

**Proposed TIP Amendment
Rensselaer Station Platform & Track Capacity Improvements**

Discretionary funds have recently been made available for intercity passenger rail projects from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). A condition for application for these funds is that the project be part of an approved TIP/STIP before funding is awarded (similar to FTA's discretionary grant programs but different from FHWA's Enhancement Program, for example, where inclusion in the TIP occurs after project selection).

The New York State Department of Transportation is proposing a project calling for the installation of a fourth passenger track and signal changes at the Rensselaer Train Station. The purpose of the project is to create additional train capacity and operational flexibility at this station. This project was identified in the New York State Senate High Speed Rail Task Force Action Program, and is consistent with New York's Statewide Transportation Master Plan, CDTC's New Visions Plan and REVEST initiative, and CDTA's rail planning initiative. According to NYSDOT, this project is considered the most appropriate for the funds available at this time.

In accordance with CDTC's TIP procedures, this action would normally require Policy Board approval based on a Planning Committee recommendation. Because FRA's project solicitation schedule was announced after February's Planning Committee meeting, and because the application deadline occurs before the next Policy Board meeting, the Policy Board at its March 6, 2008 meeting authorized the Planning Committee to act on its behalf on this matter.

Regarding air quality, New York State's ICG (Intermodal Coordinating Group) agreed that this project should be considered exempt for purposes of air quality conformity analysis. The ICG is an interagency group that coordinates air quality planning in New York State and includes representatives from NYSDOT, NYSDEC, EPA, FHWA, FTA, and New York State's MPOs.

Additional detail of the request is described in the attached summary prepared by NYSDOT's Main Office staff.