

December 30, 2003

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Paul Thompson

Subject: Item 5.e: Overview of the Process for Setting the MPO's FY06-09 STIP Priorities

Background

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has begun the process of updating the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP, for fiscal years 2006 through 2009. As in previous STIP updates, it will be important for MPC to provide input by developing and forwarding a set of priority projects for consideration by ODOT for inclusion in the STIP. The STIP includes both a Development section, or D-STIP, and the more traditional Construction section, or C-STIP. The D-STIP includes projects that require more than four years to develop or for which construction funding needs to be obtained. Projects that can complete the development process and be ready for bid within four years or less may be placed directly into the C-STIP.

The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) recently adopted new Project Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization Factors for the STIP update. The new criteria and factors are similar to those used in earlier STIP updates, and include such considerations as project readiness, consistency with adopted plans and policies, and leveraging other funding to help stretch the state's construction dollars further. A copy of the adopted set of project eligibility criteria and prioritization factors is included as Attachment 1.

Process

At its February 2004 meeting, MPC will have an opportunity to review the Transportation Planning Committee's draft assessment of projects for potential STIP funding, provide feedback to staff toward developing a final priority list and open a public comment period on the draft STIP priorities. Sometime during the latter half of February MPO staff will host a public workshop on the STIP priorities. At its March meeting MPC will hold a public hearing on the STIP priorities and be asked to adopt a final priority list, which will be forwarded to the Lane County Board of Commissioners for inclusion in the county-wide STIP priorities. The final "blended" county-wide priority list from the previous FY04-07 STIP process is included as Attachment 2.

We also anticipate in early 2004 a process in which ODOT will request input to help develop a statewide list of priorities for the next round of funding from the Oregon

Transportation Investment Act, OTIA. A significant amount of construction funding for modernization projects is expected to be allocated to the highest priority projects. While the final selection criteria for OTIA projects have not yet been adopted, we expect the process to be similar to selection of STIP projects. For this reason this packet includes information from TPC on potential OTIA projects as well as STIP projects.

TPC Review of ODOT Projects

To begin the process of developing priorities for the next round of STIP and OTIA projects, the Transportation Planning Committee reviewed a list of all ODOT projects included in TransPlan. This list is intended to represent all projects on ODOT roadways inside the TMA, including a few that have already been constructed, a few currently programmed, and all others on both the constrained list and the future list. The list of completed and fully programmed (funded) projects is included as Attachment 3. The remaining unprogrammed projects are included as Attachment 4. Note that two ODOT projects shown on Attachment 4 are not currently in TransPlan but are within the TMA boundary.

The list shown in Attachment 4 includes a mixture of very large projects, small to medium size projects, and studies listed separately in TransPlan for the purpose of developing more detailed plans for some of the larger projects. The last two columns of Attachment 4 provide staff comments on some of the projects and an initial effort to identify the best funding strategy for each project – for example, options such as federal earmarks, STIP or OTIA funds. Note that many of the larger projects will require detailed planning studies before the project can be defined well enough to be placed on a STIP or OTIA list for construction funding. The projects are not listed in any priority order, but are grouped by whether they are on TransPlan's constrained or future project lists, or not listed in TransPlan.

The Transportation Planning Committee identified those projects that initially appear to be the most likely candidates for STIP or OTIA funding, based primarily on the sense of project readiness. For example, Beltline Highway stage 2 from Roosevelt to West 11th has a completed environmental assessment and preliminary design, so it could possibly be constructed during the 2006-2009 time frame; whereas Beltline from Delta Highway to River Road, while acknowledged as a critical need, would have to go through a planning, environmental and design process before it could be funded for construction. The potential funding strategies are reflected in the final column of Attachment 4. Other funding sources such as federal earmarks and OTIA Bridge project funding are shown for a few projects that are very high priorities and for which all funding has not yet been secured. Attachment 5 presents the same information as Attachment 4, sorted by the potential funding strategies.

The following comments are intended as a brief summary of TPC's initial discussion of funding strategies, as shown on Attachment 4:

Interstate 5/Coburg interchange: This project is not in TransPlan but is now within the TMA boundary. It was the first priority on the “blended” metro and rural list in May 2002. A short-term, interim safety project for the northbound off-ramp is included in the current STIP for construction. Also, ODOT is funding an interchange area management plan as part of the work being done to update the city of Coburg’s Transportation System Plan.

Interstate 5/Beltline interchange: with all environmental and planning work now completed, this project is partially funded with STIP and OTIA 1 funds. Additional funding is sought from a federal earmark in the next federal authorization, as a very high priority for ODOT and the local United Front.

Interstate 5 from I-105 to Highway 58: the planning and environmental process for the new, permanent Willamette River bridge is seen as an opportunity to evaluate options for a new interchange at I-5 and Franklin Blvd. The scope of such a study would be likely to incorporate the Glenwood interchange because of its close proximity and functional relationship to the existing ramps. Beyond the existing interchange at Glenwood and a potential new interchange at Franklin, the other interchanges and longer-range widening to six lanes will require planning studies before any of these projects can be added to a STIP or OTIA construction list.

Interstate 105 from 7th Avenue to I-5: with the recent completion of the added lane through the southbound merge area on the Washington-Jefferson Bridge, the most obvious safety issue has been addressed. As mentioned above for I-5, further planning and environmental work will need to be done prior to being able to advance any of the other projects on I-105.

Eugene-Springfield Highway from I-5 to Main Street: again, planning and environmental assessments will be needed in order to advance specific projects on this segment of roadway. ODOT has initiated a study for the portion of this highway from 42nd Street to Main Street, which will include preliminary analysis of the proposed interchanges at 52nd Street and at Main Street.

West Eugene Parkway: the first phase is listed in the current STIP for construction. Once final environmental clearance has been obtained, additional phases of the WEP would be logical candidates for STIP or OTIA funding.

Beltline Highway: as mentioned earlier, the Roosevelt to W. 11th section would represent a logical STIP or OTIA priority, while the other key segments would be good candidates for funding for a planning study.

Courthouse District Improvements: this project is a high earmark priority for the local United Front.

Other projects: based on staff’s initial sense of project readiness and relative need, several smaller projects are listed as good candidates for STIP funding: 6th-7th

intersection improvements for traffic capacity and operations; Highway 99 North from Garfield to Roosevelt, for upgrading to urban standards; Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood, upgrading to urban standards and complementing the recent nodal development planning work in Glenwood; and West 11th from Green Hill Road to Terry Street, for increased capacity as well as upgrading to urban standards.

Summary and Next Steps

Starting with a fairly long list of potential ODOT projects in the adopted TransPlan, TPC is proposing a shorter list of projects that could meet a construction timetable of 2006 to 2009 in the next STIP, or the next round of OTIA funding. Because of the low level of STIP funding for modernization projects during this STIP period, smaller projects may be more appropriate as STIP modernization priorities, targeting larger projects for possible OTIA funding. TPC will develop a draft list of STIP project priorities for MPC consideration at the February meeting.

Action requested: None, Information & discussion only

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Project Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization Factors For the 2006-2009 Development STIP and Construction STIP
- Attachment 2 – Countywide Priority List for 04-07 STIP
- Attachment 3 – Completed and Programmed ODOT Projects in TransPlan
- Attachment 4 – Unprogrammed ODOT Projects in Central Lane TMA (sorted by TransPlan status)
- Attachment 5 – Unprogrammed ODOT Projects in Central Lane TMA (sorted by potential funding strategy)