

Tri-State Releases Analysis For Investment Priorities

An analysis and report, "Tracking State Transportation Dollars," conducted by Tri-State Transportation Campaign, examines state-level transportation spending in each of the 50 states. After obtaining and reviewing each state's transportation improvement program (STIP), the Campaign said it has found that on average, states are spending 20 percent of their transportation dollars (often leveraged by state and local sources) on transit, 2 percent on bicycle/pedestrian projects, 39 percent on projects that maintain roads and bridges, and 23 percent on projects that add new capacity to roads and bridges. This project is an expansion of Tri-State's annual STIP analysis for New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

In the tri-state region, the Campaign found that Connecticut devotes 23 percent of its STIP to road and bridge expansion, while New York commits 62 percent of its STIP to transit and 2 percent to bicycle/pedestrian projects. Both Connecticut and New Jersey commit 27 percent of their transportation dollars to maintaining existing roads and bridges.

The Campaign's analysis examines the STIPs of all 50 states to determine short-term spending priorities and provides insight into transportation investments on a national level. The STIP is a federally mandated transportation reporting document developed by each state's department of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations. It generally covers a four-year period and lists all projects expected to be funded with federal dollars over the same period. The STIP typically shows other contributions (state, local and private) put towards these projects as well. Although the STIP is a federally required reporting document, the information contained within is often indecipherable to the general public and difficult to obtain.

"Each STIP analysis is a helpful policy tool for taxpayers and legislators interested in understanding how federal transportation dollars, often leveraged by state and local funds, are being spent throughout the state," said Veronica Vanterpool, executive director at the Campaign.

The Campaign's report, "Tracking State Transportation Dollars," found that: transportation reporting documents are not uniform, and in many

states, these documents are inaccessible and not transparent to the public; state departments of transportation tend to do a poor job of clearly explaining how transportation dollars are spent and more transparency increases public support of transportation projects.

"Improved reporting in each state's STIP will help the public, elected officials, and the federal government understand the kinds of transportation investments each state is making with its federal dollars," said Renata Silberblatt, staff analyst at the Campaign and report author. "Furthermore, increased transparency can help state DOTs gain public support for their projects."

To achieve increased uniformity and transparency in state-level transportation planning, the report recommends: increasing accessibility of STIPs and the creation of a state DOT contact for all STIP questions; requiring uniform information and project categories in all STIPs; including descriptions and costs of project components in STIPs; and developing performance metrics for STIP projects.

An interactive website, trackstatedollars.org, was also launched and includes state fact sheets that outline each state's transportation spending. The fact sheets are available as one-page downloadable PDFs.

The Campaign has been tracking planned transportation spending in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut since examining Connecticut's 2000 STIP. Closely examining how each state plans to spend its federal, state and local transportation dollars has informed the Campaign's advocacy work and helped the Campaign win numerous policy and program goals, including: the passage of New York's complete streets law, restoration of New Jersey's Transit Village program, and passage of Connecticut's complete streets law.

Ms. Silberblatt said MAP-21, the transportation law signed by President Barack Obama on July 6, gives state DOTs more flexibility in allocating federal transportation dollars. "Given this flexibility, it is even more important for the public to pay close attention to how their state DOTs are choosing to spend their funds," Ms. Silberblatt noted.

The report and state fact sheets can be found on the project website, trackstatedollars.org.



NEW DEPUTY CHIEF...John G. McCabe Jr., center, with his family and Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow, is sworn in by Superior Court Judge Karen M. Cassidy, Union County assignment judge, at the Union County Courthouse as deputy chief of investigators for the Union County Prosecutor's Office.

McCabe New Deputy Chief Of Investigations for UCPO

COUNTY — John G. McCabe, Jr. was sworn in as the deputy chief of investigators for the Union County Prosecutor's Office (UCPO) on July 2 at the Union County Courthouse. An expert in the field of drug law enforcement, Deputy Chief McCabe began his career as an investigator with the New Jersey Attorney General's Office in 1987.

"He brings a wealth of experience to Union County where he will oversee a number of units and serve as a liaison to outside agencies," Prosecutor Theodore Romankow said.

Additionally, Deputy Chief McCabe will assist in the planning, developing, organizing, coordinating, direction and evaluating of investigative objectives and in overseeing the administration of investigating activities conducted in compliance with state enforcement programs.

He began a federal law enforcement career with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a special Agent in 1990 and was assigned to the New Jersey Division. As a special agent, he aggressively pursued high-level narcotics traffickers and money launderers throughout the world. In 2000, Deputy Chief McCabe was promoted to group supervisor and assigned to the Special Operations Division where he directed and managed several highly successful multi-jurisdictional operations targeting the command and control structure of the Mexican drug cartel.

