

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: August 16, 2005

TITLE: Review of Draft Regional Priority List for the 2007-2013 State Transportation Improvement Program

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___NO__X__
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Adopted Local Priority List C. Division 7 Projects from the Draft Regional Priority List D. Local Priority Lists from Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Orange County	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Dale McKeel – 918-7329

PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is for the Board of Aldermen to review and comment on the draft regional priority list for the 2007-2013 State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A resolution has been prepared for the Board's adoption (Attachment A).

INFORMATION

The Transportation Improvement Program includes cost estimates and funding schedules for highway, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, public transit, and aviation projects over a seven year period.

Generally, the Board of Transportation updates the State TIP every other year. However, in order to transition the TIP to odd years (2007, 2009, etc.), both a 2006-2012 and 2007-2013 TIP are being adopted. The 2006-2012 TIP was adopted in July of this year, and the 2007-2013 TIP is scheduled to be adopted in July 2006.

The following list describes the steps for developing the Transportation Improvement Program (currently we are at step 2):

1. *Spring 2005* – Local governments adopt a local project priority list, which is forwarded to the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO). Carrboro adopted a local priority list on March 1 (Attachment B).
2. *Summer 2005* - Using the local priority lists, the DCHC MPO ranks the projects based on a series of objective criteria and prepares a draft regional project priority list, which is released for public comment. Once comments have been received and any changes have been made to the draft list, the regional priorities are forwarded to the N.C. Department of Transportation and representatives from the DCHC MPO and NCDOT meet.

3. *Fall 2005* - The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) develops the draft statewide Transportation Improvement Program, which includes a draft Metropolitan TIP (MTIP) for the DCHC MPO area.
4. *Winter 2006* - Both NCDOT and the DCHC MPO receive public comments on the draft TIP.
5. *Spring 2006* - The DCHC Transportation Advisory Committee will adopt its own version of the draft MTIP. Representatives from the DCHC TAC and NCDOT meet to reconcile differences between the DCHC draft MTIP and the NCDOT draft MTIP.
6. *Summer 2006* - The final MTIP is adopted by the DCHC TAC and the N.C. Board of Transportation.

PLACEMENT OF CARRBORO'S PROJECTS ON THE REGIONAL LIST

Attachment C lists the Division 7 Projects from the Regional Priority List. The projects on the regional list are divided into Tiers of project that received the same score on the priority list. The Tier number assigned to Carrboro projects is listed on the Carrboro Priority List (Attachment B). The complete Regional Priority List can be viewed on-line at:

http://www.dchcmpo.org/dmdocuments/FY2007-2013_Reg_Pr_List_Rev1.pdf

In reviewing the priority list, please note that Orange County is in a different NCDOT highway division than Durham County or Chatham County. State funding formulas are based on highway divisions, so projects in Orange County do not directly compete with projects in Durham and Chatham counties for funding. The local priority lists for Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Orange County are enclosed as Attachment D.

RECOMMENDED COMMENTS

Town staff recommend that the Carrboro Board of Aldermen provide the following comments to the MPO on the draft regional priority list for the 2006-2012 Transportation Improvement Program:

1. Rearrange the Carrboro projects in the regional priority list as necessary to match the order in the local priority list.

Rationale: This rearrangement will allow Carrboro's projects on the regional list to be in the same priority order as they were on the local list. For instance, the regional list currently has the Seawell School Road project (# 3 on the local list) ranked higher than Estes Drive (# 1 on the local list).

2. Divide the Estes Drive project into two phases. Phase 1 would be from Greensboro Street to Seawell School Road and Phase 2 would be from Seawell School Road to Airport Road.

Rationale: The recent Carolina North plans show the portion of Estes Drive between Seawell School and Airport roads being removed. If the Estes Drive project is divided into two phases, NCDOT may be willing to move forward on the section from Greensboro to Seawell while delaying action on the section east of Seawell School Road.

3. Ensure that points have been assigned consistently to all projects on the regional list and ask the MPO to continue to refine the methodology for ranking projects on the regional list.

Rationale: The current ranking methodology has worked well but there are areas where improvement may be possible. For example, the current methodology does not work well for some types of projects, such as the Chapel Hill signal system.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board of Aldermen should review the regional priority list and adopt a resolution providing comments to the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Transportation Advisory Committee. A resolution containing comments is enclosed as Attachment A.