

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE TIP

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is pleased to present the DVRPC Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the New Jersey portion of the region (FY2018 to FY2021). DVRPC and its member governments have worked diligently to prepare a program of projects that responds to the needs of the region and at the same time complies with federal and state policies.

In DVRPC's New Jersey region, the TIP contains 152 projects (99 Highway and 53 Transit), totaling \$2 billion for the phases to be advanced over the next four years (FY2018–2021), and averaging \$506 million per year. Programmed funds include \$1.3 billion for projects primarily addressing the highway system and \$722 million for transit projects for NJ TRANSIT and DRPA/PATCO. The TIP also shows 107 statewide programs that are highway programs managed by NJDOT for the State of New Jersey worth about \$4.3 billion over the first four years; 14 NJDOT sponsored projects that will be in the Study and Development Program; and 2 "Tier 2" unfunded projects in the DVRPC region that cannot be funded based on current 10-year revenue estimates.

The DVRPC FY2018 TIP for New Jersey meets the federal requirements of being financially constrained to a level of funding that is expected to be available to the region, as established in the financial guidance provided by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). See Appendix B for further details on this guidance.

[1.1] THE TIP AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The TIP is a requirement of federal transportation legislation, which is currently the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), or Public Law (P.L.) 114-94. The FAST Act was signed into law on December 4, 2015 and will expire on September 30, 2020. The FAST Act is the first federal law in over 10 years to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation, after multiple extensions of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) which began on October 1, 2012 and originally was set to expire on September 31, 2014. The FAST Act built on the initiatives established in MAP-21; the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21); and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). Transportation investment has been prescribed in a balanced approach through a guaranteed commitment to highways and bridges, public transit, safety, intermodal projects, and advanced technologies, such as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

[1.2] WHAT THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES

The complete TIP document has been divided into multiple sections. Included is a general overview of the TIP and the TIP development process, intended to familiarize you with what the TIP is and is not, how it was developed, and what can be expected for projects in the TIP. The document also contains various summaries of the New Jersey programs, a description of the TIP public involvement process, including issues relating to environmental justice, and an explanation of project maps, project listings, and codes and abbreviations included in the document. This reference information is followed by project maps and indices, and finally the project listings themselves.

At the end of this document, there are eight appendices: (A) Board Resolutions; (B) Financial and Procedural Guidance used in developing the program, including the STIP Introduction; (C) Executive Summary of the Documentation of the Conformity Finding; (D) Memorandum of Understanding on Procedures to Amend and Modify the TIP; (E) DVRPC Local Program; (F) DVRPC TIP Project Benefit Criteria, (G) Summary of the TIP Public Involvement Process, Summary of Public Comments, Original Public Comments, Agency Responses, Public Comment Outreach Documentation, and List of Recommended Technical Changes; and (H) Unfunded Projects, which contains NJDOT's "Tier 2" projects that cannot be funded based on current 10-year revenue estimates, but the availability of additional state or federal funds could allow them to be funded. These unfunded projects are displayed for information only.

[1.3] ACCESS THE TIP WITH VARIOUS TECHNOLOGIES

The World Wide Web

The TIPs for Pennsylvania and New Jersey are found on the DVRPC website. The website includes an interactive method for displaying maps and project listings. During the public comment period, comments can be submitted directly to DVRPC through this interactive site. Using Google Maps as a base, projects can be located using either street grid or aerial views. To use the DVRPC TIP website, go to www.dvrpc.org/TIP.

QR Code

DVRPC has provided the ability to use the QR Code (Quick Response Code) symbol to access the TIP website using your smartphone. Smartphone users with a QR Reader Application can open the application, point the camera at the QR Code symbol, and the smartphone will open up directly to the DVRPC TIP webpage. The DVRPC TIP QR Code symbol is shown on this page.



Scan QR code with your smartphone for up-to-date information on DVRPC's TIP or visit www.dvrpc.org/TIP.

DVRPC Resource Center and Public Libraries

Hardcopies of the TIP are available at various public libraries listed in Table 10 in this document and at the DVRPC Resource Center located on the 8th floor of 190 North Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

[1.4] WHAT IS THE TIP?

