Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance

Guidelines for Developing Transportation Improvement Programs

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In Coordination with:
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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of TIP Preparation Guidance

The purpose of this document, developed in response to a joint Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommendation to all Virginia metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), is to provide a uniform set of clear guidelines for understanding and developing Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) – including how projects are programmed. In addition, this TIP Preparation Guidance documents the process and criteria for making TIP revisions based on project (including grouped projects) changes.

While the goal of this guidance is to provide clarity and consistency with regard to TIP development and revision processes throughout the Commonwealth, the guidance is not meant to dictate how each MPO’s TIP should be formatted or specifically how each MPO will carry out its TIP development and revision processes.

Transportation Improvement Program

A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a prioritized listing/program of transportation projects developed by a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), in cooperation with the State and affected public transportation operators, as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process. The TIP must be consistent with the applicable metropolitan Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), be fiscally-constrained, and cover a period of no less than four years. With a few exceptions (see 23 CFR 450.324(c) and 23 CFR 450.328(f)), all federally-funded and/or regionally significant projects that require an action by the FHWA or FTA must be included in a current TIP that has been approved by the MPO and the Governor before work can proceed.

Fiscally-constrained means that the TIP includes sufficient financial information for demonstrating that projects in the TIP can be implemented using committed or available revenue sources, or revenue sources that may be reasonably expected to be available.

Federal regulations define a regionally-significant project as a transportation project (other than projects that may be grouped in the TIP or exempt projects as defined in the Environmental Protection Agency’s transportation conformity regulation) that is on a facility that serves regional transportation needs (such as access to and from the area outside the region; major activity centers in the region; major planned developments such as new retail malls, sports complexes, or employment centers; or transportation terminals) and would normally be included in the modeling of the metropolitan area’s transportation network. At a minimum, this includes all principal arterial highways and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer a significant alternative to regional highway travel.
Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

A Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a statewide prioritized listing/program of transportation projects developed by the State in cooperation with the MPO for each designated metropolitan area. The STIP must be consistent with the State long-range transportation plan, metropolitan LRTPs, and TIPs. Each metropolitan TIP must be included without change in the STIP, directly or by reference, after approval of the TIP by the MPO and the Governor. With a few exceptions (see 23 CFR 450.216(g), 23 CFR 450.218(d), 23 CFR 450.324(c), and 23 CFR 450.328(f)), only projects in an FHWA/FTA approved STIP are eligible for funds administered by FHWA or FTA.

Update Cycle

Federal regulations require a full update of the TIP and STIP at least every four years. The TIP may be updated more frequently, but the cycle for updating the TIP must be compatible with the STIP development and approval process. The TIP expires when FHWA/FTA approval of the STIP expires.

While the previous paragraph refers to a full update of the TIP and STIP (for instance, updating from the FY 2012-2015 TIP/STIP to the FY 2015/2018 TIP/STIP), project information in TIPs and the STIP are generally revised regularly by way of amendments or administrative modifications. TIP revisions are discussed in Section IV – TIP Revision Process.
II. TIP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) must be consistent with the current Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), so the development of the TIP technically begins with the LRTP – which must be fiscally-constrained, have a planning horizon of at least 20 years, and include transportation projects on which activity is planned to take place during that time period.

It is in the development of the TIP, which must also be fiscally-constrained, that the transition from transportation planning to transportation programming is made. The steps for developing the TIP are generally as follows:

1. Given the available funding and drawing from the current LRTP, the MPO, State agencies, localities, and affected transit operators develop a draft list of projects and studies on which activity is to occur during the four-year period of the TIP.

2. The MPO coordinates production of the draft TIP document, which, in addition to project information, typically includes an introductory section that may provide:
   a. An overview of the document, its purpose, and its contents
   b. An overview of the MPO region
   c. A summary of the TIP development process
   d. Information on air quality conformity requirements
   e. A summary of public involvement opportunities related to the TIP
   f. The financial plan
   g. A section on how to read the project information, including term definitions, project phases, and funding sources

3. If an air quality conformity analysis is required, it may be carried out while the draft TIP document is being produced.

4. The draft TIP document is made available for technical and public review.

5. Comments received on the draft TIP document are reviewed and addressed, as appropriate, and the final TIP document is produced.

6. The final TIP document is presented to the MPO policy board for approval.

7. Upon approval by the MPO policy board, the TIP is forwarded to the Governor (via VDOT and DRPT), FHWA, and FTA for approval and incorporation into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP is then forwarded for review by FHWA and FTA.

The approved STIP and TIPs typically become effective on October 1 – the first day of the federal fiscal year. Figure 1 on the following page summarizes the TIP development process.
Figure 1 – TIP Development Process

Transportation Improvement Program Development Process

Long-Range Transportation Plan

Project Prioritization

Draft TIP Project List

Air Quality Conformity Analysis on Draft TIP (if necessary)

Draft TIP Document

Final TIP Document

MPO, State, Localities, & Transit Agencies

MPO, State, Localities, & Transit Agencies

MPO, State, & Interagency Consultation Group

MPO

Approvals by MPO, Governor, FHWA & FTA

Public Involvement
Public Involvement

Transportation has a direct and personal impact on the population of a region and is of critical importance to economic vitality and quality of life. The cost of needed improvements to the transportation system generally far exceeds the funding available to address those needs and difficult decisions must be made regarding the use of scarce transportation dollars. For each project that is chosen for construction, many others will not be able to be built. The long-term effects of such decisions make it imperative that the public be provided with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the planning process for the multimodal transportation system. The importance of public involvement in the transportation planning process was recognized in federal law in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), and in every federal transportation act since.

As shown in Figure 1, the TIP development process should include multiple opportunities for public input. Special efforts should be made to obtain input from the traditionally underserved, including low-income and minority populations, as well as those with limited proficiency in communicating in English.

Public involvement activities related to the TIP should be detailed in the MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP should also specify the length of the public comment period for full updates of the TIP and for amendments to the TIP. Typical activities associated with informing and engaging the public and interested parties regarding the TIP include:

- Issuing press releases regarding public comment opportunities on the draft TIP. Press releases are usually posted on the MPO website and via MPO social media and newsletter, as well as to the news media.

- Notifying civic and community groups, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders. The MPO should build and maintain contact information for such groups for this purpose.

- Posting notices of opportunities for public comment in multiple languages in accordance with MPO Limited English Proficiency (LEP) policies.

- Reviewing and responding to all public comments received, and forwarding comments to state agencies, localities, and transit operators, as applicable.

- Summarizing, analyzing, and fully considering comments received during the development of the TIP.

- Maintaining an up-to-date version of the current TIP on the MPO website for easy access by the public.
In addition, if the MPO is a Transportation Management Area (TMA) and is in nonattainment for any of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, at least one formal public meeting must be held during the TIP development process.

**Air Quality Conformity**

In accordance with federal regulations (23 CFR 450.324(a)), if an MPO is in a nonattainment or maintenance area for one or more of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), the MPO, FHWA, and FTA must make an official determination that the TIP conforms in accordance with the requirements of the Clean Air Act and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93). For such nonattainment or maintenance areas, the air quality conformity process ensures that federal funding and approval goes to transportation activities that are consistent with air quality goals specified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The U.S. Department of Transportation cannot fund, authorize, or approve federal actions to support projects that do not conform to Clean Air Act requirements.

