Surface Transportation Program

Policies and Procedures

Project Proposals

Any Member of the Southwest Conference of Mayors may propose a project to be funded through the STP program, provided:

A. The project is on an STP eligible route, as determined by the Southwest Conference of Mayors, CMAP and IDOT.
B. The project is an STP eligible project type as specified in MAP-21 and on the Southwest Conference of Mayors eligible project list.
C. The project sponsor can fund the required local match.
D. The project location is within the boundaries of the Southwest Conference of Mayors (the geographic area used to determine the STP funding allocated to the Southwest Conference of Mayors).

Any transit agency that wishes to propose a project must find two municipal co-sponsors.

Eligible Routes

The routes eligible for STP funding should be those routes that promote regional and/or sub regional travel. STP routes must serve more than a local access function. In order to be eligible for STP funding, the route involved must be included in the Federal Aid Urban (FAU) list.

The Southwest Conference of Mayors has a process for adding new routes to the system. This can be found in the Guidelines for Roadways Functional Classification Change handout.

Eligible Projects

The improvement of STP System routes requires adherence to federal and state standards and policies. For example, the simple resurfacing of a STP System route is not possible unless the completed project meets federal/state standards. The list of STP eligible projects approved by the Southwest Conference of Mayors includes a number of project types that would improve air quality.

A. Eligible Highway Projects
The following are general types of highway projects eligible for STP funding as part of the Highway Component:

- Rehabilitation, reconstruction and restoration
- Road widening/Add lanes
- Intersection improvements
- Traffic signal improvements (installation, modernization and modification)

B. Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) Projects
The following are general types of TCM projects that are considered to be eligible for STP funding as part of the TCM Component:

- Transit improvements
- High-occupancy vehicle (HOV) programs
- Commuter parking
- Traffic flow improvements (including signal interconnects)
- Pedestrian/Bicycle facilities

The Southwest Conference of Mayors encourages projects that qualify as Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) to be submitted for funding consideration. TCMs are projects that encourage modes of transportation other than the single occupant vehicle or improve the efficiency of a roadway so that emission reductions are achieved.

Project Selection Process

Project applications must be submitted to the Southwest Conference of Mayors' Planning Liaison by the specified dateline. The Conference staff will review each project proposal for completeness. All complete project applications will than be reviewed and ranked using the current ranking system by the Conference's Transportation Committee. Each project will receive a total point value, which will be used to prioritize projects.

The highest ranked projects will be placed on a five-year guaranteed funding list. The number of projects that will be placed on the list will be constrained by the amount of STP funds projected to be available to the Southwest Conference of Mayors over the three year time period.

Once a project is on this list, it will be funded so long as:

- The five-year time period does not expire.
- The cost of the project does not increase by more than 20%.
- An annual project update is submitted to Conference staff.

Funding

The match ratio for a STP funded project is 80% federal funds and 20% local funds for any projects approved on or after January 29th, 2014. Any projects approved before this date

still are under the The maximum amount of federal funding for any single component of a project is $1,000,000. Any federal amount exceeding $1,000,000 is the responsibility of the local municipality.

Phase I Engineering (Preliminary Engineering)
Phase II Engineering (Design Engineering)
Phase III Engineering (Construction Engineering)

Right-of-way (ROW) acquisition costs **are not eligible.**
Right-of-way acquisition will be a 100% local responsibility and must be accomplished in accordance with federal land acquisition requirements.

Non-Participatory STP Costs

Non-participating costs are those which are paid 100% by a municipality or other agency and are not included in the STP (federal) portion of a project's cost. There are two reasons why an item may be considered non-participating: 1) the item is not eligible for STP funding (*required*), or 2) the item has been identified for full funding by the sponsor or other agency (*optional*), such as an item with low traffic benefits. The purpose of the *optional* non-participating costs typically is to increase a project's score in the project evaluation and project selection process. Note that along with the cost of a non-participating item, any benefits derived from that item will be removed from the project evaluation and project selection process.

Policy On Funding Cost Increases

Cost increase in guaranteed projects pose difficulties for maintaining a fiscally constrained STP program. Project sponsors must inform Conference staff of any changes in project cost, as soon as the information becomes available. In addition, project sponsors must inform Conference staff of any cost increase beyond 20% of the original cost.

