



January 5, 2011

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: 5.e: STP-U Funding Request for MPO Work Program in support of Local and Regional Transportation System Plans (TSPs)

Action Recommended: Hold public hearing; review recommendation and provide feedback to staff.

Issue

The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the MPC reprogram existing Surface Transportation Planning-Urban (STP-U) federal MPO funding for the MPO's work program on the Eugene, Springfield, Coburg and Regional Transportation System Plans in the amount of \$225,000 in federal fiscal year 2011.

Background

Significant data and transportation modeling work is needed as part of the work program to complete the three local Transportation System Plans, and the Regional Transportation System Plan (See Attachments 1 and 2). The work required of MPO staff in support of the local and regional state-required TSPs is in addition to the staff time already funded to maintain the data and modeling for the Regional Transportation Plan, and therefore additional funds are being requested.

The requested STP-U funds were originally programmed for the Central Lane Household Survey, but are no longer needed for that purpose.

Funding Source

In June of 2007, MPC programmed \$225,000 of STP-U funds for the Central Lane Household Travel Behavior Survey. This provided the funding for the MPO's portion of ODOT's statewide Survey. However, due to a number of funding and timing issues, the MPO worked with ODOT to obtain substitute funds to support the Travel Survey.

A significant challenge for the direct expenditure of the Federal STP-U funds on the Household Survey was the requirement to generate non-federal direct or in-kind match contributions. All of the local work on the Survey would be conducted by MPO staff and could not be counted as in-kind match since that work would already be federally funded. No local funds would be available to the project. At the same time, ODOT funding of the local and regional TSP efforts was also a question of timing. The ODOT funds were tied to a specific Oregon budget cycle, and were at risk of not being available should the TSP work not get under way in that time frame.

As a result of discussions between ODOT and the MPO, an agreement was reached to exchange funding – to provide the State funding for the MPO’s Household Survey expenses, and to provide the MPO’s Federal STP-U funding for the MPO’s work on the local and regional TSPs. This arrangement resolved both potential hurdles. The State funding for the Survey carried no local match requirement, and it was significantly easier to generate in-kind match for the Federal funding for the TSP work given the large amount of local, non-federally-funded, staff time that would be spent on the TSP updates. Furthermore, the Survey expenditures were due to occur within the timeframe needed to secure and fully utilize the State funding, while the commencement of work on the TSPs was still off in the future.

MPC was informed of this funding arrangement in late 2008, and the expenditure of the State funds on the Survey has already occurred. Since that time, MPO, ODOT and local staff have been waiting for work on the local TSPs to commence. It is only within the past several months that work orders and other arrangements have been put in place to allow that work to proceed in all three cities.

Public Involvement

The Central Lane MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) calls for a public comment period, a public hearing, notice to interested parties, web notice, an open house, and a newspaper display ad for proposed STP-U fund allocations. Staff supports the required public comment period, public hearing, notice to interested parties and web notice. The public comment period will be noticed in accordance with the PPP and will run from January 7 through February 7, 2011.

Staff is requesting that MPC waive the requirement for an open house and newspaper display ad.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Involvement

The CAC will review this request at their January meeting.

Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) Involvement

The TPC reviewed this request at their December meeting. TPC unanimously recommended the request pending results of the public comment period and MPC review.

Recommendation

Hold public hearing and provide feedback to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. MPO TSP Work Program Outline