

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Guidance Document**

**Prepared by:
Capital Region Transportation Council TIP Task Force**



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TIP Task Force

The Capital Region Transportation Council (the Transportation Council) TIP Task Force was initiated with the purpose of engaging Transportation Council Planning Committee members in discussions on how the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) update process and TIP management procedures can be improved. The primary goal of the Task Force was to develop a TIP Policy Document that recommends improvements to how the TIP is developed and managed. The approved policy document will empower Transportation Council staff to prepare updates to the TIP application, evaluation, and programming processes in accordance with recommendations established by the TIP Task Force. This document will be brought to the Planning Committee for review and approval to be implemented in subsequent updates of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and TIP.

The Task Force met four times from December 2022 through June 2023 to debrief on the 2022 – 2027 TIP process and review existing TIP management practices. The following Transportation Council members and staff participated in the TIP Task Force.

Name	Organization
Sandra Misiewicz	Capital Region Transportation Council
Jacob Beeman	Capital Region Transportation Council
Andrew Tracy	Capital Region Transportation Council
Greg Wichser	NYS DOT Region 1
Randy Milano	NYS DOT Region 1
Kim Lambert	Saratoga County
Steve Feeney*	Schenectady County
Lisa Ramundo	Albany County
John Scavo	Town of Clifton Park
Susan Barden	City of Saratoga Springs
Andrew Kreshik	City of Troy
William Trudeau	City of Albany
Chris Wallin	City of Schenectady
Michael Williams	CDTA

**Chair, Capital Region Transportation Council Planning Committee*

What is the TIP?

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the 5-year capital program of federally funded transportation projects for the Capital Region Transportation Council (the Transportation Council) planning area. As required by 23 CFR § 450.326, Title 23, U.S.C. § 134, and Title 49 U.S.C. § 5303,

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in cooperation with state departments of transportation (i.e. NYSDOT) and regional public transportation operators (i.e. CDTA). The TIP should support the priorities included in the regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan (New Visions 2050) and be updated at least every four (4) years and be approved by the MPO and the Governor¹.

23 CFR § 450.326 requires that the TIP must:

- ◆ Provide the opportunity for public input.
- ◆ Support progress towards statewide performance targets.
- ◆ Contain Regionally Significant projects regardless of if they use federal funding or not.
- ◆ Contain descriptive information on each project phase including logical termini, project length, cost, responsible agency, etc.
- ◆ Contain a financial plan that demonstrates how the approved TIP can be implemented.

The Transportation Council's goal is to produce a "balanced" TIP that contributes to implementation of the New Visions 2050 Plan and meets both the letter and spirit of federal regulations.

Eligible Applicants

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), Counties, Cities, Towns, Villages and other public entities within the Transportation Council planning area are eligible to apply for TIP funding.

Federal Funding Programs and Eligibility

The 2025 – 2030 TIP will contain all projects in the Transportation Council planning area that are expected to use federal funding in federal fiscal years (FFY)² 2025 through FFY 2030. All candidates must be eligible for at least one of the fund sources being programmed.

In general, projects eligible for the TIP include, pavement and bridge preservation, maintenance, and construction / reconstruction, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure preservation, maintenance, and construction / reconstruction, intersection improvements, ITS infrastructure improvements, etc. Additionally, for pavement projects, federal funds cannot be used on roads functionally classified as 8, 9, and 19. To determine the functional classification of a specific road visit the NYSDOT Functional Classification viewer webpage³.

¹ Refer to 23 CFR § 450.326 for more information on TIP development and requirements. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-1/subchapter-E/part-450#450.326>

² The Federal Fiscal Year begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. The FFY is designated by the calendar year in which it ends (i.e. FFY25 begins October 1, 2025, and ends September 30, 2025)

³ NYSDOT Functional Classification Viewer: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/gisapps/functional-class-maps>

The following formula funds in the core Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) programs serve as the basis for project programming in the TIP:

- ◆ National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- ◆ Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STP - Flexible and Large Urban funds)⁴
- ◆ Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- ◆ Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)⁵
- ◆ FTA Section 5307
- ◆ FTA Section 5339

The TIP may also include federal fund sources that are not part of the core funding programmed during the TIP update process including, but not limited to:

- ◆ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- ◆ Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- ◆ Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- ◆ National Highway Freight Program (NHFP)

Additional information on federal funding programs and TIP fund sources can be found in the following sections and on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Guidance and Regulations webpage⁶.

