

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



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In Reply Refer To:
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File: 105.000

Mr. Matthew L. Garrett, Director
Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
355 Capitol Street, N.E.
Salem, OR 97301

RE: 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Approval and Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Finding

Dear Mr. Garrett,

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.218, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have jointly reviewed Oregon's 2015-2018 STIP, transmitted in your letter on January 16, 2015 and supported by the Governor's certification of the metropolitan TIPs on March 17, 2015. We find the 2015-2018 STIP substantially meets the process and content requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C. 5303 - 5305, 23 CFR Part 450 (Subparts B and C) and 49 CFR Part 613 (Subparts B and C).

23 U.S.C. 135(f)(4) and 23 CFR 450.218 also requires that the FHWA and the FTA approval of the STIP include a finding that the process from which the STIP was developed is consistent with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135 and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5305. ODOT's statewide transportation planning program provides a robust, analytical and public participatory process to create a structured planning program leading to the effective identification of needed investments and prioritization of action. The State's recognition of the importance of system management in a time of constrained resources and the re-crafting of project prioritization (e.g. Fix It and Enhance) is a strong example of leadership.

While supportive of the overall planning process, the review also identified actions needed to continue ensuring that the STIP and planning programs meet applicable federal requirements. Attachment 1 provides additional details on the Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Finding and includes items that require action on the part of ODOT as well as observations. We request that ODOT provide an action plan by June 30, 2015 that prioritizes the action items and establishes a schedule for their completion.

On behalf of FHWA and FTA, we find that the Oregon STIP was developed consistent with the statewide and metropolitan planning provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135 and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5305, and the 2015-2018 STIP is hereby approved. This action shall remain valid for four years; however, ODOT may choose to update the STIP at more frequent intervals. This joint FHWA and FTA approval of the STIP does not constitute an eligibility determination for the Federal funds proposed for obligation on the listed projects. The eligibility of individual projects for funding is subject to the applicant's satisfaction of all additional administrative requirements.

FHWA and FTA look forward to continued coordination with ODOT, the MPOs, and other local and regional transportation service providers in further implementing the transportation planning provisions in federal law. If you have any questions, please contact Nick Fortey, FHWA, at 503-316-2565, or Jeremy Borrego, FTA, at 206-220-7956.

Sincerely,



Phillip A. Ditzler
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration



R. F. Krochalis
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration

Enclosure

cc, w/encl.:

ODOT	(Paul Mather, Highway Division Administrator)
	(Jerri Bohard, Transportation Development Division Manager)
	(Erik Havig, Planning Section Manager)
	(Jeff Flowers, Program and Funding Services Manager)
	(Kelly Jacobsen, Statewide STIP Manager)
Metro	(Elissa Gertler, Planning and Development Director)
SKATS	(Mike Jaffe, Transportation Planning Director)
CLMPO	(Paul Thompson, Program Manager)
RVMPO	(Dan Moore, Planning Director)
CAMPO	(Ali Bonakdar, Planning Director)
AAMPO	(Theresa Conley, AAMPO Coordinator)
BMPO	(Tyler Deke, Bend MPO Manager)

ATTACHMENT 1

2015 Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration Oregon Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Finding for FY 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Introduction

This Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning Finding examines the extent to which the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) is based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304, and subparts A, B, and C of 23 CFR 450. This report documents the Planning Finding for Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) 2015-2018 STIP and all of the incorporated Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) for the metropolitan areas of the State of Oregon.

This finding and approval is based on FHWA and FTA's ongoing involvement in and knowledge of the statewide and metropolitan planning processes, the gathering and review of requested information, and discussions with ODOT and the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and others. Below is a summary of items that require follow-up actions by ODOT as well as observations.

Follow-up action items:

1 - State and MPO Self-Certifications

Self-certification statements by the State and the MPOs are important components of the STIP development process and are necessary to support the planning finding and STIP approval. These statements certify that the statewide and metropolitan planning processes are being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements. For the statewide planning process, ODOT completed this certification as part of their STIP submittal; and for metropolitan planning areas each MPO completed their own certifications. Both State and MPO certifications were reviewed to support this planning finding. All certifications reference appropriate citations, however, the self-certification process does not reference supporting documents and analysis. ODOT should provide the documentation that supports the self-certification process for ODOT and work with the MPOs to ensure a similar documentation process is in place for MPO certification.

