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MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 2, 2004  
TO: Salem-Plaistow-Windham TAC  
FROM: David Walker, Senior Transportation Planner  
RE: Project Solicitation for MPO Long Range Plan

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The purpose of this memo is to facilitate discussion of a new Long Range Plan project solicitation process.

In passing the 2005-2014 Ten Year Plan, the New Hampshire Legislature recognized that the revenue projected for the plan period was inadequate to fund all the projects in the plan. To address this issue, the Legislature intends to review the plan every 2 years, pursuant to RSA 228:99 and RSA 240, but not to add projects until the funding is adequate to bring the plan within a projected 10-year completion framework.

It is estimated that it may take as long as two funding cycles (4 years) before there is adequate funding for the current Ten Year Plan. Therefore, the legislature will not entertain new projects for inclusion in the Ten Year Plan.

This freeze or moratorium on the Ten Year Plan is an opportunity to improve the MPO solicitation process. Further, the ongoing update to the Statewide Transportation Business Plan enhances this opportunity by allowing us to develop a process that will be compatible with a revised NHDOT transportation planning process.

Staff has prepared a draft process and flow chart for review and discussion:

**Draft MPO Solicitation Process**

Project solicitation process will consider existing projects and identify new transportation problems or issues at the regional and local level.

MPO staff will send a letter to each community listing *existing projects* from the community that are currently in the Long Range Plan. The letter will also request the community identify *new transportation issues*.

**Existing Projects**

*The letter will list the existing projects and ask the community to review, evaluate and prioritize the list of existing projects.*

Specifically the community will be asked to:

- ? Identify the problem/issue the project is intended to solve.
- ? Prioritize the project

- ? Provide any new or existing data to back up the need for the project

The solicitation letter will include summary sheets for each existing project. The sheets will be developed to guide the community towards providing the required information.

### **Transportation Issues**

*The letter will also ask the communities to identify regional and local transportation problems and issues.*

Specifically the community will be asked to:

- ? Identify and define the transportation problem/issue
- ? Prioritize the problem
- ? Provide any data to back up the need for the problem

The solicitation letter will include a problem summary sheet developed in a manner that will guide the community to provide the required information.

### **Incorporation into the Long Range Plan:**

Communities will submit the summary sheets to the MPO via their respective Planning Commission.

MPO staff will consolidate the collected information and develop a method for prioritization of the problems/projects. Staff will develop additional data and conduct a site visit to the area if feasible.

Staff will assume that the existing projects will take priority over new problems unless otherwise stated by the community. (This will be made clear in the solicitation letter)

Problem/projects will be prioritized as High, Medium, Low.

The TAC will review the staff prioritization of the problems/projects and make a recommendation to the Policy Committee.

The Policy Committee will approve the results of the solicitation and instruct staff to incorporate the

The top ranked problem/issues/projects will enter the new DOT Ten Year Plan Process as soon as the legislature entertains additions to the Ten Year Plan.

### **Other Issues**

There are a number of other issues that need to be considered and incorporated into this process.

- ? How specifically this will dovetail with the NH DOT 10 Year Plan project solicitation process,
- ? Where can communities, especially small ones, find the resources to do some project development work,
- ? How will projects be determined to be High, Med, or low priority?