

CHAPTER 1: **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE TIP**

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is pleased to present the Draft Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for New Jersey (FY24–FY27). DVRPC and its member governments have worked diligently to prepare a program of projects that will respond to the needs of the region and at the same time comply with federal and state policies. The TIP is the regionally agreed upon-list of priority transportation projects, and federal law requires showing at least four federal FYs of programming. This document, referred to as the Draft DVRPC FY2024 TIP for New Jersey, includes cost, phase, and schedule information for transportation projects in each of the federal fiscal years FY24–27 for Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer Counties. The Draft TIP meets the federal requirements of being financially constrained to a level of funding that is expected to be available to the region over the next decade, per Financial Tables provided by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). See Appendix B: Financial Tables Used in Developing the Program, Including the Draft Statewide TIP (STIP) Introduction for further details on this guidance.

The Draft DVRPC FY2024 TIP for New Jersey contains 146 projects to advance over the First-Four Years (FY24–FY27): 86 federally-funded projects and one (1) STATE-DVRPC funded project in the DVRPC regional Highway Program and 59 projects (37 by NJ TRANSIT and 22 by the DRPA/PATCO) in the DVRPC regional Transit Program. The programmed amount for these projects over the next four years totals \$2.226 billion, which averages almost \$557 million per year. Programmed funds include \$1.351 billion for projects primarily addressing the highway system and nearly \$878 million for the NJ TRANSIT (about \$761 million) and DRPA/PATCO (about \$113 million) transit systems. For information purposes only, the TIP lists 108 NJDOT-managed statewide highway programs for the State of New Jersey that are worth \$984.227 million (primarily state-funded) over the first four years. Eight (8) NJDOT-sponsored Concept Development and three (3) DVRPC Local Concept Development projects, totaling 11 projects, are displayed in the “pre-TIP” Study and Development Program.

1.1 The TIP and Federal Requirements

The TIP is a requirement of federal transportation legislation, which is currently the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), or Public Law 117-58, also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” (BIL). The IIJA or BIL was signed into law on November 15, 2021, and is set to expire on September 30, 2026. It provides funding for investment in infrastructure over federal fiscal years 2022 to 2026. Prior to the IIJA/BIL, the TIP was a requirement of legislation under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, or Public Law 114-94. The IIJA/BIL built on the initiatives established in previous legislation: the FAST Act; Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21); the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21); and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). Transportation investment has been prescribed in a balanced approach through a guaranteed commitment to highways and bridges, public transit, safety, intermodal projects, advanced technologies, and operational improvements like Transportation Systems Management and Operations.

1.2 What This Document Includes

The complete Draft TIP document is divided into multiple sections. Included is a general overview of the TIP and the TIP development process, intended to familiarize readers with what the TIP is and is not, how it was developed, and what can be expected for projects in the TIP. The document also contains various summaries of the New Jersey programs; a description of the TIP public involvement process, including issues relating to Environmental Justice; and an explanation of project maps, project listings, and codes and abbreviations included in the document. This reference information is followed by web-based project maps and indices, and finally the project listings themselves.

There are eight appendices in this document: (A) Acknowledgement of Board Resolutions; (B) Financial Tables Used In Developing the Draft Program, Including the Draft Statewide TIP (STIP) Introduction; (C) Acknowledgement of the Executive Summary of the Documentation of the Conformity Finding; (D) Memorandum of Understanding on Procedures to Amend and Modify the TIP; (E) DVRPC Local Program; (F) DVRPC TIP Project Benefit Evaluation Criteria, (G) Environmental Justice Appendix, (H) Acknowledgement of the Summary of the TIP Public Involvement Process, Public Comments, Agency Responses, and List of Recommended Changes. Note that appendices A, C, and H in this Draft TIP document are intentionally left blank (“Acknowledgements”) until DVRPC Board adoption and printing of the Final TIP document.

1.3 Various Methods to Access the TIP

The Internet

The TIP is found on the DVRPC website, where it is easy to search for the Draft FY2024 TIP for New Jersey and previous TIPs. The website includes an interactive method for displaying maps and project listings, as well as a way to submit comments during the public comment period. Using Google Maps as a base, projects can be located using either street grid or aerial views. To access the DVRPC TIP website, go to www.dvrpc.org/TIP.