2 – Agreements between MPOs, Transit Providers and ODOT

MPOs, the State, and publically-owned operators of the mass transit are required to mutually determine their respective roles in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Samples of agreements were reviewed to determine if sufficient detail is present to indicate responsibilities for actions and products. In the agreements reviewed, tasks and responsibilities among the various agencies were generally well defined. However, the level of detail on responsibility for project identification, prioritization and implementation was not consistent in all agreements. ODOT should establish a schedule to review each MPO's planning agreement to determine if updates are needed.

3 - Oregon MPO Consortium

MPO coordination through the Oregon MPO Consortium offers an opportunity to encourage cooperative planning. The Consortium serves as an informal cooperative among Oregon's MPOs; in the past few months Oregon's MPOs have agreed to allocate a portion of their Federal planning funds to support a shared staffing position. ODOT should clarify the role of the MPO Consortium and provide a general assurance that Federal funds do not support lobbying activities through a letter to FHWA Oregon Division and FTA Region 10. ODOT should develop or redistribute lobbying guidance to ODOT MPO liaisons and the MPOs.

4 – Transportation Management Area Certification Reviews Action Tracking

Under 23 CFR 450.334(b), FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review Transportation Management Areas every four years and certify whether the planning process in those areas meets the applicable provisions of Federal law. In conducting this review, FHWA and FTA review elements of the planning process including: metropolitan planning area boundaries, 3-C planning agreements, Unified Planning Work Program development, TIP development, long range transportation plan development, public outreach, air quality, and Title VI compliance.

The corrective actions from the previous TMA certification reviews (Portland Metro March 2013; Salem-Keizer November 2012; and Central Lane October 2011) have either been resolved or are in the process of being resolved. During the review of the 2015-2018 STIP submission, FHWA and FTA requested and received written summaries from the TMAs that identify each corrective action and the actions taken toward resolution. ODOT, in coordination with the TMAs, should develop a formal process that tracks the status of corrective actions and recommendations from the TMA certifications.

5 - Metropolitan Planning Organization Support and Oversight by ODOT

A continuing and cooperative relationship among the MPO, State, and transit operator assure the effective development of the long-range plan and short-range program of projects (TIP). The metropolitan planning program generally meets Federal requirements based on our continuing involvement with the metropolitan planning organizations, attendance at technical advisory and policy committee meetings, attendance at UPWP meetings, and review of MPO planning products. As the direct recipient of Federal MPO planning funds (PL, 5303), ODOT should better define expectations for ODOT MPO liaisons' proactive roles in managing MPO progress toward meeting Federal planning requirements. ODOT support and oversight for MPOs should include early and active involvement in UPWP development and review, TMA planning certification reviews, and STIP/TIP coordination.

6 - Statewide Planning and Research Program (SPR)

23 CFR 450.206 (d.) outlines expectations for documenting statewide planning work program activities supported by Federal planning funds. We look forward to our discussions with ODOT to better understand the process for project solicitation, selection and prioritization utilizing state planning and research funds. FHWA and FTA expect that our continued meetings to focus on the SPR program will clarify how projects and programs are solicited, selected and prioritized for the Federal planning program. FHWA and FTA expect that these conversations will lead to more efficient and effective program management and oversight.

7 - Safety Planning

FTA and FHWA support ongoing safety planning efforts conducted by ODOT and MPOs. Additional work is needed to extend the link between metropolitan efforts and statewide efforts. Given ODOT's development of an All Roads Transportation Safety (ARTS) Program, coupled with the new strategic highway safety plan, the MPOs and ODOT should use this opportunity to ensure a strong link between the ARTS safety identification and prioritization process and MPO safety plans. We continue to encourage safety plan development for identification and prioritization of hot spot and systemic safety needs. In the near term, we recommend ODOT update the Transportation System Planning guidelines to provide more direction in the area of safety planning.

8 - Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The development of operations plans and updates to ITS architecture plans have become more prominent in discussions at the MPOs, reflecting a renewed focus on investing in improved management of the existing system. In collaboration with the MPOs and regional stakeholders, ODOT should develop a model approach based on Federal guidance that allows updates of Regional ITS Architectures and Strategic Plans that are commensurate with the transportation system management and operation investments in the region. These efforts should be coordinated with the management and operations direction from the regional transportation plans.

9 - Title VI Plans

Both the MPOs and the State have devoted considerable efforts to developing or updating Title VI plans; several MPOs were contemplating new work designed to identify transportation impacts on community sectors. While recognizing impacts are specific to a geographic area, the development of a broadly applicable approach among MPOs would reduce duplication of effort. FHWA and FTA recommend that the MPOs and ODOT work cooperatively to develop a model framework for a Title VI analysis methodology making effective use of the data available to assess impacts to affected populations of local communities.

