

February 5, 2004

TO: Metropolitan Policy Committee

FROM: Paul Thompson

SUBJECT: Item 4.b: Setting MPO Priorities for the FY2006-2009 STIP

### **Background**

At its January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004 meeting, staff provided information to MPC about the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) update. The process for developing a list of priority projects for consideration by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will include the following steps:

- January MPC meeting: receive background information, including previous priority lists and current list of potentially eligible projects.
- February MPC meeting: review initial project list from TPC and provide feedback to staff toward developing a final priority list. Open a public comment period on the draft project list.
- February 19, 5:00-7:30: staff hosts a public open house/workshop on the draft project list.
- March MPC meeting: hold a public hearing, consider public input and staff recommendations, adopt a final priority list.
- Late March: Lane County Board of Commissioners adopts a final countywide list as a blend of MPO priorities and other projects in Lane County.
- April: ODOT Region 2 conducts an all-area meeting to determine regional priorities for the FY2006-2009 STIP.

As discussed last month, the FY2006-2009 STIP will include 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. Both D-STIP and C-STIP projects must meet several eligibility criteria, and must address a set of prioritization factors in order to be selected for inclusion in the STIP. (The eligibility criteria and prioritizing factors were included in the January MPC agenda item packet as Attachment 1 to item 5e.)

Although the funding levels for both C-STIP and D-STIP modernization projects are expected to be very modest, the next round of funding from the Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) is anticipated to provide a larger source of funds for modernization projects. Projects on the MPC priority list that are not selected for STIP funding could be proposed for OTIA funding at the appropriate time.

In addition to modernization projects, the STIP also reflects the programming of preservation and bridge projects on the state system. State-wide priorities for these two programs are identified through the ODOT Pavement and Bridge Management Systems. The local role regarding these two systems is to review the timing of the projects as they relate to other local projects or issues. (Other STIP programs

such as Safety, Bicycle/Pedestrian, Transit, Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Improvement, Transportation Enhancement and Scenic Byways are not addressed in this process.)

### **Process for Developing Central Lane MPO C-STIP and D-STIP Priorities**

The January MPC packet included a list of ODOT projects drawn from the adopted Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) list of roadway modernization projects on state highways in the Eugene-Springfield area and including additional ODOT projects now within the MPO boundary but not listed in the adopted RTP. (The STIP may also list projects off of the state system that directly affect performance of the state system and support implementation of the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP).) An updated version of that list is included as Attachment 1. Projects on this comprehensive list have been grouped by estimated cost: under \$10 million, \$10 million to \$20 million, and over \$20 million. As indicated earlier, the expected levels of funding for C-STIP and D-STIP modernization funding will be minimal, thus it is important to develop a set of priorities that could potentially be funded under this constraint.

As a first step, TPC staff has conducted an initial evaluation of the project against the C-STIP eligibility criteria specified by OTC. The evaluation of projects against the two eligibility criteria considered:

- C-STIP Eligibility Criteria #1: Consistent with TSP and Constrained RTP
  - If a project is consistent with either the Eugene-Springfield TSP or the Coburg TSP *and* the project is listed on one of the RTP’s financially constrained project lists, then it is considered fully eligible under the first criteria. These projects are marked with a “Y” under the first eligibility criteria.
  - If a project is consistent with either the Eugene-Springfield TSP or the Coburg TSP and is listed on one of the “beyond 20-year unfunded” RTP project lists, but could potentially be amended to a financially constrained project list for construction within the FY06-09 STIP timeframe, then it is considered partially eligible under the first criteria. These projects are marked with an “\*” under the first eligibility criteria.
  - If a project is either inconsistent with the Eugene-Springfield TSP or the Coburg TSP or is consistent with the Eugene-Springfield TSP or the Coburg TSP but is listed on one of the “beyond 20-year unfunded” RTP project lists and would be difficult to amend to a financially constrained project list for construction within the FY06-09 STIP timeframe, then it is considered not eligible under the first criteria. These projects are marked with an “N” under the first eligibility criteria.
- C-STIP Eligibility Criteria #2: Consistent with OHP Policy Action 1.G.1
  - All listed projects are considered to meet the second eligibility criteria. Since the development of the Central Lane RTP considered consistency with OHP policies, projects listed in the RTP are individually consistent with 1.G.1. OHP Policy Action 1.G.1 states:

