



DATE: March 4, 2004
TO: Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO TAC
FROM: David Walker, Senior Transportation Planner
RE: 2005-2007 STIP Amendment #02

STIP Amendment 2 Summary

Attached is a table detailing the changes proposed to the 2005-2007 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and through that, the Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the same time period.

STIP Amendment 2 contains informational, expedited and full amendments.

Full Amendments are required when:

- A project is added to or removed from the STIP;
- There is a change to the project funding amount or source;
- Or changes to projects, which requires an air quality conformity analysis, or are regionally significant and warrant a formal public review and comment period including a public hearing.
- Full Amendments require public notice and hearing and the approval of the MPO Policy Committee.

Expedited Amendments are required when:

- Project changes that are clearly minor in nature;
- Are not regionally significant;
- And the project is categorically exempt from air quality conformity determinations
- Expedited Amendments require the approval of the MPO Directors.

Informational Amendments are presented to the MPO as an opportunity to comment on the proposed project change.

STIP Amendment #02 contains 35 projects in total. Six projects require the attention of the SPW MPO.

Project 11238E, NH 16/Spaulding Turnpike triggers a Full Amendment requiring the approval of the MPO Policy Committee. The remaining 9 Seacoast area projects and statewide projects are considered Informational or Expedited Amendments requiring the approval of the MPO Directors. Project details for all Seacoast and Statewide projects are shown below.

Expedited and Informational Amendments

Statewide: Project 14265 is a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) project [04-34CM] to construct a Transportation Management Center with Emergency Operations Center, Emergency Communications Center, and State Police Dispatch. This amendment makes the following changes and is intended:

- Decreases the CMAQ funds utilized by \$100,000 for Preliminary Engineering.
- Advances PE and Construction funds from 2006 and 2007 respectively to 2005.

The intent of the change is to prevent a lapse in CMAQ funds caused by the delays to the Nashua Rail Project and other CMAQ projects.

Salem to Manchester: Project 10418 is a portion of the I-93 widening project that descriptively encompasses the widening from the State-line 4.5 miles north, including Exits 1 and 2, Pelham Road improvements and bridge work.

- Moves Right-of-Way funds from 2006 to 2008. This effectively removes the project from the TIP and should trigger a full amendment instead of an Expedited one.

Expedited and Full Amendments

Salem to Manchester: Project 10418C is a portion of the I-93 widening project that descriptively deals with the Environmental Impact Study and Final Design of the entire project. This amendment is listed twice; once as an Expedited and once as a Full Amendment.

- Decreases Preliminary Engineering funds in 2006 from \$9.0 to \$7.0 million
- \$4 million of Right of Way funds is moved from 2006 to 2007
- There is also what looks to be an accounting adjustment that changes the value of Right-of-Way funds. Originally there were two listings; one for -\$6.8 million and one for \$6.8 million. The amendment changes this to a -\$300,000 and \$300,000 respectively.
- Preliminary Engineering Funds in 2005 are being reduced from \$8.5 to 5.0 Million and funding is being expanded from Interstate Maintenance, to that and High Priority Funds. (Full Amendment portion)
- Overall project cost increased from 109.973 Million to 113.473 million, although planned expenditures during the 2005-2007 TIP are decreasing.

From the documents submitted to the MPO by NH DOT, it is not clear as to the purpose of these changes or why the \$6.8 million adjustment has decreased to a \$300,000 adjustment. Why is it split into two amendments? And if the costs listed in the TIP are decreasing, where is the increased overall cost being spent?

Recommended Action:

Staff advises the TAC to review all of the proposed project amendments and recommend approval of the Full Amendment by the MPO Policy Committee and approval of the Expedited Procedure Amendment by the MPO Director *provided that the questions raised in this memo can be answered by NH DOT*. To summarize, staff has the following concerns regarding the amendment as submitted:

1. The fiscal constraint analysis included with the amendment does not lend itself well to interpretation and study. While the math seems to all balance out, the lack of any text description of what is occurring makes understanding difficult.
2. The description of a project changing because "phase/project advanced or delayed due to financial constraint" is not appropriate. In November a STIP was adopted that assured that it was Financially Constrained. What happened in the three months? If a project cost increased that "broke" the financial constraint, it should be noted that the cost of a project increased, and given limited resources the project (or others) needed to be delayed. This would be a much more clear and accurate description of what is changing.
3. The amendment is structured with several projects listed under multiple amendment types making the changes confusing. Staff has attempted to clarify when information has been available, but there is still room for confusion. In addition, Staff has suggested to NHDOT that when multiple changes to a project triggers a STIP amendment, the project should be listed once and the more stringent amendment process should be applied.
4. The amendment listed for Project 10418C is very confusing as to its true nature. Overall costs are decreasing for components listed, yet the overall project cost is increasing.

Staff has relayed these concerns to NHDOT and it is hoped that they can be addressed in writing and by a DOT representative at the TAC and Policy Committee meetings.