

exempt project) that is on a facility which serves regional transportation needs (such as access to and from the area outside of the region, major activity centers in the region, major planned developments such as new retail malls, sports complexes, etc., or transportation terminals as well as most terminals themselves) and would normally be included in the modeling of a metropolitan area's transportation network, including at a minimum all principal arterial highways and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel.

*Safety margin* means the amount by which the total projected emissions from all sources of a given pollutant are less than the total emissions that would satisfy the applicable requirement for reasonable further progress, attainment, or maintenance.

*Standard* means a national ambient air quality standard.

*Transit* is mass transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance which provides general or special service to the public on a regular and continuing basis. It does not include school buses or charter or sightseeing services.

*Transit project* is an undertaking to implement or modify a transit facility or transit-related program; purchase transit vehicles or equipment; or provide financial assistance for transit operations. It does not include actions that are solely within the jurisdiction of local transit agencies, such as changes in routes, schedules, or fares. It may consist of several phases. For analytical purposes, it must be defined inclusively enough to:

(1) Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope;

(2) Have independent utility or independent significance, i.e., be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made; and

(3) Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

*Transportation control measure (TCM)* is any measure that is specifically identified and committed to in the applicable implementation plan, including a substitute or additional TCM

that is incorporated into the applicable SIP through the process established in CAA section 176(c)(8), that is either one of the types listed in CAA section 108, or any other measure for the purpose of reducing emissions or concentrations of air pollutants from transportation sources by reducing vehicle use or changing traffic flow or congestion conditions. Notwithstanding the first sentence of this definition, vehicle technology-based, fuel-based, and maintenance-based measures which control the emissions from vehicles under fixed traffic conditions are not TCMs for the purposes of this subpart.

*Transportation improvement program (TIP)* means a transportation improvement program developed by a metropolitan planning organization under 23 U.S.C. 134(j).

*Transportation plan* means the official intermodal metropolitan transportation plan that is developed through the metropolitan planning process for the metropolitan planning area, developed pursuant to 23 CFR part 450.

*Transportation project* is a highway project or a transit project.

*Written commitment* for the purposes of this subpart means a written commitment that includes a description of the action to be taken; a schedule for the completion of the action; a demonstration that funding necessary to implement the action has been authorized by the appropriating or authorizing body; and an acknowledgment that the commitment is an enforceable obligation under the applicable implementation plan.

[62 FR 43801, Aug. 15, 1997, as amended at 69 FR 40072, July 1, 2004; 71 FR 12510, Mar. 10, 2006; 73 FR 4439, Jan. 24, 2008; 75 FR 14283, Mar. 24, 2010; 77 FR 14986, Mar. 14, 2012]

### § 93.102 Applicability.

(a) *Action applicability.* (1) Except as provided for in paragraph (c) of this section or § 93.126, conformity determinations are required for:

(i) The adoption, acceptance, approval or support of transportation plans and transportation plan amendments developed pursuant to 23 CFR part 450 or 49 CFR part 613 by an MPO or DOT;

(ii) The adoption, acceptance, approval or support of TIPs and TIP

amendments developed pursuant to 23 CFR part 450 or 49 CFR part 613 by an MPO or DOT; and

(iii) The approval, funding, or implementation of FHWA/FTA projects.

(2) Conformity determinations are not required under this subpart for individual projects which are not FHWA/FTA projects. However, §93.121 applies to such projects if they are regionally significant.

(b) *Geographic applicability.* The provisions of this subpart shall apply in all nonattainment and maintenance areas for transportation-related criteria pollutants for which the area is designated nonattainment or has a maintenance plan.

(1) The provisions of this subpart apply with respect to emissions of the following criteria pollutants: ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), particles with an aerodynamic diameter less than or equal to a nominal 10 micrometers (PM<sub>10</sub>); and particles with an aerodynamic diameter less than or equal to a nominal 2.5 micrometers (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

(2) The provisions of this subpart also apply with respect to emissions of the following precursor pollutants:

(i) Volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) in ozone areas;

(ii) NO<sub>x</sub> in NO<sub>2</sub> areas;

(iii) VOC and/or NO<sub>x</sub> in PM<sub>10</sub> areas if the EPA Regional Administrator or the director of the State air agency has made a finding that transportation-related emissions of one or both of these precursors within the nonattainment area are a significant contributor to the PM<sub>10</sub> nonattainment problem and has so notified the MPO and DOT, or if the applicable implementation plan (or implementation plan submission) establishes an approved (or adequate) budget for such emissions as part of the reasonable further progress, attainment or maintenance strategy;

(iv) NO<sub>x</sub> in PM<sub>2.5</sub> areas, unless both the EPA Regional Administrator and the director of the state air agency have made a finding that transportation-related emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> within the nonattainment area are not a significant contributor to the PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment problem and has so notified the MPO and DOT, or the applicable

implementation plan (or implementation plan submission) does not establish an approved (or adequate) budget for such emissions as part of the reasonable further progress, attainment or maintenance strategy; and

(v) VOC, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and/or ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) in PM<sub>2.5</sub> areas either if the EPA Regional Administrator or the director of the state air agency has made a finding that transportation-related emissions of any of these precursors within the nonattainment area are a significant contributor to the PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment problem and has so notified the MPO and DOT, or if the applicable implementation plan (or implementation plan submission) establishes an approved (or adequate) budget for such emissions as part of the reasonable further progress, attainment or maintenance strategy.

