

# **ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**FFY 2011**

## **ANNUAL FEDERAL AID OBLIGATION REPORT**

**Reporting Period  
October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011**



**April 2012**

## **ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

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## BACKGROUND

The U.S. Department of Transportation requires every metropolitan area with a population over 50,000 to have a designated MPO in order to qualify for the receipt of Federal highway and public transportation funds. In 2003, the Governor of New York State designated the UCTC as the MPO responsible for transportation planning in Ulster County. As the designated MPO, the UCTC is responsible for making final decisions for programming transportation improvements in the Kingston Urbanized area and a portion of the Poughkeepsie-Newburgh Transportation Management Area (TMA).

Federal regulations require an annual listing of bridge, highway and transit projects, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which Federal transportation funds have been obligated in the preceding year. An *obligation* is the U.S. Department of Transportation's legal commitment to pay the Federal share of a project's cost. Projects for which funds have been obligated are not necessarily initiated or completed in a given program year and the amount of the obligation in a single year will not necessarily equal the total cost of the project. This annual listing of Federal aid obligations must be made available for public review by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The listing must be consistent with the funding categories identified in the adopted Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The TIP is a five-year financial plan that identifies the project costs, funding sources, phase types and implementation schedule of federally funded transportation improvements. TIP projects must be consistent with the overall goals and objectives identified in the Long Range Transportation Plan. The TIP can be viewed online at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/tip.html>.

The TIP typically receives a number of amendments and revisions throughout its 5-year lifecycle. The UCTC TIP in effect and referenced for use in this FFY 2011 Obligation Report was approved by the UCTC Policy Committee on July 5, 2011. Other data sources include information provided by the New York State Department of Transportation Region 8 office and data from local departments and agencies.

## LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A Federal Aid Obligation Report together with the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) helps to evaluate an MPO's overall performance. Financial forecasts from the LRTP help establish a baseline for which Federal aid obligations can be



compared and help measure an MPO's ability to implement projects. The current annual LRTP Federal aid target for Ulster County is approximately \$15 million per year during the 2011 to 2015 five year cycle.<sup>1</sup> The LRTP update for the county for year 2035 can be viewed online at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/lrtp.html>.

A continuation of underperforming Federal Aid Obligation Reports may indicate one or more of the following: 1) financial forecasts improperly calculated; 2) a downturn in the economy resulting in less Federal aid available for programming; 3) the complexity of the Federal aid process; 4) insufficient local funding to match the Federal aid projects programmed; and 5) changing priorities.

## FEDERAL AID OBLIGATIONS

To ensure that the public has an accurate understanding of how federal funds are actually being spent on transportation projects, Congress, in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (1998) and continuing in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU, 2005), included a requirement that the organizations responsible for approving the Transportation Improvement Program publish an annual listing of project obligations.

**Obligation** in the context of this report is the Federal government's legal commitment to pay the Federal share of a project's cost. An obligated project is one that has been authorized by the Federal agency as meeting eligibility requirements for federal funds. Projects for which funds have been obligated are not necessarily initiated or completed in the program year. For obligations on a construction project, typically the project needs to complete a competitive bid process and begin construction if an acceptable bid is received. Alternatively, projects may have obtained permission to proceed to construction using local funds, with the ability to be obligated and reimbursed with federal funds at a later date. Some of the projects or project phases listed in this report may already have been completed.

The amount of the obligation usually does not equal the total cost of the project. This is because an obligation is typically for only one phase of a multi-phased project. The obligation only accounts for federal funds allocated to the project. The figures exclude any matching state and local funds that are likely necessary as well.

For Federal Transit Administration (FTA) projects, obligation occurs when the FTA grant is awarded. For Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) projects, obligation occurs by phase when a project agreement is executed and FHWA authorizes the federal funds. A project agreement defines specific project elements that are eligible for funding; how financing will occur; and agency roles, responsibilities and liabilities.



Once funds have been obligated, the project sponsor/lead agency begins incurring eligible project expenses and then requests reimbursement from the eligible grant recipient. The reimbursement request must demonstrate that the recipient incurred the costs consistent with the project agreement and all federal requirements.

