

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a long range, multimodal plan that provides a blueprint to address transportation issues and needs through the year 2035. All major transportation modes are incorporated into the plan, including highways and streets, public transportation, airports, freight and goods movement, and bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Periodically, the MTP is updated through a cooperative process among the public, government, business, and special interest groups. The lead agency for preparing and adopting the MTP is the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Spokane County area. The SRTC Policy Board is the final decision making body of SRTC. The Board is composed of local elected officials, representatives from area transportation agencies, and transportation industry experts.

Through a cooperative planning process with the affected state and federal agencies, the Spokane Transit Authority (STA), and local governmental agencies, the following issues have been addressed in the 2011-2035 MTP:

- Planning assumptions for developing a new air quality conformity determination.
- The identification of a new 2035 planning horizon year, with interim planning years for 2015 and 2025.
- An evaluation of existing projects included in the previous 2008 MTP within the context of updated revenue and expenditure projections, which is necessary to ensure the plan is financially constrained.

Transportation projects that are needed to address growth and development have been identified for inclusion in the MTP by evaluating the current growth patterns and forecasting growth and development across the metropolitan area. Spokane County had a 2010 population of 471,221¹ people, which is expected to grow to more than 639,604 by 2035. This represents an increase of more than 168,000 residents, a gain of more than 35 percent. This means more travel into and through the region and greater demands being placed on the existing transportation system.

Some areas of Spokane County are essentially built out, such as the lower north side and south hill of the City of Spokane. These areas still expect to see increased travel demand as new employment opportunities are created in retail and commercial centers and land in industrial developments is converted to a wide range of uses from medium density residential to high rise residential. Similarly, areas to the north and south of the urbanized area, as well as in Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Mead, and West Plains are also experiencing expanding residential and commercial areas that will attract new trips to areas

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, State & County QuickFacts

that have been semi-rural and rural agricultural environments. This will continue transportation and other infrastructure needs such as roadways improvements, non-motorized improvements and the expansion of public transportation services in the future.

Public Transportation

With rising fuel costs and an increasing demand for transportation choices, public transportation services (fixed route, demand response, and vanpools) provided by the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) have all seen ridership gains in recent years. For example, boardings on STA's fixed-route bus lines increased by 45% between 2005 and 2009. Since that time, however, because of declining sales tax revenues, STA has been forced to restructure and reduce service levels by approximately 10%. Coupled with a necessary fare increase and the economic recession that has reduced the number of overall work related trips, ridership has remained steady, and overall system productivity has improved. In the coming years, as fuel costs continue to rise, public transportation is expected to play an increasingly significant role in the regional transportation system.

For this MTP update, two specific changes in the public transportation component should be noted. First, the plan includes a Modern Electric Trolley option for the downtown Spokane area (Browne's Addition to Gonzaga University). This option was identified as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) from STA's recently completed Central City Alternatives Analysis, and will serve as a component of a regional High Performance Transit Network (HPTN). The Modern Electric Trolley project has an estimated cost of approximately \$36 million, and replaces a \$72 million streetcar project that was included in the previous MTP.

