

Southern Alleghenies Rural Planning Organization
2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program
Project Prioritization and Selection Process

The federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act legislation and the federal Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule (Title 23 U.S.C. Section 34 and Title 49 U.S.C. Section 1607) 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)." The FAST Act also recognizes the designation of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to carry out these processes outside of urbanized areas. The FAST Act and the federal rule specify the primary roles and responsibilities of MPOs and RTPOs. Southern Alleghenies is the Rural Transportation Planning Organization responsible for fulfilling these federal requirements in the Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties.

Every two years, Pennsylvania's MPO and RPO Planning Partners, including Southern Alleghenies work in partnership with PennDOT, local transit providers, and area local officials to identify priority transportation needs and develop a new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to address these needs over the next four-year period.

The TIP details the planned expenditure of federal funds and state capital funds for specific programs and projects, within specified limits of fiscal constraint. In order to be included on the TIP, programs and projects must be included on the Southern Alleghenies 2041 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or addressed through reserve line items included on the 2041 LRTP. 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 and adopted by the State Transportation Commission (STC) every two years, at the same time as the TIP.

Southern Alleghenies RPO works to educate the public on transportation programs and encourages interested citizens to participate in the STC public involvement process. The public is notified of the opportunity to provide input via the STC Twelve Year Program update outreach processes, and the Planning Partners review public feedback compiled by the STC. Southern Alleghenies also regularly solicits public input on transportation priorities through public meetings, press releases, comment forms on websites, and other methods.

Project Selection:

Projects in the TIP address a variety of transportation modes, including improvements to roadways, bridges, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rail freight facilities and airports. In recent years, system maintenance has required a growing share of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's limited resources. Consequently, the TIP places high priority on projects that rehabilitate, reconstruct, and renew the existing and aging transportation infrastructure. Fiscal constraints also mean that very few new projects

are typically added to the TIP during each update. Consideration for all new projects on the TIP is initiated through the PennDOT Connects municipal and public involvement processes.

The projects selected for inclusion on the 2019-2022 TIP, which were not carryovers from the previous TIP, are consistent with PennDOT's "Transportation Investment Plan." The purpose of the Transportation Investment Plan is to make ongoing assessments and to reevaluate the data associated with the transportation decision-making process by ensuring that each dollar invested is being directed in a fashion that meets a "strategic direction" and that enhances the overall "performance" of the Commonwealth's transportation system. The Investment Plan focuses on the following four priority areas:

- Bridges on the National Highway System (NHS)
- Roadway conditions on the NHS
- Bridges on the remainder of the roadway system
- Roadway conditions on the remainder of the system

In addition, projects are also programmed from the following sources:

- Project priorities and line items specified in the Southern Alleghenies 2041 LRTP
- Recommendations in the Southern Alleghenies Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan and from the regional transit providers, Somerset County Transportation System, and the Huntingdon, Bedford, Fulton Area Agency on Aging
- RPO counties' priorities solicited from municipal and county stakeholders
- Project priorities committed to as part of the Decade of Investment (DOI) list generated during consideration of Pennsylvania transportation legislation known as Act 89
- Safety needs identified PennDOT District 9, the RPO, RPO counties, and municipal stakeholders

Meetings are also held with PennDOT District 9 and county planning staff to review candidate lists of projects for possible inclusion in the TIP, considering previous public involvement and undertaking a consistency check with LRTPs and with local/county priorities. The project priorities and essential project information are compiled in the Draft TIP documentation made available to the public as part of a 30-day public comment period before adoption by the Southern Alleghenies RPO

Roadway Projects

District 9 updates its roadway inventories annually, which is used to update the Roadway Management System (RMS). This information is then used to update the District's Roadway "5Year Plan" process, where roadway needs are assessed and planned utilizing cycles that follow PennDOT's Pavement Policy Manual. Utilizing this Plan, projects are then funded on the TIP/TYP. Factors for which projects are picked from the 5-Year Plan are: projects on the Decade of Investment (DOI) plan that still need to be constructed; fulfillment of and maintaining acceptable levels on the scorecard of influence; hierarchy (Business Plan Network) of the roadway (i.e., Interstate gets more preference than a 4-digit state route); current roadway conditions; and the next needed pavement treatment cycle.

