

***IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION: USDOT
on STIP Amendment Approvals**

February 20, 2025

Good Morning,

We wanted to share an important update regarding the approval process for Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) amendments.

Over the past week, we've heard growing concerns from several MPOs across the country **regarding an added layer of review in the approval of STIP amendments**. We've heard from **MPOs in at least six states** that the additional layer of review was initially communicated by FHWA and FTA division offices and is reportedly under direction from USDOT Headquarters. **This morning, AMPO received confirmation that instructions regarding the additional layer of review were sent to all FHWA division offices by USDOT HQ.**

This change requires division offices to forward all STIP amendments to the Office of General Counsel (OGC) at USDOT for review before any approval actions can be taken. No timeline has been provided for how long OGC reviews will take, raising significant uncertainty and concern among MPOs and industry partners.

While FHWA divisions are reportedly continuing to accept STIP amendment submissions, **the added review layer has effectively placed a hold on all projects requiring a STIP amendment.** Impacted MPOs have flagged that if an extended review period continues, project implementation schedules could face significant disruptions. Potential impacts include delays in contract awards, construction start dates, and the obligation of federal funds—jeopardizing the ability to meet fiscal year deadlines and potentially risking the lapse of funds.

Impacted MPOs are actively assessing how the additional layer of review could affect their TIPs, **given the required consistency between STIP and TIP amendments.** In areas with large-scale projects or narrow construction windows, even short delays can cascade into prolonged setbacks, increased project costs, and missed opportunities to address critical transportation needs.

AMPO is actively communicating with federal partners to understand the reasons behind the additional layer of review. **We have requested clarification about whether this affects projects in the currently approved TIP, and we're waiting for a response.** We will continue to monitor this rapidly evolving situation, analyze impacts, and provide updates as more information becomes available.

If your MPO is experiencing delays or has concerns, please contact Katie Economou, Legislative Director, at keconomou@ampo.org. Additionally, please take our **survey [here](#)** to help us document how the funding freeze has impacted your MPO's operations.

Thank you,

AMPO Staff

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