

CDOT Guidance for Processing Amendments and Modifications to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Draft Revision: March 24, 2026

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Introduction

This guidance document provides information on how CDOT will amend and modify the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and how to incorporate changes made to its planning adjacent documents, such as the MPO TIPs. This guidance also includes process guidance for submitting newly adopted TIPs to the Governor for approval.

Any transportation project utilizing federal transportation funding must be included in the STIP and any relevant MPO TIP per 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304. This guidance is intended for assisting CDOT staff, its planning partners, and local agency recipients in adhering to federal guidelines when initiating and completing federally funded transportation projects.

It is important to note that the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) maintains the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in an electronic format (eSTIP). The eSTIP serves as the official, approved STIP document for the State of Colorado. Any STIP versions produced in PDF or other static formats are provided for reference only and may not reflect the most current, approved information. In the event of any discrepancy, the eSTIP shall govern.

Key Terms

Administrative Modification – A minor change to an existing project in the STIP or TIP. These may include minor changes in project scope or funding sources, but do not create a major impact to the project overall.

Annual STIP Adoption – Each year, CDOT updates the STIP to drop the initial fiscal year and add a new fiscal year for the end of the cycle. CDOT follows specific federal guidelines (23 USC 135) for developing this plan. Conducting this annual update allows CDOT to always have four federally recognized years of projects in the STIP. This process allows CDOT to better manage cash and project scheduling. The officially approved STIP is maintained in the eSTIP.

CDOT Region Planner – There are Region Planners staffed in each of the five CDOT Engineering Regions, plus Headquarters. These staff work with the rural Transportation Planning Regions and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to determine transportation planning needs across the state. The Region Planners also work with their respective Region Business Office to coordinate appropriate STIP actions for transportation projects.

Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) STIP Coordinator - This person coordinates all transit amendments and modifications in the STIP. This includes liaising with the MPOs and direct recipient transit providers to ensure that those transit projects that are also included in the STIP.

eSTIP (Electronic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) – CDOT’s web-based system of record for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. The eSTIP contains the most current, approved project, funding, and programming information and serves as the official STIP for all federal and state purposes.

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Funding Program Pool – A division of Program Distribution that is allocated to the CDOT Regions and TMAs for planning and budgeting purposes. NOTE: the only funding programs that the TMAs receive direct allocations for are CMAQ, STBG (formerly known as STP-Metro), and TAP.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – A geographic area with a population of 50,000 or more. In Colorado there are two small MPOs with populations of more than 50,000, but less than 200,000. These are the Grand Valley MPO (GVMPO) and the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG). Colorado also has three large MPOs, with populations over 200,000. These are the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG), and the North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO).

Region Planning Commission (RPC) – The voting Board for each Transportation Planning Region.

Rollover Funding - Moving unobligated project funds for in-progress projects to the new fiscal year.

STIP – The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. This is a federally required four-year program of transportation projects that Colorado, specifically CDOT, intends to initiate, construct or complete over a four-year period. The STIP document utilized for this report is the FY2018 – FY2021 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

STIP Management Team – The STIP is co-managed by staff from CDOT’s Division of Transportation Development and the Division of Accounting and Finance. This team verifies and maintains compliance with state and federal planning regulations and liaises with CDOT’s internal and external planning partners.

SWP – The Statewide Plan. This is a federally required long-range transportation plan. This 25 + year plan examines future transportation needs in Colorado, based on revenue projections, population changes, the impact of new technologies, etc. This plan sets the goals and strategies for Colorado’s transportation system and is the basis for the STIP.

TIP – Transportation Improvement Program. This is a federally required four-year program of transportation projects that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) intends to initiate, construct or complete over a four-year period. TIPs include CDOT projects that fall within MPO boundaries. Each MPO is responsible for developing and maintaining a TIP to federal standards.

TIP Amendment – Amendments and Administrative Modifications done at the MPO level. Once a TIP has been adopted or modified, it is then included in the STIP unchanged, per federal guidance. Each MPO develops and follows its own policies for modifying their TIP. CDOT has standing agreements with each MPO to utilize the MPO public process for developing and amending their respective TIPs, and incorporating those adoptions into the STIP. This is done to eliminate duplication of process and to mitigate project delays.

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Transportation Planning Legislation – The Colorado Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is developed in accordance with the following federal legislation and state rules:

- 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304.
- 2 CCR 601-22, Statewide Transportation Planning Process and Transportation Planning Regions.