In 2003, he was transferred to the Washington Division Office where he led an aggressive mobile enforcement team and Metropolitan Police Homicide Prevention Task Force into Washington D.C.'s most beleaguered areas, building strong coalitions among police, prosecutors and the public to score some significant successes, including the closure of several homicide investigations.

In 2004, Deputy Chief McCabe was promoted to chief of the Mexico Central American Section at DEA's headquarters. He spent the next three years of his career managing domestic and foreign investigations linked to Mexico and seven Central Ameri-

can countries with great success. Most notably, he directed and implemented the Drug Flow Attack Strategy, a multi-agency, multi-national collaborative initiative that significantly disrupted the flow of drugs, money, and chemicals between the source zones and the United States.

Deputy Chief McCabe was assigned to the New Jersey Division as the assistant special agent in charge in October 2007, where he oversaw two DEA task forces groups and the entire Northern New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task. As a result his direction and management, multiple drug trafficking organizations were dismantled through arrest, multi-million dollar asset seizures and incarceration. Working with his law enforcement partners throughout New Jersey, he implemented an intelligence led, collaborative, multi-agency initiative to proactively attack the drug threat and the violence associated with drug trafficking.

Between February 2010 and April 2011, Deputy Chief McCabe served as the acting special agent in charge of the DEA New Jersey Division. As special agent in charge, he was responsible for the daily operations of the men and women whose primary mission is to enforce federal narcotics laws throughout the state.

He started in his new role with the Union County Prosecutor's Office on July 1 and replaces Gregory Clay, who retired earlier this year after a 23-year career with the prosecutor's office.

Deputy Chief McCabe received his Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Rutgers University and is an active member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).

"John is a talented, dedicated, and experienced man of law enforcement and brings a great wealth of knowledge to the office," Prosecutor Romankow said. "He has been given the authority to examine every aspect of this office and report back with ways the Union County Prosecutor's Office can be more efficient and continue to work in the best interest of the residents."

Contractors Get Probation In Bid-Rigging Scandal

TRENTON — Two contractors were sentenced July 20 for rigging bids and inflating school contracts at the direction of an engineer who oversaw construction projects for the Westfield and Scotch Plains-Fanwood school districts.

The engineer, Kenneth Disko, 48, of Mountainside, pleaded guilty in October to recommending rigged contracts and taking thousands of dollars in contract kickbacks in those districts and the Tinton Falls school district. He was sentenced on March 16 to three years in state prison.

Martin W. Starr, 45, of Cliffwood Beach, owner of Starr Contracting, and Stephen M. Gallagher, 51, of Cliffwood Beach, owner of East Commercial Construction, were each sentenced to three years of probation by state Superior Court Judge Joseph Donohue in Union County. Both men pleaded guilty on December 1, 2011 to accusations charging them with making false representations for a government contract. The companies owned by the two men also pleaded guilty to the same charge. The men and their companies are disqualified from public contracts for five years, and are each liable for paying a \$25,000 penalty to the state's fund for anti-trust enforcement efforts, according to the Attorney General's Office.

In pleading guilty, Disko, the former contracted engineer or engineer/architect on record for the Westfield, Tinton Falls and Scotch Plains-Fanwood school districts, admitted that he orchestrated a series of bid-rigging and kickback schemes from 2001 to 2010 in those school districts involving Starr, Gallagher and a third contractor, John Sangiuliano, 57, of Scotch Plains, co-owner of Metropolitan Metal Window Company, who has also pleaded guilty in the case, according to the Attorney General's Office.

The Attorney General's Office said Disko prepared fraudulent quotes and estimates and directed the contractors to inflate quotes and estimates. He admitted that he submitted the fraudulent quotes and estimates to the districts and recommended approval of the contracts in exchange for kickbacks from the contractors.

Starr admitted that in 2009 and 2010, he prepared fictitious quotes

from legitimate contractors without their permission and submitted them to Disko in order to appear to be the lowest bidder for contracts worth nearly \$25,000 that were awarded to Starr Contracting by the Westfield and Scotch Plains-Fanwood districts.

Gallagher admitted that he helped Starr to obtain those contracts by preparing fraudulent and fictitious quotes and estimates for his own companies and submitting them to Disko as higher bids than those submitted by Starr. Also, in connection with other contracts that were awarded to Gallagher's company in the Westfield and Scotch Plains-Fanwood districts, Gallagher inflated quotes and the cost of work performed. The state's investigation revealed that in return for the inflated contracts, Gallagher gave cash kickbacks to Disko.