For nonattainment or maintenance areas, a full update of the TIP always requires an air quality conformity determination. For revisions to an approved TIP, the MPO and state agencies determine whether the proposed revision(s) require a new air quality conformity determination. In general, TIP revisions that add or remove capacity from the transportation network that is included in the travel demand model require an updated conformity determination; while revisions to projects that are not included in the travel demand model usually do not require an updated conformity determination.

When an air quality conformity determination is necessary, the MPO coordinates with the VDOT Environmental Division for air quality modelling of the projects in the TIP or proposed revised TIP. The results of the transportation conformity analysis are documented in a report, which is forwarded to FHWA and FTA for review. Upon completion of their review, FHWA and FTA issue a joint transportation conformity finding.

The air quality conformity process may take up to six months to complete.
Certification

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.334, for all metropolitan planning areas (MPAs), concurrent with the submittal of the full update of the TIP to FHWA and FTA as part of the STIP approval, the State and the MPO shall certify at least every four years that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

2. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93.
4. 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity.
5. Section 1101(b) of the SAFETEA-LU (Pub. L. 109-59) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects.
6. 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts.
8. The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

As shown above, the federal regulations regarding self-certification of the metropolitan transportation planning process contain references to multiple laws and regulations. To improve transparency of the self-certification process, it is recommended that the MPO produce a **Self-Certification Procedural Guide** that provides brief descriptions of the referenced laws and regulations as well as information on issues considered during the self-certification process. An example of a **Self-Certification Procedural Guide** – including a sample certification page to be signed by representatives of the MPO, VDOT, and DRPT – is included in **Appendix A**.
Federal Action

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.328, FHWA and FTA shall jointly find that each metropolitan TIP is consistent with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) produced by the continuing and comprehensive transportation planning process carried out cooperatively by the MPO(s), State(s), and public transportation operator(s) in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303. This finding shall be based on the self-certification statement submitted by the State and MPO under §450.334, a review of the LRTP by FHWA and FTA, and upon other reviews as deemed necessary by FHWA and FTA.

In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the MPO, FHWA, and FTA shall determine air quality conformity of any updated or amended TIP, in accordance with 40 CFR part 93. After FHWA and FTA issue a conformity determination on the TIP, the TIP shall be incorporated, without change, into the STIP, directly or by reference.

Where necessary in order to maintain or establish operations, FHWA and FTA may approve highway and transit operating assistance for specific projects or programs even though the projects or programs may not be included in an approved TIP.
Schedule for Full Update of TIP and STIP

As noted in the Introduction, federal regulations require a full update of the TIP and STIP at least every four years. The TIP may be updated more frequently, but the cycle for updating the TIP must be compatible with the STIP development and approval process. The TIP expires when FHWA/FTA approval of the STIP expires.

Figure 2 is a recommended schedule for the development of a full update of the STIP and TIPs. The recommended schedule is based on lessons learned from past experiences (see Appendix B) on the development of the STIP and TIPs.

**Figure 2 – Recommended STIP/TIPs Development Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month (Year)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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</table>
| June (Year 1) | Kick-off for preparation of STIP/TIPs update  
               | VDOT/DRPT develop “working” scenarios for STIP/TIPs update |
| July (Year 1) | VDOT Federal Programs Management sends Draft TIP Project Lists to Districts and MPOs for Data Quality Review – coordinated by District PIM staffs  
               | DRPT sends Draft TIP Project Lists to MPOs for Data Quality Review including fiscal constraint information – MPOs coordinate directly with DRPT |
| September (Year 1) | VDOT Districts return Data Quality Review of Project Lists  
                   | Air Quality Conformity process begins on affected TIPs |
| October (Year 1) | VDOT Federal Programs Management receives Maintenance Grouping data from Operations Planning Office (OPO)  
                 | VDOT Federal Programs Management receives fiscal-constraint financial data from VDOT Financial Planning |
| November – December (Year 1) | VDOT Federal Programs Management prepares and provides obligation information for all MPOs – starting with large MPOs  
                                | VDOT Federal Programs Management provides Financial Plan information to all MPOs – starting with large MPOs  
                                | VDOT Federal Programs Management prepares obligation information for rural (non-MPO) areas |
| January – February (Year 2) | MPOs produce draft TIP documents |
| March (Year 2) | MPOs conduct public involvement on draft TIPs  
                 | Air Quality Conformity finding by FHWA/FTA/EPA for affected TIPs due |
| April (Year 2) | TIPs approved by MPOs and submitted to VDOT/DRPT for inclusion in STIP submission to FHWA/FTA |
| May – June (Year 2) | VDOT/DRPT conduct public involvement on draft STIP  
                     | STIP fiscal-constraint information finalized  
                     | VDOT Federal Programs Management compiles STIP document |
| July (Year 2) | Updated STIP submitted to FHWA/FTA for approval |
| September (Year 2) | FHWA/FTA approval of the STIP/TIPs expected |
| October (Year 2) | Approved STIP posted on VDOT website; Approved TIPs posted on MPO websites |
III. TIP REQUIRED CONTENTS

Federal regulations (23 CFR 450.324) includes detailed information regarding what is required to be included in the TIP, as well as items that are optional. In general, the TIP must include capital and non-capital surface transportation projects (or phases of projects) within the boundaries of the metropolitan planning area (MPA) to be funded with federal funds, as well as all regionally-significant projects requiring an action by FHWA or FTA regardless of the source of funding.

Project Information

For each project or project phase (preliminary engineering, environmental/NEPA, right-or-way, design, or construction) the TIP must include the following:

1. Sufficient descriptive material (scope, termini, length) to identify the project or phase. This includes a unique project identification number that cannot be changed or reused (UPC number for VDOT projects; STIP ID number for DRPT projects).
2. Estimated total project cost, which may extend beyond the four years of the TIP.
3. The amount of federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year for the project or phase.
4. Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase.
5. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, identification of those projects which are identified as Transportation Control Measures in the applicable State Implementation Plan.
6. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, included projects shall be specified in sufficient detail (design concept and scope) for air quality analysis in accordance with the EPA transportation conformity regulation.
7. In areas with Americans with Disabilities Act required paratransit and key station plans, identification of those projects that will implement these plans.

In addition to the minimum required information listed above, MPOs may enhance the usability and transparency of their TIPs by including additional project information, such as:

- Project location map
- Allocation information per year
- Phase cost estimates
- Phase schedules
- Expenditure information by phase
- Project photos
- Statement of need for the project
- Other information to help TIP users better understand the project
Grouping Projects

Federal regulation (23 CFR 450.324(f)) states that “Projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification in a given program year may be grouped by function, work type, and/or geographic area using the applicable classifications under 23 CFR 771.117(c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR part 93.” In addition, “projects proposed for funding under title 23 U.S.C. Chapter 2 that are not regionally-significant may be grouped in one line item or identified individually in the TIP.”

For nonattainment and maintenance areas, project classifications must be consistent with the “exempt project” classifications contained in the EPA transportation conformity regulation (40 CFR part 93).

Grouping projects provides some benefits in terms of streamlining – certain types of project revisions can be made without undergoing the amendment or administrative modification process – at the cost of a decrease in transparency. This is because the obligation information for the project group is included in the TIP – not the obligation information for each project in the group. Since MPOs are directly responsible for project selection and allocation of funds under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), it is recommended that projects that include CMAQ and/or RSTP funding not be grouped.