The list of obligated projects is organized in a manner consistent with the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). For each project identified, the list includes the following:

- PIN: a Project Identification Number (PIN) that NYSDOT uses to track projects;
- Project Description: a narrative description used to define the nature and location of the project;
- Project Sponsor: the lead agency in charge of carrying out the project;
- Total Federal Project Cost: the total amount of federal funds budgeted for the project, excluding state and local funds;
- Federal Funds Programmed on TIP: the planned amount of funding programmed on the TIP that year (a '—' symbol indicates that the project is no longer listed on the current TIP);
- Federally Funded Phases Programmed in FFY 2011: the phases in the project development process that were planned in the TIP for the FFY (projects no longer listed on the current TIP but receiving funding are labeled as "not applicable);"
- Project Phases Obligated in FFY 2011: the phases for which funding was actually obligated during the federal fiscal year;
- Federal Funds Obligated in FFY 2011: the funding obligated (in millions of dollars) or not obligated (expressed as a negative integer, ie. (0.000)).

## Project Phases

Phases of TIP projects are categorized in the following manner:

- Scoping: This phase includes meetings with project developers and designers, local government representatives, and other involved parties. Decisions are made regarding specific elements that will be included in the project and the range of design alternatives that will be investigated.
- Preliminary Design/Engineering (PD): This phase includes basic engineering work on each alternative, traffic studies, environmental analyses, and other work specific to the project. Public outreach in accordance with state and



Federal requirements is used to gain community input on the project. A preferred alternative is selected to advance the project.

- Detailed Design (DD): This phase includes detailed engineering work on the preferred alternative. This phase results in the development of plans and specifications that a construction contractor will work from.
  - (PE: covers all phases for design – Scoping, Preliminary Design & Detail Design)
- Right-of-Way Incidentals (RI): This phase includes preparation work required prior to right-of-way acquisition.
- Right-of-Way Acquisition (RA): This phase includes the acquisition of right-of-way (property) necessary to complete the project. Acquisition can be achieved through the purchase of property or an easement.
  - (ROW: covers both RI and RA phases)
- Construction (CONST): This phase includes all work necessary to build the project.
- Construction Inspection (CI): This phase includes ongoing inspection to ensure construction is performed properly and conforms to specifications.
- Miscellaneous/Other (MISC): This phase is usually associated with public transportation projects. It involves the purchase and acquisition of vehicles and associated preventive maintenance, though in some cases, such as for station, parking, and maintenance/storage facilities, the construction of fixed or permanent facilities is undertaken. This phase type also includes funding for agency staff and/or contractors to perform work that supports the transportation system (e.g., bridge inspection, traffic center operations, etc.).

## FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2011 FEDERAL AID OBLIGATIONS

Approximately **\$4.997 million** in Federal Transit Authority aid was obligated for transit projects in Ulster County in FFY 2011. Similarly, approximately **\$3.295 million** in Federal Highway Administration aid was obligated for various highway project phases in Ulster County in FFY 2011.

**Tables 1-A and 1-B** on pages 5 and 6 identify project phases obligated in FFY 2011 for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) projects and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) projects, respectively.



