

Project Concept Unit

The primary focus of the Project Concept Unit (PCU) is to provide preliminary scopes and cost estimates for future projects in the Surface Transportation Program (STP) Urban & Rural funding categories. The original goal for this unit as set forth by the Bureau of Engineering and Highway Operations is as follows: Provide an accurate assessment, at the very beginning of the project development process, of the project scope, the associated realistic costs and any potential problem issues that can be foreseen with the information provided and/or available.

Requests for additional information should be addressed to:

Mario Marrero

Principal Engineer - Project Concept Unit

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Our Documents

- [FHWA Programs and Funding Guide for Municipalities](#)
- [STP-Urban/Rural Application \(pdf\)](#)
- [Public Information Guidelines \(pdf\)](#)
- [Unit Costs for Estimating Pavement Structures and Overlays \(pdf\)](#)
- [Preliminary Project Cost Estimating Worksheet \(zip\)](#)
- [Guideline for Estimating Rural Minor/Major Collector Projects \(pdf\)](#)
- [Elmwood Area Presentation \(pps zip\)](#)

Other Related Links

- [Design Service's Web Page for Contract Development and Estimating](#)

FHWA Federal Programs/ Funding available to Municipalities

This pamphlet is a simple guide to describe the various FHWA federal programs/ funding available to municipalities and answer some [frequently asked questions](#). The following programs will be addressed:

[Local Roads Accident Reduction Program](#)

[STP \(Surface Transportation Programs\) -Urban Program](#)

[STP- Rural Program \(State Roads Only\)](#)

[STP- Rural Minor/Major Collector Program](#)
[CMAQ \(Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality\) Program](#)
[Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement Program for Off Systems Bridges](#)
[State Local Bridge Program \(No federal funds\)](#)
[High Priority Projects](#)
[Corridor and Planning Studies](#)
[Transportation Enhancement Program](#)
[Scenic Byways \(State roads only\)](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

- What federal funding sources are available to municipalities? FHWA federal funding sources are available to municipalities mainly through a Regional Planning Organization (RPO) for some of the previously noted programs.
- What are requirements for developing and initiating roadway improvements? To initiate a roadway improvement project, municipalities need to determine the roadway deficiencies (e.g. capacity and/or safety), recommend a solution, ascertain that it is a qualifying roadway (typically functional classification greater than a local road), have it be prioritized by the RPO, and, if project selected, fill out an application and provide the requested data.
- Who do I contact? The contact person(s) are provided under each program description later in this pamphlet.
- What information is needed? The available program applications list the pertinent information needed, which usually includes a proposal plan, traffic data, and cost estimates.
- What is TIP/STIP process? The TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) is a federal requirement that is jointly developed by ConnDOT and the RPO's. It outlines project phases with cost estimates for specific projects being federally funded over the next three years and includes their funding sources. The STIP (State TIP) is a list of all TIP's for the entire state which show fiscal constraint and air quality conformance and developed through a cooperative effort between the State, the RPO's and the transit districts.
- What is ceiling? Ceiling is the obligational limit a state is permitted to use (recent levels ranging from 89% to 92%) set by Congress each federal fiscal year, which is normally less than the federal appropriation.
- How can I get local bridges rehabilitated? Local bridges on municipal roads can be rehabilitated with STP- Urban funds, State Local Bridge funds and Federal Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement (HBRR) Program Off-system funds.

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FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Local Roads Accident Reduction Program - This program is intended to address safety problems off the Federal-aid highway system. Upon availability of funds, projects are solicited from municipalities. They rank projects according to RPO process and top ranked ones are submitted to ConnDOT, who will select a limited number of viable projects based on a cost-benefit analysis, after reviewing the accident history, and based on allowable funds.

Funding: Federal (90%), State (10%), Design by Municipalities.

Contact: John Carey, Manager of Traffic Engineering (860) 594-2710.

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STP- Urban Program - In the urban areas of the State, each RPO, at its discretion, develops a solicitation program for potential projects from its member municipalities. Funding for these projects is available based on population. The projects are prioritized and submitted to ConnDOT. The Project Concept Unit (PCU) will review the applications and provide an accurate assessment of the project scope, cost and potential problems. After a public informational meeting and municipal endorsement, the PCU will program the project based on available funds.

Funding: Federal (80% Const., Design & R.O.W.), State (10% Const., Design & R.O.W.), Municipality (10% Const., Design & R.O.W.).

Contacts: Charles Barone, Planning Director (860) 594-2132.

Mario Marrero, Transp. Principal Engineer (860) 594-3481.

