



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

ARIZONA DIVISION

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October 8, 2015

In Reply Refer To:
(TRAP 37 – STIP)
(727)
Arizona FY 2016-2019
Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
Planning Finding and Approval

Mr. Michael Kies, Division Director
Multimodal Planning Division
Arizona Department of Transportation, (300B)
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Mr. Kies:

We have completed our review of the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT) 2016-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as requested in your letter delivered to our office on September 9, 2015.

To approve the STIP document, including Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) contained by reference or directly in the STIP, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration must make a determination that each metropolitan TIP is based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. In addition, we are required to issue a Planning Finding documenting the extent that all the projects in the STIP are based on a planning process in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134, 135, 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304, and 23 CFR 450. This letter is the documented joint STIP approval and Planning Finding for Arizona's FY 2015-2018 STIP, and all the incorporated TIPs for the following metropolitan areas: Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), Pima Association of Governments (PAG), Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO), Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO) and Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO). Also included are the rural Council of Government (COG) TIPs: Northern Arizona Council of Governments, Western Arizona Council of Governments, Southeastern Arizona Government Organization, and Central Arizona Governments which have been reviewed jointly with the STIP along with the Sun Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization Listing of Transportation Projects. Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization (LHMPO) and Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO) projects are currently included in the respective COGs for their region until they develop Long Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs in early 2016.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

The previous Planning Finding on the FY 2015-2018 STIP was issued on November 25, 2014 and contained no corrective actions. Following our review of the FY 2016-2019 STIP, no corrective actions are being issued at this time.

PLANNING PROCESS OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

The following areas of the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes have been identified for improvement.

The STIP

- 23 CFR 450.216 requires that financial constraint of the STIP shall be demonstrated and maintained by year. Upon review of the STIP, we believe this area can be improved in the next STIP. Revenue should be identified by funding type and not all lumped together as Federal funds. It is our understanding that Financial Management Services is working on improving this process. We would be happy to assist in any way we can to improve on this very critical element in the STIP.
- Now that the e-STIP is operational, we would like to encourage ADOT to work with MPOs and COGs to implement features of this system and to explore opportunities to streamline the STIP/TIP process. In addition, we would like ADOT to explore the potential for electronic approval of amendments through the e-STIP.
- MAP-21 requires that State DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) self-certify compliance with various Federal Laws including American's with Disability Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We would like to encourage ADOT staff (planning and civil rights) to work with the MPOs to ensure these requirements are being met since this has become an FHWA emphasis area.

CYMPO TIP

- 23 CFR 450.324 requires that the TIP shall include financial information containing system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways. The TIP only shows a few maintenance projects. The TIP should reflect maintenance costs for all of the member agency jurisdictions.
- 23 CFR 450.328 and 450.334 require that the MPO self-certify that they are addressing the major issues in the metropolitan planning area and are in accordance with Federal Planning Laws and Regulations. CYMPO met the requirement to issue a self-certification by submitting the document to our office in writing. It is our recommendation that this document be included in the TIP. All of the other MPOs already do this.

FMPO TIP

- None.

MAG TIP

- None.

PAG TIP

- None.

YMPO TIP

Since YMPO continues to use the FY 2014-2018 TIP, two comments from the previous planning finding are carried forward to this planning finding.

- 23 CFR 450.332 requires that an annual listing of obligated projects from the previous year be published. The easiest way to meet this requirement is to include it in the TIP.
- 23 CFR 450.324 requires that the TIP shall include financial information to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation. The TIP contains FY 2014 information only. Since YMPO doesn't update the TIP annually, this information should be provided for each of the four years in the TIP.

New MPOs

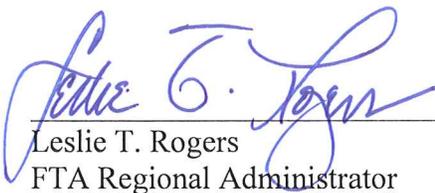
- SCMPO, LHMPO and SVMPO should have adopted Long Range Transportation Plans and TIPs in place by March 2016. Each of these MPOs should be taking steps to ensure they can meet this date.

2015-2018 STIP Approval and Planning Finding

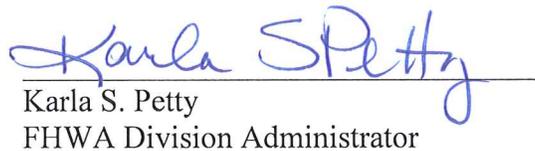
Accordingly, the FHWA and the FTA, based on the State DOT and MPO(s) self-certifications of their statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes, review of self-certification supporting documentation, Federal certification of Transportation Management Areas within the State, and our involvement in the State and MPO transportation planning processes, hereby approve the 2015-2018 STIP and find that the 2015-2018 STIP is based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of 23 U.S.C. Sections 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C. Sections 5303-5305, and 23 CFR 450. Our Planning Finding includes the entire State of Arizona.

As usual, individual project approvals will require a separate action by the FHWA or FTA and the projects will need to satisfy all program requirements at that time of authorization.

Sincerely yours,



Leslie T. Rogers
FTA Regional Administrator



Karla S. Petty
FHWA Division Administrator

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