Transportation Planning Region (TPR) – In Colorado there are 15 geographically contiguous areas designated as transportation planning regions. There are 10 rural TPRs and 5 metropolitan areas, also known as MPOs. These planning regions are established in the Statewide Planning Rules: 2CCR 601-22 - RULES GOVERNING STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGIONS

STIP Format and Official Record

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is frequently amended due to changes in available funding, project cost, scope or schedule, or the addition or deletion of projects. The process for amending, modifying, and approving all highway and transit projects in the STIP is described below.

CDOT administers the STIP using the eSTIP as the authoritative source for all project programming, funding, and approval actions. Amendments, administrative modifications, and annual updates are processed and reflected in the eSTIP. When required for federal approval or public communication, CDOT may generate PDF or other static versions derived from the eSTIP; however, these versions do not supersede the eSTIP and may not capture subsequent approved changes.

STIP Amendment Process

I. STIP Amendments

STIP Amendments require Transportation Commission approval and will follow the process outlined below as needed when Amendments are submitted to CDOT. Below is a description of what constitutes an Amendment and the timeline for approval.

A. Regionally Significant Projects

A revision to the eSTIP is considered to be a STIP Amendment when:

1. A regionally significant project is added to or deleted from the STIP.
 - a) Regionally significant projects are defined here as stand-alone projects serving regional transportation needs and of significant scale to be typically included in transportation demand modeling for air quality emissions analysis and identified individually in the STIP.

NOTE: A project may be regionally significant but does not necessarily need to be modeled for air quality emissions. If you have questions or need specific examples, please contact the CDOT Regional Planner.

2. There is a major scope change to a project. A major scope change may be described

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as:

- a) Adding a travel lane at least one centerline mile in length;
 - b) Adding a new intersection or a major improvement to existing intersections (excluding turn lanes, auxiliary lanes or median improvements);
 - c) Adding new interchanges and grade separated intersections;
 - d) Major improvements to existing interchanges excluding drainage improvements and ramp widening;
 - e) A modification to a project that results in a re-evaluation of a NEPA document (NOTE: STIP amendments *documented* during NEPA re-evaluation public involvement do not require further public involvement during STIP process);
 - f) A modification to a project that requires air quality conformity determination, if applicable;
3. Adding or deleting federal or state funding for any project by more than \$5 million (cumulative) over the four years of the STIP.

B. Non-Regionally Significant Projects and Funding Program Pools

Adding a new funding program pool or implementing substantial changes to funding program pool totals due to action by the Transportation Commission or the US DOT. Projects that are listed in 23 CFR 771.117 (c) & (d) are pool eligible and will follow the Administrative Modification guidance in section II.

1. Adding funds to a funding program pool that results in a change of the funding program pool balance of 15% or more than was originally pushed via Program Distribution or the Annual Budget funding adjustment, based on updated revenue projections.
2. Other amendments determined by CDOT.

C. Timeline for Processing STIP Amendments

Amendments will be processed for approval by the Transportation Commission. This includes the public involvement process as detailed in III A, below. Amendments must be submitted to the CDOT STIP Manager by the first Friday of the month. The STIP Manager will then coordinate the 30-day public process and inclusion on the next month's Transportation Commission agenda for approval. Overall, this process takes 45 – 60 days to complete.

D. Emergency or Expedited Process for STIP Amendments

If there is an expedited action or special circumstance required, this must be agreed upon by CDOT Executive Director and FHWA Colorado Division Administrator or the FTA Regional Administrator. This action will go through an abbreviated public involvement process concluding with Transportation Commission action.

II. STIP Administrative Modifications

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- A. STIP Administrative Modifications include revisions which:
 - 1. Do not meet the STIP Amendment criteria as listed in Section I A or I B; or
 - 2. Result from voter initiatives; or
 - 3. Are declared an emergency as defined by the Emergency Relief Program 23 CFR 668.105, the Governor, the Transportation Commission, or the Executive Director (based on an emergency event)
- B. Unobligated and unauthorized funds from prior STIPs (non-TIP areas)
 - 1. Includes both highway and transit projects or any active projects listed in the first year of the current STIP that are not yet authorized or obligated, or are only partially authorized/obligated, but are expected to be obligated or authorized in the first year of the new STIP.
 - 2. These projects will be added to the current STIP as follows:
 - a) The Region or Headquarter Business Office will undo any relevant budget actions so that the funds may be rolled into the current fiscal year and re-programmed with the original funds in the current fiscal year.