While DRPT does not group projects as described above, VDOT encourages the grouping of certain types of projects. For more information on how VDOT handles project grouping and the types of reporting available on grouped projects, see the VDOT Groupings Fact Sheet in Appendix C.

Whether the TIP will include project groups and, if so, which projects may be grouped, is at the discretion of the MPO.
Financial Plan

As noted in the introduction, the TIP must be fiscally-constrained. Only projects, or phases of projects, for which full funding can reasonably be anticipated to be available within the time period contemplated for completion may be included in the TIP. This fiscal-constraint – which must be demonstrated and maintained by year – is documented by inclusion of a financial plan.

Fiscal-constraint has been a critical part of the planning, programming, and project development processes since the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991. Fiscal stewardship is engrained throughout the transportation decision-making process. The State and MPOs actively strive for transparency, consistency, and reasonableness with regard to planned expenditures of public resources and endeavor to ensure that consistent messages are provided throughout the planning and programming processes.

Federal regulation (23 CFR 450.324(h)) states that the financial plan must demonstrate how the approved TIP can be implemented, indicate resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the TIP, and recommend any additional financing strategies for needed projects and programs. Revenue and cost estimates for the TIP must be provided in year of expenditure (YOE) dollars. For purposes of transportation operations and maintenance, the financial plan must contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways.

In nonattainment and maintenance areas, projects included in the first two years of the TIP must be limited to those for which funds are available or committed.

Regulations call for MPOs, State departments, and public transportation operators to cooperatively develop the financial plan. In Virginia, since VDOT and DRPT pull together most of the transportation funding information for the development of the Six-Year Improvement Program and coordinate the obligation of federal funds with FHWA and FTA, MPOs receive most of the information necessary to produce the financial plan for the TIP from VDOT and DRPT.
IV. TIP REVISION PROCESS

A TIP revision is a change that is made between full updates of the TIP. Most MPO TIPs are revised on a regular basis to update project information. Fiscal-constraint of the TIP must be maintained when the TIP is revised. There are two types of TIP revisions – amendments and administrative modifications.

Amendment

An amendment involves a major change to a project in the TIP. An amendment to the TIP requires an opportunity for public review and comment. A revision request that involves any of the following items must be processed as an amendment:

- Addition or deletion of a project
- Major changes in project cost
- Major changes in project/phase initiation dates
- Major changes in design concept or design scope
- Any change that requires an updated air quality conformity determination
- Any change that requires re-demonstration of fiscal constraint

Administrative Modification

An administrative modification involves a minor change to the TIP. An administrative modification does not require public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal-constraint, or an updated air quality conformity determination. The following are examples of items that may be processed as administrative modifications:

- Minor changes in project/phase costs
- Minor changes to funding sources for previously-included projects
- Minor changes to project/phase initiation dates
- Splitting or combining individually listed projects – as long as overall cost, schedule, and scope remain unchanged

Procedures for Revising the TIP

To help ensure that proper coordination occurs between all necessary parties so that TIP revisions may be processed in a consistent and efficient manner, it is recommended that each MPO, in cooperation with the applicable VDOT District Office and DRPT, document procedures for processing revisions to the TIP. Appendix D provides a sample TIP Revision Procedures document that outlines the steps and corresponding timelines for processing a TIP amendment or administrative modification.
Schedule for TIP Revisions

Although the schedule for processing TIP revisions will vary from one MPO to another, it should ensure adequate time to carry out the following typical steps:

1. The requester (usually the project administrator – such as a locality, transit agency, VDOT, DRPT, etc.) makes initial contact with MPO staff, usually via email, providing information on the proposed TIP revision request.

2. MPO staff determines whether the proposed TIP revision may be processed as an administrative modification or must be processed as an amendment. For MPOs to which air quality conformity requirements apply, MPO and VDOT staff determine whether the requested change will require an updated conformity finding.

3. VDOT and/or DRPT verify that the current cost estimates, allocations, obligations, expenditures, and funds available for transfer in the proposed revision request are correct.

4. MPO staff reviews the official request letter and coordinates with the requester to ensure the request is processed in as timely a manner as possible. TIP revision requests are processed as follows:

   If the request must be processed as an Amendment:
   a. TIP revision request is included in the agendas of the next meetings of the MPO technical advisory committee (if applicable) and policy board.
   b. MPO staff conducts a public review and comment period as specified in the MPO Public Participation Plan.
   c. Upon approval by the MPO policy board, MPO staff revises the TIP and sends documentation specifying this action to VDOT and/or DRPT so that the STIP may be revised accordingly once an air quality conformity finding, if required, has been made. The requester should receive a copy of the documentation of the MPO action.

   If the request must be processed as an Administrative Modification:
   a. MPO staff makes appropriate changes to affected projects in the TIP.
   b. MPO staff sends documentation to VDOT and/or DRPT specifying the changes made to the TIP so that the STIP may be revised accordingly. The requester should receive a copy of the documentation of the MPO action. No federal action is required.

5. VDOT and/or DRPT staff should provide confirmation to MPO staff once the STIP has been revised to incorporate the requested revision.
It is helpful to all parties, particularly TIP revision requesters, for the MPO to provide a calendar highlighting the various deadlines associated with the TIP revision process. Figure 3 provides an example of such a calendar. It is recommended that such a calendar be made accessible on the MPO website.

Figure 3 – Sample TIP Revision Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadlines for FY 2015-2018 TIP Revision Requests</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>January 2015</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>S M T W T F S</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>May 2015</strong></td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
V. TIP MAINTENANCE

Between full updates of the TIP – which are required at least every four years, but are usually conducted every two to three years – the TIP is kept up-to-date primarily through the use of amendments and administrative modifications. Close coordination between the MPO, VDOT, DRPT, and applicable public transportation agencies helps ensure that consistency between the TIP and STIP is maintained.

As mentioned in Section III – TIP Required Contents, some MPOs have enhanced the usability and transparency of their TIPs by including project information beyond the minimum information required by federal regulations, such as:

- Allocation information per year
- Phase cost estimates
- Phase schedules
- Expenditure information by phase
- Project location map
- Project photos
- Statement of need for the project
- Other information to help TIP users better understand the project

Maintenance of the items listed in the first five bullets above requires coordination between the MPO, VDOT, and applicable public transportation agencies. VDOT provides a Monthly MPO Detailed Report in Excel format to interested MPOs. This report is very helpful for updating funding allocation information, project phase schedules, and expenditures per phase. Phase cost estimates can also be updated using this report as long as there is no change to the total cost of the project. (Any data elements that are common between the TIP and STIP, like total project costs and funding obligations, should only be updated by way of TIP amendments or administrative modifications.)

Maintenance of items related to the last three bullets may be carried out by MPO staff using other sources.
VI. ANNUAL OBLIGATION REPORT

Required Contents

According to Federal regulations (23 CFR 450.332):

a) In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.

b) The listing shall be prepared in accordance with §450.314(a) and shall include all federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year, and shall at a minimum include the TIP information under §450.324(e)(1) and (4) and identify, for each project, the amount of Federal funds requested in the TIP, the Federal funding that was obligated during the preceding year, and the Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years.