DVRPC has provided the ability to use the QR Code (Quick Response Code) symbol to access the TIP website using your smartphone. Smartphone users with a QR Reader Application can open the application, point the camera at the QR Code symbol, and the smartphone will open up directly to the DVRPC TIP webpage. The DVRPC TIP QR Code symbol is shown here. Scan the QR code with your smartphone for up-to-date information on DVRPC’s TIP, or visit www.dvrpc.org/TIP

DVRPC Office and Public Libraries

Hardcopies of the Draft TIP are available at various public libraries listed within Table 1 of this document and in the reception area of DVRPC’s office, located on the 8th floor of 190 North Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA 19106. A web link to the digital version of the TIP is available at www.dvrpc.org/TIP.

1.4 What Is the TIP?

The TIP is the agreed-upon list of specific transportation improvement priorities of the region. It lists all projects that either intend to use federal funds or are regionally significant, whether or not they use federal funds. The list is multimodal; in addition to the traditional highway and public transit projects, it includes bicycle, pedestrian, and freight-related projects as well. The TIP is required by federal law.

The TIP shows estimated costs and schedule by project phase. The TIP not only lists the specific projects but also documents the anticipated schedule and cost for each project phase (Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction). Inclusion of a project phase in the TIP means that it is seriously expected to be implemented during the TIP time period.

The TIP covers a four-year period by regulation, follows the federal FY schedule, and is updated every other year. Federal regulation requires that the TIP cover a minimum of four federal FYs of programming. DVRPC TIP documents for both states demonstrate a longer planning and programming horizon (10 years for New Jersey; 12 years for Pennsylvania) to better understand expected resources and to provide the region with a more realistic timeframe for advancement of TIP projects and more realistic project costs. The funding presented in both TIP documents after the first four years is considered “Later Fiscal Year” (LFY) funding, and per regulation is not technically available or able to be committed or authorized. The TIP operates on a federal FY schedule that begins on October 1, of a given year and ends on September 30, of the following year. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania TIPs are updated every other year, in alternate years.

The TIP may change through various Modifications or Amendments after it is adopted. Under the provisions of federal law and regulation, the approved TIP can be modified or amended in various ways to add new projects, delete projects, advance projects into the first year, and accommodate cost and phase-of-work changes or major scope changes to a project. The criteria and procedures for changing the TIP after adoption are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), per Appendix D of this document.

The TIP is financially constrained. The list of projects in the TIP must be financially constrained to the amount of funds that are expected to be available. In order to add projects to the TIP, others must be deferred or additional funding to the region must be identified. Since the TIP is financially constrained, competition between projects for a spot on the TIP clearly exists. The STIP resources used to develop each of the programs is included as Appendix B in this document.

The TIP is authorization to seek funding. A project’s presence in the TIP represents a critical step in the authorization of funding for a project. It does not, however, represent a commitment of funds, an obligation to fund, or a grant of funds.

The TIP is not a final schedule of project implementation. The time frame shown in the TIP is the best estimate at the time of TIP development, which ranges from six to nine months prior to the beginning of the first FY of the TIP period. Projects quite often cannot maintain that schedule and are reprogrammed to later years.

The TIP does not guarantee project implementation. Unforeseen problems may arise, such as engineering obstacles, environmental permit conflicts, changes in priorities, and additional financial constraints. These problems can slow a project and cause it to be postponed or even dropped from further consideration. These challenges can also increase the project’s overall cost.

Regional Consensus

The production of the TIP is the culmination of the region’s transportation planning process and represents a consensus among state and regional officials as to what near-term improvements to pursue. Consensus is crucial because the federal and state governments want assurance that all interested parties have

participated in developing the priorities prior to committing significant sums of money. A project's inclusion in the TIP signifies regional agreement on the priority of the project and establishes its eligibility for federal funding.

How Does the TIP Relate to the Long-Range Plan?

Regionally significant projects must be drawn from the region's Long-Range Plan ("Plan"), and all projects in the TIP must help implement the goals of the Plan. The Plan, required by federal law, is the document that helps direct transportation and land-use decisions over a minimum 20-year horizon. The Plan presents an extensive list of policies and strategies, as well as the actions required to carry them out.

Although all projects included in the TIP must be consistent with the Plan, projects that add capacity for single-occupant vehicles (SOV) must meet further federal requirements in a region like the Delaware Valley. These projects must result from the region's Congestion Management Process (CMP), which attempts to meet increasing travel demand through non-capacity-adding strategies, where practical. All projects included in the TIP have met this requirement.

The TIP represents the translation of recommendations from DVRPC's latest Plan into a short-term program of improvements. For further information about the policies and strategies of the currently adopted Plan, visit www.dvrpc.org/LongRangePlan.