III. Public Involvement and Approval Procedures for STIP Amendments and STIP Administrative Modifications for Rural, non-TIP Areas

- A. STIP Amendments:
 - 1. Prior to STIP Amendment approval for rural non-TIP areas:
 - a) CDOT Region Planner will notify OFMB of STIP Amendment
 - (1) STIP Management Team verifies if project modification requires an Amendment.
 - (2) STIP Management Team verifies financial constraint.
 - (3) Region Planner verifies the amendment for consistency with the long-range Regional and Statewide Plans. If a Plan amendment is needed, the Region Planner will initiate it and work with DTD to complete.
- B. STIP Team prepares amendment packet for public comment, Transportation Commission Approval and incorporation into the STIP. This process can take up to 60 days to complete.
 - 1. Details for the STIP amendment are posted on the external CDOT [website](#). This opens the public comment period, which lasts a minimum of 30 days.
 - 2. The STIP Management Team distributes an electronic notice of the proposed STIP Amendment using appropriate TPR distribution list. This mailing list is derived from the DTD Statewide Planning Mailing List and will be updated periodically with the electronic list managed by the STIP Team.
 - 3. Comments Received
 - a) CDOT Region Planner contacts TPR representative and requests that a TPR meeting be conducted to discuss any pending STIP Amendments no later than the end of the written comment period, identified in the notice. If the TPR already has a meeting scheduled during the public involvement period, they should discuss

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- any pending STIP Amendments for their area.
 - b) All written comments are sent to STIP Manager who will, in turn, forward copies to the appropriate CDOT Region Planner within 3 business days after receiving comments.
 - c) CDOT Region Planner responds to the commenter within 5 business days before the scheduled Transportation Commission meeting.
 - d) CDOT Region Planner provides a copy of the response to OFMB for documentation.
- (4) Transportation Commission Approval
- a) OFMB coordinates with the Transportation Commission office on the required agenda item and the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, leads the Transportation Commission discussion with the CDOT Region Planner or appropriate region staff in attendance, if necessary.
 - b) Transportation Commission takes action on the STIP Amendments.
 - c) If the Transportation Commission approves STIP Amendments, OFMB submits the approved STIP Amendment(s) with signature from the Transportation Commission Secretary to FHWA/FTA for their approval.
 - d) FHWA/FTA signs the approval letter and sends its approval of STIP Amendments to the STIP Management Team.
 - e) If the Transportation Commission or FHWA/FTA **does not** approve the STIP Amendments, the process may start over with updated information.
- C. Administrative Modifications - Administrative Modifications to the STIP do not require a public comment period or approval by the Transportation Commission, FHWA, or FTA.
1. Region Planners submit administrative modifications as needed.
 2. The STIP Management Team verifies and approves the revision(s) as administrative modification(s) in the STIP.

TIP Processes in MPO Areas

For any Amendment or Administrative Modification for CDOT projects located in an MPO area, CDOT will rely on Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)'s public involvement process as structured in the signed Memorandum of Agreement with each MPO. TIP projects are included in the STIP without modification. For specifics on how each MPO processes Amendments and Administrative Modifications for their area, please refer to Appendix A.

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I. Public Involvement and Approval Procedures for TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications

A. MPO TIP Amendments

1. CDOT acknowledges the MPO's TIP public involvement process and obtains MPO TIP resolutions from the MPO Board for TIP Amendments.
2. CDOT Regions will ensure projects are in the TIP before modifying the STIP.
3. The STIP Management Team drafts a letter for signature from the CDOT Executive Director, who has signature authority from the Governor to approve incorporating TIP amendments into the STIP.
4. The STIP Management Team sends the signed letter and supporting documentation to FHWA/FTA for subsequent modifications/amendments to the STIP. This will be an action for informational purposes only and does not require FHWA/FTA signatures. Supporting documentation includes:
 - a) Verification of fiscal constraint
 - b) Explanation for the amendment
 - c) Resolution or Board action from MPO
5. After forwarding the information to FHWA/FTA, the STIP Management Team endorses the amendment list in the STIP and informs DTD-MPO & Regional Planner and CDOT Region Planner of the STIP approval.
6. The STIP Management Team will review and submit TIP amendments on a weekly basis.
7. Once modified in the STIP, Region Planners will communicate this back to their respective MPO.