The TIP is the agreed-upon list of specific priority projects. The TIP lists all projects that intend to use federal funds, along with non-federally funded projects that are regionally significant. The TIP represents the transportation improvement priorities of the region and is required by federal law, currently the FAST Act. The list is multimodal; in addition to the more traditional highway and public transit projects, it includes bicycle, pedestrian, and freight-related projects as well.

The TIP shows estimated costs and schedule by project phase. The TIP not only lists the specific projects but also documents the anticipated schedule and cost for each project phase (Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction). Inclusion of a project phase in the TIP means that it is seriously expected to be implemented during the TIP time period.

The TIP covers a four-year period by regulation, follows the federal fiscal year (FY) schedule, and is updated every other year. Federal regulation requires that the TIP cover a minimum of four federal FYs of programming. DVRPC TIP documents for both states demonstrate a longer planning and programming horizon (10 years for New Jersey; 12 years for Pennsylvania) in order to better understand expected resources and to provide the region with a more realistic timeframe for advancement of TIP projects as well as more realistic project costs. The funding presented in both TIP documents after the first four years is considered “Later Fiscal Year” (LFY) funding, per regulation not technically available or able to be committed or authorized. The TIP operates on a federal FY schedule that begins on October 1 of a given year and ends on September 30 of the following year. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania TIPs are updated every other year, in alternate years.

The TIP may change after it is adopted. Under the provisions of federal law and regulation, the approved TIP can be modified or amended in various ways in order to add new projects, delete projects, advance projects into the first year, and accommodate cost and phase-of-work changes or major scope changes to a project. The criteria and procedures for changing the TIP are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) included as Appendix D in this document.

The TIP is financially constrained. The list of projects in the TIP must be financially constrained to the amount of funds that are expected to be available. In order to add projects to the TIP, others must be deferred, or additional funding to the region must be identified. As a result, the TIP is not a wish list; competition between projects for a spot on the TIP clearly exists. The financial guidance used to develop each of the programs is included as Appendix B in this document.

The TIP is authorization to seek funding. A project’s presence in the TIP represents a critical step in the authorization of funding for a project. It does not, however, represent a commitment of funds, an obligation to fund, or a grant of funds.

The TIP is not a final schedule of project implementation. The timeframe shown in the TIP is the best estimate at the time of TIP development, which ranges from six to nine months prior to the

beginning of the first FY of the TIP period. Projects quite often cannot maintain that schedule and are reprogrammed to later years.

The TIP does not guarantee project implementation. Unforeseen problems may arise, such as engineering obstacles, environmental permit conflicts, changes in priorities, and additional financial constraints. These problems can slow a project and cause it to be postponed or even dropped from further consideration. It can also increase the project's overall cost.

Regional Consensus

The production of the TIP is the culmination of the region's transportation planning process and represents a consensus among state and regional officials as to what near-term improvements to pursue. Consensus is crucial because the federal and state governments want assurance that all interested parties have participated in developing the priorities prior to committing significant sums of money. A project's inclusion in the TIP signifies regional agreement on the priority of the project and establishes its eligibility for federal funding.

How Does the TIP Relate to the Long-Range Plan?

Regionally significant projects must be drawn from the region's Long-Range Plan, and all projects in the TIP must help implement the goals of the plan. The Long-Range Plan, required by federal law (FAST Act), is the document that helps direct transportation and land-use decisions over a minimum 20-year horizon. The plan presents an extensive list of policies and strategies as well as the actions required to carry them out.

While all projects included in the TIP must be consistent with the Long-Range Plan, projects that add capacity for single-occupant vehicles (SOV) must meet further federal requirements in a region like the Delaware Valley. These projects must result from the region's Congestion Management Process (CMP), which attempts to meet increasing travel demand through non-capacity-adding strategies, where practical. All projects included in the TIP have met this requirement.

The TIP represents the translation of recommendations from DVRPC's latest Long-Range Plan into a short-term program of improvements. For further information about the policies and strategies of the currently adopted Long-Range Plan, visit www.dvrpc.org/LongRangePlan.

How does the TIP Relate to the Clean Air Act?

