

■ 3.0 Key Transportation Planning Documents

State Report on Transportation

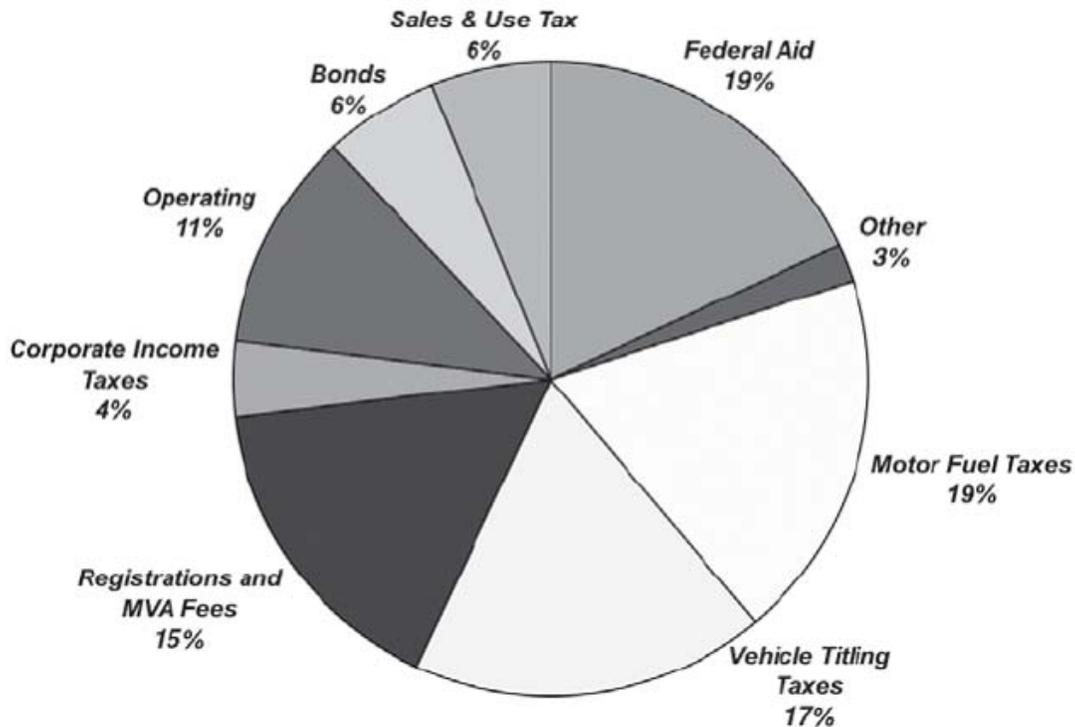
Every year, as part of the Statewide multimodal transportation planning process, MDOT prepares and distributes the State Report on Transportation (SRT) to the Maryland General Assembly, local elected officials, and interested citizens. The SRT consists of three components: the *Maryland Transportation Plan*, the *Consolidated Transportation Program*, and the *Annual Attainment Report on Transportation System Performance*. All of these reports can be found at this website: <http://www.mdot.state.md.us/Planning/index.html>.

The *2009 Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP)* establishes MDOT's 20-year vision for a world class multimodal transportation system and helps to guide Statewide improvements across all means of transportation, including highways, roads, tunnels, bridges, rail, buses, water ports, airports, bike paths, and sidewalks. The MTP provides policy direction through Statewide multimodal goals and objectives. The MTP is the basis for developing strategic transportation plans, programs, policies, and projects across the State. As prescribed by both State and Federal law, MDOT updates the Statewide transportation plan every four to five years to address current and future transportation challenges, needs, and conditions. A description of the five goals is included below:

- **Quality of Service:** Enhance user's access to and positive experience with all MDOT transportation services;
- **Safety and Security:** Provide transportation assets that maximize personal safety and security in all situations;
- **System Preservation and Performance:** Protect Maryland's investment in its transportation system to preserve existing assets and maximize the efficient use of resources and infrastructure;
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Develop transportation policies and initiatives that protect the natural, community and historic resources of the State and that encourage development in areas best able to support growth;
- **Connectivity for Daily Life:** Support continued economic growth in the State through strategic investments in a balanced, multi-modal transportation system.

The MTP guides the development of the second component of the SRT, the *Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP)*, Maryland's six-year constrained capital program. The CTP contains all capital projects funded with the Maryland Transportation Trust Fund (TTF). Figure 3.1 illustrates the TTF funding sources (also found on page 11 of the CTP). Projects from all Modal Administrations and MdTA are listed in the CTP. For major projects, the CTP contains a detailed description and an illustrative Project Information Form (PIF). The primary difference between the CTP and the STIP is that the CTP also includes projects that are not Federally funded. For the urban areas of the state, once the CTP is approved by the legislature, all of the information in the CTP is directly input into the Metropolitan TIPs for the Transit and Highway programs.

Figure 3.1 Transportation Trust Fund Sources, 2010 – 2015

Where The Money Comes From

In 2010, the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill intended to enhance transparency and accountability in the evaluation and selection of proposed major capital projects for the CTP/STIP. The resulting Maryland State law, Chapter 725, requires MDOT and other proposing entities clarify the relationship between their prioritized projects and the overarching state goals for transportation as articulated in the MTP. In addition, full consideration of related goals and policies must be considered in the selection criteria.