**Table 1-A: List of UCTC Federal Aid Obligations, FTA Projects/Phases, FFY 2011**

Reporting Period: October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011						
Transit Provider Funds in Millions of Dollars						
PIN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Project Sponsor	TOTAL FEDERAL PROJECT COST	FEDERALLY FUNDED PHASES PROGRAMMED IN FFY 2011	DATE OBLIGATED	FEDERAL FUNDS OBLIGATED FFY 2011
<b>Transit Projects</b>						
8TRU14	PROJECT ADMINISTRATION AND PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE FUNDING FOR THE ULSTER COUNTY BUS SYSTEM	UCAT	0.720	MISC	9/23/11	1.124
8TRU28	PURCHASE OF SEVEN 35 FOOT TRANSIT BUSES WITH LOW FLOOR FOR THE ULSTER COUNTY BUS SYSTEM	UCAT	0.560	MISC	9/23/11	0.360
8TRU50	ULSTER COUNTY AREA TRANSIT OPERATIONS	UCAT	0.059	[NONE]	9/23/11	0.183
8TRU53	PURCHASE TWO (2) THIRTY FOOT BUSES, PURCHASE TWO (2) SUPPORT VEHICLES, PURCHASES SECURITY CAMERAS, ROADSIDE SIGNAGE, BICYCLE RACKS, BUS SHELTERS, PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE, AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION	UCAT	2.126	[NONE]	3/29/11	2.125
8TRU56	ULSTER-GREENE COUNTY CHAPTER NYSARC, INC BUS PURCHASE	ULSTER-GREENE COUNTY	0.038	MISC	4/18/11	0.038
8TRU58	TMA USA 89 5307 DISTRIBUTION TO INTER COUNTY COMMUTER BUS SERVICE (TRAILWAYS). PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE	TRAILWAYS	1.167	MISC	September-11	1.167
<i>Total Federal Project Cost</i>			<i>4.670</i>	<b>Total FTA Obligated Funds:</b>		<b>4.997</b>



**Table 1-B: List of UCTC Federal Aid Obligations, FHWA Projects/Phases, FFY 2011**

Reporting Period: October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011							
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Funds in Millions of Dollars							
PIN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Project Sponsor	TOTAL FEDERAL PROJECT COST	FEDERAL FUNDS PROGRAM MED ON TIP	FEDERALLY FUNDED PHASES PROGRAMMED IN FFY 2011	PROJECT PHASES OBLIGATED IN 2011 (DATE)	FEDERAL FUNDS OBLIGATED FFY 2011
<b>State Projects</b>							
823938	ROUTE 9W AT YOUNG AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS	NYSDOT	0.756	0.756	DETLDES, PRELDES, ROWACQU, ROWINCD	ROW (2/1/11), PE (several)	0.052 0.252
846049	ROUTE 32/RONDOUT CREEK BRIDGE REHABILITATION	NYSDOT	4.194	—	not applicable	CONST (4/14/11) close out phase	0.500
873207	I587: RTE 32-RTE 28	NYSDOT	3.603	—	not applicable	ROW (1/6/11) close out ROW	0.001
8RT809	MOHAWK PRESERVE REC TRAILS PROJECT	NYSDOT	0.100	—	not applicable	CONST (2/22/11) advance funded, partially converted	0.020
<i>Total Federal Project Cost, State Projects:</i>			7.897	<i>Total State</i>			0.825
<b>Local Projects</b>							
875618	GREENKILL AVENUE / BROADWAY (NYS ROUTE 28) CITY OF KINGSTON. BRIDGE REPLACEMENT OF BIN 2019580	City of Kingston	1.727	1.727	not applicable	PE (8/22/11) advance funded	0.224
875639	KINGSTON PED BRIDGE	City of Kingston	0.029	—	not applicable	CONST (12/20/10) close out phase	0.004
875710	ABEEL STREET: HUDSON STREET TO CITY	City of Kingston	5.421	—	not applicable	PE (2/1/11) advance funded	0.200
						ROW (5/12/11) advance funded	0.100
875781	TILLSON AVE: FROM ROUTE 92 TO ROUTE 44/55: SAFETY ALIGNMENT WORK. TOWN OF LLOYD, HAMLET OF HIGHLAND	Town of Lloyd	3.135	3.135	PRELDES	PE (9/19/11) match supplemental agreement	0.140
875799	RT 208, SOUTHSIDE AVE, PLATTEKILL AVE SIDEWALKS	Town of New Paltz	0.028	—	not applicable	PE (1/3/11) close out phase	0.005
876029	WASHINGTON AVENUE SIGNALS @ SCHWENK DRIVE & NORTH FRONT STREET, CITY OF KINGSTON	City of Kingston	0.077	0.077	not applicable	PE (8/22/11) advance funded	0.061
878022	HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL	Town of Lloyd	1.544	—	MISC	CONST (6/17/11) advance funded/locally administered	1.544
882325	VILLAGE OF NEW PALTZ PARK & RIDE LOT ON ROUTE 32	Village of New Paltz	0.096	0.096	not applicable	PE (5/3/11)	0.192
<i>Total Federal Project Cost, Local Projects</i>			12.057	<i>Total Local</i>			2.470
<b>Total State + Local Federal Project Cost</b>			<b>19.954</b>	<b>Total FHWA Obligated Funds:</b>			<b>3.295</b>