Flexibility

Any municipality may request that the Southwest Conference of Mayors consider an exception from the above STP policies. Any request for an exception must be made in writing to Conference staff and signed by the Mayor or President of the municipality. The request will then be placed on the next Conference meeting agenda.

Project Selection

The Southwest Conference of Mayors will approve a list of projects, based on project ratings, STP funding marks and other factors they may wish to consider. Conference staff will provide CMAP and IDOT with the necessary information for inclusion of the approved projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

A meeting with the project sponsor, Conference staff, IDOT and any other affected agencies will be held to identify and discuss critical or unusual problems.

The project sponsor will complete and submit a *Proposed Project Schedule* as found in Attachment H.

The following criteria shall be considered by the Conference's Transportation Committee in formulating their recommendations for Surface Transportation Program projects:

1. Traffic Volume
2. Regional Transportation Significance
3. Safety
4. Intergovernmental Importance
5. Air Quality Benefits
6. Pavement Condition Rating

7a. Level of Service (for projects which are, or contain, intersection improvements)
7b. Volume over capacity ratio (for non-intersection projects)

8. Transportation Control Measure Components
9. Project Readiness

Points System For Ranking Highway STP Projects

1. <u>Traffic Volume</u>

AADT > 40,000	20
AADT 25,000 – 39,999	15
AADT 15,000 – 24,999	10
AADT 5,000 – 14,999	05
AADT < 5,000	00

An intersection improvement project shall receive the point total for both roads it serves, divided by 2. If the traffic volume of a roadway changes within the project's limits, the volume which covers the greatest distance shall be used.

2. Regional Transportation Significance

Strategic Regional Arterial	20
Other/Minor Arterials	15
Collectors	10

3. Safety

The averages of the last three-year's accident reports are to be used and compared against the IDOT average for that type of roadway. The project must address the accident situation and be reasonably expected to lower the accident rate to qualify for safety points. (Statistics are listed as per million miles traveled.)

Roadways

	2 Lane Road	4 Lane Road	PTS
125% of IDOT Avg.	8.27	8.35	15
76% - 124% of IDOT Avg.	6.62	6.68	10
51% - 75% of IDOT Avg.	4.96	5.01	05
50% or less of IDOT Avg.	3.31	3.34	00

Intersections

125% of IDOT Avg.	8.006	12.944	15
76% - 124% of IDOT Avg.	6.405	10.35	10
51% - 75% of IDOT Avg.	4.804	7.766	05
50% or less of IDOT Avg.	3.203	5.178	00

4. Intergovernmental Importance

Projects sponsored by 3 or more jurisdictions	15
Projects sponsored by 2 jurisdictions	10

A project sponsor must contribute financially to the portion of the project for which funding is sought.

5. Air Quality Benefits

Projects which eliminate automobile trips	20
Projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled	15
Projects which reduce emissions	10
Projects with seasonal air quality benefits	05
Projects that are air quality neutral	00
Projects with negative air quality effects	- 05

6. Pavement Condition

0.0 – 4.5	Poor	15

4.6 – 6.0	Fair	10
6.1 – 7.5	Good	05
7.6 – 9.0	Excellent	00

7a. Level Of Service (LOS)

Existing LOS of F	20
Existing LOS of E	15
10 – Year Projected LOS of E/F	10
Existing LOS of D	05
Existing LOS A-C	00

To qualify for Level of Service points, the project must reasonably be expected to address the existing or projected congestion.

7b. Volume/Capacity

126% to 150% Over Capacity	15
101% to 125% Over Capacity	10
76% to 100% Over Capacity	05
Up to 75% of Capacity	00

To determine V/C points, the volume of a roadway is divided by its design capacity a project can earn either LOS or V/C points, but not both.

8. Transportation Control Measure Component

Each TCM within project	05

9. Project Readiness

Ready for letting in less than 6 months	15
Ready for letting in 6-12 months	10
Ready for letting in 12-24 months	05
More than 24 months	0

Overview Of The STP Project Implementation Process

Once the Conference and CMAP have programmed a project, work can begin on engineering the improvement. To utilize STP funds, project design and construction must be in accordance with IDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards and criteria.

Public informational meetings and formal public hearings should be utilized throughout the course of the project to facilitate community understanding of the project, as well as comply with State and Federal rules and regulations, where applicable. For projects requiring land acquisition a formal public hearing process is required.

