



**U.S. Department  
of Transportation**

**Federal Transit Administration**  
Region I  
55 Broadway Suite 920  
Cambridge, MA 02142-1093  
(617) 494-2055  
(617) 494-2865 (fax)

**Federal Highway Administration**  
Rhode Island Division  
380 Westminster Street, Suite 601  
Providence, RI 02903  
(401) 528-4541  
(401) 528-4542 (fax)

September 28, 2016

Governor Gina M. Raimondo  
State of Rhode Island  
State House  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

**Subject: FY 2017-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Approval**

Dear Governor Raimondo:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have completed our review of the Fiscal Year 2017-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) transmitted by you on September 16, 2016. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which in Rhode Island covers the entire State as the STIP, was adopted by the State Planning Council on September 8, 2016.

On July 20, 2012, the entire State of Rhode Island was designated as attainment for the 2008 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), thus transportation conformity is not required for the 2008 ozone NAAQS. Under the previous (1997) ozone NAAQS, all of Rhode Island was designated as a non-attainment area and subject to transportation conformity requirements under the Clean Air Act. Effective April 6, 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revoked the 1997 ozone NAAQS for all purposes, including transportation conformity. Therefore, transportation conformity is no longer required for any part of Rhode Island.

Therefore, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.220, and based upon the RIDOT and MPO self-certifications of their statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes and federal agency routine involvement in the transportation planning processes, FHWA and FTA hereby make the following determinations:

- The projects in the STIP are based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of Title 23, U.S.C. 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C. Section 5303 – 5305 and 23 CFR Part 450 Subparts A, B, and C.
- The STIP is based on a continuing, comprehensive planning process carried on cooperatively by the State, the MPO, and the transit operator in accordance with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, and 49 U.S.C. Section 5303 – 5305.

Accordingly, the FHWA and the FTA have jointly determined that the Rhode Island FY 2017-2025 STIP satisfies requirements for the obligation of Federal-aid highway funds and Federal transit funds for the period October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2020 and is hereby approved. In support of our determination, enclosed are joint FHWA/FTA findings on the transportation planning process in accordance with 23 CFR §450.220(b) and 23 CFR §450.330(a).

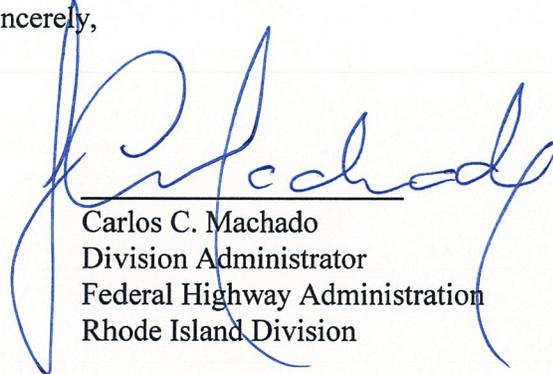
Approval of the STIP does not constitute project or grant approval. Both agencies may need

additional information on some of the projects in the approved STIP when a project agreement or grant submission approval is requested. If there are any questions regarding this action, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



 Mary Beth Mello  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
Region 1



Carlos C. Machado  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration  
Rhode Island Division

- cc: Mr. Peter Alviti, Jr., Director, RIDOT  
Mr. Ray Studley, CEO, RIPTA  
Mr. Michael DiBiase, Chairman, State Planning Council  
Mr. Parag Agrawal, Secretary, State Planning Council

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FINDING

In accordance with 23 CFR §450.220 and 23 CFR §450.330, the FHWA and the FTA, based on the certifications of the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning process for and within the State of Rhode Island, and the FHWA's and FTA's participation in this transportation planning process including the quadrennial certification review, hereby find that the projects in the FY 2017 - 2025 STIP are based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of 23 CFR Part 450 Subpart A, B, and C, 49 U.S.C. Sections 5303-5305, and 23 U.S.C. Sections 134 and 135.

### PLANNING OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

The following strengths of the Rhode Island transportation planning process have been identified:

- The State of Rhode Island has in place the necessary transportation planning processes to successfully deliver a program that complies with 23 CFR 400.
- Strong commitment to freight planning with a draft Statewide Freight Plan being currently under review.
- Development of the UPWP in coordination and collaboration with the DOT and transit provider.
- Development of TIP, STIP and LRP through comprehensive and thoughtful public participation and input.
- Successful use of the MPO subcommittees under the Transportation Advisory Committee to develop this new 9 year STIP using an asset management approach to ensure the State can meet the new performance targets being established under MAP-21.

The following areas of the Rhode Island transportation planning process have been identified for further improvement:

- Incorporation of the new planning regulations that address requirements of MAP-21 and FAST Act legislation into all planning processes and documents, such as additional planning factors, broader consideration of intercity travel, inclusion of additional stakeholders, etc.
- Implementation of performance-based planning and programming requirements, incorporating federally-required performance measures as they are finalized.
- Development of a procedure to regularly update the STIP in line with the new 10 year strategic plan and proposed annual update.
- Continue to strengthen Title VI planning efforts.
- Update of LRP incorporating target setting goals established as per MAP-21, continue State's emphasis to use an asset management approach to the LRP which translates into projects to address the needs in future STIPs.