How Does the TIP Relate to the Clean Air Act?

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require that all transportation plans, programs, and projects conform to the purpose of State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to attain national air quality standards. A TIP is said to conform if it is drawn from a conforming plan, as determined by an emissions analysis. Long-Range Plan projects in the Draft DVRPC FY2024 TIP for New Jersey are a subset of the regionally significant projects contained in the Long-Range Plan. The TIP and the Plan are tested for conformity and must meet all requirements, including the critical test that volatile organic compounds (VOCs), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and fine particulate matter (PM2.5) emissions are less than any applicable budgets or baseline established for all analysis years. An acknowledgment of the Executive Summary of the Draft Documentation of the Conformity Finding is included as Appendix E in this document. A complete description of the conformity procedures can be found on DVRPC's website, www.dvrpc.org/AirQuality/Conformity.

Who Are the Players?

Various agencies directly participate in the New Jersey TIP development process. They include DVRPC member governments, operating agencies, and state and federal agencies comprising the "New Jersey Subcommittee of the Regional Technical Committee [RTC]," commonly referred to as the "New Jersey TIP Subcommittee." Municipalities within the region participate through their respective county governments. The business community, and the public, and other groups become involved through the DVRPC public participation process, in addition to their involvement at the municipal and county levels. The multiplicity of jurisdictions and agencies in the region necessitates a high degree of coordination during the TIP development process by DVRPC.

TIP Development Timeline

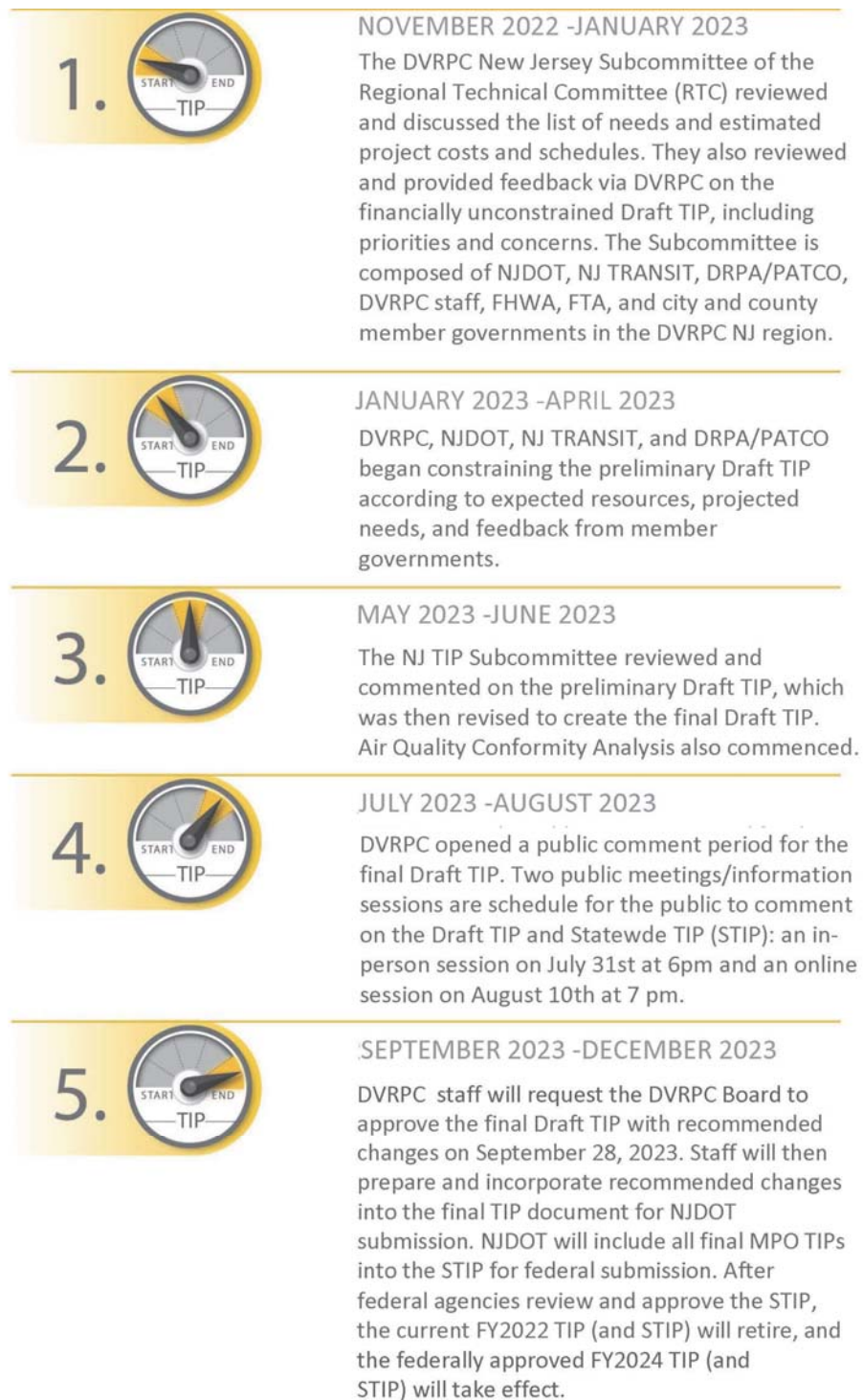
TIP development (or update) typically begins approximately 10 months prior to adoption and involves intensive staff work and negotiations by NJDOT, NJ TRANSIT, DRPA/PATCO, DVRPC staff, FHWA, and the representatives of DVRPC city and county member governments who constitute the DVRPC New Jersey TIP Subcommittee. As portrayed by Figure 1, the TIP update process commenced between the end of 2022 and early 2023 with the review of costs and schedules of current FY2022 TIP projects, projects that anticipate to "graduate" from Concept Development, and a review of new project candidates to be added to the TIP should there be financial capacity. By spring of 2023, the result was a constrained, preliminary draft program ("preliminary Draft TIP") based on reasonable, anticipated revenue projections over the next 10 years (FY24–FY33), TIP Benefit Evaluation Criteria results for new projects, performance-based planning and

