

Section 2 - TIP Process

2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program

Section 2: Transportation Improvement Program Process

For a transportation improvement project to receive federal funding, it is necessary for that project to be included in both the transportation plan and the transportation improvement program (TIP). The transportation plan is a 20-plus year program that considers the present and future needs of an urbanized area in relation to its transportation system. Using demographic data, computer modeling and public input, the transportation plan recommends a balanced program of transportation improvements that are eligible for federal funds. Once the appropriate public decision-makers decide to pursue a particular project recommended in the transportation plan, it is included in the TIP. The TIP includes a description of each transportation project or program requesting federal funding and provides a schedule for funding and implementation.

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization utilizes five guidelines in preparing the *2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program*. These guidelines, in conjunction with the TIP amendment process, guide the development process for the TIP.

1. *All projects must be evaluated and found to be consistent with the transportation plan*

The schedule of projects programmed in the TIP is consistent with the Evansville MPO 2035 *Transportation Plan*, a summary of which is included in Appendix A. All projects included in the long-range element of the TIP are recommendations from the transportation plan. Projects in the short-range element of the TIP have been evaluated and are supported by the Transportation System Management Element of the planning process.

Consideration is also given to the relationship between the projects programmed in the TIP and the planning factors set forth in SAFETEA-LU. The TIP includes a mixture of improvements, including roadway maintenance, enhancements, capacity expansion, and air quality projects.

2. *The list of projects in the TIP must be developed in cooperation with local government, transit operators, INDOT, KYTC, & all other appropriate federal agencies*

Development of the TIP includes funding schedules and project prioritization for both local and state initiated projects. This requires the participation of representatives from a multitude of public agencies. Representatives from Vanderburgh County, Warrick County, Henderson County, Evansville, Henderson, and Newburgh are consulted regarding transportation priorities for their localities and the region. These priorities are then presented to the INDOT and the KYTC, which takes them into consideration while programming federal & state transportation funds.

Once a draft program of projects is assembled, it is presented to the various local governing bodies (city councils, county commissions, etc.) for review. The members of the governing bodies then make recommendations to their representatives on the MPO Policy Committee. Local government representatives have the ability to adjust, through approval or veto, the scheduling and funding program in the TIP.

Following local approval, the final version of the program is provided to INDOT, KYTC, and all other appropriate state and federal agencies for review and approval/modification. The MPO Policy Committee may also modify the final approved TIP through the TIP amendment process.

3. All projects must be prioritized by year and presented in a fiscally-constrained TIP that shows how reasonable expectations of specific financial resources will be available to implement all included projects

Projects are prioritized in the funding and implementation schedules provided in Section 6. The MPO strongly encourages continued funding of existing projects. These include projects already included in prior TIPs for any stage of development and which have federal funds obligated. These projects will be given funding priority for the next stage of their development. Additionally, prioritization is based upon the type of funding available for each project or program in the TIP, the status of the project, recommendations from management systems, and the eight SAFETEA-LU planning factors. A formal prioritization process for locally allocated STP and CMAQ projects was adopted by the EMPO Policy Committee in September 2009. The process will serve to guide future new project selection.

The MPO evaluates available federal funding sources and makes reasonable estimates of future funds based upon the current transportation bill, historical data, and in consultation with INDOT and KYTC. Section 3 provides a detailed description of available and expected funding sources.

4. All projects can be included in the final TIP only if reasonable notice is given to the public and opportunity for public comment is provided

As chronicled in Section 1, the Evansville MPO public participation program seeks to provide members of the general public with useful information regarding area transportation activities. In addition, the opportunity for public comment on these activities is just as important. The community involvement program for the *2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program* will consist of the following activities:

- A 30-day public comment period, from December 28, 2009 to January 26, 2010, was advertised in the Evansville Courier & Press, Henderson Gleaner, Our Times Newspaper, Boonville Standard and the Newburgh-Chandler Register. Copies of the draft TIP and all conformity materials were made available at the EMPO office. A comment sheet was provided along with the draft copy to simplify the comment process. In addition, the draft TIP was available for online review through the EMPO web site and in Henderson at the Office of the City Manager and at the Henderson-Henderson County Plan Commission. The draft TIP was available for review at selected area public libraries.
- The draft FY 2010-2013 TIP was available for discussion during an Open House held on January 13, 2010. The Open House date and time was advertised in conjunction with the 30-day public comment period described above. The Open House was also publicized by way of the Evansville Courier local happenings section of the newspaper on two occasions.
- Staff members from EMPO presented the draft TIP to the EMPO Technical and Policy committees for comment at their October (project listing only) and November, 2009 meetings.
- Members of the EMPO Committees were informed that the TIP was under development. The committee members were encouraged to review and comment on the program of projects and to provide the TIP program and Public Comment information to their respective groups or agencies.