## FEDERAL AID SCHEDULED FOR OBLIGATION, BUT NOT OBLIGATED

Approximately **\$2.527 million** in Federal Transit Authority aid was eligible for obligation in Ulster County in FFY 2011, but not obligated. Similarly, approximately **\$0.994 million** in Federal Highway Administration aid was eligible for obligation in Ulster County in FFY 2011, but not obligated.

**Tables 2-A and 2-B** on pages 8 and 9 identify project phases that were eligible for obligation during FFY 2011, but not obligated.

**Table 2-A:** List of UCTC FTA Projects/Phases Eligible for Obligation, But Not Obligated, FFY 2011

<b>Reporting Period: October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011</b>						
<b>Transit Provider Funds in Millions of Dollars</b>						
PIN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Project Sponsor	TOTAL FEDERAL PROJECT COST	FEDERALLY FUNDED PHASES PROGRAMMED IN FFY 2011	PROJECT PHASES OBLIGATED IN 2011 (DATE)	FEDERAL FUNDS NOT OBLIGATED FFY 2011
<b>Transit Projects</b>						
8TRU15	ULSTER COUNTY BUS SHELTER PROGRAM	UCAT	0.200	MISC	—	(0.200)
8TRU16	PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE FUNDING FOR THE ADIRONDACK TRAILWAYS BUS SYSTEM	UCAT	3.425	MISC	—	(0.685)
8TRU57	TMA UZA 89 5307 DISTRIBUTION TO ULSTER COUNTY AREA TRANSIT. PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE.	UCAT	0.642	MISC	—	(0.642)
8TRM25	SECTION 5310 FUTURE PROJECTS BLOCK	NYS DOT	0.280	MISC	—	(0.280)
8TRU17	OPERATIONS FOR CITY OF KINGSTON CITIBUS	CITIBUS	1.300	MISC	—	(0.200)
8TRU18	PROJECT ADMINISTRATION FOR CITY OF KINGSTON CITIBUS	CITIBUS	2.000	MISC	—	(0.400)
8TRU19	PREVENTATIVE MAINTAINANCE FOR CITY OF KINGSTON CITIBUS	CITIBUS	0.600	MISC	—	(0.120)
<i>Total Federal Project Cost</i>			<i>8.447</i>	<b><i>Total Unobligated FTA Funds:</i></b>		<b><i>(2.527)</i></b>