*Use the following priorities for developing corridor plans, transportation system plans, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and project plans to respond to highway needs. Implement higher priority measures first unless a lower priority measure is clearly more cost-effective or unless it clearly better supports safety, growth management, or other livability and economic viability considerations. Plans must document the findings which support using lower priority measures before higher priority measures.*

1. *Protect the existing system. The highest priority is to preserve the functionality of the existing highway system by means such as access management, local comprehensive plans, transportation demand management, improved traffic operations, and alternative modes of transportation.*
2. *Improve efficiency and capacity of existing highway facilities. The second priority is to make minor improvements to existing highway facilities such as widening highway shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes, providing better access for alternative modes (e.g., bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters), extending or connecting local streets, and making other off-system improvements.*
3. *Add capacity to the existing system. The third priority is to make major roadway improvements to existing highway facilities such as adding general purpose lanes and making alignment corrections to accommodate legal size vehicles.*
4. *Add new facilities to the system. The lowest priority is to add new transportation facilities such as a new highway or bypass.*

Based on the evaluation of eligibility, staff is proposing the list of ODOT projects shown in Attachment 2 for potential FY06-09 C-STIP funding. If MPC concurs with this preliminary list, staff will perform a prioritization evaluation of the projects and will make that information available to the public in advance of the open house/workshop to be held on February 19.

All projects not considered eligible for C-STIP funding are then shown as potential D-STIP funded development milestone projects on Attachment 3. In addition, the Interstate 5 Interchange Study listed on the RTP's financially constrained project list is included on Attachment 3. The inclusion of this study serves as a step in the "development" of the I-5 at 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue and I-5 (I-105 to Highway 58) construction projects contained on the RTP's future project list. All of the projects shown on the potential D-STIP list (Attachment 3) are within the corridors identified in the RTP that will "require additional, corridor-level analyses to address existing and future capacity, safety and operational problems over the next 20-30 years" (*TransPlan*, Chapter 3, page 12). Attachment 3 shows the "Development STIP Project Description" for each project, indicating the "development milestone" that a potential D-STIP project would achieve. Staff has started the process of evaluating these potential D-STIP projects against the OTC's D-STIP eligibility criteria and will also conduct a prioritization evaluation of these projects prior to the public workshop.

Following the public workshop, staff will consider the public input and develop a recommended priority ranking of both C-STIP and D-STIP projects for MPC at the February 26 TPC meeting. Final ranking of projects on the list will be done by MPC following a public hearing at the March 11 2004 meeting.

### **Proposed Project Evaluation Method**

Both the C-STIP and D-STIP processes for evaluating priorities are governed by the OTC's *Project Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization Factors Process Description and Guidance for the 2006-2009 Development STIP and Construction STIP* document. This document was included in the January 2004 MPC packet as Attachment 1 to item 5e.

The prioritization factors specified by the OTC for C-STIP modernization projects are:

- Project Readiness (an assessment of the likelihood of a project getting to construction in the timeframe contemplated)
- Projects that best support the policies of the Oregon Highway Plan
- Projects that leverage other funds and public benefits
- Class 1 and Class 3 projects that have completed an environmental milestone of a Record of Decision (ROD) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Table 1 shows the OHP policies that are most applicable to modernization projects.

The following examples of the leveraging of other funds and public benefits are provided in the OTC guidelines:

- Other funding contributions, such as additional federal funds, local matching funds or provision of project right-of-way, private funding.
- Bundling with other infrastructure projects (provided there is no adverse affect on project readiness).
- Fish enhancement, such as culvert replacement and improved drainage.
- Transfer of jurisdiction from state to local control.
- Leveraging of additional funds that contribute to transportation system effectiveness, revitalization of the downtown or mainstreet, etc.
- Direct benefits to multiple modes of travel. This would include local efforts to accommodate non-auto modal opportunities.
- Local circulation improvements that support and complement the state highway project.
- Improvements in Oregon’s economy by addressing transportation challenges.
- Potential for collecting toll revenues.
- Projects that implement other innovative finance techniques.

