

**BARRY Cella**

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**From:** Chris Hagerbaumer [ChrisH@oeconline.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2010 12:39 PM  
**To:** cuttingcarbs@lists.groundwire.org  
**Subject:** [cuttingcarbs] your input needed on the draft eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for the STIP

**WHAT:** Your comments are needed on the draft eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for the 2012-2015 STIP.

**WHY:** Suggested updates to the eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for determining which major road, highway, and transit projects get built in Oregon are stronger than they've ever been, but public comment is needed to ensure the Oregon Transportation Commission adopts even more robust criteria and prioritization factors, especially with regard to greenhouse gases.

**WHEN:** Comments are due by February 19th, 2010

**WHO:** Please submit your comments to Lucia Ramirez, Principal Planner in ODOT's Transportation Development Division, at Lucia.L.RAMIREZ@odot.state.or.us.  
Lucia can also be reached at 503-986-4168.

**BACKGROUND:**

Draft eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for the 2012-2015 STIP are available for comment at: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/docs/1215stipcmt/CriteriaReview.pdf> [PDF].

Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) strongly urges you to review and comment on these criteria and prioritization factors because we have an unprecedented opportunity to ensure improved transportation decision making in the state.

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is the funding and scheduling document for major road, highway, and transit projects in Oregon. It lists projects for the next four years. Oregon's STIP is adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC). Project ideas are brought forward by a variety of local and regional entities, e.g., Area Commissions on Transportation, Freight Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The OTC also adopts the eligibility criteria and prioritization factors that guide which projects to include in the STIP. The document out for public review was produced by the STIP Stakeholder Committee, on which OEC sits, and additional public comment can strengthen it.

During the 2009 legislative session, OEC and others forwarded a set of 10 considerations to be incorporated into STIP criteria, which were adopted as part of House Bill 2001 (see the list on page 4 of the draft). Three are of particular interest to OEC:

8. Fosters livable communities by demonstrating that the investment does not undermine sustainable urban development. This consideration is addressed in the new criterion "Implement OHP Policy 1B: Land Use and Transportation" on pages 24-25.
9. Enhances the value of transportation projects through designs and development that reflect environmental stewardship and community sensitivity. This consideration is addressed primarily in the new criterion "Implement OHP Policy 5A: Environmental Resources" on pages 27-28.
10. Is consistent with the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and reduces this state's dependence on foreign oil. This consideration is addressed in the new criterion "Implement OHP Policy 5A: Environmental Resources" on pages 27-28, as well as the discussion of least cost planning in the introduction.

While OEC believes the revisions suggested by the STIP Stakeholder Committee go a long way toward ensuring adequate consideration of these goals, it's our opinion that the proposal falls a bit short with regard to the state's greenhouse gas reduction (GHG) goals. The introduction (see pages 4-9) discusses how GHGs should be considered, but is a bit schizophrenic in its recommendations. There is useful direction (e.g., on pages 7-9) to project proponents that they "should be aware of the state greenhouse gas reduction targets and any local greenhouse gas reduction plans and are encouraged to select investments that contribute to achievement of the goals described." But on page 6, lines 26-37, the proponents are advised that "documentation of these (considerations) is not required for the 2012-2015 STIP." Project proponents are "expected to consider and discuss these principles" in a general way with no reference to the specifics on pages 7-9. OEC feels that entities proposing transportation projects should be given a consistent signal that the time has arrived for addressing the global warming consequences of transportation infrastructure choices. Every transportation and land use decision made has GHG consequences that will last far into the future, and in order to meet the state's 2020 and 2050 GHG reduction goals we must make the correct choices now. Even without a perfect means of assessing the GHG implications of a specific project, VMT, fleet mix and modal split can serve as a rough proxy for GHGs in the mean time.

If you agree (and even if you don't!), we highly encourage citizen input. Only true transportation wonks will enjoy reading the entire document, but hey – what better use of your time during the rainy, dreary days of winter than to help ensure a better future for Oregon.

For full proceedings of the STIP Stakeholder Committee, see  
<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/1215stipcmte.shtml>.

For a citizen's primer on the STIP, see  
<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/docs/0811stip/primerBrochure.pdf>

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