National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)

The purpose of the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) is to provide support for the condition and performance of the National Highway System (NHS); to provide support for the construction of new facilities on the NHS; to ensure that investments of Federal-aid funds in highway construction are directed to support progress toward the achievement of performance targets established in a State's asset management plan for the NHS; and to provide support for activities to increase the resiliency of the NHS to mitigate the cost of damages from sea level rise, extreme weather events, flooding, wildfires, or other natural disasters. For a full list of NHPP eligible activities see the [FHWA NHPP Fact Sheet](#).

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) promotes flexibility in State and local transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address a variety of State and local transportation needs. For a full list of STBG eligible activities see the [FHWA STBG Fact Sheet](#).

⁴ Suballocated directly to the Capital Region Transportation Council as per [23 U.S.C. 133(d)(1)(A)(i) and (d)(4)]

⁵ Suballocated directly to the Capital Region Transportation Council as per [23 U.S.C. 175(e)(1)(A)(i) and (e)(3)]

⁶ Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Guidance & Regulations: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/guidance.cfm>

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The purpose of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads and roads on tribal land. The HSIP requires a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads that focuses on performance. For a full list of HSIP eligible activities please see the [FHWA HSIP Fact Sheet](#).

The Transportation Council received a \$1.2 million Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant and is preparing a regional Vision Zero Safety Action Plan. This plan will use a data-driven process to identify the best possible safety projects in our region. As such, available HSIP funding in the 2025 – 2030 TIP solicitation will be reserved for a separate HSIP solicitation open to state and local applicants at the conclusion of the SS4A study in 2025. Each TIP candidate project will still be evaluated for potential safety benefits regardless of project type. **(Pending approval by Transportation Council Policy Board)**

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)

The Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) provides funds for projects designed to reduce transportation emissions (carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions) from on-road highway sources. For a full list of eligible CRP eligible activities see the [FHWA CRP Fact Sheet](#).

If you have any questions regarding your project's eligibility, contact Andrew Tracy or Jacob Beeman of the Transportation Council staff by email to info@capitalmpo.org or by phone (518-458-2161) before submitting a project application.

TIP Project Categories

Transportation Council staff has worked closely with the TIP Task force to develop six (6) project categories that will be used to group candidate projects. Each project category has its own unique evaluation criteria that will be used to score and rank projects in each category. It is important for sponsors to understand the type of project being proposed before submitting an application, as each online application is designed for a specific project type. Review the following project types for descriptions, examples, and general scoring methodology for each project category.

Pavement Only

Eligible projects include all pavement preservation, rehabilitation, and construction / reconstruction activities that **do not incorporate** bicycle and pedestrian elements. Example projects include pavement overlay, mill and fill, in-place recycling, and reconstruction techniques. Projects may include improvements to drainage, slope stability etc.

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Pavement Only" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Projects in the Pavement Only category support the federal Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measure (PM2) and may support the federal HSIP and Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Complete Streets

Eligible projects include all pavement preservation, rehabilitation, and construction / reconstruction activities **that also incorporate** bicycle and pedestrian elements. Example projects include pavement overlay, mill and fill, in-place recycling, and reconstruction techniques that are associated with active transportation infrastructure improvements (i.e. adjacent sidewalk installation, repair or replacement, bike lane installation, repair, or replacement).

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Complete Streets" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Projects in the Complete Streets category support the federal Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measure (PM2) and may support the federal HSIP and Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Bridge

Eligible projects include bridge preservation and or reconstruction work. Example projects include element specific bridge repairs, bridge rehabilitations, and bridge replacements and combinations of bridge improvements and active transportation infrastructure improvements (i.e. adjacent sidewalk installation, repair or replacement, bike lane installation, repair, or replacement).

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Bridge" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Projects in the Bridge category support the federal Pavement and Bridge Condition Performance Measure (PM2) and may support the federal HSIP and Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Bike and Ped Only

Eligible projects include on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and non-motorized transportation users. Example projects include the installation, repair, or replacement of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths. **Only use this category if the proposed project does not include improvements to adjacent pavement infrastructure.**

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Bike and Ped Only" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Projects in the Bike and Ped Only category support the federal System Performance / Freight / CMAQ (PM3) measures and may support the federal HSIP and Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Congestion, Freight, and Air Quality

Eligible projects must support strategies identified in the Transportation Council Congestion Management Process (CMP) (i.e. ITS, TSMO, Access Management, Roadway Capacity), on-road freight and air quality improvements, and Alternative Fuel Vehicle Infrastructure. Example projects include intersection improvements (including dedicated turn lanes and roundabouts), ITS projects, traffic signal upgrades or optimization, access management improvements, demand management projects, intermodal freight projects, electric vehicle charging, and more.