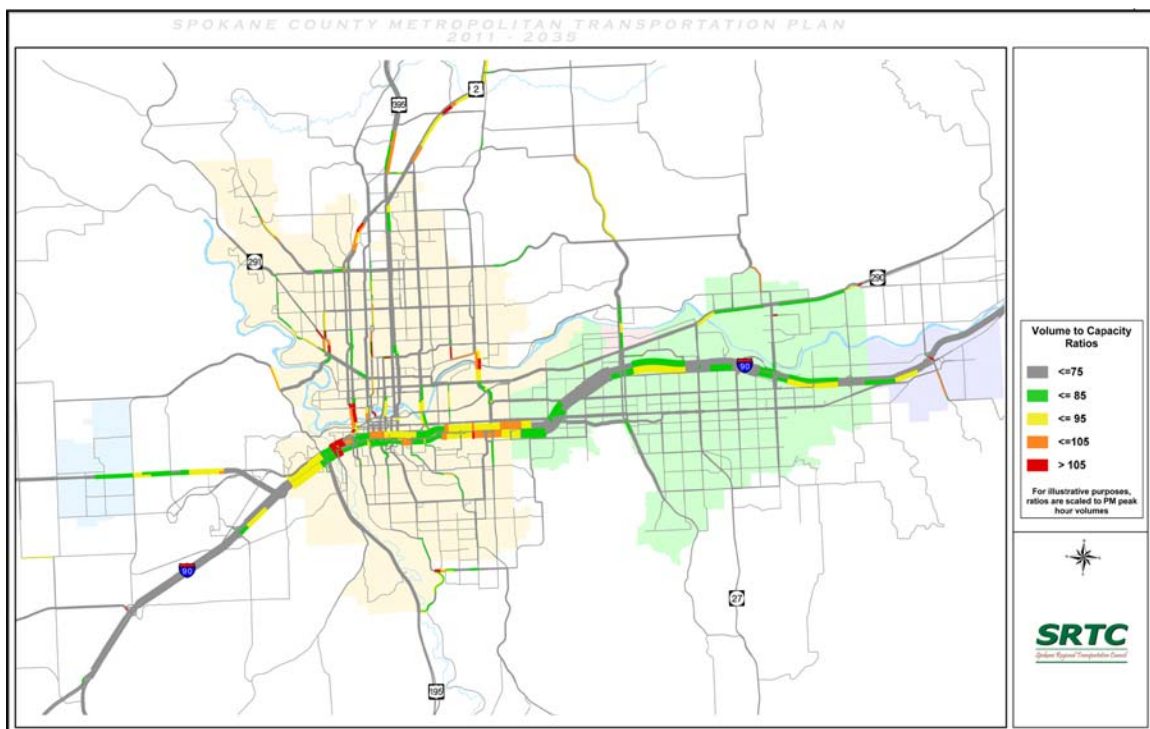
Second, due to the federal requirement for a financially constrained MTP, the Spokane Regional Light Rail Project in the previous MTP has been restructured to include the following two components: 1) \$47.5 million for corridor preservation for the South Valley High Corridor for High Performance Transit in the financially constrained component of the MTP; and 2) a future light rail project for the South Valley Corridor in the illustrative, unfunded portion of the MTP. It is anticipated that this project will be further evaluated for potential inclusion during the next update of the MTP.