As described above, the Annual Obligation Report (AOR) is to be produced within 90 calendar days following the end of the program year (or federal fiscal year, which ends on September 30). The AOR must include projects for which federal funds were obligated during the just-ended federal fiscal year. For each project, the following information (at a minimum) must be provided:

- Sufficient descriptive material (i.e., type of work, termini, and length) to identify the project or phase
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase
- Planned obligations (the amount of federal funds requested in the TIP)
- Actual obligations (the federal funding that was obligated during the preceding year)
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years

Figure 4 (next page) is a Guide Sheet on AOR data provided by VDOT. The Guide Sheet shows a sample project and provides descriptions of the data included in the AOR listings.
### Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance

**GUIDE SHEET**

**MOPO OBLIGATION REPORT**

### STIP Transactions

**Hampton Roads MPO Study Area**

**Federal Obligated Funds: 10/01/2013 - 09/30/2014**

<table>
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<th>Local</th>
<th>NHPP</th>
<th>IMNet</th>
<th>STIP</th>
<th>EB-MG</th>
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<th>BROS</th>
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<td><strong>Project Obligations</strong></td>
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**Sliding Scale**

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<td>15%</td>
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<td>$500 or more</td>
<td>5%</td>
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**Notes:**

A. For projects where obligations identified with no TIP amount identified –
   The transaction was a modification and based on the sliding scale, no TIP action was required; and/or AC conversion
B. For projects where the obligated amount exceeds the TIP amount identified –
   Based on the total estimated cost of the project phase vs. the sliding scale, no TIP action was required; and/or AC conversion
C. By project; Funds indicated w/() – release of obligation
D. Release obligations are not calculated in any totals

**Figure 4 – VDOT Guide Sheet on AOR Data**
Agency Coordination

It is recommended that agency coordination for production of the AOR be documented in the Metropolitan Planning Agreement between the State, MPO, applicable public transportation agencies, and other stakeholders. Sample language regarding the AOR for inclusion in the Metropolitan Planning Agreement is included below:

Within 90 days after the close of a federal fiscal year, the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall provide the MPO with Annual Obligation Report information. To the extent possible, this report(s) will contain the projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which federal highway or transit funds were obligated in the preceding program year. It shall include all federally funded projects authorized, including those revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year; at a minimum include TIP project description and implementing agency information; and identify, for each project, the amount of Federal funds requested in the TIP, the Federal funding that was obligated during the preceding year, and the Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years. The MPO shall publish the Annual Obligation Report on the Web and in accordance with any other procedures outlined in the Public Participation Plan to ensure adequate access by the public and other interested stakeholders.

Posting of AOR for Public Review

According to Federal regulation (23 CFR 450.332(c)), the AOR must be published or otherwise made available in accordance with MPO public participation criteria for the TIP. It is recommended that MPOs satisfy this requirement by posting the AOR on the MPO website.
APPENDIX A

Sample: Self-Certification Procedural Guide Document
HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
VOTING MEMBERS
Camelia Ravanbakht, PhD
Interim Executive Director

CHESAPEAKE
Alan P. Krasnoff

GLOUCESTER COUNTY
John C. Meyer, Jr.

HAMPTON
George Wallace

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY
Delores C. Darden

JAMES CITY COUNTY
Mary K. Jones

NEWPORT NEWS
McKinley L. Price

NORFOLK
Paul D. Fraim

POQUOSON
W. Eugene Hunt, Jr.

PORTSMOUTH
Kenneth I. Wright

SUFFOLK
Linda T. Johnson

VIRGINIA BEACH
William D. Sessoms, Jr.

WILLIAMSBURG
Clyde A. Haulman

YORK COUNTY
Thomas G. Shepperd, Jr.

MEMBERS OF THE VIRGINIA SENATE
The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
The Honorable Frank W. Wagner

MEMBERS OF THE VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES
The Honorable Christopher P. Stolle
The Honorable David E. Yancey

TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT COMMISSION OF HAMPTON ROADS
William E. Harrell, President/Chief Executive Officer

WILLIAMSBURG AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Kevan Danker, Executive Director

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
James Utterback, Hampton Roads District Administrator

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
Jennifer Mitchell, Director

VIRGINIA PORT AUTHORITY
John F. Reinhart, CEO/Executive Director
HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
NON-VOTING MEMBERS

CHESAPEAKE
James E. Baker

JAMES CITY COUNTY
Doug Powell

PORTSMOUTH
John Rowe

GLOUCESTER COUNTY
Brenda G. Garton

NEWPORT NEWS
Jim Bourney

SUFFOLK
Selena Cuffee-Glenn

HAMPTON
Mary Bunting

NORFOLK
Marcus Jones

VIRGINIA BEACH
James K. Spore

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY
Anne Seward

POQUOSON
J. Randall Wheeler

WILLIAMSBURG
Jackson C. Tuttle

YORK COUNTY
James O. McReynolds

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Irene Rico, Division Administrator – Virginia Division

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
Brigid Hynes-Cherin, Regional Administrator, Region 3

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
Jeffrey W. Breeden, Airport Planner, Washington Airports District Office

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION
Randall P. Burdette, Director

PENINSULA AIRPORT COMMISSION
Ken Spirito, Executive Director

NORFOLK AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Wayne E. Shank, Executive Director

CHAIR – CITIZEN TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Shepelle Whatkins-White, Chair

CHAIR – FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Arthur W. Moye, Jr. – Co-Chair (Non-Voting Board Member)
Delegate Christopher P. Stolle, Co-Chair (Voting Board Member)

MILITARY LIAISONS
William S. Galbraith, Colonel, U.S. Army
Robert E. Clark, Captain, U.S. Navy

PROJECT STAFF
Camelia Ravanbakht, PhD Interim Executive Director
Michael S. Kimbrel Principal Transportation Engineer
Kendall L. Miller Public Involvement and Title VI Administrator
ABSTRACT
The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Self-Certification Procedural Guide serves as a reference for staff, reviewing agencies, and the public to assure that metropolitan transportation planning and programming processes are being carried out in accordance with applicable requirements. This guide includes self-certification questions and information about pertinent authorities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
This report was prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), and the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA). The contents of this report reflect the views of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO). The HRTPO staff is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the FHWA, FTA, VDOT, or DRPT. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation. FHWA, FTA, VDOT or DRPT acceptance of this report as evidence of fulfillment of the objectives of this guide does not constitute endorsement/approval of the need for any recommended improvements nor does it constitute approval of their location and design or a commitment to fund any such improvements. Additional project level environmental impact assessments and/or studies of alternatives may be necessary.

NON-DISCRIMINATION
The HRTPO assures that no person shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, handicap, sex, age, or income status as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent authorities, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity. The HRTPO Title VI Plan provides this assurance, information about HRTPO responsibilities, and a Discrimination Complaint Form.
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In accordance with Federal regulations (23 CFR 450.334), metropolitan planning areas (MPAs) must certify at least every four years, concurrent with the submittal of the entire proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, that the metropolitan transportation planning and programming process is being carried out in accordance with applicable requirements. These requirements include highway, transit, and air-quality regulations and laws, as well as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination authorities. The questions within this document serve as a guide to issues considered during the self-certification process.

**HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Hampton Roads area. As such, it is a federally mandated transportation policy board comprised of representatives from local, state, and federal governments, transit agencies, and other stakeholders and is responsible for transportation planning and programming for the Hampton Roads MPA. Any highway or transit project or program to be constructed or conducted within the MPA and to be paid for with Federal funds, must receive approval by the HRTPO before any Federal funds can be expended. In addition, any highway or transit project deemed to be regionally-significant, regardless of the source(s) of funding, must receive HRTPO approval to proceed. The Hampton Roads MPA includes the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; the counties of Isle of Wight, James City, and York; and a portion of Gloucester County.
The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Self-Certification Procedural Guide was developed to serve as a reference for staff, reviewing agencies, and the public to assure that metropolitan transportation planning and programming processes are being carried out in accordance with applicable requirements.

This Guide is organized as follows:

- **Self-Certification Questions** – This section includes the questions used to ascertain that the HRTPO transportation planning and programming processes comply with pertinent laws and regulations.

- **Appendix A** – Enumerates and defines applicable requirements. Items 1 and 2 of this section list and briefly explain highway, transit, and air-quality regulations and laws. Items 3 through 10 provide information about Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination statutes.

- **Appendix B** – Includes the HRTPO Self-Certification Form. When the Self-Certification Form is submitted, it will be accompanied by an **Accomplishments Report** highlighting HRTPO initiatives and accomplishments achieved through the regional transportation planning and programming processes since the previous self-certification.

The self-certification process takes place at least every four years, concurrent with the submittal of the entire proposed HRTPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The FY 2015-2018 TIP is scheduled for approval by the HRTPO Board on July 17, 2014.

The Self-Certification Form and Accomplishments Report will be included in the appendix of the approved FY 2015-2018 TIP.
**SELF-CERTIFICATION QUESTIONS**

**ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

1. Is the HRTPO properly designated by agreement between the Governor and 75% of the urbanized area, including the central city, and in accordance in procedures set forth in state and local law?

2. Does the HRTPO Board include elected officials, providers of major modes of transportation, and appropriate state officials?

3. Is training about the transportation planning process provided for the HRTPO Board and its advisory committees?

4. Does the HRTPO boundary encompass the existing urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within the 20-year forecast period?

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING PROCESS**

1. Is the transportation planning process continuous, cooperative and comprehensive?

2. Is there a currently adopted Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)?
   a. Are tasks and products clearly outlined?
   b. Does the UPWP include sufficient detail of who will perform the work, the schedule for completing work, the resulting products, proposed funding and a summary of the total amounts of federal and matching funds?
   c. Is the work identified in the UPWP completed in a timely fashion?

3. Is there a valid Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)?
   a. Does the LRTP have at least a 20-year horizon at the time of adoption?
   b. Does it address the eight planning factors?
   c. Does it cover all modes applicable to the area?
   d. Does the LRTP specify the HRTPO’s project selection methodology?
   e. Is it financially constrained?
   f. Does it include funding for the maintenance and operation of the system?
   g. Is it updated/reevaluated in a timely fashion (at least every four or five years)?
   h. Does the area have a process for including environmental mitigation discussions in the planning process?

4. Is there a valid Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?
   a. Is it consistent with the LRTP?
   b. Is it fiscally constrained?
   c. Is it developed cooperatively with the state and local transit operators?
d. Is it updated at least every four years and adopted by the HRTPO and submitted to the Governor?

5. Does the area have a valid Congestion Management Process?
   a. Is it consistent with the LRTP?
   b. Is it used for the development of the TIP?
   c. Is it monitored and reevaluated to meet the needs of the area?

6. Does the area have a process for including environmental, state, other transportation, historical, local land use and economic development agencies in the planning process?

**TITLE VI AND RELATED AUTHORITIES**

1. Does the planning process meet the following requirements of federal law?
   a. Title VI: Are there procedures in place to address complaints related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and do they comply with federal regulation?
   b. American Disabilities Act (ADA): Are there procedures in place to address ADA complaints of non-compliance and do they comply with federal regulation?
   c. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE): Does the HRTPO have a DBE policy statement that expresses commitment to the DBE program?

2. Environmental Justice: Has the HRTPO identified low-income and minority populations within the planning area and considered the effects in the planning process?

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

1. Does the area have an adopted Public Participation Plan (PPP)?
   a. Did the public participate in the development of the PPP?
   b. Was the PPP made available for public review for at least 45-days prior to adoption?
   c. Is adequate notice provided for public meetings?
   d. What sources does the HRTPO use to educate and inform the public about plans, programs, and activities (i.e. website, press releases, newspapers, mailers, etc.)?
   e. Are meetings held at convenient times and at accessible locations?
   f. Is the public given an opportunity to provide oral and/or written comments on the planning process?
   g. Does the HRTPO seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households?
   h. Is the PPP periodically reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness?
   i. Are plans/program documents available in an electronic accessible format?
2. Does the area participate in an interagency process designed to facilitate communication among involved agencies and make decisions on the transportation conformity process and air quality improvement matters?

**DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING**

1. What supporting documentation/information is provided to the HRTP0 Board when the self-certification is approved?

2. How is the self-certification provided to the Federal agencies?

3. Is there continuity and consistency between the self-certification and quadrennial Federal Certification?
AUTHORITIES: LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. Highway and Public Transportation
   a. 23 U.S.C. 134 – Highways
      Sec. 134. Metropolitan Planning
      This section describes the legal framework for metropolitan planning areas (MPAs) and the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning processes, development of transportation plans, programs, and activities to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation and development of transportation systems.

   b. 49 U.S.C. 53 – Public Transportation
      Sec. 5303. Metropolitan Transportation Planning
      This section provides the legal framework to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between States and urbanized areas. This section also encourages the continued improvement and evolution of the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes.

   c. 23 CFR part 450.334 (a) – Self certifications and Federal certifications
      Regulations to ensure the State and MPAs certify at least every four years that the metropolitan planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements.

2. Clean Air Act and Related Regulation
   a. The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the law that defines the Environmental Protection Agency's responsibilities for protecting and improving the nation's air quality and the stratospheric ozone layer. The last major change in the law, the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, was enacted by Congress in 1990.

   b. 40 CFR part 93 – Determining Conformity of Federal Action State or Federal Implementation Plans
      This section sets forth policy, criteria, and procedures for demonstrating and assuring conformity of such activities to an applicable implementation plan developed pursuant to the CAA. This section also provide procedures for air quality nonattainment and maintenance to implement requirements with respect to the conformity of transportation plans, programs, and projects which are developed, funded, or approved by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and by MPOs or other recipients of highway or transit funds.
3. **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** states, "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 set a standard which authoritatively outlawed discrimination in the conduct of all federal activities. Subsequent laws and Presidential Orders added handicap, sex, age, and income status to the criteria for which discrimination is prohibited.

**Executive Order 12898** directs Federal agencies to make Environmental Justice part of their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

**Executive Order 13166** requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. This Executive Order also requires that the Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

4. **49 U.S.C. 5332** prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity.

5. **Section 1101(b) of the SAFETEA-LU (Pub. L. 109-59)** and **49 CFR part 26** provide the legal and regulatory framework regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects.

6. **23 CFR part 230** provides regulatory standards for the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on federal and federal-aid highway construction contracts.

7. The **American Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities. It prohibits the discrimination on the basis of disability by public accommodations and in commercial facilities.