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Congestion, Freight, and Air Quality" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Projects in the Congestion, Freight, and Air Quality category support the federal System Performance / Freight / CMAQ (PM3) measures and may support the federal HSIP and Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Other

Example projects include PEL (Planning-Environmental Linkage) studies and all other projects that may not fit within the previous categories.

Candidate projects will be scored based on the detailed "Other" methodology found in **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

TIP Project Evaluation Criteria

Transportation Council staff will review each TIP project application received for completeness and will contact applicants if additional information is needed. Staff will evaluate each project on a 100-point scale using the evaluation methodology described above. The evaluations will be provided to the Planning Committee and Policy Board for their reference to guide TIP project selection. Projects are judged only against other projects within the same category.

For the full scoring criteria used for each project category, refer to **Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria**.

Benefit-Cost

Quantitative benefit-to-cost ratios are calculated for each Pavement, Complete Streets, and Bridge project. The Transportation Council STEP (Systematic Transportation Evaluation and Planning) Model is used to estimate the annual transportation benefits provided by each proposed roadway and bridge investment. The model takes into account facility usage and all available detours. For projects with proposed safety countermeasures, the annual crash reduction benefit is estimated using the NYSDOT CLEAR (Crash Location & Engineering Analysis & Reporting) system. The project cost is annualized over

the anticipated service life of the project. The benefit-to-cost ratio is then calculated by dividing the total annual project benefits by the annualized cost.

Project Benefits

For the Bike/Ped Only and Congestion Freight and Air Quality categories, a qualitative assessment of project benefits is prepared and converted to a numerical score. For Bike/Ped Only projects, the Project Benefits score is comprised of three components: cost-effectiveness, market potential (an order-of-magnitude estimate of the usage of the proposed facility), and safety. For Congestion, Freight & Air Quality projects, the Projects Benefit score considers project consistency with relevant plan goals and strategies as well as project cost-effectiveness.

Merit Scores

All projects will be scored using a set of merit scores. The merit scores capture project benefits that may not be considered in the benefit-cost evaluation, such as: project readiness, freight impact, security and resiliency, equity and environmental justice, and more. Each project category is assigned a set of merit scores relevant to that project type.

For a full description of each merit score criterion, refer to Appendix A: TIP Project Evaluation Criteria.

Project Applications

To apply for TIP funding, applicants will complete an online application form on the Transportation Council's TIP webpage. There is a different application for each of the six project categories. The online applications use the Jotform platform. Note that Jotform does not allow users to have more than one application in-progress at a time. Applicants need to complete and submit an application before beginning the next. Each application will require information relating to the project scope, schedule, and cost, as well as additional information needed for project evaluation.

Before beginning the application, applicants will need the following:

- **Required:** Signed cover letter from chief elected official or equivalent committing the sponsor to the project and the local match requirement.
- **Required (only if applicant is not owner of the facility):** Letter of support from facility owner.
- (Optional) Consultant agreement or resolution if a consultant has already been hired.
- (Optional) Signed letter from consultant describing project impacts and potential mitigations, if preliminary design has progressed far enough to identify.
- (Optional) Any additional supporting documents.

Questions regarding the application may be directed to Andrew Tracy or Jacob Beeman of the Transportation Council staff by email to info@capitalmpo.org or by phone (518-458-2161).

Project Programming and Approval

Once all project applications have been submitted, Transportation Council staff will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of all new candidate projects based on the scoring criteria outlined in the previous sections of this document. Transportation Council staff will create project fact sheets for each project that include important project information and summary tables for each project category that rank projects from highest to lowest total score. **Project scores are only used to guide the final project selection by the Planning Committee and the Policy Board and do not determine which projects are awarded funding.** Using the project fact sheets and summary tables as guidance, the Planning Committee will meet (likely multiple times) to select projects proposed for addition to the TIP and recommend a Draft TIP to the Policy Board for approval.

Once a Draft TIP has been recommended by the Planning Committee it must be approved by the Policy Board to be released for a minimum 25-day public review process. During the public review period Transportation Council staff will perform Air Quality Conformity analysis and public outreach activities to educate the public on the TIP process and gather comments on recommended projects⁷. If necessary, changes may be made to the Draft TIP based on public comments. The Planning Committee will meet to recommend the Final TIP to the Policy Board, and the Policy Board will meet to approve the Final TIP. Once approved, the Transportation Council TIP will be entered into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) where it will go through another public review process before becoming the “current TIP” on October 1, 2025.

⁷ Capital Region Transportation Council Public Participation Plan:
https://www.capitalmpo.org/images/othercdtcproducts/2024_Public_Participation_Plan.pdf

TIP Update Timeline