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require that all transportation plans, programs, and projects conform to the purpose of state implementation plans to attain national air quality standards. A TIP is said to conform if it is drawn from a conforming plan, as determined by an emissions analysis. The projects in the DVRPC FY2018 TIP for New Jersey are a subset of the regionally significant projects contained in the *Connections 2045: Plan for Greater Philadelphia* Long-Range Plan.

The TIP and Long-Range Plan are tested for conformity and meet all requirements, including the critical test that volatile organic compounds (VOCs), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) emissions are less than any applicable budgets or baseline established for all analysis years. An Executive Summary of the Documentation of the Conformity Finding is included as Appendix C in this document. A complete description of the

conformity procedures can be found in the *Connections 2045: Plan for Greater Philadelphia Long-Range Plan* and on DVRPC's website, www.dvrpc.org/AirQuality.

How Is the TIP Funded?

The major funding source for the projects in the TIP is the FAST Act, which is administered through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In addition, funds are made available by the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania to match federal funding in varying ratios and to provide 100 percent financing for selected projects. Local counties, municipalities, and private developers or toll authorities, as well as transit operators, may also participate in providing matching funds for federal aid. New funding sources and innovative funding techniques are constantly being sought.

Who Are the Players?

Various agencies directly participate in the TIP development process. They include DVRPC member governments, operating agencies, and state and federal agencies. Municipalities within the region participate through their respective county governments. Countless other groups, the business community, and the general public become involved through the DVRPC public participation process in addition to their involvement at the municipal and county levels. The multiplicity of jurisdictions and agencies in the region necessitates a high degree of coordination during the TIP development process by DVRPC.

What Is the Timeline to Develop the TIP?

As Figure 1 portrays, TIP development (or update) typically begins approximately 10 months prior to adoption and involves intensive staff work and negotiations by NJDOT, NJ TRANSIT, DRPA/PATCO, DVRPC staff, FHWA, and representatives of DVRPC city and county member governments, which constitute the DVRPC NJ TIP Subcommittee. For the DVRPC FY2018 TIP, the process commenced during the fall of 2016 with the review of costs and schedules of current FY2016 TIP projects, and projects anticipated to "graduate" from Concept Development. By March 2017, the result was a constrained, preliminary draft program ("preliminary Draft TIP") based on reasonable, anticipated revenue projections for the next 10-years (FY2018-2027) and based on feedback from the NJ TIP Subcommittee. Negotiations continued to July 2017 in order to address as many issues as possible in the Highway, Transit, and Study and Development programs and to arrive at a final list of projects for the Draft TIP ("final Draft TIP") that could be evaluated for impacts on air quality conformity (see page 40 for further explanation of the conformity process). DVRPC then opened a 30+ day public comment period, in which the two draft documents, Draft DVRPC TIP and NJDOT's Draft Statewide TIP (STIP), were shared with the public for feedback. The DVRPC Board is the final decision-making body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and DVRPC staff requested the DVRPC Board to adopt the Draft TIP (with a List of Recommended Technical Changes as a result of the public comment period) in October 2017. The Board adopted the TIP with recommended technical changes, and DVRPC submitted the document to NJDOT for approval and inclusion in the STIP that was then submitted to federal partners (e.g. FHWA, FTA) for review and approval. The federal partners formally approved the NJDOT FY2018 STIP, and the new DVRPC TIP and NJDOT STIP became effective and replaced the DVRPC FY2016 TIP and NJDOT FY2016 STIP.

[1.5] HOW DOES A PROJECT GET ON THE TIP?

Securing a spot on the TIP is not a simple task. Sometimes years of pre-implementation research and public input precedes a project's inclusion on the TIP. Although there are several ways in which a project can get on the TIP, the most typical course is described here. First, a particular transportation need is identified. In many cases, municipal planners and engineers generate lists of potential improvements based on their needs analyses and citizen complaints and inquiries. Since only DVRPC member agencies are allowed to formally submit candidate TIP projects, the local proposals are, in turn, reviewed at the county or major city level, often in consultation with locally based state engineers. If the county agrees that a particular idea has merit, it may decide to act as the project sponsor and work towards refining the initial idea and developing clear project specifications. Project proposals are also generated at the county and state level in much the same way.