Future Conditions

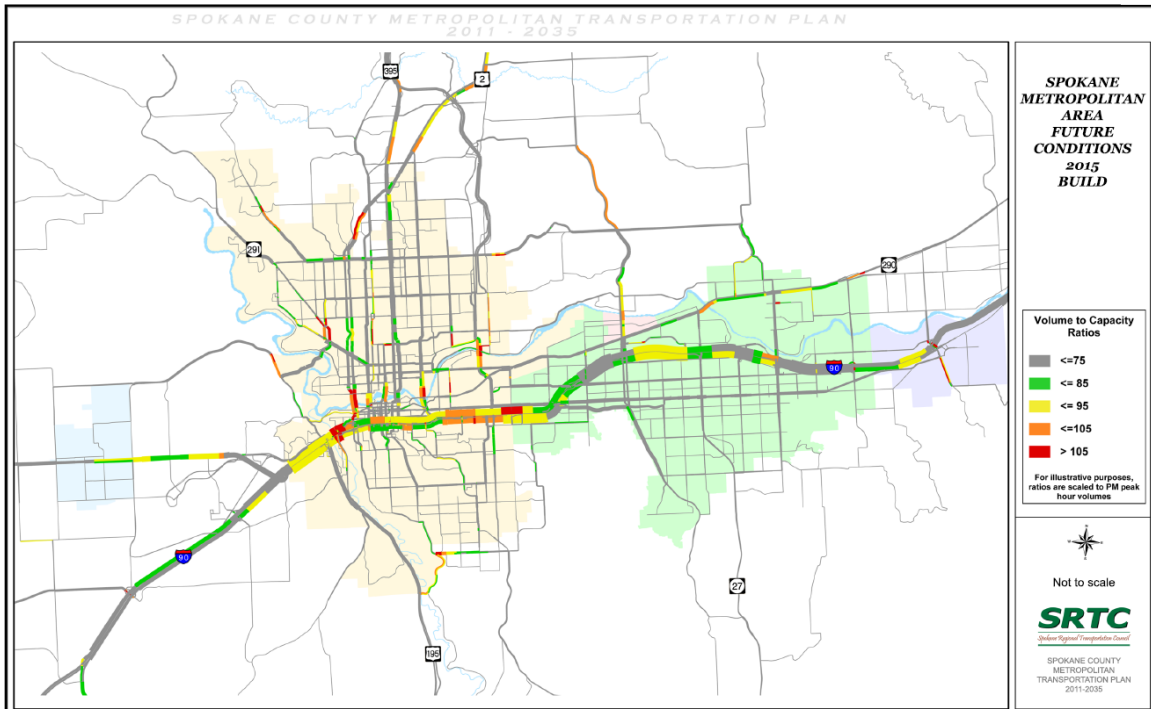
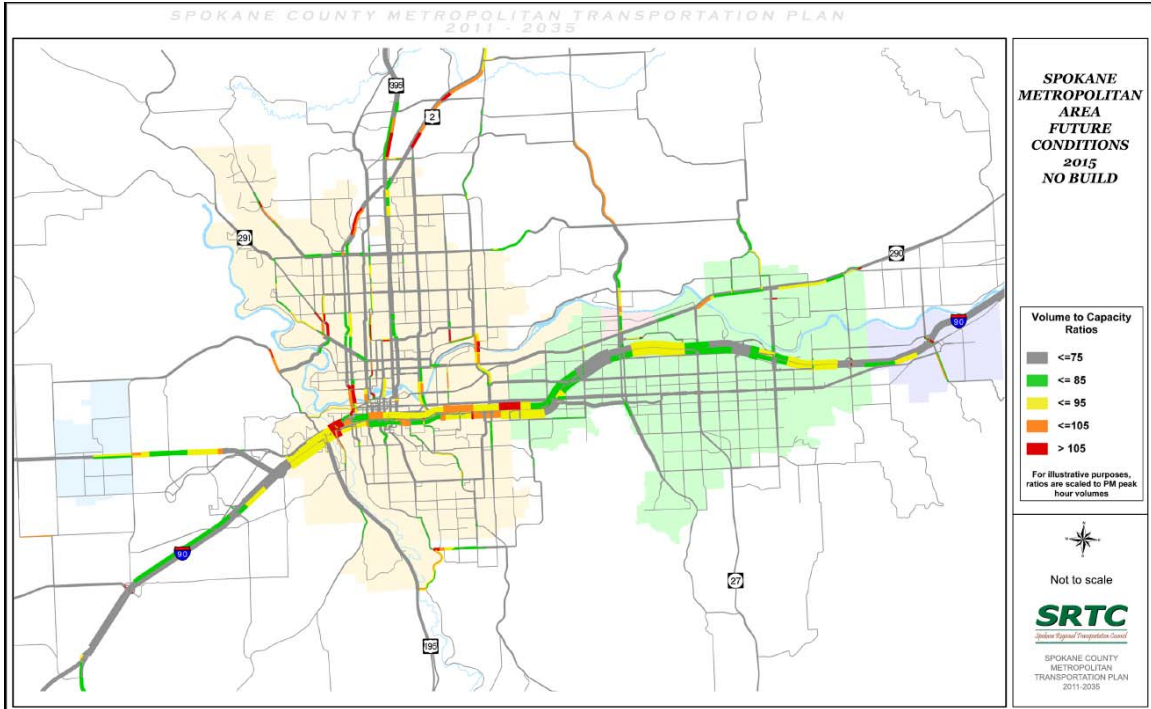
This MTP update identifies transportation conditions including current and future deficiencies as a result of increased congestion. The MTP analysis incorporates scenarios over the timeframe of this plan if no improvements are made to the transportation system ("no-build") and if the projected improvements detailed in Section 4 are realized ("build"). The following maps illustrate the base year

(2008) conditions as well as the no-build and build conditions as modeled for the interim years of 2015 and 2025 and the forecast horizon year of 2035. Congested roadways are defined as those where volumes exceed 75% of capacity. Capacity exceeding 75% serves as a “red flag” indicating that these locations require further evaluation. Please see Section 3, maps 3.1 – 3.4 on pages 3-4 through 3-7 for more information on the no-build conditions. Please see Section 4, maps 4.3 - 4.6 on pages 4-7 through 4-10 for greater detail on the build conditions. For more information on the SRTC regional travel demand model used for the MTP analysis, please see Sections 2 and 3 and the SRTC web site: <http://www.srtc.org/modeling.html>