Sangiuliano pleaded guilty on June 28 to an accusation charging him with making false representations for a government contract. The Attorney General's Office said the state would recommend that he be sentenced to a term of probation, conditioned upon him paying \$36,000 in restitution to the Westfield and Tinton Falls districts and a \$25,000 penalty to the state's fund for anti-trust enforcement efforts. Sangiuliano and his company will be disqualified from public contracts in New Jersey for five years. He is scheduled for sentencing on September 7.

In pleading guilty, Sangiuliano admitted that he falsified bids for contracts in the Westfield and Tinton Falls school districts at the behest of Disko, and paid him approximately \$36,000 in kickbacks.

In a related matter stemming from the investigation, former business administrator for the Westfield School District, Robert A. Berman, 55, of South Plainfield, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to make false representations for a government contract. He admitted that he accepted \$13,000 in windows and doors from Sangiuliano, who he recommended be hired by the school district. Berman was sentenced January 27 to one year of probation and was ordered to pay a \$6,000 penalty. He forfeited his position with the school district and is permanently barred from public employment in New Jersey.

New Solar Law to Reduce Compliance Payments

TRENTON — Governor Chris Christie has signed into law legislation to strengthen and encourage the continued growth of New Jersey's solar industry.

The bill, S-1925, couples an acceleration of the renewable portfolio standard (RPS) for solar energy with a reduction of the solar alternate compliance payments, meeting a goal of the Governor's 2011 Energy Master Plan (EMP), strengthening the solar market in New Jersey.

"The bill I am signing today furthers these goals and will help us remain a national leader in the solar energy industry as we continue to promote innovative approaches to solar development, like developing landfills and other unusable lands and transforming them into sources of usable clean energy, all while holding down costs for families and businesses," the Governor said.

Solar Alternative Compliance Payments (SACPs) set a ceiling on the market price of Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs), which the suppliers and providers of electricity are required to purchase in an

amount that satisfies the annual RPS requirement. The Division of Rate Counsel estimates that the law will save ratepayers approximately \$1.076 billion over the next 15 years as compared to the current solar subsidy schedule.

Under the bill, the 15-year RPS schedule is changed from a fixed megawatt requirement each year to a percentage of overall energy usage in New Jersey, ensuring that the level of solar obligation rises and falls with overall energy demand, which can vary due to economic factors as well as the success of energy efficiency and conservation programs.

There are over 16,000 solar installations on homes, offices, schools, and hospitals throughout the state. Of the electricity generated in New Jersey, over 1 percent now comes from solar energy.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, New Jersey has the seventh highest Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard in the nation at 22.5 percent by 2021. Thirteen states maintain no renewable energy standard whatsoever.

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| AUGUST 2012 EVENTS | | | |
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| Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30 am - 9:00 pm Friday and Saturday 9:30 am - 5:00 pm Closed Sundays | | | |
| PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS (Check website for all registration information) | | | |
| 8/1 | 4:00 pm | Computer Class: Photo Editing w/Gimp (advanced) | |
| 8/1 | 7:00 pm | Computer Class: Job Skills Databases (intermediate) | |
| 8/2 | 2:00 pm | Computer Class: Advanced Word (advanced) | |
| 8/3 | 1:30 pm | TGIF! Stephen Sondheim (video) | |
| 8/4 | 10:30 am | Jazz & Ragtime Pianist Prestine Allen | |
| 8/6 | 2 & 6:30 pm | Foreign Film: "Korkora" (French) | |
| 8/8 | 7:00 pm | Next Stage Ensemble: "The Marriage of Figaro" | |
| 8/10 | 1:30 pm | Classic Movie Week: "Swing Time" | |
| 8/13 | 2 & 6:30 pm | Foreign Film: "The Artist" (English) | |
| 8/15 | 7:00 pm | A Musical Salute to Molly Picon by Diane Cypkin, PhD | |
| 8/20 | 2 & 6:30 pm | Foreign Film: "Nora's Will" (Spanish) | |
| PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN (Check website for registration information) | | | |
| 8/6 | 7:00 pm | Stuffed Animal Sleepover—bring yours! | |
| 8/7 and 8/14 | 10:00 am | Toddler Time (babies & toddlers up to 3) | |
| 8/7 | 7:00 pm | Movie: "The Iron Giant" (grades 2 and up) | |
| 8/8 | 2:30 pm | Creative Dramatics (elementary schoolers) | |
| 8/9, 16, 23, 30 | 6:00 pm | Bedtime Movies for Families—open to the public. | |
| 8/10, 17, 24, 31 | 3:30 pm | Westfield Memorial Pool Storytime (\$5 fee to swim) | |
| 8/11 and 8/25 | 11:00 am | Family Sign and Play—ASL for babies and young children | |