

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Transportation Improvement Program**

### ***What is an MPO?***

MPO stands for “Metropolitan Planning Organization.” The MPO is the federally-designated regional transportation planning organization that serves as a forum for cooperative transportation decision-making. The MPO includes elected officials and technical staffs from the City of Richmond; the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent and Powhatan; and the Town of Ashland. It also includes technical staff from local transportation service providers, from the Virginia Department’s of Transportation and Aviation, and from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The Richmond Regional Planning District Commission serves as lead staff for the MPO. The MPO relies on a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) to provide recommendations on transportation issues that face the Richmond region. The MPO also relies on the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC) to provide assistance in planning public transportation facilities and services that can be utilized by elderly and disabled persons. Other committees and task forces are formed as the need arises to address specific transportation concerns.

### ***What is a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?***

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is developed and updated annually as part of the Richmond area transportation planning process. The TIP is a list of transportation projects that are to be carried out within a three year period and includes a financial plan to identify the funding sources to be used to complete these projects. All major projects included in the TIP must be included in the list of projects contained in the *Richmond Area MPO 2031 Long-Range Transportation Plan*.

### ***What happens with the TIP once it is adopted?***

Once the TIP is adopted by the MPO, it is forwarded on to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) where it is reviewed and approved for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) along with the TIPs from the other cities in Virginia with a population of 50,000 or more. VDOT then submits the STIP to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These federal agencies review the STIP to ensure that it meets all applicable regulations and requirements. Upon completion of federal agencies’ review and approval, projects in the STIP can become eligible for federal transportation funds.