8. The **Older Americans Act** prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.


CERTIFICATION OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING PROCESS

The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, Virginia Department of Transportation, and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation hereby certify that the conduct of the metropolitan planning and programming process complies with all applicable requirements as listed below, and that this process includes activities that support the development and implementation of the Long-Range Transportation Plan and associated Air Quality Conformity Determination, the Transportation Improvement Program and associated Air Quality Conformity Determination, and the Unified Planning Work Program.

1. 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR part 450.334 (a);
2. Sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
3. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
4. 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
5. Section 1101(b) of the SAFETEA-LU (Pub. L. 109-59) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects;
6. 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
8. The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
9. Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and

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<th>Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization</th>
<th>Virginia Department of Transportation</th>
<th>Virginia Department of Rail &amp; Public Transportation</th>
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APPENDIX B

Schedule for Full Update of TIP and STIP – Lessons Learned
Schedule for Full Update of TIP and STIP – Lessons Learned

As noted in the Introduction, federal regulations require a full update of the TIP and STIP at least every four years. The TIP may be updated more frequently, but the cycle for updating the TIP must be compatible with the STIP development and approval process. The TIP expires when FHWA/FTA approval of the STIP expires.

Past Experience

The following table shows the draft schedule provided by VDOT for the development of the FY 2015-2018 STIP, as revised on January 28, 2014.

| October 2013 | • Kick-off for preparation of FFY15-18 TIP  
|             | • Develop “working” scenarios for TIP & STIP updates |
| November 2013 | • Submit Project Listing for Conformity (NoVa)  
|              | • Submit Project Listings for Data Quality Review – PIM District Offices |
| December 2013 | • Districts return Data Quality Review Project Listings |
| January 2014  | • Receive Maintenance Grouping data from Operations Planning Office (OPO)  
|              | • Develop UPCs for Maintenance Groupings  
|              | • Table C/Fiscal Constraint financial data due – Financial Planning |
| February 2014 | • Prepare obligation for NoVa, HampRds, Richmond & TriCities MPOs |
| March 2014    | • Prepare obligation for small MPOs  
|              | • Prepare obligation information for rural area (non-MPO) |
| April 2014    | • MPOs conduct public involvement on TIPs FFY15-18  
|              | • TIPs approved by MPOs and submitted to VDOT |
| May 2014      | • Air Quality Conformity approval by FHWA/FTA/EPA  
|              | • Public Involvement for STIP (part of SYIP Public Hearings)  
|              | • DRPT portion of STIP to be submitted  
|              | • Development of STIP narrative  
|              | • Table C to be finalized  
|              | • Programming to compile FFY15-18 STIP document |
| June 2014     | • VDOT to post pre-approved STIP on website with email link for comments |
| July 2014     | • STIP submitted to FHWA/FTA for approval |
| September 2014| • FHWA/FTA approval of the FFY15-18 |
| October 2014  | • Post approved STIP on VDOT’s website; MPOs post approved TIPs on their websites |
The primary lessons learned from this most recent STIP/TIPs update and previous updates are:

- Past schedules have typically not taken into account the time required to accomplish MPO processes related to a full update of the TIP, including:
  - Data QA/QC by MPO staff, member localities, transit agencies, and other stakeholders
  - Public participation activities
  - Production of the TIP document
  - Approvals by technical advisory committees and policy boards

- Dates for delivery of necessary data to the MPOs have often slipped, but the deadline dates for MPOs to complete their TIPs remain fixed. This further impacts all of the items listed under the previous bullet.

Specific issues for MPOs exhibited in the above table include:

1. November 2013 – Submit Project Listing for Conformity
   - The schedule calls for Air Quality Conformity approval by FHWA/FTA/EPA in May 2014. This provides only five months to complete the conformity analysis and report (not counting November and May).
   - This schedule provides no time for review and approval of the draft project list by the MPO and the public prior to commencing the conformity analysis.

2. November 2013 – Submit Project Listings for Data Quality Review by VDOT District Offices
   - MPOs should be involved in this initial review of the draft TIP project list at this early stage of the process.
   - Time should be provided to allow for review of the draft TIP project list by localities, transit agencies, and other stakeholders.

3. February 2014 – Prepare obligation information for large MPOs
   - Some large MPOs received the obligation information at the end of February. Given that the schedule called for MPOs to conduct public involvement on TIPs in April, this provided less than one month for the MPO to produce the draft TIP document in order to have it ready for a 30-day public review period.
   - Some, if not all, of the large MPOs found it impossible to meet this schedule.
   - In addition, this schedule provided no time to handle possible issues with the obligation data provided by VDOT.

4. March 2014 – Prepare obligation information for small MPOs
   - Small MPOs had even less time than large MPOs to produce a draft TIP document in time to meet the schedule for conducting public involvement in April.
5. April 2014 – MPOs conduct public involvement on TIPs; TIPs approved by MPOs and submitted to VDOT
   • Even if an MPO could conduct public involvement on its draft TIP, it would be nearly impossible to have the TIP approved by the MPO during the same month.
   • This schedule provided no time to address any comments received on the draft TIP.

When the meeting schedules for MPO advisory committees and policy boards – as well as the time required for public review and comment periods – are taken into account, a schedule like the one shown in the table above is insufficient for many MPOs to develop a full TIP update.
APPENDIX C

VDOT Project Grouping Fact Sheet
Groupings Fact Sheet

Monthly MPO Detailed Report

- The Monthly MPO Detailed Report is updated after each CTB meeting and reflects any projects denoted as eligible for grouping by category. This is based on the grouping selection for each project in VDOT’s Project Pool. The data in the report shows the phase estimate of each project denoted as eligible for grouping by category. It does not reflect the planned or actual obligation amount on each individual project denoted as eligible for grouping by category.

Development of Grouping Total Estimated Costs (TECs)

- For construction projects:
  - When the STIP/TIPs are developed, projects in each grouping are identified based on the selected grouping category, schedule, and estimate information in Project Pool.
  - The accumulated value (estimates) of projects anticipated to be included in the grouping (based on the Project Pool information) is then used to establish the TEC for each grouping.
  - The TEC of the grouping for that category over the four-year STIP period is subject to the sliding scale.

- For maintenance projects:
  - Unlike the construction groupings, projects are not used to develop the TEC for maintenance groupings.
  - Instead, estimated revenue projections from the Six-Year Financial Plan (SYFP) are used to develop the TEC for maintenance groupings.
  - The estimated revenue projection amounts are essentially the anticipated maintenance budget amounts for each year over the period. These amounts are then broken out by grouping category, district, and federal fiscal year and represent the TEC for each maintenance grouping.
  - The TEC for each maintenance grouping by district is the anticipated obligation amount for that category by federal fiscal year, subject to the sliding scale.

- For both construction and maintenance projects, the grouping line item becomes “the project” for purposes of the TIP/STIP.

Management of Groupings

- VDOT Federal Programs Management Division (FPMD) tracks groupings for each MPO and Non-MPO grouping in the STIP.

- For maintenance projects:
  - As grouped project authorizations or modifications are processed, the tracking is updated to reflect that an actual obligation has been submitted for the identified grouping.
  - Groupings are monitored to ensure that as the obligation amount approaches the sliding scale, necessary TIP and/or STIP action to amend the TEC of the grouping is coordinated with the impacted MPO(s).

