What is a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

- A local, state, & federally approved document of staged, multi-year transportation improvements for the St. Cloud Metropolitan Area.
- A five (5) year document that is updated and approved by the APO, state and federal agencies, and public transit operators every year.

  - Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), such as the APO, and transit providers are required to have a minimum of four (4) years represented in their TIP/STIP documents. The APO TIP is on a rotating 5-year/4-year cycle because the APO programs two (2) years of federal funds every other year.

  - The St. Cloud metropolitan area TIP document includes projects from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) District 3 projects in the APO planning area, St. Cloud Metro Bus projects, and local federal projects.

- In non-attainment and maintenance areas for transportation related pollutants, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the APO make a conformity determination on any new or amended project in a TIP to meet state and federal air quality requirements. St. Cloud has been designated a maintenance area for air quality.
- Projects included in the TIP must be consistent with APO's Transportation Plan.

How are Projects Programmed into the TIP?

- The TIP development process begins 90 days before (early October) the end of each year.
- Projects originate from three main areas: 1) TSM, 2) Transportation Plan, and 3) implementing agencies who submit projects.
- Projects are presented to the APO Policy Board and the public for initial review and comment. Projects not meeting the minimum qualifying criteria are eliminated from consideration.
- Remaining projects are grouped into six categories: roadway and bridge; railroad and safety; enhancement; transit; right-of-way acquisition; and, corridor & environmental studies.
- Projects meeting the minimum qualifying criteria are then prioritized by the APO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) into one intermodal project list. Prioritization considerations include the following:

  - Technical engineering criteria developed by the ATP;

  - APO non-technical considerations including public involvement, project deliverability, regional benefit, funding equity and non-vehicular accommodations;

  - Other planning factors; and,

  - APO sub-targeted local federal funding available.

- TAC membership consists of technical representatives from three counties, six municipalities, three townships (depending on their desires), St. Cloud Metro Bus, Mn/DOT and APO staff. A listing of implementing agencies, TAC membership are included in Appendix A.
- A prioritized list is then forwarded to the APO's Executive Board and APO Policy Board for approval or modification. The prioritized list is presented for review, comment and approval at a public informational meeting.