The final component of the SRT is the *Annual Attainment Report on Transportation System Performance (AR)*. During the 2000 General Assembly session the Legislature passed a law requiring MDOT to submit the (AR) to accompany the MTP and CTP. The purpose of the AR is to demonstrate progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the MTP and the delivery of the CTP. The AR tracks performance measures for each Modal Administration and MdTA and sets both long- and short-term performance targets. The AR also addresses the impact of induced travel and transportation demand (TDM) programs. The performance measures presented in the AR are intended to help MDOT and Maryland's citizens better understand and assess the relationship between investments in transportation programs and projects with the services and quality they provide.

Highway Needs Inventory

The Highway Needs Inventory (HNI) is a technical reference and planning document that identifies highway improvements to serve existing and projected population and economic activity in the State as well as address safety and structural problems that warrant major construction or reconstruction. The HNI is required under Transportation Article 8 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (Title 8, § 610). The SHA's Regional and Intermodal Planning Division (RIPD) works with the counties, the SHA Engineering Districts, the Highway Information Services Division, the Project Planning Division, the Office of Traffic and Safety, and the Office of Real Estate to select projects for inclusion in the HNI and develops project information for the HNI. The projects identified in the HNI represent only an acknowledgment of need based on technical analysis and adopted local and regional transportation plans. The HNI is not a construction program and the inclusion of a project does not represent a commitment to implementation. The HNI is not financially constrained nor is it based on revenue forecasts. The HNI is a truly collaborative effort that serves as the major project source document for SHA's portion of the CTP, and can be found here: <http://www.sha.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?Pageld=509>

Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plans and Programs

Maryland's six MPOs are charged with developing a 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a short-term four to six year program called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). LRTPs help MPOs review how their region is changing and growing in order to determine future transportation needs and act as a tool to channel transportation investments where they can be most effective to meet the region's transportation needs. TIPs allow MPOs to review and approve all plans and programs of regional significance that involve Federal funds. TIPs generally reflect local needs, priorities, and available funding in coordination with local transit providers, land use, and other local government officials, citizens and other stakeholders. For example, the TIP must also show year of expenditure and what types of funding will be used and each project must be described in detail, including project cost.

The Federal requirement is to update TIPs every four years; however, in Maryland MPOs update their TIPs annually to ensure that the cost and project information is as up-to-date as possible and fiscally constrained. Since Maryland uses the legislatively approved CTP (state transportation budget) as the source documentation for the TIPs, and the budget is approved annually, we feel it is the best way to demonstrate fiscal constraint and to minimize the need for amendments.

LRTPs and TIPs cannot lead to further degradation in the region's air quality. To ensure that air quality standards are met and maintained, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has outlined regulations that require MPOs and state DOTs to provide state air agencies, local air quality agencies, and transportation agencies the opportunity for consultation regarding the development of the state implementation plan (SIP), the TIP, and associated conformity determinations.¹ MDOT maintains proactive relationships between the agencies responsible for conformity ensuring a successful conformity process.

¹ http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/conformity/ref_guid/chap2.htm

Each MPO has an approved, documented, and SAFETEA-LU required public involvement process that is used in support of developing their respective LRTPs and TIPs.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

In order to receive federal funds, Federal legislation mandates that states adopt a specific process for selecting projects for implementation known as the STIP. The Maryland Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is a four to five-year, fiscally constrained, and prioritized set of transportation projects that is compiled from local and regional plans. STIP projects are selected through an annual development process. The Maryland STIP is financially constrained by the revenues reasonably expected to be available through the STIP's four-year funding period using year of expenditure dollars. In Maryland, all years of the STIP list projects and appropriate project groupings with specific funds identified for each fiscal year. Projects (or phases of projects) are listed only if full funding is anticipated to be available for the project (or appropriate project phase) within the time period established for its completion. All projects and funding details in the STIP have been scrutinized and approved by the Maryland General Assembly and by the Governor through the State's annual budget process. The STIP is comprised of three parts: the Executive Summary, the six TIPs, and the CTP.

■ **4.0 Maryland's STIP Development**

Process Overview

The STIP development process begins with the MTP and MPO LRTPs (see Figure 4.1). These long-range plans are the foundation for transportation planning in Maryland. The STIP components are identified through a cooperative process between MDOT, the Modal Administrations, SHA District Engineers, and county staff. MPOs conduct regular meetings to coordinate transportation planning efforts. The Highway Needs Inventory and Priority Letters contain specific project lists. The Annotated Code of Maryland Title 8, section 612(c) states:

“the local governing body and a majority of the local legislative delegation shall establish a list of priorities from among those secondary system projects listed in the needs inventory and the Administration shall engage in initial project planning upon the request of the local governing body and a majority of the local legislative delegation in the order established in the list of priorities.”

In other words, the Priority Letter represents each county's own internal ranking of projects deemed most important based on local need and local input. This is an effective way for counties to convey to MDOT the need for specific transportation projects and investments. Priority Letters involve requests for a wide variety of project funding – from transit improvements, highway reconstruction, and sidewalk construction to bridge improvements, bike path development, and highway safety projects. In some cases, counties reserve portions of their own funds in order to accelerate project implementation, conduct feasibility and planning studies, ensure that projects are kept on-track, and provide a funding match as required for certain types of projects. The modal share (highway, transit, etc.) of the projects listed in Priority Letters ranges from county to