

Region 2 Modernization Prioritization Process for the 2010-2013 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Introduction/Principles

This paper will describe the process Region 2 intends to use, in partnership with the Region's Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) and Lane County, to develop the Region's modernization program recommendation to the Oregon Transportation Commission for the 2010-2013 update of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The elements of this process are guided by the following principles:

- The process will utilize a comprehensive approach, considering the needs of the ACTs in the context of regional and statewide needs, as well as the relationship of modernization project budgeting to preservation, operations, and "bucket" programs (e.g., bike, enhancement, bridge, etc.).
- The decision-making processes used by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), Region 2, and the ACTs/Lane County should be clear and easily understood. ACT members should understand and be able to describe these processes to others.
- Adequate time for ACT and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) involvement and problem solving is essential.
- The prioritization process must recognize both technical and political issues.
- Project rating criteria should be clear, quantifiable, and consistently applied. ACTs must use the prioritization factors approved by the OTC. Additional factors, consistent with those provided by the OTC, may be added by the ACTs.
- The needs of entire corridors should be considered – across ACT/MPO/Region boundaries.
- Building relationships and understanding across the ACTs/Lane County/ MPOs/Region 2 will improve communication and the ability of everyone to reach agreement on project priorities.

Region Prioritization Process

Allocation Principles

Region 2 and the ACTs/Lane County will develop the modernization program for the 2010-2013 STIP. The following principles will guide the process regarding the allocation of available funding to projects:

- Emphasis should be placed on completing projects that were only partially funded in previous STIP cycles.
- Large and small projects are important to the ACTs and the Region.
- With limited STIP funding, large projects will be difficult to accomplish. However, advancement of projects of statewide significance and large projects is important to the State and Region. Therefore, it is important to identify and plan for large projects so that opportunities are not lost if and when more funding becomes available. The purpose of establishing and maintaining a large project list is to: (1) allow for quick reaction time to new funding opportunities (e.g., new state funding opportunities, public/private ventures, federal earmarks); (2) help establish priorities appropriate for the OTC Statewide Significant project list; and (3) help local governments/stakeholders prioritize local match needs.
- With limited modernization funding available, the process should focus on meeting the priority needs of the ACTs/Lane County. While it is important for each ACT to get some projects funded in each STIP cycle and the overall goal should be to achieve an equitable distribution of modernization funding between the ACTs/Lane County over time, this may take two or more two-year STIP cycles to achieve.
- Emphasis will be placed on identifying and funding projects for inclusion in the construction STIP (CSTIP). Region 2 will take a more active role in separating CSTIP from development STIP (DSTIP) projects, the goal being to find non-STIP funding sources for DSTIP projects (e.g., region planning program) so that most of the limited funding available for the modernization program is used for construction. The goal of this exercise is to keep modernization funds on true project development activities and not early planning such as problem identification, purpose and need development, and general mode and function type issues.

Large Project Prioritization

Large projects are those with a total cost over \$15 million. Because of the magnitude and relative importance of these projects, Region 2 will be responsible, in consultation with the ACTs/Lane County, for developing and maintaining this list. The following will guide the creation and maintenance of the large project list:

- ACTs/Lane County will continue to prioritize STIP funds for keeping the large projects on this list moving forward (funding the next development milestone, such as preliminary engineering or right-of-way protection, etc.).
- ACT chairs, vice chairs, and Lane County representatives will meet in odd-numbered years (in September) with the Region 2 manager for a process check and to create, maintain, and modify as necessary a regional list of large projects. The ACTs/Lane County will prioritize large projects as part of the process described below.

ACTs/Lane County Project Prioritization

Prioritization of all projects (large and small) will primarily be conducted by the ACTs/Lane County as per the requirements from the OTC. The ACTs will be required to establish and follow a process to review and score projects. It is essential that this process be quantified and documentable. The ACTs/Lane County will engage the local agencies in their areas to suggest new eligible projects and will conduct their review and project rating in a public meeting. The steps necessary to reach a final prioritized list of modernization projects for the Region include:

- Each ACT/Lane County will utilize the eligibility criteria and prioritization factors approved by the OTC to review and rank projects. The ACTs/Lane County may use additional criteria to select and rank projects provided the criteria do not conflict with any criteria established by the OTC (source: *"Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)"* adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, June 18, 2003 – page 9).
- A limited number of new modernization projects may be accepted to be included in the Region's scoping process for the STIP update. That number will be determined by the respective area managers based on staffing availability and workload. The ACTs/Lane County will solicit from the local agencies in their area new candidate projects to be considered for inclusion in the scoping process. Each ACT may propose, from the projects submitted, a fixed number of new projects to enter scoping. The solicitation will also inform the local agencies of the eligibility criteria and prioritization factors be used to rate the projects. Any new project proposed by a local agency must meet the OTC-approved modernization eligibility criteria (local agency respondents must provide documentation to demonstrate that projects meet the eligibility criteria). Region 2 recommends that local agencies give priority to projects that were identified in, and incorporated into local agency plans through

adoption of, an ODOT facility or refinement plan. Such planning projects contain valuable information that indicates the project is further developed than other projects in an adopted TSP.

