

# Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO)

## 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

### Overview of Transportation Planning and Programming Process

The *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)* and the federal Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule require that local and state officials work cooperatively to maintain a continuous and comprehensive long-range transportation planning program in all urbanized areas with a population of over 50,000 persons in the United States. This Federal mandate is carried out by a formal group called a "metropolitan planning organization (MPO)". SAFETEA-LU and the federal rule specify the primary roles and responsibilities of MPOs. In the Centre County, PA metropolitan area, the CCMPO is responsible for fulfilling the federal requirements.

The CCMPO periodically develops and adopts a long-range transportation plan (minimum 20 years). The Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was adopted in September 2006, and updated in 2007 to ensure full compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. The LRTP is being updated again in 2008.

Every two years, the CCMPO is responsible for developing and adopting a short-range, four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), working in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA). The Centre County TIP details the proposed expenditure of federal funds and some state capital funds for specific projects, within specified limits of financial constraint. In order to be included on the TIP, projects must also be included on the CCMPO's adopted LRTP. The CCMPO adopted the 2007-2010 Centre County TIP in July 2006, and is anticipating the adoption of the 2009-2012 TIP in July 2008. The TIP years are based on the federal fiscal year, which extends from October 1 to September 30.

The list of projects on the TIP coincides with the First Four Year segment of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Twelve Year Program (TYP), which is developed by PennDOT every two years at the same time as the TIP, and adopted by the State Transportation Commission.

In addition to SAFETEA-LU, the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 specify planning activities for MPOs, in particular for areas exhibiting air quality that is not in attainment with acceptable standards. Prior to 2004, air quality in Centre County was in attainment with the standards in the CAAA, and there were no special planning activities or processes required of the CCMPO.

However, new air quality standards that became effective in June 2004 designated Centre County as a non-attainment area for ozone. This designation requires the CCMPO to complete an Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the LRTP and TIP. Conformity analyses were completed in 2005 and 2006 to ensure that the CCMPO's current TIP and LRTP conform to the new air quality standards. Although the latest air quality measurements have enabled Centre County to be redesignated as an attainment "maintenance" area, air quality conformity analyses must still be completed for the LRTP and TIP. An Air Quality Conformity Analysis has been completed for the 2008 Update of the LRTP, and the 2009-2012 TIP.

Federal regulations also require the CCMPO to develop and adopt a Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan to help guide the distribution of federal funds from certain transit programs that serve low income individuals, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. In 2007, the CCMPO adopted an Interim Coordinated Plan, and the Plan was updated in February 2008 to ensure full compliance with federal regulations.

To facilitate citizen involvement in the development of the LRTP, TIP, and Coordinated Plan, the CCMPO adopted a new Public Participation Plan in 2007. Certain proposed plans and programs must be made available for public review during a thirty (30) day comment period. The CCMPO is also required to hold a public meeting during this comment period. An extensive list of "interested parties" has been developed, and the various agencies and individuals are notified when plans and programs are being prepared.

The CCMPO is required to maintain and update a program of activities to address Environmental Justice and Title VI regulations, to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts to areas with concentrations of low income and minority populations. Concentrations of low income and minority households have been identified and mapped based on U.S. Census 2000 data and other information provided by local agencies and organizations. A program of activities to communicate with citizens in those areas about plans and programs must also be maintained. Existing techniques will be refined, and new techniques developed on an ongoing basis to improve communication between citizens, agencies and organizations, and the CCMPO.

### **Project Selection Process for 2009-2012 Centre County TIP**

The selection of projects for the 2009-2012 Centre County TIP is based on the project priorities outlined in the Centre County LRTP. The LRTP was originally adopted in September 2006, and was updated in June 2007. A 2008 Update of the LRTP is being completed concurrent with the adoption of the 2009-2012 TIP.

The project list in the LRTP was developed in 2006 using an extensive project evaluation process involving: 1) A technical ranking based on ten criteria; and 2) Policy adjustments made by the CCMPO Coordinating Committee. Chapter V of the LRTP provides details about the technical ranking process and policy adjustments.