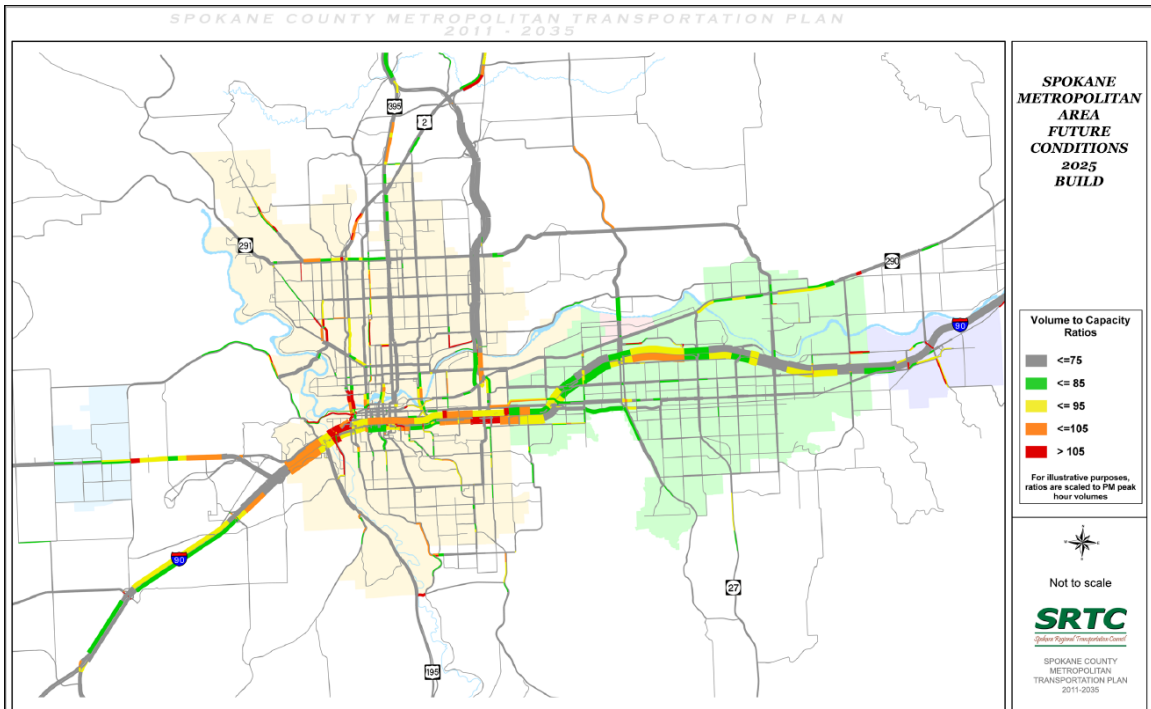
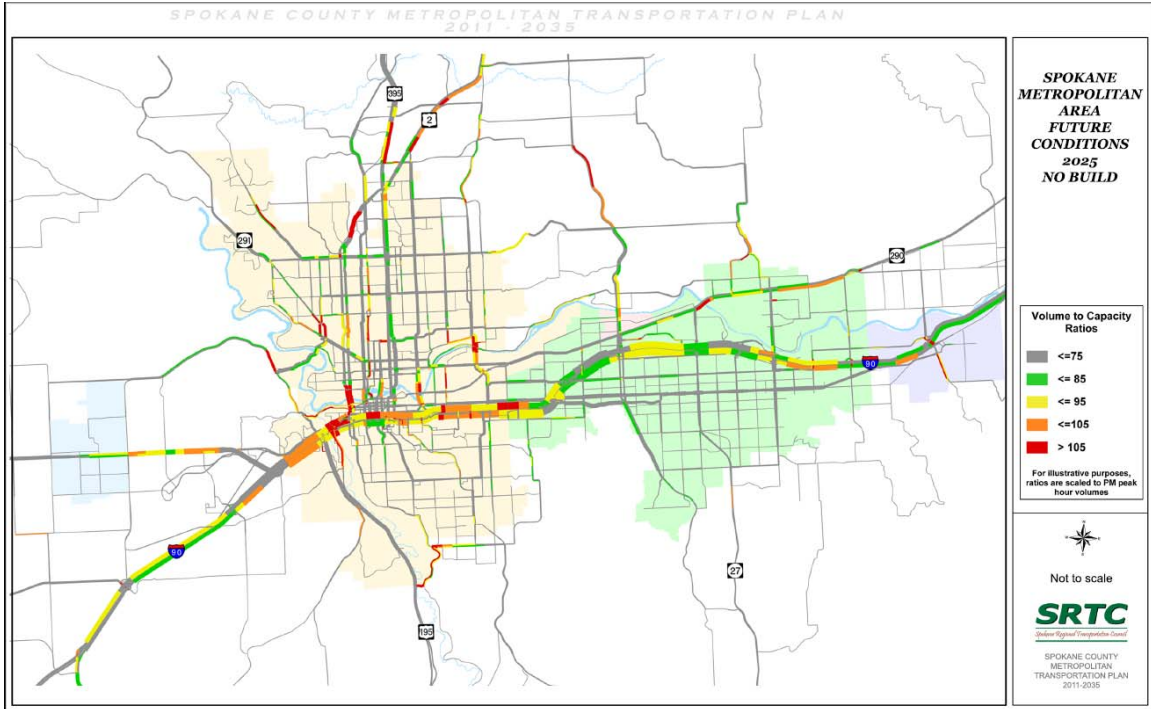
Base (2008) Conditions



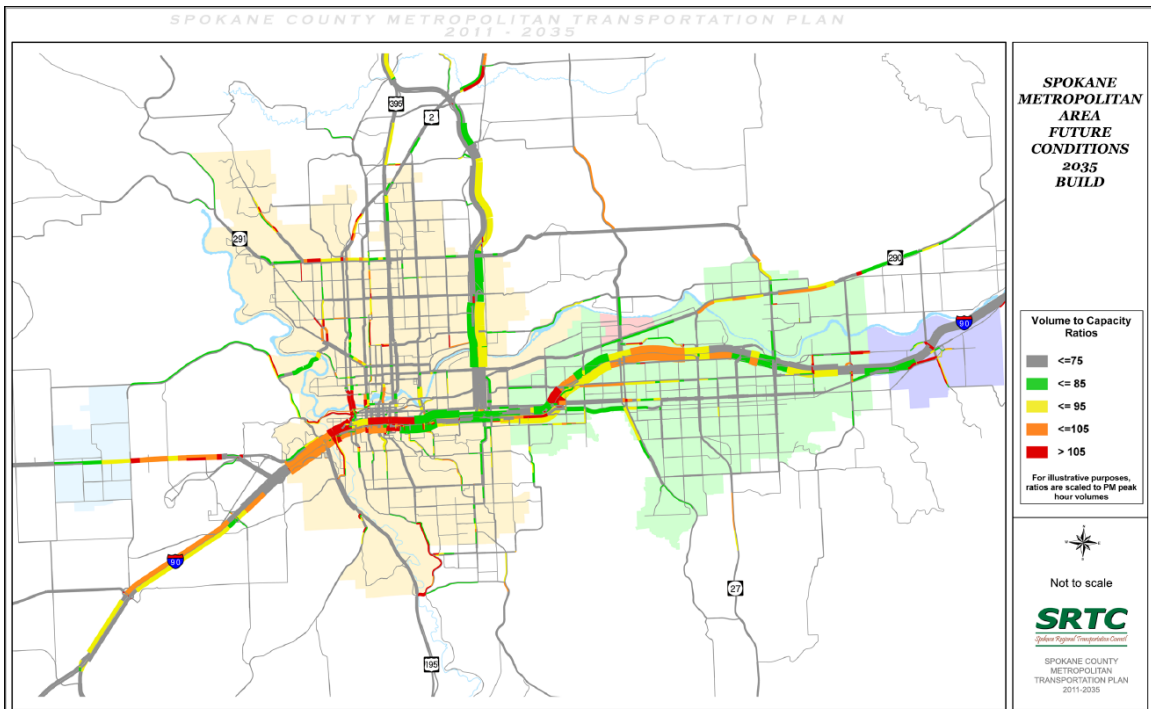
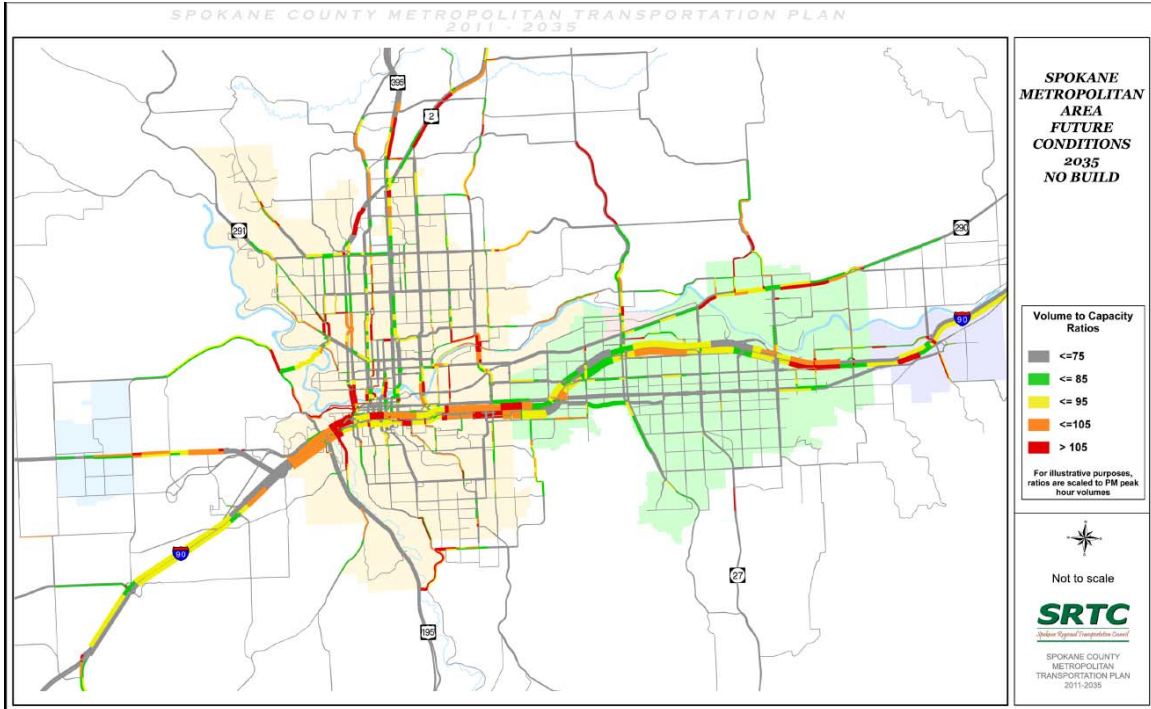
2015 No-build vs. Build