5. All projects that have the ability to impact air quality must be evaluated and found to demonstrate conformity to federal air quality standards. The program of projects must collectively show improved air quality and support the area's ability to maintain national air quality standards.

Transportation conformity is an essential part of the TIP development process. Federal law requires that all transportation plans and TIPs conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for any air quality nonattainment or maintenance area. Since a SIP has not been developed for the annual PM_{2.5} standard, the interim process for demonstrating conformity to the standard is a baseline test, in which the emissions in the analysis years are compared to a baseline year – 2002 in this case. The transportation conformity process ensures that transportation projects, programs, or planning activities contribute to the goal of achieving federal air quality standards. It is through the conformity process that all prospective transportation activities are evaluated to determine their predicted effect upon air quality.

On December 9, 1997, the U.S. EPA approved IDEM's request to re-designate Vanderburgh County from a marginal one-hour ozone non-attainment area to a maintenance area.

On April 15, 2004, U.S. EPA designated Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties as a Basic non-attainment area for the new 8-hour ozone standard. Federal regulations also required a Conformity Determination for the Transportation Plan and the TIP be made within 12-months of the designation. On June 15, 2005, the U.S. EPA revoked the 1-hour ozone standard for Vanderburgh County.

On January 30, 2006, the U.S. EPA approved IDEM's request to re-designate Vanderburgh County from a Basic 8-hour ozone non-attainment area to a maintenance area. Indiana's petition includes a long-term maintenance plan that will be implemented to ensure that the area continues to meet the 8-hour standard for ground-level ozone in the future. Indiana also committed to maintain all emission control measures necessary to ensure continued compliance with the standard.

Based on air quality monitoring data gathered between 2002 and 2004, Southwest Indiana (Evansville area) was designated as a non-attainment area for the annual PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality (NAAQS) by the USEPA on April 5, 2005 (70 FR 944). The southwest Indiana PM_{2.5} non-attainment area includes the counties of Vanderburgh and Warrick in the MPO boundary area. The non-attainment area also includes a donut area adjacent to the MPO boundary comprised of Dubois County, the township of Montgomery in Gibson County, Washington Township in Pike County and Ohio Township in Spencer County.

Because Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties are classified as a maintenance area for the 8-hour ozone standard, and non-attainment for PM_{2.5} it is necessary that the EMPO 2010-2013 *Transportation Improvement Program* receive a finding of positive conformity for air quality. If a TIP is not found to be in conformity with the appropriate SIP or fail to pass the interim test for annual PM_{2.5} standard, transportation activities may be delayed or removed. The 2035 *Transportation Plan* received the finding of conformity on November 30, 2009. The 2035 Plan identifies all regionally significant projects to be completed by designated milestone years, provides the conformity analysis conducted by the EMPO and concludes that the EMPO 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, the FY 2010-2013 TIP meet all the applicable requirements for the conformity with the Ozone and annual PM_{2.5} standards. A copy of the FHWA/FTA finding of

conformity for the *2035 Transportation Plan* and the 2010-2013 TIP is included in Appendix B (to be added).

Although short-range projects such as CMAQ improvements are not included in the *2035 Transportation Plan*, all other non-exempt projects listed in the *2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program* are consistent with the *2035 Transportation Plan* and conformity analysis. CMAQ-type projects contribute to air quality in a positive manner and each project is individually evaluated for air quality effects prior to funding approval. Given this information, the *2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program* conforms to the SIP and the Transportation Conformity Regulations based upon the *2035 Transportation Plan* conformity determination. A copy of the FHWA/FTA finding of conformity for the 2010-2013 TIP is included in Appendix B.

The TIP must give priority to any transportation control measures (TCMs) that are included in the SIP. TCMs are transportation projects, programs, or planning activities that contribute to air quality improvements and the continued attainment of national air quality standards. Although the *2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program* does not utilize a TCM from the current SIP, future TCM projects will receive consideration as appropriate.

6. TIP Amendments

The TIP process is continuous and must include an instrument of change. Priority and funding adjustments are an inevitable part of the TIP process. Therefore, changes may be made to the TIP through the TIP amendment process. Amendments allow the TIP to remain a continuously updated and current planning document. A TIP amendment is made in the following situations:

- a. Significant change in scope of work or project submission or removal
- b. Significant change in project or program cost
- c. Project change that may affect air quality conformity

Once the need for an amendment is identified, the proposed amendment is discussed with the conformity review agencies to determine if a new conformity analysis will be required with the amendment. TIP amendment public participation standards are established in the adopted Evansville MPO *Public Participation Plan*. The TIP amendment, and new conformity determination if required, is then presented to the MPO Technical and Policy Committee members for review, discussion, and approval. The committee meeting agendas are distributed to the media and all meetings are open to the general public. TIP amendments must be approved by the MPO Policy Committee and submitted to INDOT & KYTC for inclusion in the Indiana and Kentucky Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs).