



DATE: December 2, 2005
TO: STA Board
FROM: Janet Adams, Director for Projects
RE: Project Study Report Priorities

Background:

A Project Study Report (PSR) is an engineering report, the purpose of which is to document agreement on the scope, schedule, and estimated cost of a project so that the project can be included in a future State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The California Transportation Commission (CTC) requires a completed PSR for projects before being added into the STIP. The CTC intends that the process and requirements for PSRs be as simple, timely, and workable as practical, given that a PSR must be prepared at the front end of the project development process, before environmental evaluation and detailed design, and that it must provide a sound basis for commitment of future state funding. A PSR also provides a key opportunity to achieve consensus on project scope, schedule, and proposed cost among Caltrans and involved regional and local agencies.

State statutes provide that Caltrans shall have 30 days to determine whether it can complete the requested report in a timely fashion (in time for inclusion in the next STIP). If Caltrans determines it cannot prepare the report in a timely fashion, the requesting entity may prepare the report. Local, regional and state agencies are partners in planning regional transportation improvements. Input from all parties is required at the earliest possible stages and continues throughout the process. The project sponsor should take the lead in coordination activities. Regardless of who will prepare the PSR, a meeting with Caltrans and the appropriate local entity (or entities) should be held.

In an effort to accelerate project delivery for major highway projects in Solano County, the STA Board has authorized the STA to pursue and sponsor completing PSRs for priority projects in Solano County. At the February 17, 2005 STA Board retreat, STA staff presented a list of potential PSR candidate projects from the I-80/I-680/I-780 Major Investment & Corridor Study and the SR 12 Major Investment Study. (Other projects may be identified in the future SR 113 and SR 29 Major Investment Studies or other major studies conducted in Solano County.)

The STA Board requested staff develop criteria that may be used for prioritizing candidate projects for Project Study Reports. Based on the discussions of the Arterials, Highways and Freeways Committee and the TAC, the STA Board approved the following order of importance for PSR candidate criteria at their April 13, 2005 meeting:

- Project included in the STA's adopted Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP 2030)

- Traffic Safety/Traffic Operations
- Deliverability and Funding of Project
- Economic Development/Impact
- Efficiency of Project (Benefit/Cost analysis)
- Socioeconomic Impact

The justification for the order of criteria is as follows:

- The CTP is the adopted “roadmap” for transportation in Solano County; therefore, projects must meet the Goals and Objectives of the CTP to be a viable project.
- Traffic Safety and Traffic Operations improvements are the basis for current and future capacity increasing projects.
- PSR’s have a short “shelf-life” and should be completed for projects that are deliverable to construction within a few years.
- Transportation projects that provide a positive economic impact help ensure a continued emphasis on economic vitality, one cornerstone of the STA mission statement.
- Project efficiency and socioeconomic impact are both important criteria, but will generally be addressed with the application of the other criteria.

Based on the order of criteria, STA staff is taking the next steps to develop a prioritized PSR funding plan. STA and Caltrans are coordinating efforts to group and prioritize PSRs into three categories:

1. PSR development by STA for the STIP program;
2. PSR development by Caltrans for the SHOPP program;
3. PSR development by local agencies for locally funded projects with request for Caltrans oversight.

STA staff met with staff from all cities, the County and Caltrans in August and early September to discuss the status of projects on the highway system. Most of the agencies have a sequence of projects that are expected to generate highway improvements. However, there are a number of local interchange improvements that require substantial dialogue to determine and develop the funding plan. Caltrans has submitted an update on the SHOPP work for the county. Most of the work proceeding in the SHOPP are for categories that relate to maintaining the infrastructure and do not require additional input from the STA and local agencies at this time.

Discussion:

STA staff has compiled a draft list of PSR candidate projects, which was presented to the STA Board in October. The STA has dedicated \$112,000 FY 2005-06 and \$125,000 in FY 2006-07 budgets for PSR work for future STIP eligible projects. The STA may perform one PSR per year or opt to combine the funds from the two years (\$237,000/project) to perform one larger PSR. At the meeting, the STA Board provided direction to staff to elevate the development of the I-80 HOV system in Solano County. Based on the STA Board’s discussion and direction provided in October, staff recommended the following PSRs for STA and Caltrans to conduct:

STA:

FY 2005-06:

- SR 12 and Church Road Improvements (PSR funded by STA)
- I-80 HOV Lanes from Carquinez Bridge to SR37/Turner Parkway Overcrossing (PSR funded by SAFETEA Demo Funds)

FY 2006-07:

- I-80 HOV Lanes from Air Base Parkway to I-505 (PSR funded by STA)

Caltrans:

- Eastbound/Westbound I-780 Stripe Aux Lanes – 2nd St. to 5th St.
- Phase II Truck Climbing Lane
- I-80 Pavement Rehabilitation – SR12 East (Fairfield) to Meridian Rd. (Vacaville)

STA staff presented the revised PSR Candidate list to the TAC at their November 30th meeting. The TAC agreed with the STA Board's decision to fund the SR12/Church PSR and supported the decision for STA to be the lead agency to perform the I-80/SR37 HOV/Turner Parkway Overcrossing PSR. However, the City of Fairfield raised concerns over the selection of the I-80 HOV Lanes PSR from Air Base to I-505, citing that the project falls further down the Corridor Study's priority list, and considering the cost of the project (\$111M) that STA may have limited funds to fully perform the PSR or find the necessary funds to build the project before the PSR's shelf-life expires. City of Fairfield staff suggested funding the TAC's initial recommendation, the EB I-80 Auxiliary Lanes project from Travis Blvd. to Air Base Parkway. Fairfield staff cited that its priority was ranked higher in the Corridor Study, that the limited PSR budget could cover the cost for the PSR and that the cost of the project (\$3.7M) made it more "deliverable," which fit the criteria of PSR selection. The TAC approved the revised recommendation (Attachment A), with the caveat that the PSR for the I-80 HOV Lanes from Air Base Parkway to I-505 be designated as the subsequent priority for the next PSR to be funded and performed by the STA.

Pending STA Board approval, staff will initiate RFPs for the SR12/Church Road and Turner Parkway Overcrossing PSRs in early 2006. Over the next couple of months, the STA will be working closely with Caltrans and local agencies to discuss prioritizing the projects on the Local PSR list that will require Caltrans oversight.

The STA TAC also discussed the State Highway Operational Protection Program (SHOPP) at their September meeting. Following the discussions from the TAC at their September meeting, the STA Board authorized the Executive Director to send a letter to Caltrans requesting the addition of the I-80 rehabilitation project between SR 12 East in Fairfield and Meridian Rd. in Vacaville for prioritization in the SHOPP's Pavement Rehabilitation category. Following this recommendation, the recently released Draft 2006 SHOPP list includes the I-80 rehabilitation project as part of the Pavement Rehabilitation category. A letter was also sent to the Minor Improvements section of the Caltrans SHOPP department requesting the EB/WB I-780 Stripe Aux Lane (2nd St. to 5th St.) project be included as a minor improvement project.

Recommendation:

Approve the following:

1. The Priority List for future Solano County Project Study Reports (PSRs) to be conducted by STA.
2. Authorize the STA to be the lead agency for the PSR for the I-80 HOV Lane/Turner Parkway Overcrossing project in Vallejo to be funded by Federal SAFETEA Demo funds.
3. Authorize the Executive Director to initiate PSR for the SR 12 and Church Road Improvements project in Rio Vista to be funded by the STA in FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07.
4. Authorize the STA to initiate the PSR for the EB I-80 Aux Lanes – Travis Blvd. to Air Base Pkwy. project in Fairfield to be funded by the STA in FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07.
5. Designate I-80 HOV Lane – Air Base to I-505 as the subsequent priority for next PSR to be funded and performed by the STA.
6. Authorize the Executive Director to request Caltrans to conduct PSRs for the EB/WB I-780 Stripe Aux Lanes project from 2nd St. to 5th St., the Phase II Truck Climbing Lane project, and the I-80 pavement rehabilitation project from SR12 East (Fairfield) to Meridian Road (Vacaville).

Attachment:

- A. PSR Candidate Projects