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STP- Rural Program - When funding becomes available, solicitations are made to the RPO's. They are asked to utilize their Long Range Plans to help in selecting projects on state roads, since the plan has determined regional needs and their prioritization. The suggested list of potential projects is submitted to the PCU who will review and provide preliminary scopes and estimates. When Long Range Plans are updated, the RPO's frequently forward their top project to ConnDOT for funding. ConnDOT will utilize the program as an alternate funding source to accomplish improvements on state roads that have developed as a result of traffic studies.

Funding: Federal (80%), State (20%), and Design (100%) by State.

Contacts: Charles Barone, Planning Director (860) 594 -2132.

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STP- Rural Minor/Major Collector Program - Funding for this program comes from the STP-Rural Program and is only available to the rural planning regions. Each year \$667,500 is available for roadways classified as minor collectors and approximately \$438,000 is available for major collectors for a total of approximately one million dollars. Projects are selected by the planning agencies and are submitted to ConnDOT based on their apportionment. The PCU reviews the scope and estimate, and after municipal endorsement, programs the project.

Funding: Federal (80% Const. & R.O.W.), Municipality (20% Const. & R.O.W.), Design typically 100% by Municipality, however, it is eligible for 80% federal funding.

Contacts: Charles Barone, Planning Director, (860) 594-2132.

Mario Marrero, Transp. Principal Engineer, (860) 594-3481.

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CMAQ Program - This program addresses congestion and air quality problems. Funds must be used for projects (e.g. traffic signalization, incident management, and rail/bus transit) that reduce congestion and/or vehicular emissions and are intended to help achieve the goal of the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments.

Funding: Typically Federal (80%) and State (20%), however, some projects qualify for 100% Federal funding, Design typically 100% by State.

Contacts: Raymond Godcher, Acting Fiscal Administrator Services I (Public Transportation), (860) 594-2805.
Charles Barone, Planning Director Tel. (860) 594-2132.

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Highway Bridge Rehabilitation & Replacement (HBRR) Program Off-systems -The State's inventory of structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges is the major component on formulating Connecticut's apportionment of federal funds in this program. In general, 15% of the available funding in this program is dedicated to bridges off the Federal aid System.

Funding: Federal (typically 80%), Municipality (20%). Design by Municipality.
Contact: [Julie Georges](#), Trans. Principal Engineer (Structures) (860) 594-3348

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[State Local Bridge Program](#) (No Fed. Funds) - As a result of state legislation, ConnDOT provides funding to municipalities to repair their bridges. These funds have been offered since 1985 at up to 33% of the eligible project cost and provide the local governments the option to borrow up to 50% of project cost at 6% interest.
Funding: State (up to 33% grant, 50% loan), Municipality (balance). Design by Municipality
Contact: [Administrator of the Local Bridge Program](#), (860) 594-3213.

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High Priority Projects - This is a list of congressionally mandated projects that are incorporated through federal legislation. To obtain funding municipalities need to contact congressional representation for project selection.

Funding: 80% Federal funds appropriated by Congress with either Municipality or State matching. Design by State or Municipality.

Contacts: Charles Roman, Director of Fiscal/ Special Services (860) 594-2969.
Charles Barone, Planning Director, (860) 594-2132.

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Corridor and Planning Studies - These studies were initiated to promote a comprehensive understanding of a given transportation problem on state roads and to facilitate a viable, publicly accepted project. Studies are initiated by RPO's and allow for multiple opportunities for public comment. Highest priority recommendations are submitted to ConnDOT for their review and possible programming within available eligible funding sources.

Funding: (Typically 80% Federal and 20% State), Design typically by State.

Contact: Charles Barone, Planning Director, (860) 594-2132.

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Transportation Enhancement Program - This program considers projects that relate to intermodal transportation systems. When funding is available, ConnDOT solicits projects from the RPO's. Applications are reviewed and ranked by the RPO's who forward all projects

to ConnDOT in priority order. ConnDOT selects new projects based on a regional priority and available funding.

Funding: Federal (80%), Municipality (20%), Design typically 100% by Municipality, however, it is eligible for 80% federal funding.

Contact: Charles Barone, Planning Director, (860) 594-2132.

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Scenic Byways - This program provides for the designation of state roads that have outstanding scenic, historical, cultural, natural, recreational, and archaeological qualities, such as All-American Roads (AAR) or National Scenic Byway (NSB). It also provides for discretionary grants for scenic byway projects on AAR, NSB, or a State-designated scenic byway and for planning, designating, and developing State scenic byway programs. Lists of projects are to be developed based on the recommendations from the Scenic Corridor Management Plans. These projects are to be prioritized in preparation for applying for Federal Scenic Byways Grants.

Funding: Federal (80%)/State (20%), Design by State

Contact: Charles Roman, Director of Fiscal/ Special Services (860) 594-2969.