2025 No-build vs. Build



2035 No-build vs. Build



Funding the MTP

The planned projects contained in the MTP do not address all of the transportation needs in the metropolitan area. According to federal law, the MTP must be financially constrained to what can be reasonably funded. As a result, the MTP must forecast future revenues and expenditures that can reasonably be anticipated over the life of the plan. This has two affects:

1. Future revenues can be anticipated so long as they are legally available and/or there has been some historical trend developed for existing revenue sources. Gas taxes, weight fees, registration fees, developer fees, and State or Federal grant programs have a long history of utilization in both the State and Spokane County. For the purpose of the MTP, SRTC used an average of historical funding using traditional sources to forecast potential funding through 2035. This approach takes into account past increases as well as historical changes in the county's economy to predict the future. The net affect is a reasonable forecast of future revenues. They should be considered as orders of magnitude forecasts and local and state forecasts are a better prediction for individual projects or programs. This plan reflects approximately a 3% growth rate for Spokane Transit, 2% for WSDOT and 1% for both local and federal revenues for the horizon of the plan. This is an average growth rate of approximately 2% for all sources between now and 2035.
2. Expenditures can be reasonably anticipated as well using historical inflation rates. SRTC again used an average based on historic expenditures over the past 10 years to predict future costs for transportation investments as well as operations and maintenance costs.

This MTP estimates the potential revenues and expenditures through 2035 and indicates the costs of projects in Year of Expenditure dollars. In total, the MTP includes as estimated \$7.88 billion in revenues and \$7.83 billion in expenditures through 2035.

Forecasted Revenues and Expenditures 2011-2035

| | 2011-2015 | 2016-2025 | 2026-2035 | Total |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Revenues | \$1,248,880,225 | \$2,885,714,182 | \$3,745,534,431 | \$7,880,128,748 |
| Expenditures | \$1,234,896,551 | \$2,881,038,715 | \$3,716,927,881 | \$7,832,862,509 |