiveness of the public involvement process be evaluated?</p>	
<p>6. When will the 45 day review period for this major revision begin?</p>	