10 - Unified Planning Work Programs

The MPOs generally completed Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP) that are comprehensive in coverage with funding sources effectively displayed. FHWA and FTA encourage the MPOs and ODOT to strive for consistency in identifying tasks included in the State Planning and Research (SPR) Work Programs and Unified Planning Work Programs. Key products, funding sources (including match), and timelines should be clearly and consistently presented in both UPWPs and the SPR. UPWP reporting should indicate when proposed actions have had major changes in scope, schedule, or budget.

11 - Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan

The *Oregon Transportation Plan* was adopted in 2006 and serves as the statewide multimodal transportation plan which is supported by a number of individual modal plans. Oregon's statewide transportation planning program provides an analytical and public participatory process that leads to the effective identification of needed investments and prioritization of action. ODOT's recognition of the importance of system management in a time of constrained resources and the re-crafting of the project prioritization (i.e., Fix It and Enhance) is a strong

example of leadership. ODOT should assess the need to update the statewide plan, and associated model and topic plans to ensure those plans remain consistent with current state policy and maintains a 20-year forecast period as required by Federal planning regulations.

12 - Financial Constraint

FHWA and FTA review the STIP to determine if it is financially constrained and that funds are available to carry out the program based upon information provided by ODOT. The STIP is required to be financially constrained by year and funding category and include sufficient financial information to demonstrate which projects are to be implemented using proposed revenue sources. Likewise, each project in the STIP, or identified phase, must include an estimated cost along with the amount of Federal funds proposed to be obligated in each program year. ODOT maintains a program funding spreadsheet that tracks spending targets by region and program. This information should be used to support the fiscal constraint analysis in the STIP documentation to establish a more transparent accounting of expected costs and reasonably available finding. Fiscal constraint must be demonstrated over the full period of the STIP. Fiscal constraint and reasonably available funding needs to be transparent in the publically available STIP.

13 - STIP Content and Protocols for Development and Submission

Oregon's statewide transportation planning program provides an analytical and public participatory process that supports a structured planning program and leads to the comprehensive identification of needed investments. In accordance with 23 CFR 450.216(i), the project-level information in the STIP should be more detailed and include sufficient descriptive information to identify the project purpose, scope, and phase; this information should also include an estimated total cost, the amount of Federal funds to be obligated by year and funding category, and the identification of the agencies responsible for delivering the project. Discrete individual projects should be fully-identified under a single project listing to include multiple years of funding and multiple Federal funding sources. Category fund type programs (such as Surface Transportation Program transfers, pooled fund projects, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program projects) should be listed for each project.

The MPOs reviewed the STIP for consistency with their respective metropolitan transportation improvement programs (MTIPs) and identified several discrepancies that should be corrected by ODOT as identified in Attachment 2.

The transmittal of the STIP to FHWA and FTA should include the required Governor's approval of the MPO TIPs and complete highway and transit financial information. FHWA and FTA will work with ODOT to develop a STIP submittal protocol. We expect that development and adherence to the protocol will facilitate future FHWA and FTA STIP review. In addition, ODOT should review the existing STIP amendment process to identify potential streamlined approaches. STIP amendments should provide improved projects descriptions, consistent descriptions of work categories, and clarity and consistency on the funding source.

14 - Metropolitan / Non-Metropolitan Planning

The Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) provide a means to evaluate needs and recommend to the Oregon Transportation Commission project priorities in non-MPO areas of the State. The ACTs are components of the planning and prioritization process. The ACTs have

developed over time and have differing compositions and operating procedures. Every ACT should formally recognize the role of the MPOs in developing, selecting and prioritizing projects in the metropolitan plans and TIPs. These roles should also be included in the MPO planning agreement. Effective coordination and comprehensive planning would be aided by assuring representation of MPOs within ACTs and assuring that planning agreements clarify project selection.

With the option under MAP-21 (23 USC 135(m)) to create Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, ODOT may want to review the future function and options for broadening the capabilities of ACTs. We recommend ODOT perform an assessment of ACT operating protocols, including interaction with MPOs and reflection of MPO plans and TIPs to ensure a coordinated planning process with the metropolitan areas.

15 - Consultation Process

ODOT should perform an assessment of the consultation process for non-metropolitan officials as specified by 23 CFR 450.210(b)(1). The procedures for involvement of Tribal governments and Federal lands management agencies in STIP development and review are not clear. ODOT should document the procedure for Tribal and Federal land management agency involvement in STIP development. The STIP documentation should include a summary of consultation that has occurred with Tribes and Federal land management agencies.