STP project implementation is a very involved and complicated process consisting of the following key steps:

1. Project Application and Prioritization
2. Project Inclusion on Annual Element or Multi-Year Program
3. Early Coordination Meetings
4. Consultant Selection
5. Environmental and Design Studies/Project Development Report
6. Illinois Project Review System (A-95)
7. IDOT/FHWA Review and Approval of Project Report
8. Public Hearing Requirements
9. Design Approval/Joint Agreement
10. Land Acquisition
11. Plans, Specifications and Estimates (P, S, & E)
12. Approval/Final Contract Plans
13. Final Processing for Letting/Award of Contracts

A brief description of each step is summarized below. This summary does not and should not substitute for a complete review if the *Federal-Aid Procedures Manual for Local Highway Improvements* published by the Illinois Department of Transportation, as well as on-going liaison with IDOT-Local Roads Staff.

Project Application and Prioritization

Project applications must be submitted as directed by the Conference to be considered for STP funding. The application process requires that project sponsors contact IDOT-Local Roads Staff to review the project application, especially with regard to preliminary cost estimates, design and warrants for soil and/or pavement tests.

Early Coordination Meetings

The initial IDOT review of a sponsor's project in the application process is one example of early coordination. Coordination can be achieved through informal meetings and correspondence with the appropriate agencies and is designed to pinpoint potential problems early on, before they lead to delay at a more critical step in the process. These meetings address such issues as IDOT and FHWA design expectations, potential environmental impacts, related social or economic impacts, etc. Further coordination should occur before engineering consultant selection so that Requests for Proposals can include the proper specifications for scope of study and consultant qualifications.

A formal meeting between the project sponsor, IDOT-District One Local Roads staff and Conference staff should proceed the start of preliminary engineering for all STP projects.

Consultant Selection

STP projects submitted through the Southwest Conference are bound by the IDOT requirements for consultant selection. IDOT staff can provide valuable insight and guidance in this process; their procedures are designed to make consultant selection as smooth and timely as possible. These procedures are covered in Chapter 4 of *Federal-Aid Procedures for Local Highway Improvements.* Also, a publicly employed resident engineer is required to be "in responsible charge" of construction for federally funded projects.

Because the STP process is so specialized and time consuming, it is highly recommended that municipalities consider hiring a consultant, particularly one knowledgeable of the federal process and IDOT requirements. This outside expertise may result in a more timely completion of a STP project and minimize delay.

Highlights of STP Design/Improvement Standards

All STP projects must be designed according to state/federal standards as contained in documents such as the *Federal-Aid Procedures for Local Highway Improvements* and the IDOT Design Manual. Sponsors submitting STP project applications should review and familiarize themselves with the design standards contained in these documents before determining preliminary project design or cost estimates. Submittal of projects not designed according to these standards may result in unanticipated cost increases, delay in project implementation and even removal from the STP program. To prevent such circumstances from arising, early coordination with IDOT is essential.

Following is a list of IDOT/FHWA design standards and requirements that are commonly overlooked in the development of project design:

- A 30-foot minimum (face-to-face of curb) cross-section for two-lane urban collector streets.
- Storm sewers designed for a 10-year storm; where storm sewer outlets are restricted a design frequency less than 10 years may be approved.
- Storm sewers must be an integral part of the highway improvement and should be documented as such. STP funding can be utilized only for storm sewer and other drainage work that is with the road right-of-way.
- Storm sewers must be built entirely within the limits of the project, except in the case of outfalls.
- Angle parking will generally not be approved unless an auxiliary lane is provided to prevent conflict between parking maneuvers and through traffic.
- IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration will look beyond the immediate scope or limits of the project in order to incorporate solutions to other safety or operational problems currently experienced. This should be anticipated in the design of the project.
- Project design should be based on a twenty-year design traffic projection.

- Twelve-foot lane widths are generally required for widening of urban streets. Where right-of-way is restricted, lane widths of a minimum of 10 feet will be considered on resurfacing projects.
- High accident locations must be identified and improved on all projects. Wet weather accident analysis is also required.
- Pavement overlays should be based on the structural adequacy of existing pavement.
- Early coordination with utility companies is essential.
- Pavement markings, signing, striping and traffic control on resurfacing, reconstruction, widening and other projects must conform to the Illinois Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- Road cross-sections must be continuous for STP projects.
- Railroad-highway grade crossings must be included (if not improved) in the project scope of work.