- For construction projects:
  - As grouped project authorizations or modifications are processed, the tracking is updated to reflect the TEC of the submitted project and the amount of federal funds authorized.
  - Groupings are monitored to ensure that as the TECs of projects brought into the grouping approach the sliding scale, necessary TIP and/or STIP action to amend the TEC of the grouping is coordinated with the impacted MPO(s).
Groupings Fact Sheet

Reporting Available

There are three types of reports that can be provided concerning the groupings:

1. The list of projects used to develop the construction grouping category TEC at the time of STIP development/update. This list can be used to add up the individual project costs (TECs) to confirm the cost estimate as established for the grouping at the time of TIP/STIP development. However, since individual project costs may change regularly, the listing of projects is a snapshot of the project costs at the time the listing was pulled; the listing is saved for documentation purposes, but cannot necessarily be recreated from the live data set after the snapshot is taken.

2. The list of projects eligible to be grouped based on the grouping category selected in VDOT’s Project Pool. This list would be the universe of projects eligible for groupings.
   a. Projects that are not reflected in the grouping tracking sheet because the project/phase has not been advanced to authorized or modified (i.e., the project/phase has not started); and
   b. Projects that were not included in the original list used to develop the grouping TEC.

3. The list of projects in the grouping category tracking. This list:
   o Can be used to add up the individual project costs that have been authorized/modified in the grouping and ensure that the grouping remains within the sliding scale.
   o Cannot be used to determine the TEC of the grouping when the TIP/STIP was developed.
APPENDIX D

Sample: TIP Revision Procedures Document
PROCEDURES FOR REVISING THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

July 2010

INTRODUCTION
The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), has developed these procedures for processing revisions to the HRTPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to help ensure that coordination occurs between all necessary parties so that such revisions may be processed in the most efficient and proper manner. These procedures are in accordance with federal planning regulations (23 CFR 450).

DEFINITIONS

Revision
For the purposes of these procedures, a revision is a change to the TIP that occurs between full updates of the document. There are two types of TIP revisions:

- Amendments
- Administrative Modifications

Amendment
An amendment involves a major change to a project in the TIP. An amendment to the TIP requires an opportunity for review and comment by the public. A revision request that involves any of the following items must be processed as an amendment:

- Addition or deletion of a project
- Major changes in project cost
- Major changes in project/phase initiation dates
- Major changes in design concept or design scope
- Any change that requires a new air quality conformity determination
- Any change that requires re-demonstration of fiscal constraint

Administrative Modification
An administrative modification involves a minor change to the TIP. An administrative modification does not require public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or a new air quality conformity determination. The following are examples of items that may be processed as administrative modifications:

- Minor changes in project/phase costs
- Minor changes to funding sources of previously-included projects
- Minor changes to project/phase initiation dates
- Splitting or combining individually listed projects, as long as cost, schedule, and scope remain unchanged
PROCEDURES

The following procedures should be followed by a locality or transit agency submitting a request for a TIP revision – especially a revision that calls for a transfer of funds from one project to another project:

1. Coordinate with the HRTPO staff and appropriate VDOT or DRPT contact during the first week of the month prior to the month in which the TIP revision or fund transfer is needed. The HRTPO staff will coordinate with VDOT Environmental Division staff to determine whether the requested change would trigger a re-demonstration of air quality conformity of the TIP. The HRTPO staff will provide a determination on whether the revision may be processed as an Administrative Modification or must be processed as an Amendment.

2. VDOT or DRPT contact verifies the current cost estimates, allocations, obligations, expenditures, and funds available for transfer associated with the affected projects. This information should be provided to the locality or transit agency no later than the beginning of the third week of the month.

3. The locality or transit agency submits an official request letter to the HRTPO Executive Director by the end of the third week of the month. The letter should clearly specify the affected project(s), including UPC number(s), and should clearly specify the requested revision(s). To expedite the process a scanned copy of the signed request letter should be emailed to the HRTPO Deputy Executive Director and TIP staff. The request letter must include the following statement: “Current cost estimates, allocations, obligations, expenditures, and funds available for transfer associated with the affected project(s) have been confirmed with VDOT and/or coordinated with DRPT.”

4. The HRTPO staff will review the official request letter and coordinate with the locality or transit agency, as necessary, to ensure the request is processed in as timely a manner as possible. TIP revision requests will be processed as follows:

If the request must be processed as an Amendment:

a. The HRTPO staff will include the request in the TTAC agenda for the following month.
b. The HRTPO staff will conduct a public review and comment period of no less than 14 days, usually beginning on the day the TTAC agenda is posted on the HRTPO website.
c. The HRTPO staff will include the request in the HRTPO Board agenda for final approval.
d. Upon approval by the Board, the HRTPO staff will revise the TIP and send a letter specifying this action to VDOT and/or DRPT so that the STIP may also be revised in accordance with the Board’s action once federal action has been taken on the TIP Amendment. A copy of the HRTPO action letter will be sent to the representative that signed the request letter from the locality or transit agency.

If the request may be processed as an Administrative Modification:

a. The HRTPO staff will make the appropriate changes to the affected projects in the TIP.
b. The HRTPO staff will send a letter to VDOT and/or DRPT specifying the changes made to the TIP so that the STIP may also be revised accordingly. A copy of the HRTPO action letter will be sent to the representative that signed the request letter from the locality or transit agency. No federal action is required.
5. The VDOT and/or DRPT staff will provide confirmation to the HRTPO staff once the STIP has been revised to incorporate the requested change(s). For TIP Amendments, this confirmation will occur after federal action has been taken on the requested amendment.

BLACKOUT PERIODS
Specific circumstances may prohibit TIP revisions to be processed within the timeframe described in the Procedures section above. Examples of such circumstances include:

- Months during which TTAC and/or HRTPO Board meetings are not held
- Periods during which the STIP and/or Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) are locked in preparation for CTB approval of a new/revised SYIP

The HRTPO, VDOT, and DRPT staffs will endeavor to provide sufficient advance notice of such circumstances.
## PROCEDURES FOR REVISING THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

### CHECKLIST

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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Action Initiated By</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Completed (Date)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Locality or transit agency advises HRTPO staff and VDOT or DRPT Contact of intent to request TIP revision and which projects would be affected. HRTPO staff provides a determination on whether the revision may be processed as an Administrative Modification or an Amendment.</td>
<td>Locality or Transit Agency</td>
<td>First week of month prior to the month in which the TIP revision is needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VDOT or DRPT Contact coordinates with locality or transit agency on current cost estimates, allocations, obligations, expenditures, and funds available for transfer.</td>
<td>VDOT or DRPT</td>
<td>No later than the beginning of the third week of the month.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Locality or transit agency submits an official letter requesting TIP revision to the HRTPO Executive Director and emails a scanned copy of signed letter to the HRTPO Deputy Executive Director and TIP staff.</td>
<td>Locality or Transit Agency</td>
<td>No later than the end of the third week of the month.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>HRTPO staff reviews the official request letter and processes TIP revision, coordinating with locality/transit agency and VDOT and DRPT, as necessary.</td>
<td>HRTPO Staff</td>
<td>During the following month for a TIP Amendment, or within a few days for an Administrative Modification.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>VDOT or DRPT staff provides confirmation to HRTPO staff that the STIP has been revised to incorporate requested changes.</td>
<td>VDOT or DRPT</td>
<td>For TIP Amendments, after federal action has been taken on the revision request. For Administrative Modifications, as soon as the STIP has been revised.</td>
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APPENDIX E

Document Preparation, Review, and Comments
Document Preparation, Review, and Comments

DOCUMENT PREPARATION

The *Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance* document was produced in response to a recommendation included in the Joint FHWA-FTA planning finding letter received by all Virginia MPOs on their FY 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Programs in September 2014. The letter included three recommendations that the federal team specified should receive attention over the next federal fiscal year. The first two recommendations had to do with Civil Rights and the third recommendation was about the preparation of a TIP Preparation Guidance document.