**Table 2-B: List of UCTC FHWA Projects/Phases Eligible for Obligation, But Not Obligated, FFY 2011**

Reporting Period: October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011							
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Funds in Millions of Dollars							
PIN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Project Sponsor	TOTAL FEDERAL PROJECT COST	FEDERAL FUNDS PROGRAM MED ON TIP	FEDERALLY FUNDED PHASES PROGRAMMED IN FFY 2011	PROJECT PHASES OBLIGATED IN 2011 (DATE)	FEDERAL FUNDS OBLIGATED FFY 2011
<b>State Projects</b>							
823938	ROUTE 209/ROCHESTER CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	NYSDOT	0.132	0.132	DETLDES,	—	(0.088)
					ROWACQU	—	(0.044)
846059	NYSDOT WILL REIMBURSE THE TOWN OF ROSENDALE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, LEASE, AND MAINTENANCE OF A P&R LOT ON ROUTE 32	NYSDOT	0.240	0.240	OPER	—	(0.112)
<i>Total Federal Project Cost, State Projects:</i>			0.372			<i>State Funds Not Obligated</i>	(0.244)
<b>Local Projects</b>							
875914	HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL (TOWN OF LLOYD)	TOWN OF LLOYD	0.200	0.200	DETLDES	—	(0.032)
					PRELDES	—	(0.150)
					ROWINCD	—	(0.018)
875925	D&H CANAL/O&W RR TRAIL: ROCHESTER LINE TO EASTERN STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (TOWN OF WAWARSING)	TOWN OF WAWARSING	0.128	0.128	DETLDES	—	(0.064)
					PRELDES	—	(0.056)
					ROWINCD	—	(0.008)
875990	PAVEMENT REHAB-SOUTH PULL CORNERS ROAD: ROUTE 299 TO ROUTE 32, RECONDITION TOP COAT, INSTALL SIX FOOT WIDE HEAVY DUTY SHOULDER, MOVE GUIDERAIL TO ACCOMMODATE NEW SHOULDER. TOWN OF NEW PALTZ	COUNTY DPW	1.286	1.286	DETLDES	—	(0.067)
					PRELDES	—	(0.070)
					ROWINCD	—	(0.006)
875995	WALLKILL HAMLET SIDEWALKS, HAMLET OF WALLKILL, TOWN OF SHAWANGUNK	TOWN OF SHAWANGUNK	1.655	1.655	DETLDES	—	(0.131)
876008	DOWNTOWN AREA PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS (VILLAGE OF SAUGERTIES)	VILLAGE OF SAUGERTIES	0.847	0.847	ROWACQU	—	(0.148)
<i>Total Federal Project Cost, Local Projects</i>			4.116			<i>Total Local</i>	(0.750)
<b>Total Federal State + Local Project Cost</b>			<b>4.488</b>			<b>Total FHWA Obligated Funds:</b>	<b>(0.994)</b>



## SUMMARY

The Federal Aid Obligation Report enables the UCTC to monitor the rate of federal aid obligations to ensure federal funding is maximized.

A total of \$3.295 million – approximately 77% – of Federal Highway Administration funds that were eligible for obligation during FFY 2011 were successfully obligated. A total of \$4.997 million – approximately 66% – of Federal Transit Administration funds that were eligible for obligation during FFY 2011 were successfully obligated. Overall, while the \$8.292 million of Federal funds that were obligated in FFY 2011 in Ulster County comes far short of the 2010 level of \$17.055 million, the overall FHWA/FTA obligation ratio of 70% indicates strong performance in Ulster County during FFY 2011. These figures are summarized below in Table 3.

**Table 3: Summary of 2011 UCTC Federal Obligations**

	<b>Obligated Funds</b> (millions of dollars)	<b>Unobligated Funds</b> (millions of dollars)	<i>Row totals</i>
<b>FHWA</b>	\$3.295	<b>\$(0.994)</b>	<b>\$4.289</b>
<b>FTA</b>	\$4.997	<b>\$(2.527)</b>	<b>\$7.524</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$8.292</b>	<b>\$(3.521)</b>	<b>\$11.813</b>

It is important to note that FFY's 2009 and 2010 experienced a significant influx of Federal investment brought about by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. One ARRA project alone – the Route 28 Preventive Maintenance project – accounted for over \$8 million in 2010 obligations. Therefore, the seemingly lower amounts of funding are more likely a reflection of the conclusion of ARRA along with a mix of other factors, including declining federal funding levels.

Federal funding for projects programmed goes unobligated for various reasons. Unobligated federal funding does not carry over into the next FFY, rather, it expires at the end FFY if unclaimed by the project sponsor. Unobligated federal funds represent an *opportunity cost* for other Ulster County municipalities that may be waiting to receive federal aid for a project. In this sense, projects programmed but not acted upon hold up federal funding that could otherwise be utilized by other project sponsors waiting for federal aid. UCTC staff will continue to work closely with NYSDOT and local project sponsors to stay on top of project priorities and help sponsors move their projects to implementation. Staff will also continue to assist project sponsors with the identification of unused federal aid and process TIP amendments to modify transportation priorities to help utilize federal aid obligation authority before it expires.

<sup>i</sup> Refer to Year 2035 UCTC LRTP, *Table 6-2: Total Anticipated Funding Resources Compared to Needs*, page 6-13. \$15m is calculated by adding the Federal Highway Administration Funds 2011-2015 column (omitting IM and STP Rail) and dividing across the five-year program span. Therefore, \$75.86m/5 = ~\$15m/year.