- The ACTs/Lane County prioritized project list from the 2008-2011 STIP update will be updated (the ACTs/Lane County will determine which projects from their respective previous lists will be carried forward) and augmented with the new projects from the process above. This new list will be the projects that each ACT will prioritize.
- In a public meeting, each ACT/Lane County will review, score, and rank all the projects on the list and establish their prioritized project list. The final list should reflect the ACTs/Lane County modernization priorities irrespective of the size of the project.
- Each ACT/Lane County will submit their prioritized project list to Region 2.

Region 2 Process

- The Region 2 staff will use the ACTs/Lane County prioritized project lists to develop a preliminary Region recommendation that will be submitted to the ACTs/Lane County for their consideration and input. Region 2 will utilize the allocation principles above as a guide in preparing the list.
- Region 2 staff, through the area planners, will present the Region recommendation for their area to each of the ACTs/Lane County.
- Each ACT/Lane County will be given adequate time (2-3 months) to review and comment on the preliminary recommendations for their own areas and the other areas of Region 2.
- After review and comments by the ACTs/Lane County, Region 2 will prepare a revised Region recommendation that will form the foundation for discussion at an All-Area meeting. The purpose of the All-Area meeting will be to reach agreement on the final list of modernization projects, matched to available funding. Each ACT/Lane County will be represented at the All-Area Meeting by the Chair and Vice Chair. Region 2 will be represented by the Region Manager and the Region Planning Manager. Representatives of local agencies and MPOs may be asked to make brief presentations on projects. Decision-making will be done by the ACT/Lane County Chairs, vice chairs, the ODOT Region 2 Manager and ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager.

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PROPOSED 2010-2013 STIP DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

March – July 2007

- ODOT Headquarters (HQ) develops initial program level funding allocation scenarios from Management Systems. Priority lists of needs produced for preservation, safety, operations, and bridge.
- OTC develops draft Modernization Program eligibility criteria and prioritization factors and transmits to ACTs/Lane County for review and comment.
- ACTs/Lane County approve area-specific prioritization factors. Area-specific factors must not conflict with the OTC criteria and factors.
- OTC adopts statewide eligibility criteria and prioritization factors.
- ACTs/Lane County solicit new modernization project proposals from local agencies and ODOT.

August 2007

- ODOT HQ assembles draft program and funding materials and distributes to ACTs, stakeholders, and the OTC.

September 2007

- ODOT HQ distributes program goal information to, and requests input from ACTs, MPOs, and ERT.
- ACT Chairs/Lane County meet with the Region Manager to develop/modify the Region Large Project Priority list.
- ACTs/Lane County recommend new projects to enter scoping process.
- Region 2 request ACTs begin prioritization for modernization projects. Ratings must be based on the OTC criteria and factors at a minimum.

October 2007

- OTC/ODOT management discussions on funding allocations and program goals for STIP
- ACTs begin refining their prioritized lists of modernization needs.

November 2007

- ACTs, MPOs and others give OTC input about program goals and OTC begins discussion.
- Management System prioritized needs lists are completed by ODOT HQ and submitted to Regions.

December 2007

- OTC approves program goals and funding allocations.
- ACTs submit their preliminary prioritized modernization lists to Region.
- Continued project scoping for modernization.

January 2008

- Project scoping begins
- Region funding targets distributed

February 2008

- Project scoping continues
- Region 2 releases preliminary Region recommendation of modernization projects for ACT review and comment in early February.

March 2008

- Project scoping continues
- ACTs review Region preliminary recommendation

April 2008

- Project scoping completed
- ACTs and MPOs provide feedback on Region recommendation to Region 2 staff.

May 2008

- Region 2 staff analyze feedback and prepare revised modernization proposal.
- Region 2 releases final modernization proposal to ACTs for the All-Area meeting by mid-May.

June 2008

- All-Area meeting is held to decide Modernization project priorities.
- Region prepares draft program for review by ACTs, MPOs, ERT, etc.
- Region submits modernization program recommendation to ODOT Headquarters for incorporation into the Draft STIP.

July 2008

- Targets to actuals process begins

August 2008

- Targets to actuals process continues
- Regions review Draft STIP database with ACTs

September 2008

- ODOT HQ prints and mails draft STIP
- Begin public review
- ACT Chairs/Lane County meet with the Region Manager to develop/modify the Region Large Project Priority list.

October-November 2008

- Public review of Draft STIP

December 2008

- ACTs, Regions, OTC review public input.

January 2009

- Continue review of public input.
- Make adjustments to STIP as necessary.

February-May 2009

- Air quality conformity modeling and determinations
- *Next STIP cycle begins*

April-May 2009

- ODOT HQ constrains STIP to conform to estimated available revenue.

June-July 2009

- Prepare final STIP for review.

July 2009

- Final review by MPOs, ACTs, ERT, OTC.

August 2009

- OTC approval of Final STIP/submit to USDOT for review.

NOTE: This is an approximate timeline – many actions on this timeline are outside of Region 2 control.