



April 2, 2006

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Susan Payne

Subject: Item 4.f: ODOT Transportation Enhancement Program – Letter of Endorsement for Local Applications

**Action Recommended:** Review draft letter of endorsement for local applications and approve for submittal to ODOT.

### **Background**

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) program provides federal highway funds for projects that strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, or environmental values of our transportation system. The funds are available for twelve activity types specifically identified in the enabling federal legislation (Attachment 1). There are four main groups of activities: pedestrian and bicycle projects, historic preservation related to surface transportation, landscaping and scenic beautification, and environmental mitigation.

TE funds are for special activities not normally required on highway or transportation projects. This can include stand-alone projects or eligible activities within larger projects, but not routine or customary elements of construction and maintenance, or required mitigation. Projects must have a clear relationship to surface transportation facilities such as highways, roads, bikeways and walkways, or public transportation.

Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, Indian tribes, districts, county and city governments. The maximum number of applications permitted for a city and county is based on population. Projects must also comply with transportation plans and comprehensive plans in effect for the project area, as well as statewide plans such as the Oregon Plan, Oregon Transportation Plan, and Oregon Highway Plan.

TE projects are selected through a competitive process. Available funding is \$13 million statewide for this funding cycle. The program provides reimbursements for qualified expenditures and local matching funds at a minimum of 10.27%. The minimum project size is \$223,000 (including local match). This round of TE projects are for activities that can be ready for design starting in **October 2009**, and for construction in Federal FY **2011-2013**, i.e. for programming in the FFY10-13 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

For additional details on qualifying work within each activity see “Requirements and Eligibility by Type of Project” at [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/LGS/enhancement.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/LGS/enhancement.shtml) or consult federal guidance posted at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE) and [www.enhancements.org](http://www.enhancements.org).

### **2008 Applications**

A Notice of Intent was due February 1, 2008 for each project – 106 eligible applications were submitted to ODOT totaling \$93 million in requested federal funds. The City of Eugene submitted three projects (Attachment 2) which have received approval to proceed to the final application stage. Within Lane Co., there were two non-MPO projects submitted: Cottage Grove Chamber’s Bridge Restoration (\$1.28 million federal funds) and Cottage Grove OR99 @ Main St Bike Safety Enhancement (\$1.34 million in federal funds).

Completed application packets are due May 2, 2008.

In summer, ACTs and MPOs can submit input on local priorities, and in September-October, ODOT will identify approximately 30 finalists. In December 2008, Oregon Transportation Commission will award the funds to the selected projects.

### **MPO Action**

At their meeting on March 27, 2008, TPC approved a unanimous recommendation to MPC to endorse all three Transportation Enhancement project applications.

At this time, MPC is requested to approve a letter of support for the three projects. This letter will be submitted in the final application packets. A draft letter is attached for review (Attachment 3).

### **Attachments**

1. Eligible Transportation Enhancement projects
2. City of Eugene projects
3. MPC Letter of Endorsement to ODOT