programming metrics, Environmental Justice and Equity analyses of the “pool” of all project requests for the Draft TIP, and feedback from the New Jersey TIP Subcommittee. Negotiations continued into late spring of 2023 to address as many issues as possible in the Highway, Transit, and Study and Development programs, including the Draft Statewide Program, and to arrive at a final list of projects for the Draft TIP (“final Draft TIP”) that could be evaluated for impacts on air quality conformity.

DVRPC then opened a 30+ day public comment period, in which the two draft documents, the Draft DVRPC FY2024 TIP and the Draft NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT STIP, were shared with the public for feedback. The DVRPC Board is the final decision-making body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and DVRPC staff will request the DVRPC Board to adopt the Draft TIP (with a List of Recommended Changes after the public comment period) in September of 2023. After the DVRPC Board adopts the TIP with recommended changes, DVRPC submits the document to NJDOT for approval and inclusion in the STIP, which NJDOT will then submit to federal partners (e.g., FHWA, FTA) for review and approval. When the federal partners approve the FY2024 STIP, the FY2024 TIP and STIP become effective and replace the FY2022 TIP and STIP for New Jersey.

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Figure 1: Development Timeline of the Draft DVRPC FY2024 TIP for New Jersey



Source: DVRPC, 2023

1.5 How Does a Project Get on the TIP?

Many TIP projects originate from asset management systems. Some come through state or regional competitive programs. On rare occasions, a few may come from one-time special discretionary additional funds to the region. Securing a spot on the TIP is not a simple task. For those not originating from an asset management system, competitive program award, or special discretionary funding, years of pre-implementation research and public input may precede a project's inclusion on the TIP. There are several ways in which a project can get on the TIP, and the most typical course is described here. First, a particular transportation need is identified. In many cases, municipal planners and engineers generate lists of potential improvements based on their needs analyses (e.g., from their asset management system) including citizen concerns and inquiries. Since only DVRPC member agencies may formally submit candidate TIP projects during the major TIP "Update" period, the local proposals are, in turn, reviewed at the county or major city level, often in consultation with locally based state engineers. If the county agrees that a particular idea has merit, it may decide to act as the project sponsor and work toward refining the initial idea and developing clear project specifications. Project proposals are also generated at the county and state levels in much the same way.

Once each county and operating agency has developed its own list of projects and priorities, they are brought to DVRPC for funding consideration. The RTC reviews the list to ensure that the highest priorities of the region are being addressed within the limits of available resources and to assure consistency among projects and with the region's goals. The RTC makes recommendations to the DVRPC Board and is composed of state, county, and city planners; transit operators; citizen representatives from the Public Participation Task Force; and transportation-related interest groups.

