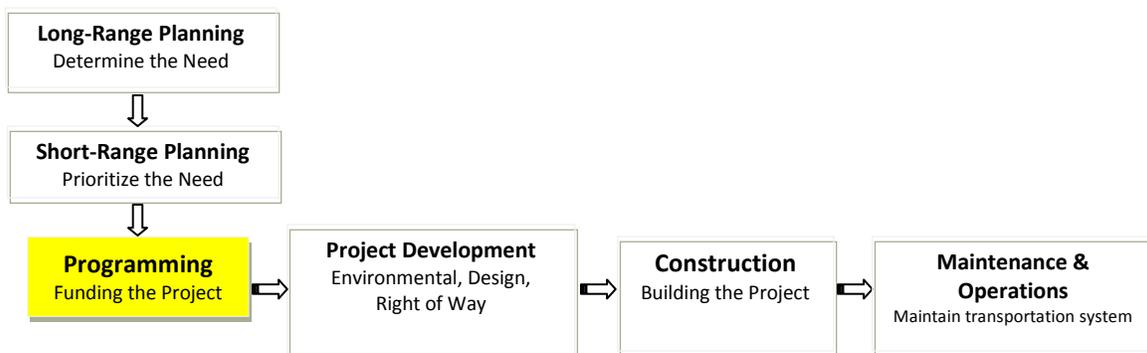


Introduction

Planning and programming California’s transportation system is a complex process that requires extensive coordination between Caltrans and regional planning agencies such as Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs). Long-range plans are prepared separately at the state and regional level to plan a coordinated and balanced transportation system and guide transportation investments. Project identification and prioritization are based on the process established by the regional agency and Caltrans.

Typically a transportation project with a defined purpose and need statement advances to the programming phase where specific funds are identified. A project may include more than one fund type and fund source (federal, state, local, or private). Projects must be listed in the appropriate state and federal programming documents to access the transportation funds.

Figure 1 below demonstrates where transportation programming fits in a project’s life cycle.



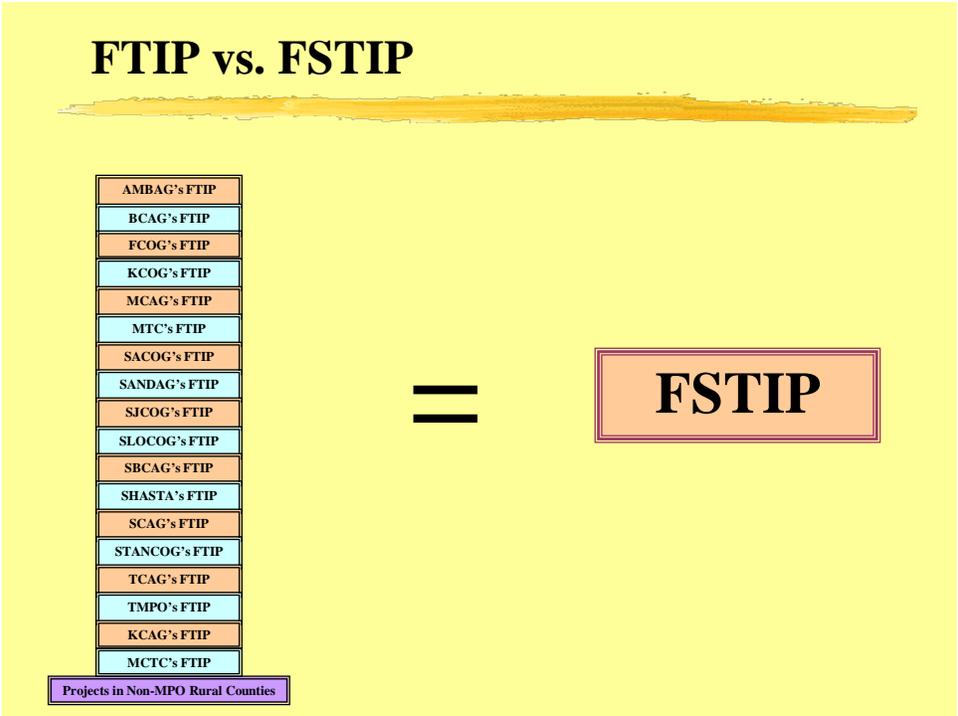
What is an MPO Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)?