The 2007 and 2008 Updates of the LRTP focused on updating the bridge and public transportation project lists, as well as addressing federal Year of Expenditure (YOE) requirements for all projects. The new federal YOE requirements resulted in significant changes to the LRTP's highway project list; however, the changes involved projects in future years and did not impact highway projects on the 2009-2012 TIP.

More details are provided below.

#### **Highway Projects**

The highway projects included on the 2009-2012 TIP reflect the highest priorities for highways in the LRTP.

All of the highway projects on the 2009-2012 TIP are projects being carried forward from the 2007-2010 TIP, with the exception of the State Route (SR) 26 Section 139 Pleasant Gap Betterment project (pavement restoration). The Pleasant Gap Betterment project was originally proposed for the 2007-2010 TIP, but the project was deferred until after the Interstate 99 Acid Rock Drainage (ARD) mitigation program is completed in 2008.

## State Bridge Projects

The bridge projects included on the 2009-2012 TIP also reflect the priorities in the LRTP, based on the 2007 and 2008 Updates. The original 2006 technical project ranking for bridges was updated in 2007 to include additional bridge projects proposed by PennDOT. The projects were then included in the LRTP 2007 Update adopted in June 2007.

The approval of Pennsylvania Act 44 in July 2007 provided additional state funding for structurally deficient (SD) bridge projects. PennDOT completed a risk assessment for bridges in fall 2007, and based on the results of the assessment, proposed the addition of more state bridges to the LRTP and TIP. In 2008, policy direction from Pennsylvania's governor and legislature focused more financial resources on SD state bridges. As a result of these initiatives, the 2008 Update of the LRTP includes additional high-priority SD bridges proposed by PennDOT. The CCMPO accepted the priorities for state bridges that were proposed by PennDOT, and those priorities are reflected in the LRTP 2008 Update and 2009-2012 TIP.

## Municipal Bridge Projects

Two municipal bridge projects are included on the TIP, based on the priorities in the LRTP. Both projects are carried forward from the 2007-2010 TIP.

A local SD bridge line item is also included on the 2009-2012 TIP. The line item funding may be used to advance other high priority local bridge projects included on the LRTP. The LRTP 2008 Update included revisions to the local bridge priorities that address requests from several municipalities for assistance in rehabilitating or replacing SD local bridges.

## Transportation Enhancements Projects

The two Transportation Enhancements (TE) projects on the 2009-2012 TIP are being carried forward from the 2007-2010 TIP. The projects were prioritized by the CCMPO during the 2005 statewide application cycle, and were included on the LRTP in 2006. The projects were added to the 2007-2010 TIP in late 2007 when TE funding became available. The two projects are the last remaining projects approved by the CCMPO from previous application cycles. The projects are included on the LRTP.

## Public Transportation Projects

The 2009-2012 TIP includes several public transportation projects being carried forward from the 2007-2010 TIP, and several new projects. The projects reflect the priorities in the LRTP, based on: 1) The project prioritization utilized in 2006; 2) Priorities identified by local and county officials in the 2007 and 2008 LRTP Updates; and 3) The recommendations in the CCMPO's adopted Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan which was adopted in mid-2007 and updated in early 2008.

The LRTP 2008 Update incorporates additional funding for public transit from Pennsylvania Act 44, which has allowed the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) to expand its program for vehicle rehabilitation and replacement, and provided additional resources for restoring and expanding service. The 2008 Update also incorporates projects intended to be financed with federal funds from the Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedoms, and Section 5310 Programs. These projects are specified in the CCMPO's Coordinated Plan.

## **STAFFING AND AGENCY SUPPORT FOR TIP DEVELOPMENT**

Staff support for the CCMPO's transportation planning and programming activities is provided by the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA), CATA, Centre County Planning and Community Development Office (CCPCDO), PennDOT Engineering District 2-0 Office (Clearfield), and PennDOT Central Office (Harrisburg).

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The CCMPO website may be accessed at <http://www.ccmpos.net>

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