Once each county and operating agency has developed its own lists of projects and priorities, they are brought to DVRPC, where the Regional Technical Committee (RTC) reviews them. The RTC seeks to ensure that the highest priorities of the region are being addressed within the limits of available resources and to assure consistency among projects and with the region's goals. The RTC makes recommendations to the DVRPC Board and is composed of state, county, and city planners; transit operators; citizen representatives from the Public Participation Task Force; and transportation-related interest groups.

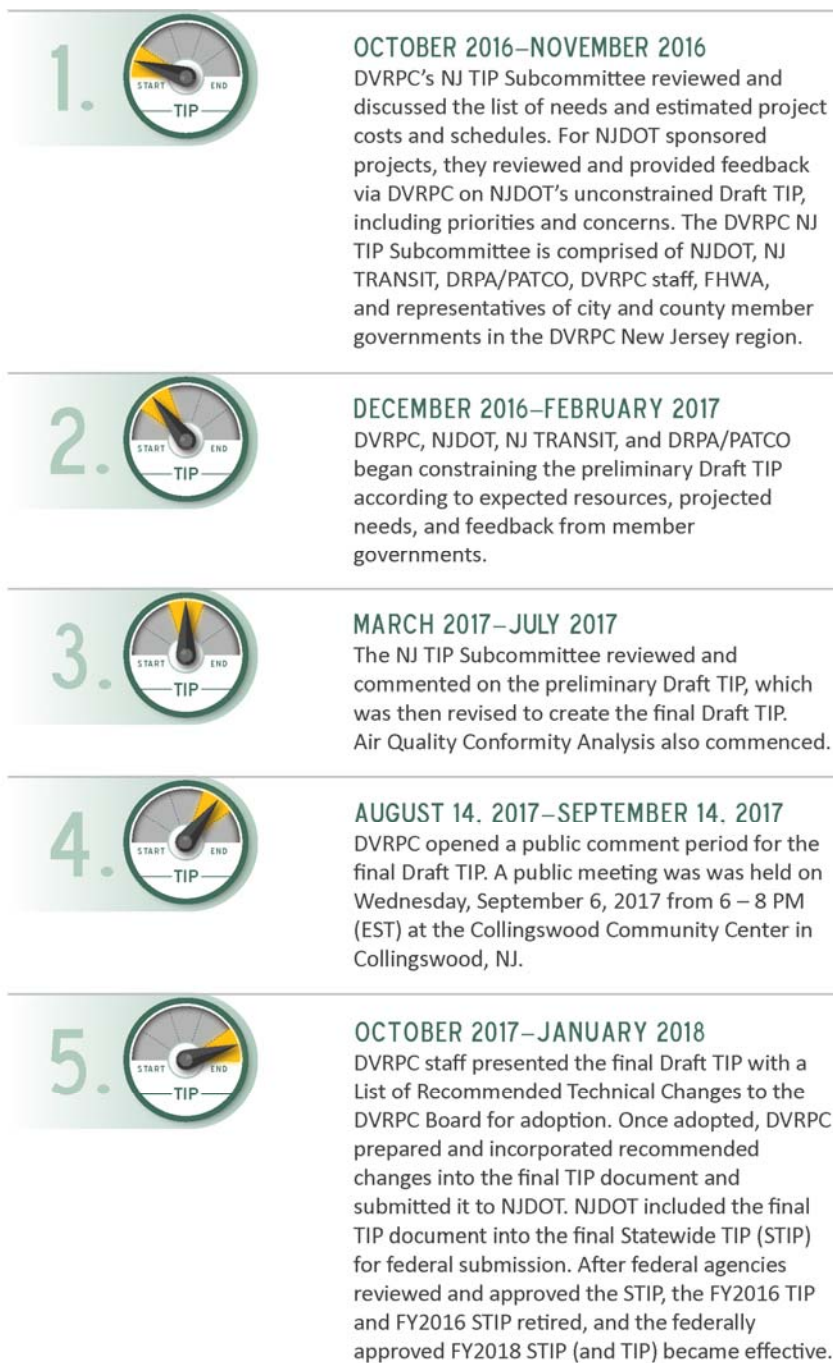
Finally, the DVRPC Board provides the forum through which the elected officials of the region's counties and major cities and representatives of the states and operating agencies determine each year's TIP projects. After considering the recommendations of the RTC and the comments received from the public, the Board determines the final list of projects to be included in the TIP and adopts it as its selection of projects to be advanced.