Federal law requires that MPOs prepare an FTIP – a short-range program of specific projects derived from the Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) supported with available funding commitments from various sources. Additionally, the Clean Air Act Amendment requires MPOs within nonattainment and maintenance areas to perform air quality conformity determinations before approving their RTPs and FTIPs. Each MPO provides opportunity for public comment before finalizing its FTIP. The final FTIP is approved by the MPO board and submitted to Caltrans for inclusion in the FSTIP.

What is an FSTIP?

The FSTIP is a statewide programming document required by federal law and prepared by Caltrans. It is a compilation of the 18 MPO FTIPs and projects from the rural portions of the state that are not within the area of an MPO (See Figure 2).

Figure 2



The FSTIP covers a four-year period and it must be fiscally constrained. A project receiving federal funding and programmed in an MPO FTIP must also be included in the approved FSTIP before it can receive federal authorization to proceed or before federal funds can be committed to the project.

Caltrans updates the FSTIP every even-numbered year. During each update, the FSTIP is made available for public review and comment before it is finalized. The final FSTIP is approved by Caltrans, as delegated by the governor, and is then submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for approval.

1 – Overview of California’s State and Federal Programming Process

State Programming Process

The major transportation system decision-makers in California are:

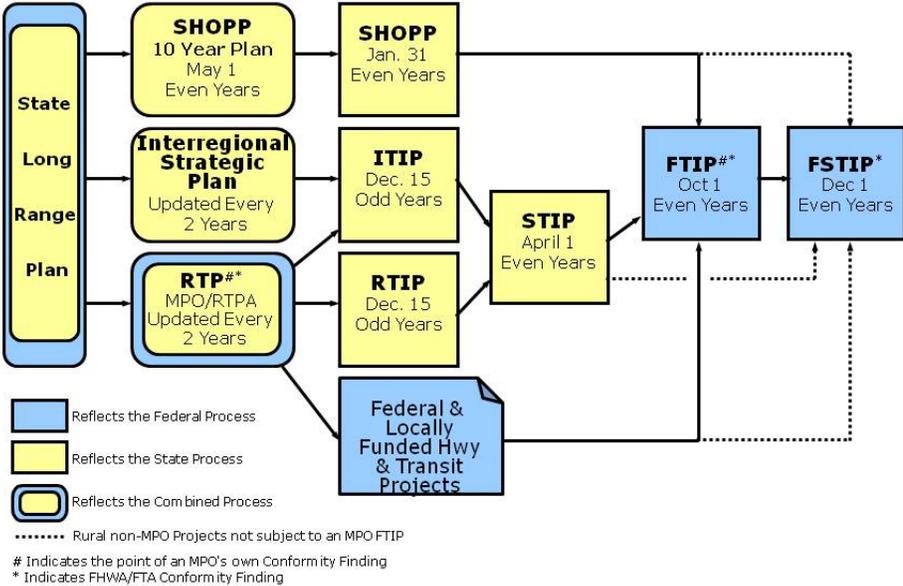
- *The legislature* – establishes overall policies, funding sources, distribution, and spending priorities through state statutes.
- *The California Transportation Commission* – reviews and adopts the state transportation programs and approves projects nominated by Caltrans and regional agencies for funding.
- *Caltrans* – preserves, operates, and maintains the state highway system and improves interregional mobility of people and goods. As owner and operator of the system, Caltrans develops a four-year State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). Caltrans plans, designs, and nominates state highway projects in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) – the interregional portion of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- *MPOs and RTPAs* – Every county in California is served by an RTPA, and every county with at least one urbanized areas is also served by an MPO. These regional agencies plan, coordinate, and administer the funds for their regional transportation system. In California, each of the 18 MPOs and the 26 RTPAs (see Figure 4) develops and adopts a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is the basis for each RTPA’s Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) – the regional portion of the STIP, and each MPO’s FTIP.

The two primary state programming documents are the STIP and the SHOPP. The programming capacity for the STIP and SHOPP is based on the CTC-adopted STIP Fund Estimate. Most projects in the adopted STIP and SHOPP are included in the MPOs FTIPs and the FSTIP. FTIPs and the FSTIP also include other federally funded projects that are not subject to the state’s programming process.

Figure 3 below demonstrates the relationship of the state and federal transportation programming documents and process.

Figure 3

FEDERAL/STATE PLANNING & PROGRAMMING PROCESS



Federal Programming Process

The STIP and SHOPP are the key programming building blocks for the MPO FTIPs and FSTIP. State statutes and practice integrate state and federal programming documents into a sequential process to conserve resources and streamline the programming process.

Figure 4 – MPO/RTPA Map