The OTC guidance also states that “ACTs, MPOs and regional or statewide advisory groups may use additional criteria to select and rank projects provided the criteria are consistent with the project eligibility criteria and prioritization factors adopted by the OTC.” As shown on Attachment 2, for the prioritization of potential C-STIP modernization projects staff recommends that the Central Lane MPO utilize an additional set of factors considering consistency with the adopted Central Lane RTP policy set. Each project’s support of the four RTP policy categories would be considered individually, in addition to the project’s specific support of Finance Policies #3 & #5. The two finance policies specifically state that:

- Finance Policy #3: Prioritization of State and Federal Revenue

*Set priorities for investment of Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and federal revenues programmed in the region’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to address safety and major capacity problems on the region’s transportation system.*

*Policy Definition/Intent: This policy supports the development and application of a process for prioritizing regional system improvements funded by state and federal revenues. Safety and major capacity issues will be emphasized in this*

*process. Local jurisdiction funding sources, including federal payments to the County road fund, are allocated through local agency Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs) and are not subject to a regional prioritization process.*

- Finance Policy #5: Short-Term Project Priorities

*Consider and include among short-term project priorities, those facilities and improvements that support mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly nodal development and increased use of alternative modes.*

*Policy Definition/Intent: This policy supports consideration and programming of facilities and improvements that support nodal development and the increased use of alternative modes. Examples of such investments include funding incentives for implementation of nodal development, funding of TDM programs, and improvements made to the transit and bike systems.*

As shown on Attachment 3, staff recommends that the potential D-STIP projects be prioritized using OTC's recommended prioritization factors.

Additional description and discussion of all of the OTC C-STIP and D-STIP prioritization factors is included in the January 2004 MPC packet as Attachment 1 to item 5e.

A project's "performance" on each of the prioritization factors will be rated as either:

- "Not supporting/meeting" (indicated by a blank cell on the matrix)
- "Supporting/meeting" (indicated by a "+" on the matrix)
- "Strongly supporting/meeting" (indicated by a "++")

Staff will then assess the overall performance of each project across all of the prioritization factors, and rank the projects accordingly. As indicated earlier, staff will then make the initial draft rankings available to the public, including providing, describing and discussing the rankings at the public workshop scheduled for February 19. Following the public workshop, staff will review the assessment of the prioritization factors and rankings, and forward draft rankings to TPC on February 26. TPC will develop recommended rankings, make those available to the public, and forward them to MPC for consideration at the March 11 meeting.

**Action requested:** Provide feedback to staff regarding overall process and C-STIP Prioritization Factors. Open Public Comment Period.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1 – Potential ODOT Modernization Projects
- Attachment 2 – Potential ODOT C-STIP Modernization Projects
- Attachment 3 – Potential ODOT D-STIP Modernization Projects

**Table 1**  
**Summary List of OHP Policies Applicable To C-STIP and D-STIP Projects**

- Policy 1A: State Highway Classification System—use to guide priorities for investment and management in the highway system.
- Policy 1B: Land Use and Transportation—coordinate for purposes of mobility, safety, compact development, alternative modes, livability and economic good.
- Policy 1C: State Highway Freight System—maintain efficient through movement on major truck routes, balance freight needs with other highway uses.
- Policy 1D: Scenic Byways—preserve and enhance.
- Policy 1F: Highway Mobility Standards—use to maintain acceptable and reliable mobility on state system.
- Policy 1G: Major Improvements—improve system efficiency and management before adding capacity.
- Policy 2A: Partnerships—use to help develop, operate and maintain the system.
- Policy 2B: Off-system Improvements—help locals build improvements on their facilities if it improves the state system.
- Policy 2C: Interjurisdictional Transfers—consider transfers that make sense.
- Policy 2E: Intelligent Transportation Systems—use to improve system efficiency and safety.
- Policy 2F: Traffic Safety—continually improve for all users of the highway system.
- Policy 2G: Rail and Highway Compatibility—reduce and prevent conflicts.
- Policy 3A: Classification and spacing standards—manage access consistent with classification of state highways.
- Policy 3B: Medians—use to enhance safety and efficiency and to influence land use.
- Policy 3C: Interchange Access Management Areas—manage for safety and efficiency.
- Policy 4A: Efficiency of Freight Movement—maintain and improve on the state system; balance with local needs.
- Policy 4B: Alternative Passenger Modes—advance and support where appropriate.
- Policy 4C: HOV Facilities—utilize where appropriate.
- Policy 4D: TDM—invest in TDM strategies.
- Policy 4E: Park and Ride Facilities—develop where appropriate.
- Policy 5A: Environmental Resources—design, construction, operation and maintenance of state system should maintain or improve the natural and built environment.