



**For immediate release**

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**Analysis Shows Mixed Progress on Transportation Funding Investments**

*Advocacy group calls for decreased spending on road and bridge expansion projects*

A new report from Tri-State Transportation Campaign finds Connecticut making mixed progress on prioritizing its sustainable transportation infrastructure investments. Tri-State Transportation Campaign analyzed the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (ConnDOT) \$4.26 billion 2012-2015 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), a blueprint for transportation investments and a key tool to understanding the State's transportation funding priorities. The STIP outlines transportation projects which ConnDOT plans to commit federal, state and local resources in the four years from 2012 through 2015, and the analysis serves to compare how the State's priorities have, and have not, shifted from past years.

"Our analysis shows Connecticut making important progress: pedestrian and bicycle investment is up and the State is dedicating more money to maintaining existing infrastructure," said Renata Silberblatt, staff analyst at the Campaign. "But the State is still over-committing to costly road and bridge expansion projects. Almost 41 cents of every road or bridge dollar goes to expansion, even though more than 70 percent of roads in the state are in less than good condition," she said.

While Connecticut has made strides in recent years towards supporting a 'state of good repair' investment strategy for its roads and bridges, when compared to neighboring states Connecticut still falls short. Rhode Island spends just 11 cents of every road or bridge dollar on road or bridge expansion projects, while New York spends about 14 cents and Massachusetts spends 26 cents on expansion projects, according to a previous 50-state STIP analysis ([trackstatedollars.org](http://trackstatedollars.org)) conducted by the Campaign in 2012.

"Compared to the last STIP, Connecticut is spending a smaller share of funds on transit capital projects," pointed out Senior Planner Steven Higashide. "Furthermore, two transit projects that are on their way to completion – the New Haven-Springfield Rail Line and CTfastrak – represent a quarter of all transit capital spending. It's time for Connecticut to start thinking about the next generation of transit projects," he said.

The Campaign found that:

- Although transit capital investments continue to comprise the largest chunk of the STIP, the share of the STIP dedicated to these types of projects has decreased from previous years. The New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Line and CTfastrak make up 24.9 percent of transit capital dollars.
- While spending on road or bridge expansion has decreased to 14.7 percent from 20.0 percent in the 2010-2013 STIP, nearly 41 cents of every dollar is still dedicated to road or bridge expansion.

- Although fix-it-first projects consume a larger share of STIP funds, 72.4 percent of the state's roadways were in less than good condition in 2009 and 35.1 percent of the state's bridges were rated deficient in 2012, highlighting the need for renewed commitment to the repairing and maintaining of the state's existing infrastructure.
- The percentage of funds going towards pedestrian and bicycle projects has increased since TSTC's last analysis. However, a higher percentage of federal earmark funds are paying for these projects, foreshadowing a future funding problem given that MAP-21, the current transportation law, eliminates federal earmarks.
- Transit projects are receiving a smaller share of flexible federal funds than they have in the past. However, MAP-21 provides funding that the State could "flex" to pay for transit and maintenance projects.

Prioritizing maintenance and repair of the State's existing road and bridges, or a 'fix-it-first' policy, is integral to creating a more balanced transportation system in the state. Road and bridge capacity expansion projects are very expensive, and consumes Connecticut's limited transportation resources.

In order to keep the State moving towards a more equitable and sustainable investment strategy, the Campaign recommends:

- Decreasing spending on road or bridge expansion projects.
- Doubling down on its commitment to a fix-it-first road and bridge program.
- Increasing sustainable investment in pedestrian and bicycle projects.
- Using flexible funding available in MAP-21 to invest in more pedestrian, bicycling and transit infrastructure.
- Greater transparency in presenting information in the STIP.

Tri-State went line-by-line through the STIP and categorized projects into 15 categories: Bicycle/Pedestrian, Environmental, Ferry, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Road or Bridge Expansion, Road or Bridge Maintenance, Road or Bridge Minor Expansion, Transit Capital, Transit Operating, Safety, Signage, Streetscape/Landscape, Transportation Demand Management and Other.

The full report can be found at <http://tstc.org/reports/CTSTIP.pdf> and more information about the report's methodology can be found at <http://tstc.org/reports/CTSTIP/CTSTIP-2013-methodology.php>

*Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.*