

Actions That Can Be Taken To Expedite Economic Recovery Delivery

- 1. If the project is not currently on the STIP or Long Range Plan and the state wants to include it as part of the Economic Stimulus.**

Strategies to Expedite:

If the project is new to the TIP/STIP, the State and MPO should work cooperatively to achieve the required formal TIP/STIP amendment.

Most MPOs have a streamlined process in place to accomplish such an amendment.

If no new air quality conformity determination is required, the MPOs would take their action and submit the amended TIP to the State for incorporation into the STIP. The State would submit the amended STIP to FHWA/FTA for review and approval. Some of these items can be parallel-processed. This process should be able to be accomplished **within 30 days**.

If the project is in an air quality nonattainment or maintenance area, the addition of non-exempt activities or projects would trigger a plan/TIP amendment, **a new conformity determination would be required**. In this case, certain conformity and planning requirements such as public involvement and interagency consultation must be met before completing the amendment and conformity determination. Although some of these items can be parallel-processed, **at a minimum an additional 30 to 45 days may be needed**.

The State and the MPOs can do the necessary planning work such as model runs for the various scenarios; analysis work needed for conformity, if necessary; public involvement; and any other planning support work to get prepared. The technical work can be completed and action taken to approve the necessary amendments or the conformity determination as soon as the stimulus bill is passed and signed.

- 2. A project has not yet completed the environmental process and the state wants to include it as part of the Economic Stimulus**

Strategies to Expedite:

Since we anticipate that the majority of the projects can be completed with programmatic CE(s), the state should work to complete the processing, consulting with resource staff ASAP.

This process can also be accomplished in a **30 day or less time period**.

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3. Minimizing unreasonable and unresponsive bids; and the inability to properly assess the bids

Strategies to Expedite:

FHWA should work with the state DOTs to develop reasonable schedules that anticipate industry capacity and type of work, to provide a better opportunity for contractors to determine which projects they can best respond to with fair and accurate bids; and that reflect the availability of State DOT staffing resources to assess the bids.

4. Managing the increased project load

Strategies to Expedite:

States can utilize consultant services for contract management; and if unencumbered by hiring ceilings will need to organize, and quickly hire and train people in the skills needed to properly oversee the work.

5. Accelerating the contracting process

Strategies to Expedite:

The State can use design/build and the flexibility to shorten bid times. Other concepts from Highways for LIFE and ACTT (Accelerating Construction Technology Transfer) may be of interest for states to consider.