

NEWS RELEASE
DRAFT 2021 STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
(STIP)
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES (PIP)

Transportation shapes our communities and touches much of our lives. Because transportation effects are so pervasive, transportation systems should be designed and operated to produce benefits across the broadest set of societal values. That can only be achieved if planning for transportation improvements reflects those values and the relationships of transportation to other aspects of our society. As part of its planning effort, the Department of Transportation has initiated its public involvement process to receive input from all stakeholders in the transportation system.

In its effort to assure that the process provides full and open access to all, the Department is providing opportunities for public review, comment and discussion of the transportation program-related improvements, which are being proposed for the next four years. To accomplish this, a draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) has been prepared and forwarded to each of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Rural Councils of Government (RCOG) for public review and comment.

This will afford the public more opportunities to become aware of the STIP, to review the Draft STIP and to provide comments related to the Draft STIP. In addition to the regional public notices for the review period and public meetings, the Connecticut Department of Transportation has placed notices in several major newspapers advertising the availability of the draft STIP and where it can be reviewed. The Draft 2021 STIP is also available on the STIP Web page, www.ct.gov/dot/stip for your review. It is hoped that these efforts will show that early-on public participation is valued and desired. All public input received will be reviewed and addressed accordingly.

The portions of the Draft STIP in metropolitan planning areas have been developed in cooperation with the MPOs. The MPOs' TIPs have been included in the draft STIP without modification. The Rural COGs have been consulted on their portion of the STIP.

The Draft STIP includes all federally funded highway and transit transportation improvements and is the MPOs/Rural COGs and State's transportation investment program for the next four years. It consists of capital and operating improvements to the State's highways and roads, and public transit systems. Investments in various modes are included in the draft STIP. The STIP is the means of implementing the goals and objectives identified in Long-Range Regional and State Transportation Plans utilizing federal funds.

The Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) Section 176(c) (42 U.S.C.7506(c)) and Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) conformity regulations (40 CFR 93 Subpart A) require that each new Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) be demonstrated to conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) before the MTP and TIPs are approved by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or accepted by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). This ensures that the MTP and TIPs are consistent with air quality goals and that progress is being made towards achieving and maintaining Federal air quality standards. A conformity determination is undertaken to estimate emissions that will result from an area's transportation system. The analysis must demonstrate that those emissions are within limits outlined in state air quality implementation plans.

The STIP for FFY 2021-2024 contains 223 projects in 36 federal funding categories. It programs \$3.163 billion in federal funds, which will be matched by \$684.472 million in state funds and \$16.984 million in local funds, for a total program cost of \$3.865 billion. Of the \$684.472 million in state funds, \$5.794 million is programmed for public transportation operating assistance. Within the transportation modes, a total of \$2.343 billion (60.63%) will be used for highway and bridge capital programs and a total of \$1.522 billion (39.37%) will be used for transit (rail, bus, and rideshare) capital and operating costs.

Examples of major projects included in the STIP:

- Replacement/rehabilitation of highway bridges throughout the State
- Removal of traffic signals on Route 9 in Middletown (82-318)
- I-95 improvements at Interchange 74 in East Lyme (44-156)
- I-95 improvements from Greenwich to Stamford (56-316)
- I-95 improvements in Norwalk (102-295)
- CT 15 improvements from New Canaan to Norwalk (102-296)
- CT 85 improvements from Montville to Salem (85-146 & 120-94)
- CT 82 improvements in Norwich (103-274 & 103-275)
- Statewide Bus Replacements
- CT Transit Facilities Rehabilitation/Improvements (Hartford/Stamford)
- Replacement of New Haven Line Tracks
- Rehabilitation WALK, SAGA, East Ave, Osborne Ave and Fort Point St Railroad Bridges
- NHL Station Improvement Program
- NHL Signal System

The Draft STIP includes a priority list of projects to be carried out in a four-year period. The priority list is grouped by year, with year one being the highest priority. The program is financially constrained by year and the STIP includes a financial plan that demonstrates which projects can be implemented using current and proposed revenue sources. Only those projects for which construction and operating funds can reasonably be expected to be available are included.

Federal Statewide Planning and Metropolitan Planning Regulations (23 CFR Part 450 and 771 & 49 CFR Part 613, May 27, 2016) require that state transportation agencies and MPOs develop public involvement procedures (PIP). Pursuant to these regulations, CTDOT has established a proactive, public involvement process that is accessible to the public and identifies and addresses transportation-related issues early in the project development process. This process provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing planning documents and transportation improvement programs. This process also minimizes duplication of public involvement efforts and meets the needs of the public and resource and regulatory agencies to provide early and continuing input into the project development process. The PIP is available on the STIP Web page, www.ct.gov/dot/stip for your review.

On Wednesday **September 23, 2020, two Virtual Public Informational Meetings will be held.** The first will be at 1:00 p.m. and the second will be at 7:00 p.m. The meetings will provide a forum for a full and open discussion of the details of the Draft 2021 STIP and PIP. Department of Transportation staff will be available to help answer specific questions and clarify any proposed projects. Please use this meeting as an opportunity to ask questions and provide input to this very important transportation planning effort.

Persons with limited internet access may request that the Draft 2021 STIP and /or PIP information be mailed to them by contacting Rose A. Etuka by email at Rose.Etuka@ct.gov or by phone at 860 594-2040. (Allow one week for processing and delivery.)

Individuals with limited internet access can listen to the meeting by calling (800) 369-2192 and entering the Participant Code when prompted: 4906163. Persons with hearing and/or speech disabilities may dial 711 for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). The MS Teams Live Event offers closed captioning for the hearing impaired and non-English translation options. A recording of the formal presentation will be posted to YouTube following the event and closed captioning (including non-English translation options) will be available at that time. The recording will also be available in the list of DOT virtual public meetings here: <https://portal.ct.gov/dot/general/CTDOT-VPIM-Library>

Apple users may not have access to the live chat line. During the Q&A session and the comment period that follows the meeting, individuals may leave a question or comment via email (preferred) at DOT.Draft2021STIPComment@ct.gov. Individuals may also leave a voicemail question or comment by calling (860) 944-1111. Please reference the Draft 2021 STIP or PIP in your voicemail.

Language assistance may be requested by contacting the Department's Language Assistance Call Line (860) 594-2109. Requests should be made at least 5 business days prior to the meeting. Language assistance is provided at no cost to the public and efforts will be made to respond to timely requests for assistance.

The Draft 2021 STIP and PIP are available for review for a **public comment period between August 24, 2020 to October 9, 2020**. This document is available for review online at www.ct.gov/dot/stip, at the CTDOT Administration Building in Newington and at each of the eight Metropolitan Planning Organizations and two Rural Council of Governments upon request. An appointment is suggested in order to adequately schedule all interested parties. To schedule an appointment at CTDOT, please call (860) 594-2040. To schedule an appointment at one of the Council of Governments, please call them directly.

Written comments must be received on or before **October 9, 2020**. Comments should be addressed to:

Mrs. Maribeth Wojenski
Transportation Assistant Planning Director
Bureau of Policy and Planning
Connecticut Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131-7546
Or
Emailed to: DOT.Draft2021STIPComment@ct.gov

Please include your name, address, and if applicable, the name of the company or organization you represent with your response.