(3) The provisions of this subpart apply to PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment and maintenance areas with respect to PM<sub>2.5</sub> from re-entrained road dust if the EPA Regional Administrator or the director of the State air agency has made a finding that re-entrained road dust emissions within the area are a significant contributor to the PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment problem and has so notified the MPO and DOT, or if the applicable implementation plan (or implementation plan submission) includes re-entrained road dust in the approved (or adequate) budget as part of the reasonable further progress, attainment or maintenance strategy. Re-entrained road dust emissions are produced by travel on paved and unpaved roads (including emissions from anti-skid and deicing materials).

(4) The provisions of this subpart apply to maintenance areas through the last year of a maintenance area's approved CAA section 175A(b) maintenance plan, unless the applicable implementation plan specifies that the provisions of this subpart shall apply for more than 20 years.

(c) *Limitations.* In order to receive any FHWA/FTA approval or funding actions, including NEPA approvals, for a project phase subject to this subpart, a currently conforming transportation plan and TIP must be in place at the time of project approval as described in §93.114, except as provided by §93.114(b).

(d) *Grace period for new nonattainment areas.* For areas or portions of areas which have been continuously designated attainment or not designated for any NAAQS for ozone, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> or NO<sub>2</sub> since 1990 and are subsequently redesignated to nonattainment or designated nonattainment for any NAAQS for any of these pollutants, the provisions of this subpart shall not apply with respect to that NAAQS for 12 months following the effective date of final designation to nonattainment for each NAAQS for such pollutant.

[62 FR 43801, Aug. 15, 1997, as amended at 65 FR 18918, Apr. 10, 2000; 67 FR 50817, Aug. 6, 2002; 69 FR 40072, July 1, 2004; 70 FR 24291, May 6, 2005; 73 FR 4439, Jan. 24, 2008]

#### § 93.103 Priority.

When assisting or approving any action with air quality-related consequences, FHWA and FTA shall give priority to the implementation of those transportation portions of an applicable implementation plan prepared to attain and maintain the NAAQS. This priority shall be consistent with statutory requirements for allocation of funds among States or other jurisdictions.

#### § 93.104 Frequency of conformity determinations.

(a) Conformity determinations and conformity redeterminations for transportation plans, TIPs, and FHWA/FTA projects must be made according to the requirements of this section and the applicable implementation plan.

(b) *Frequency of conformity determinations for transportation plans.* (1) Each new transportation plan must be demonstrated to conform before the transportation plan is approved by the MPO or accepted by DOT.

(2) All transportation plan amendments must be found to conform before the transportation plan amendments are approved by the MPO or accepted by DOT, unless the amendment merely adds or deletes exempt projects listed in § 93.126 or § 93.127. The conformity determination must be based on the transportation plan and the amendment taken as a whole.

(3) The MPO and DOT must determine the conformity of the transportation plan (including a new regional

emissions analysis) no less frequently than every four years. If more than four years elapse after DOT's conformity determination without the MPO and DOT determining conformity of the transportation plan, a 12-month grace period will be implemented as described in paragraph (f) of this section. At the end of this 12-month grace period, the existing conformity determination will lapse.

(c) *Frequency of conformity determinations for transportation improvement programs.* (1) A new TIP must be demonstrated to conform before the TIP is approved by the MPO or accepted by DOT.

(2) A TIP amendment requires a new conformity determination for the entire TIP before the amendment is approved by the MPO or accepted by DOT, unless the amendment merely adds or deletes exempt projects listed in § 93.126 or § 93.127.

(3) The MPO and DOT must determine the conformity of the TIP (including a new regional emissions analysis) no less frequently than every four years. If more than four years elapse after DOT's conformity determination without the MPO and DOT determining conformity of the TIP, a 12-month grace period will be implemented as described in paragraph (f) of this section. At the end of this 12-month grace period, the existing conformity determination will lapse.

(d) *Projects.* FHWA/FTA projects must be found to conform before they are adopted, accepted, approved, or funded. Conformity must be redetermined for any FHWA/FTA project if one of the following occurs: a significant change in the project's design concept and scope; three years elapse since the most recent major step to advance the project; or initiation of a supplemental environmental document for air quality purposes. Major steps include NEPA process completion; start of final design; acquisition of a significant portion of the right-of-way; and, construction (including Federal approval of plans, specifications and estimates).

(e) *Triggers for transportation plan and TIP conformity determinations.* Conformity of existing transportation plans and TIPs must be redetermined