B. MPO Administrative Modifications

1. TIP Modifications approved by the MPO will be forwarded to CDOT for incorporation into the STIP.
2. Once modified in the STIP, Region Planners will communicate this back to their respective MPO.

II. TIP/STIP Reconciliation

In order to maintain consistency between the TIPs and the STIP, CDOT will conduct a reconciliation process with each MPO and any relevant stakeholder agencies, such as Transit Direct Recipients, FHWA, and FTA. These reconciliations must be completed, at minimum, on a semi-annual basis.

A. Purpose

The first reconciliation will be completed by the end of January each year for the FHWA funding programs, as well as Transit. The second reconciliation will occur by the end of September. The reconciliation may include all programs and projects included in the TIP and STIP.

1. Participants should include CDOT Region staff, DTD liaisons, DTR liaisons, and the STIP

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Management Team, as well as MPO staff.

2. Representatives from any stakeholder agencies (e.g., Transit agencies) and FHWA and FTA shall be included as well.

B. Process

1. Compare the TIP with the STIP dollar by dollar, and project by project
2. Complete a TIP to STIP Comparison sheet, or equivalent, to reflect any corrections needed.
3. The corresponding liaison (listed below) will take the lead to communicate to their respective Business Office to follow the natural process for TIP amendments and modifications.
 - a) CDOT Region Planner: FHWA funding programs
 - b) DTR STIP Coordinator: Transit
 - c) MPO Representative

Transit Projects in the STIP and TIPs

CDOT has set forth the following procedures to ensure that all transit projects are included in both the STIP and TIPs, where relevant.

I. Process

A. Urban Transit Projects

1. Region Planners will review TIP modifications and amendments as they are received from the MPOs. They will 'flag' anything labeled as a transit item and send this to the DTR contact to review.
2. The DTR contact will review the modification or amendment and begin tracking these projects. [See DTR Award and STIP Process Flowcharts]
3. DTR will request any necessary pool revisions including reductions or additions via a FAR form. NOTE: The Funding Allocation Request (FAR) form is an internal CDOT form used to track transfer requests between funding programs, Regions, etc.
4. OFMB will complete any necessary pool transfers.
5. DTR will prepare the STIP amendment form and submit it to the planner in the Business Office, who will enter the modification into SAP, CDOT's financial system of record.
6. Once approved into the STIP, the STIP team will communicate back to the respective MPO that the action is completed.

B. Rural Transit Projects

1. The DTR contact will maintain a list of the rural transit projects.
2. They will cooperate with the rural transit agencies to ensure the correct project documentation and details are provided to the CDOT Business Office.
3. The DTR contact will work with the Headquarter Business Office to ensure that any TIP amendments or modifications are reflected in the STIP.

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II. Roll-forwards for Unauthorized and Unobligated Funds

- A. CDOT defines these as any outstanding unauthorized or unobligated balances that are “rolled” into the next fiscal year and utilized in the ‘Rolled Column’ in the STIP.
- B. During STIP Development
 1. The State Fiscal Year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. The Federal Fiscal Year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30. This creates a 3 month “gap” where CDOT has already commenced a new fiscal year while the Federal Fiscal Year is coming to completion. All federal transit projects that are awaiting authorization and obligation during this “gap” period or later must be included in the new STIP in the Roll-Forward column in order to be recognized as valid for federal authorization and obligation.
 2. Region Planners/DTR should work with urban transit agency liaisons and the MPO contacts to ensure that urban transit projects are added to the draft STIP during the STIP's annual update cycle.
 3. The DTR contact should work with rural transit agency liaison contacts and the Headquarter Business Office to ensure that rural transit projects are added to the draft STIP during the STIP's annual update cycle.
 4. All roll forwards must be incorporated into the upcoming STIP prior to final adoption by the Transportation Commission, or be subject to following the established amendment processes laid out above

III. During TIP Cycle Updates

Region Planners/DTR should work with FTA and the MPO contacts to ensure federal transit projects that are awaiting authorization and obligation are included in the STIP in the appropriate fiscal year.

TIP Adoption and Approval Process

CDOT is the facilitator that takes an adopted TIP from an MPO and gives it to the governor for their signature. The STIP manager oversees this process by putting together the packet that goes first to the CDOT executive director, then to the governor, and lastly back to the MPO for final signatures. This process should occur within 30 days of MPO Board action.

