



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

**ARIZONA DIVISION**

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March 5, 2014

In Reply Refer To:  
(727)  
Arizona FY 2014-2017  
Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)  
Planning Finding and Approval  
HPM-AZ

Mr. Joseph S. Omer, Director  
Multimodal Planning Division  
Arizona Department of Transportation, (300B)  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Mr. Omer:

We have completed our review of the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT) 2014-2017 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as requested in your December 4, 2013 letter. This review also includes the recently approved Maricopa Association of Governments FY 2014-18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Sun Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization Listing of Transportation Projects. We delayed approval of the STIP until the conformity finding was made on these inclusions since MAG has not done a new TIP since the substantive Planning Finding of February 24, 2011 and three years have elapsed since those comments were issued.

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 2014-2017 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.

**CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

The previous Planning Finding on the FY 2013-2016 STIP was issued on January 18, 2013. As part of the current review, an in depth review of corrective actions from the previous March 24,

2011 Planning Findings along with the January, 18 2013 Planning Findings was conducted. We are very pleased with the improvements made in this STIP submittal and have determined the proposed STIP substantially addresses the previous findings.

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 revenue and cost estimates for the STIP must use an inflation rate to reflect “year of expenditure” dollars. We have determined by consultation with ADOT that the STIP complies with this requirement but no mention is made of this in the document. A statement that the STIP is reflected in “year of expenditure” dollars should be included in the next 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 needs to be improved in the next STIP. Revenue should be identified by funding type and not all lumped together as Federal funds.

#### **CYMPO TIP**

- The adoption date for the TIP should be shown on the cover.
- 23 CFR 450.324 requires that the TIP shall include for each project the total project cost inclusive of all phases.
- 23 CFR 450.324 requires that revenue and cost estimates for the TIP must use an inflation rate to reflect “year of expenditure” dollars. In the TIP, reference should be made that the TIP reflects this requirement.

#### **FMPO TIP**

- 23 CFR 450.324 requires that the TIP includes a self-certification. The self-certification is included with the TIP but is missing the ADOT signature.

#### **MAG TIP**

- None.

#### **PAG TIP**

- None.

#### **YMPO TIP**

- 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 all regionally significant projects regardless of funding source are included in the TIP. This is also a requirement for air quality conformity purposes. The current YMPO TIP doesn't have a list of regionally significant projects.

**COG TIPs**

- 23 CFR 450.216 requires that the STIP demonstrates financial constraint. This requirement has not been met for the COGs. Each of the four COGs should develop a simple STP and HSIP expenditure tracking table. FMPO and PAG have good examples in there TIPs.
- 23 CFR 450.216 requires that revenue and cost estimates for the STIP must use an inflation rate to reflect “year of expenditure” dollars. Each of the COGs should add a reference to the project tables that the table reflects “year of expenditure” dollars.

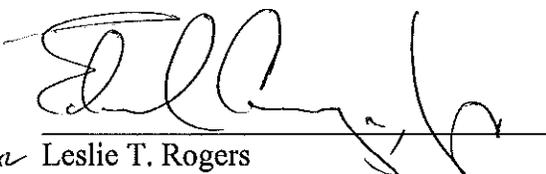
**2014-2017 STIP Approval and Planning Finding**

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 2014-2017 STIP and find that the 2014-2017 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.

It is our understanding that the electronic e-STIP will go online in the very near future and we are looking forward to working closely with ADOT, the MPOs and COGs to implement this system.

Sincerely yours,

  
 For Leslie T. Rogers  
 FTA Regional Administrator

  
 for Karla S. Petty  
 FHWA Division Administrator