The third recommendation in the joint FHWA-FTA letter read as follows:

> We recommend that the Virginia Association of MPOs (VAMPO), in cooperation with VDOT, prepare *TIP Preparation Guidance*. This documentation would provide for a uniform set of clear guidelines for understanding and developing MPO TIPs – including how projects are programmed. These mutually developed and agreed upon guidelines would also serve to document the process and criteria for making metropolitan TIP revisions based on project (including grouped) changes. Currently, some MPOs rely on the *2008 STIP Procedures Memorandum of Agreement*, which is meant to guide the STIP development (not TIP) while other MPOs have not accepted this approach. In addition, there has been some need for clarification regarding how projects should be listed in the TIP and TIP revision procedures.

To assist in this effort, we recommend an Advisory Committee that should include representatives from: VDOT Central and District offices, VDRPT, MPOs, and FHWA and FTA. For your consideration and to help serve as a format example and provide for topics, below is a link to Wisconsin’s *TIP Preparation Guidance – Guidelines for Developing Transportation Improvement Programs*:


If you would like other examples, let us know and we can coordinate with other FHWA and FTA offices.

In response to the recommendation by the federal team, VAMPO set up a working group consisting of representatives from three MPOs, VDOT Program Management, and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to produce the *TIP Preparation Guidance* document. The working group coordinated closely with staff from FHWA and FTA during the development of the document.
MILESTONES OF DOCUMENT PREPARATION, REVIEW, AND COMMENTS

1. **February 10, 2015** – Coordination on the project began with an email message from the group leader to the working group, federal partners, and others; that included a brief overview of the mission of the working group as well as a proposed methodology for development of the Guidance. Working group members and the FHWA representative provided comments in response to the message.

2. **April 14, 2015** – An email message from the group leader transmitted a draft, detailed outline for the document to the working group and federal partners. Working group members provided input on the draft, detailed outline.

3. **June 9, 2015** – First draft of Guidance, prepared by the group leader in accordance with the agreed-upon methodology, emailed to the working group and federal partners for review and comments. The working group decided to schedule a meeting to discuss and address the comments.

4. **July 8, 2015** – Working group met at the offices of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission to discuss comments on the first draft and to make revisions to the document to address those comments.

5. **July 9, 2015** – An email message from the group leader transmitted the second draft of the Guidance, which incorporated the changes discussed during the meeting the previous day, to the working group for review and comments.

6. **July 28, 2015** – An email message from the FHWA representative transmitted two comments on the second draft of the Guidance. The group leader transmitted the comments, along with a recommendation to address the comments, to the working group and federal partners. The working group agreed with the recommendation to address the comments.

7. **July 28, 2015** – An email message from the FHWA representative suggested adding an introductory paragraph on fiscal constraint. The group leader transmitted the comment, along with a recommendation to address the comment, to the working group and federal partners. The working group agreed with the recommendation to address the comments.

8. **August 5, 2015** – VAMPO Board Meeting. Group leader presented second draft of Guidance, revised to address all comments received to-date, to the VAMPO Board. The VAMPO Board approved the draft document for formal transmittal to VDOT, DRPT, FHWA, and FTA for review and comment.

9. **September 3, 2015** – Letter from the VAMPO Chair to VDOT Commissioner Kilpatrick transmitted the draft Guidance document for review and requested comments by September 18, 2015.
10. **September 15, 2015** – Group leader notified by FHWA representative that he has not received a formal request to review and comment on the draft Guidance. Group leader notified VAMPO Chair.

11. **September 17, 2015** – VAMPO Chair transmitted the draft Guidance to FHWA, FTA, and DRPT for review and requested comments by September 30, 2015.

12. **October 8, 2015** – Letter from VDOT Commissioner to VAMPO Chair in response to request for comments on draft Guidance.

13. **October 8, 2015** – DRPT representative responded to request for comments with an email message stating that DRPT did not have any additional comments.

The replies received in response to the formal request for review and comments regarding the Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance document are included in the following pages.
October 8, 2015

Mr. Will Cockrell, AICP
Chair, Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
c/o TJPDC
P.O. Box 1505
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-1505

Dear Mr. Cockrell:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance developed in response to recommendations made jointly by the Virginia Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in their Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) planning findings across the Commonwealth.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) offers the following comments in response to the guidance.

Grouping

VDOT encourages and supports project grouping in both the TIPs and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to the extent authorized under 23 CFR §450 and the STIP Procedures Memorandum of Agreement jointly agreed to by VDOT, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), FHWA Virginia Division, and FTA. Use of project groupings increases efficiency and flexibility in securing project authorizations and phase obligations, thereby streamlining the process for both MPOs and VDOT. VDOT’s goal is to encourage grouping where allowed, work with MPOs in their decision to group or ungroup certain types of projects, and provide transparency and reporting concerning grouped projects.
TIP and STIP Development Schedule

We recognize the concerns outlined as to the compressed timeline of the FFY 2015-2018 TIP and STIP development processes. VDOT is committed to working in close coordination with our partners at VAMPO and the multi-state MPOs to develop a schedule for the next updates of the TIPs and STIP. The schedule for the next updates should facilitate sufficient time for information gathering and review processes of both the MPOs and VDOT, as well as ensure adequate public review and comment in support of the ultimate development of the TIPs and the STIP. I have asked Diane L. Mitchell, Federal Programs Management Division Director, to reach out to VAMPO and the multi-state MPOs to begin discussions on the development of such a schedule.

Cooperative Development of Financial Plan

Since regions including Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia receive significant amounts of transportation funding from non-federal and non-state revenue streams, it important that all stakeholders closely coordinate financial planning activities associated with the TIPs and the STIP with VDOT and DRPT to ensure coordinate, reliable, and consistent financial plans.

Additional Input

Finally, as partners and stakeholders in the development of TIPs and the Commonwealth’s STIP, it is recommended that the draft document be made available to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the three additional MPO areas in Virginia that are not members of VAMPO (Bristol, Kingsport, and TPB) for their review and comment.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this important guidance. If additional information is needed, please contact Wendy E. Thomas at (804) 225-3552.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Charles A. Kilpatrick

C: John Lawson  
Diane L. Mitchell
From: Arabia, Christopher (DRPT) [mailto:Christopher.Arabia@drpt.virginia.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 08, 2015 2:26 PM
To: William Cockrell
Subject: TIP Guidance Document

Will,

I'm responding on behalf of DRPT and our Director, Jennifer Mitchell. We do not have any additional comments on the TIP Guidance document. DRPT’s Marie Berry was on the team that drafted the document, so we are good with what that team put together.

Thanks.

Christopher Arabia
Acting Planning and Mobility Programs Administrator
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
600 East Main Street, Suite 2102
Richmond VA 23219
804-786-1059
www.DRPT.Virginia.gov