Finally, the DVRPC Board provides the forum through which the elected officials and/or representatives of the region's counties, major cities, states, and operating agencies determine the TIP projects. After considering the recommendations of the RTC and the comments received from the public, the Board determines the final list of projects to be included in the TIP and adopts it as its selection of projects to be advanced.

How is the TIP Funded?

The major funding source for projects listed in the Draft TIP is the IIJA. The IIJA is administered through the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT's) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which allocate various funds to states and transit agencies with regional apportionment. In addition, funds are made available by New Jersey and Pennsylvania to match federal funding in varying ratios and to provide 100 percent financing for selected projects. Local counties, municipalities, private developers, toll authorities, and transit operators may also participate in providing matching funds for federal aid. New funding sources and innovative funding techniques are constantly being sought.

1.6 What Happens to a Project Once It Is on the TIP?

Once a project is on the TIP, a considerable amount of work remains to bring it to completion. The designated lead agency ("Project Sponsor") is responsible for ensuring that its project moves forward. The lead agency, in most cases, is the state Department of Transportation (DOT) or transit operator and, in some cases, a county or city.

Highway projects typically proceed in phases (Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction). Each phase is included in the TIP, showing funding and anticipated schedule. Transit projects are programmed in the TIP according to the annual grant application cycle under which the funds will be sought. Ideally, a project will advance according to its programmed schedule. Realistically, projects are often delayed due to unforeseen obstacles, such as environmental issues and community concerns. Tracking each project's progress is essential to identify and resolve delays as soon as possible and to reallocate resources as necessary to avoid losing them.

Once federal funds have been made available (termed federally “authorized” or “obligated”) for a project’s final Construction phase, it will no longer appear in future TIP documents (even though the project may not yet be constructed or completed), and the formal bidding process can begin.

1.7 Why Is Municipal and Interest Group Involvement Important?

DVRPC believes that a collaborative process among all levels of government, the public, and business communities will ensure that the best transportation program is produced. This type of process is one in which state, county, and local governments and transportation providers become partners in the planning and programming process, and interest groups and community leaders have a voice. For this reason, planning efforts for the region’s capital improvements exhibit a “bottom-up” approach within the context of a regional plan that gives a top-down perspective.

1.8 How Can the Public Participate?

Public participation occurs during all stages of a project’s development. Letters of concern to municipal and county officials and transit agency managers are one of the most effective starting points. As local investigations begin, public input may be provided at formal meetings or informal sessions with local and county planning boards and staff. Residents of the region are also asked to participate in special task forces to review transportation improvement concepts at the corridor, county, and regional levels. Finally, once a project is on the TIP and it enters the Preliminary Engineering phase, the detailed environmental review process affords yet another opportunity for the public to offer input.

DVRPC provides various opportunities for the public to review its planning and programming activities. Representatives from the private sector, social service entities, environmental organizations, partnering agencies, and citizens are encouraged to comment on DVRPC’s policies and plans. To this end, an online commenting feature is available for Board action items, including TIP Actions. DVRPC’s website provides a wide array of information and interactive mapping. Materials are available in hardcopy upon request, at the DVRPC office or by mail. Project-specific open houses and listening sessions are held by project sponsoring agencies to inform the public and gather input.

Specifically, during the TIP update period, the public and other interest groups can comment on the Draft TIP before it is presented to the DVRPC Board for official adoption. Prior to Board adoption, DVRPC opens a public comment period. DVRPC will hold two virtual information sessions/public meetings within this period to allow the public an opportunity to present written comments on the Draft TIP and STIP projects and process to state, county, city, transit, and DVRPC staff. The Draft TIP and STIP are available online, and a hardcopy of the draft documents are available upon request or at the DVRPC office. The Draft TIP is also made available at certain public libraries across the region.

After the TIP is adopted and approved, monthly changes to maintain the TIP known as ‘TIP Actions’ (Amendments and/or Modifications), may occur. Despite careful planning, funding and scheduling may need to change during the course of the federal FY. The modification process is in place to assist this effort to provide necessary funding for projects in the TIP. The MOU in Appendix D of the TIP specifies different types of Amendments and Modifications that would require DVRPC, NJDOT, and/or federal approvals. All TIP documents (Draft, DVRPC Board Adopted/Current, and Prior Year TIPs, including a Summary of Amendments and Modifications to the Current TIP) are viewable on DVRPC’s website at www.dvrpc.org/TIP. Past and upcoming TIP Actions for Board approval are available at www.dvrpc.org/Committees/board