- A. After a TIP is approved by the MPO, CDOT needs to ensure that the Governor’s approval process is engaged immediately afterwards
- B. The MPO board adopts their TIP and sends all of their corresponding information to the STIP manager, which may include the following:
 - a. conformity letter from the Air Pollution Control Division - Department of Public Health and Environment (APCD) for air quality (where applicable)
 - b. a transmittal letter from the MPO,
 - c. The Board resolution,
 - d. a signed self-certification document,
- C. CDOT will gather the following documents:

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- a. a fiscal constraint confirmation from the CDOT Chief Financial Officer (CFO),
 - b. a region concurrence letter from relevant CDOT region(s),
 - c. a CDOT signature on the MPO self-certification letter,
 - d. a cover letter signed by the CDOT director to the governor,
 - e. a draft letter for the governor to sign and send back to CDOT,
- D. Submitting entire packet to the governor
- a. The CDOT executive director's chief of staff takes the packet, including all of the information listed above, and transmits it to the governor's office for them to sign the approval letter.
 - b. The governor's office sends it back to the executive director's chief of staff once the governor has signed it.
- E. The STIP manager transmits the governor's signature letter back to the MPO and the regions so that they know the TIP has been approved by the governor.

Annual STIP Update

The steps below outline the process for the Annual STIP Update. This process is used to maintain an active 4-year STIP window to align with the CDOT principles of Cash Management. This process has been developed with input and concurrence from the FHWA Colorado Division and the FTA Region 8 offices.

The Annual STIP Update typically occurs during the first six months of the year. The typical schedule is outlined below; however, an updated schedule may be released at the beginning of an update cycle if timing is impacted by circumstances outside of CDOT's control. The update will include projects identified for funding in the year being added to the STIP, including any Regionally Significant projects, and projects in non-regionally significant program pools. This includes any projects that have been identified for asset management program pools, such as Surface Treatment, Bridge, FASTER Safety, etc.

I. Annual STIP Update Process – Incorporation of New Projects

- A. Region Planners will meet with each TPR or MPO to review projects being added to the new fiscal year in the STIP. These meetings may be set with each individual TPR/MPO or conducted as a joint meeting. These meetings must be concluded by the end of February each year.
- B. Region Planners will enter the additional projects into SAP by the end of February.
- C. OFMB will then publish the Draft STIP for a minimum of 30 days for public review and comment.
 1. Any comments received by the OFMB STIP Manager will, in turn, be forwarded to the appropriate CDOT Region Planner within 3 business days after receiving comments.
 2. CDOT Region Planner responds to the commenter within 5 business days.
 3. CDOT Region Planner provides a copy of the response to the STIP Manager for documentation.
- D. The Transportation Commission will host a public hearing during its April meeting schedule

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to accommodate any comments made to the Commission in person.

- E. The Transportation Commission will take action to adopt the STIP at its regular May meeting.
- F. Once approved, CDOT will forward a copy of the updated STIP, along with a copy of the Transportation Commission resolution, an updated self-certification, and verification of fiscal constraint with signature from the Chief Financial Officer to FHWA/FTA.
- G. FHWA/FTA will conduct a final review and approval of the updated STIP. Final approval will be sent back to the CDOT Executive Director by the end of June. Copies of the approval will be sent to the Chief Financial Officer, the Division Director for the Division of Transportation Development, and the STIP Manager.
- H. The updated STIP becomes active on July 1 of each year, unless circumstances require delaying the adoption of the STIP by the Transportation Commission, or the approval of the STIP by FHWA or FTA. In the case of a delay, the current STIP will remain active until its expiration date or a new STIP is adopted and approved.

II. Annual STIP Update Process – Prior Unauthorized or Unobligated Funds

- A. Any active projects listed in the first year of the current STIP that are not yet authorized or obligated, or are only partially authorized/obligated, should be rolled into the first year of the new STIP.
 - 1. Region Planners should work with their respective Business Managers to determine which projects will need to move into the next fiscal year.
 - 2. All roll-forward determinations must be made prior to the end of the third week of June.

Appendix A - Links to MPO TIP Amendment & Administrative Modification Guidelines

The guidance for each respective MPO's TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications can be found at the links listed below.

[Denver Regional COG Guidance for TIP Amendments - DRCOG TIP](#)

[Grand Valley MPO Guidance for TIP Amendments - GVMPO TIP](#)

[North Front Range MPO Guidance for TIP Amendments - NFRMPO TIP](#)

[Pueblo Area Council Of Governments Guidance for TIP Amendments - PACOG TIP](#)

[Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Guidance for TIP Amendments - PPACG TIP](#)