Observations

Performance-Based Planning

ODOT and the MPOs have had considerable experience with performance based planning. While Federal regulations continue to be developed in response to MAP-21 requirements for performance measures, ODOT should consider opportunities to continue to enhance data collection and coordination efforts. ODOT, the MPOs, transit providers, and other transportation agencies and transportation service providers recognize the importance of data collection and analysis to support effective transportation decision-making and data reporting. FHWA and FTA support efforts to assemble data users groups to look at improved data gathering techniques, data analytics, and decision-making techniques to reduce the data collection burden and to improve decision-making across a system, which is often viewed as seamless by users.

Transportation Air Quality Conformity

The Clean Air Act requires that transportation plans, programs, and projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas that are funded or approved by FHWA or FTA be in conformity with the State Implementation Plans for air quality through the process described in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) transportation conformity regulations. Conformity findings have been made separately with the same date as this STIP approval. This review, examining the broad outlines of agency coordination, found that the MPOs and ODOT continue to effectively manage the air quality conformity process. ODOT has demonstrated leadership in coordinating the air quality conformity processes to ensure the MPOs' work towards Federal requirements is organized, transparent, and well-documented.

ATTACHMENT 2
FY 2015-2018 STIP and MTIP Projects Consistency Review

MPO	Project Key No.	Discrepancy	Action
Corvallis MPO			
	None	None	None
Bend MPO			
	14020	Right of Way Program year is 2016 in MTIP.	Correct entry in STIP
	17807	NHPP funds in the 2016 construction year is in MTIP. Project is inside the Bend MPO boundary.	Correct entry in STIP
SKATS			
	18750	STP-U funds for this project are not shown in the STIP.	Correct entry in STIP
Central Lane MPO			
	18781,18856, 18859, 18792, 18822, 18576, 18577, 18863, Bus Support Equipment and Facilities, Passenger Boarding Improvements, Regional TO/TDM Program - Point2point Solutions, Regional Safe Routes to School, Vanpools, Accessible Service Vehicles, Accessible Service Vehicles, 17336, 16779	Project name is different in STIP & MTIP.	Correct entry in STIP
	18822, 18865	Funding source discrepancy.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	19175,	Projects are in MTIP but	MPO and ODOT

	Coburg Regional Transportation Planning, 18813, Central Lane MPO UPWP Funding, TDM Program & Projects (#17, #18, #19), LTD Regional Transportation Planning, 17336	missing in STIP.	coordination.
	18857	STIP is missing an amendment that was approved to add \$163,500 to the PE phase.	Correct entry in STIP
	18857, 16861, Bus Support Equipment and Facilities, Regional Safe Routes to School, 16779	Project description discrepancy.	Correct entry in STIP
	18132	Total amount different in MTIP and STIP.	Correct entry in STIP
	LTD SmartTrips Regional Residential Program	Lead agency discrepancy. STIP indicates ODOT. MTIP indicates LTD. Federal amount is incorrect in the STIP.	Correct entry in STIP
Metro			
	17538, 18313, 18314, 19054	Projects are in MTIP but missing in STIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	15389	Projects are in STIP but missing in MTIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	18032, 18034	Projects are in STIP but missing in MTIP.	Remove entries from STIP.
	17270, 17270, 15601, 18306, 18809, 14438, 17410, 18801, 16253, 17888, 18022, 17757, 17414, 17521, 17708, 18444, 18785, 18836, 17306, 18027,	Miscellaneous discrepancies.	MPO and ODOT coordination.

	18028, 19285, 19286		
RVMPO	17251, 17249, New, Foothill Rd, Corey Rd to Atlantic Ave, 17262, 17975, 17639, 18144, 18374, 18375, 18376, 18377	Projects are in MTIP but missing in STIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	17388, 19140, 18978	Funding, phase and year discrepancy in MTIP and STIP.	Correct entries in STIP.
	18978	Project name different in STIP & MTIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
MRMPO			
	19186	Projects are in MTIP but missing in STIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	17477, 18235, 18569, 16062	TIP project shows as non- MPO in STIP.	Correct entries in STIP.
Albany MPO			
	19125, 19127, 19128	Projects are in MTIP but missing in STIP.	MPO and ODOT coordination.
	17186	Remove from STIP	Correct entry in STIP.
	19128	Project description discrepancy. STIP indicates the project is in CWACT. MTIP indicates MWACT.	Correct entry in STIP.