Bridge Projects

Replacements:

1. The current SD population and the condition 5 population are evaluated
2. Prioritization by Business Plan Network: Interstate top priority and Non-NHS with less than 2,000 ADT lowest priority

3. Consider roadway projects to determine if we can combine the bridge replacements with the roadway projects
4. Evaluate if Department Forces can possibly complete the work

Rehabilitations:

Rehabilitations use the same logic as replacements but are usually on bridges where the condition ratings can be raised to a 6 or greater for all three major bridge components (substructures, superstructures and deck).

Preservation:

1. Rely on cycles for each preservation treatment:
 - a. 10 to 20-year cycle for deck overlays (depends on type of overlay and traffic volumes)
 - b. 10-year replacement cycle for expansion dam strip seal glands
 - c. 15-year replacement cycle for tooth dam expansion troughs
 - d. 50 to 75-year cycle to replace entire expansion dams
 - e. 30 to 40-year cycle for painting steel girder bridges
 - f. 15 to 20-year cycle for painting steel trusses and steel through plate girders
2. Most of the deck and joint preservations are included with roadway projects on Business Plan Networks 1 to 3
3. Standalone group bridge preservation projects are established for:
 - a. Painting projects
 - b. To get bridges on cycle when no roadway projects are planned
 - c. To address Business Plan Network 4 when Department Forces cannot complete the work
 - d. Scour or substructure repairs
4. Prioritize by Business Plan Network and by the highest cost assets (major river crossings)

Local Bridges:

Through a RPO wide solicitation process, local bridge needs and priorities are prioritized by their respective counties. The RPO then compiles these priorities and submits them to District 9 for analysis against the Local Bridge Risk Assessment. The Rural Transportation Technical Committee's Local Bridge Sub-Committee reviews the county priorities and then submits a RPO local bridge priority list from which District 9 programs projects in priority order, until available funds are consumed.

Other Projects

The 2019-2022 Southern Alleghenies TIP may also include funds for several projects that received funding from programs allocated on a statewide basis, including the following:

- Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside
- Appalachian Regional Commission Local Access Road Program
- Automated Red Light Enforcement and Green Light-Go Programs
- Multimodal Transportation Fund
- Congested Corridor Improvement Program
- Rapid Bridge Replacement Program (P3)
- Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Program (RRX)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Statewide Set-aside

As new projects are successful in obtaining funding through these programs, Southern Alleghenies RPO will consider adding the projects to the approved TIP.

Safety Projects

Southern Alleghenies RPO Performance Targets:

Federal safety performance measures were implemented in 2016. PennDOT established Statewide Targets in August 2017. On December 8, 2017, the Southern Alleghenies RPO adopted supporting Pennsylvania’s Statewide Safety Performance Measure Targets. The following shows the CY 2018 Statewide Targets established based on 2% reduction of five-year average (2014-2018) and aggregated supporting regional Southern Alleghenies RPO Targets:

| Safety Performance Measure | Baseline (2012-2016) | Statewide Target (2014-2018) | Southern Alleghenies RPO Target (2014-2018) |
|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Number of fatalities | 1,220.2 | 1,177.6 | 36.2 |
| Rate of fatalities per 100 million VMT | 1.220 | 1.161 | 1.338 |
| Number of serious injuries | 3,434.0 | 3,799.8 | 80.6 |
| Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT | 3.433 | 3.746 | 2.978 |
| Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries | 602.4 | 654.4 | 7.8 |

The Southern Alleghenies 2019-2022 TIP includes roadway safety improvement projects that are intended to help improve the performance of the roadway system relative to the five federal safety performance measures. The following has helped to ensure planned HSIP projects in the Southern Alleghenies RPO achieve a significant reduction of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads:

- Implementing the strategies in the 2017 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) through a data driven safety analysis, and the utilization of low-cost safety improvements system-wide support achieving these reductions
- Projects are being planned and completed that were associated with the Intersection Safety Implementation Plan (ISIP) and Roadway Departure Safety Implementation Plan (RDIP)
- Conducting the PennDOT Connects process, with PennDOT District 9, for all planned projects and for candidate projects

Public Transportation Projects

The TIP includes public transportation projects and line items being carried forward from the previous 2017-2020 TIP and with input by the Bureau of Public Transportation. The transit projects reflect the priorities established by:

1. The project prioritization process for the Southern Alleghenies 2041 LRTP
2. The recommendations in the Southern Alleghenies Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan
3. The priorities expressed by Somerset County Transportation system and the Huntingdon, Bedford, Fulton Area Agency on Aging
4. PennDOT's Capital Planning Tool