



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

ARIZONA DIVISION

December 10, 2007

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In Reply Refer To:
HPR-AZ

(727)
Arizona FY 2008-2011
Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
Approval

2007 DEC 26 AM 7:58

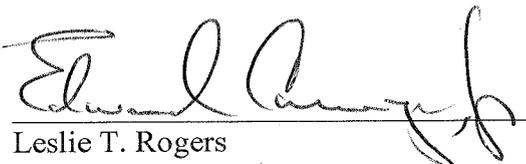
Mr. Victor M. Mendez, Director
Arizona Department of Transportation, (100A)
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

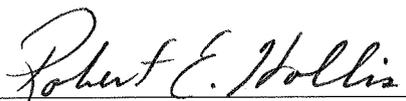
Dear Mr. Mendez:

We have completed our review of the Arizona Department of Transportation's 2008-2011 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The FHWA and FTA find that the 2008-2011 STIP is based on transportation planning processes that substantially meet the requirements of 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and 135 and 49 U.S.C. Sections 5303-5305. This finding is based on: the self-certifications of the statewide and MPO planning process by the State of Arizona and respective metropolitan planning organizations; a review of the self-certification supporting documentation; the federal certification of planning processes in designated transportation management areas in Arizona; and, other federal involvement in the State and metropolitan transportation planning processes. Our 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.

For 
Leslie T. Rogers
FTA Regional Administrator


Robert E. Hollis
FHWA Division Administrator

Enclosure

FHWA/FTA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FINDING

Introduction/Background

To approve the STIP document, including TIP's 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, this Planning Finding is based upon the extent that all the projects in the STIP are based on a planning process in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134, 135, and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5305. This is the documented Planning Finding for Arizona's FY 2008-2011 STIP, and all the incorporated TIP's for the following metropolitan areas: Maricopa Association of Governments (Phoenix), Pima Association of Governments (Tucson), Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (Yuma), Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (Flagstaff) and Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (Prescott). Also included are the rural Council of Government TIP's: Northern Arizona Council of Governments, Western Arizona Council of Governments, SouthEastern Arizona Government Organization, and Central Arizona Association of Governments.

PLANNING PROCESS OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

The following strengths of the statewide and metropolitan planning processes have been identified:

- All of the planning organizations including ADOT meet the four year project listing requirement of SAFETEA-LU.
- The majority of the planning organizations including ADOT have updated their public participation plans to SAFETEA-LU standards. FMPO is currently in the final phase of updating their public participation plan.
- The majority of the planning organizations have SAFETEA-LU compliant Long Range Plans and TIP's. FMPO is currently working on a new Long Range Plan that will be developed under SAFETEA-LU standards. They have been put on notice that no TIP amendments will be allowed until the Long Range Plan is SAFETEA-LU compliant.

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

- Ensure that the TIP's and Long Range Plans all incorporate Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars. We have elected not to require that the current TIP's be brought to YOE standard by December 11th to process any future TIP amendments. It has been decided that this is a burdensome requirement with no real benefits to force MPO's to redo all TIP's. The YOE requirement will be implemented through the natural course of the next TIP development cycle.
- Ensure that the TIP's incorporate maintenance and operations funding for expenditures by local agencies with local funds.

The following suggestions are offered for enhancing the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes:

- To adhere to SAFETEA-LU, ensure that land management, environmental and natural resource agency stakeholders are consulted with during the planning process and that this consultation is documented.
- To adhere to SAFETEA-LU, ensure that safety and freight continue to be considered during the planning process.

The following are outstanding Corrective Actions/Recommendations requiring follow up:

- None at this time

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 TMA's within the State, and our involvement in the State and MPO transportation planning processes, hereby find that the STIP is based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of 23 U.S.C. Sections 134 and 135 and 49 U.S.C. Sections 5303-5305.

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Transit Administration



Signature



Signature

Robert E. Hollis

For Leslie T. Rogers

Printed Name

Printed Name

Division Administrator

Regional Administrator Region 9

Title

Title

December 10, 2007

12/12/07

Date

Date