[1.6] WHAT HAPPENS TO A PROJECT WHEN IT IS ON THE TIP?

Once a project is on the TIP, a considerable amount of work remains to be done to bring it to completion. The designated lead agency is responsible for ensuring that its project moves forward. The lead agency, in most cases, is the state department of transportation (DOT) or transit operator and, in some cases, a county or city.

Highway projects typically proceed in phases (Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction). Each phase is included in the TIP, showing funding and anticipated schedule. Transit projects are programmed in the TIP according to the annual grant application cycle under which the funds will be sought. Ideally, a project will advance according to its programmed schedule. In reality, projects are often delayed due to unforeseen obstacles, such as environmental issues and community concerns. Tracking each project's progress is important in order to identify and resolve delays as soon as possible and to reallocate resources as necessary.

FIGURE 1: TIP DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



SOURCE: DVRPC. 2017

Once federal funds have been made available (termed federally “authorized” or “obligated”) for a project’s final construction phase, it will no longer appear in future TIP documents (even though the project may not yet be constructed or completed), and the formal bidding process can begin.

[1.7] WHY IS MUNICIPAL AND INTEREST GROUP INVOLVEMENT IMPORTANT?

DVRPC believes that a collaborative process among all levels of government and the public and business communities will ensure that the best transportation program is produced. This type of process is one in which state, county, and local governments and transportation providers become partners in the planning and programming process, and interest groups and community leaders have a voice. For this reason, planning efforts for the region's capital improvements exhibit a "bottom-up" approach within the context of a regional plan that gives a top-down perspective.

[1.8] IN WHAT WAYS CAN THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATE?

Public participation occurs during all stages of a project's development. Letters of concern to municipal and county officials and transit agency managers are one of the most effective starting points. As local investigations begin, public input may be provided at formal meetings or informal sessions with local and county planning boards and staff. Citizens are also asked to participate in special task forces to review transportation improvement concepts at the corridor, county, and regional levels. Finally, once a project is on the TIP and it enters the Preliminary Engineering phase, the detailed environmental review process affords yet another opportunity for the public to offer input.

DVRPC provides various opportunities for the public to review its planning and programming activities. Representatives from the private sector, social service entities, environmental organizations, partnering agencies, and citizens are encouraged to comment on DVRPC's policies and plans. To this end, an online commenting feature is available for Board action items, including TIP Actions. DVRPC's website provides a wide array of information and interactive mapping. Materials are available in hard copy at DVRPC's Resource Center and at various public libraries throughout the region. Project-specific open houses and listening sessions are held to inform the public and gather input.

Specifically, the public and other interest groups were able to comment on the Draft FY2018 DVRPC TIP for New Jersey before it was presented to the DVRPC Board for official adoption in October 2017. DVRPC opened the public comment period; and the September 6, 2017 open-house meeting within this period allowed the public an opportunity to present comments about the process and projects to state, county, city, transit, and DVRPC staff. Copies of the Draft DVRPC FY2018 TIP were available online, as well as at the DVRPC Resource Center.

When the TIP is adopted and approved, monthly maintenance of the TIP, which is known as "TIP Actions" (Amendments and/or Modifications), may occur. Despite careful planning, funding and schedule may need to change during the course of the federal FY. The modification process is in place to assist this effort to provide necessary funding for projects that show in the TIP. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Appendix D of the TIP specifies different types of amendments and modifications that would require DVRPC, NJDOT, and/or federal approvals. All TIP documents (Draft, Adopted/Current, and Prior Year TIPs, including a Summary of Amendments and Modifications to the Current TIP) are viewable on DVRPC's website at

www.dvrpc.org/TIP. Past and upcoming TIP Actions for Board approval are available at www.dvrpc.org/Committees/BOARD.