Using EPSP to Request Authorizations for Local HSIP Projects Not Programmed in the Current FFY

Caltrans Division of Local Assistance (DLA) manages federal funding for the local Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects. The DLA prepares a financially-constrained, statewide project list for the HSIP program and sends the subset lists to the various Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to amend into their Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (FTIPs). The MPOs are requested to program the projects in the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) shown in the project lists, either as a grouped project listing or as individual projects.

Usually the FTIPs for local HSIP projects are developed in a way that older projects are programmed in the earlier years and the newer projects in the outer years of the current four-year FTIP cycle. However, the fact that a local HSIP project is NOT programmed in the current FFY should NOT hinder the local agency from requesting for authorization in the current FFY when the local agency is ready to start the work for a project phase. This understanding is especially important since the DLA has developed specific project delivery milestone requirements for local HSIP projects.

Local agencies are allowed and encouraged to request for authorizations (E-76s) for a local HSIP project in a year prior to its program year shown in the FTIP, using the Expedited Project Selection Procedures (EPSP).

Example: A local HSIP project is programmed in FTIP in FFY 2021/22. The local agency would like to request for construction authorization (CON E-76) in the current FFY. This can be achieved by using the EPSP.

What is Expedited Project Selection Procedures (EPSP)?

Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 450.220(e) and 450.330(a) allows for the advancement of projects within the active period of the approved FTIP and FSTIP. However, in order to access this provision, an MPO, or the California Department of Transportation acting as the MPO for the rural, non-MPO counties, must have an EPSP in place.

An EPSP is a project selection process developed by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators, including transit operators, that provides for the advancement or delay of projects for implementation purposes within the active period of the approved FTIP and FSTIP without the need for immediately processing FTIP/FSTIP amendments, unless the EPSP action results in the project crossing analysis years for air quality conformity determinations. However, the impacts of the EPSP action must be included in future FTIP/FSTIP updates, amendments or administrative modifications.

23 CFR Section 450.330(a) specifies that "if the State or public transportation operator(s) wishes to proceed with a project in the second, third, or fourth year of the TIP, the specific project selection procedures stated in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section must be used unless the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator(s) jointly develop expedited project selection procedures to provide for the advancement of projects from the second, third, or fourth years of the TIP". The EPSP must be agreed to by all parties in the project selection process as stated in 23 CFR 450.220(e), and be adopted by the MPO Board.

How to use the EPSP for local HSIP projects?

The requests for authorizations (E-76s) may be processed for local HSIP projects that are not programmed in the current FFY using the EPSP by following the below steps:

1. **EPSP request from local agency:**
   The local agency submits the request to use the EPSP to the Caltrans District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE), together with the E-76 request package;
2. **DLAE's review:**
   If the DLAE determines that the E-76 request package is complete and the project is ready to start the phase to be requested, the DLAE forwards the EPSP request to the HQ HSIP Manager;
3. **The HQ HSIP Manager's review/approval:**
   The HQ HSIP Manager evaluates the HSIP financial capacity in the current FFY. If sufficient capacity exists, the DLAE will be notified that the EPSP request has been approved. The DLAE will then include a copy of the approved use of EPSP in the E-76 package submitted to the HQ Implementation Area Engineer.

The EPSP requests may be processed with emails. Formal letters are not required.

Internet Links to Related Documents

Project Delivery Status Reports and Delivery Requirements
https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/fed-and-state-programs/highway-safety-improvement-program/delivery-requirements-status-approved-projects

Project Lists of State-managed Local Safety Programs for FTIP:
https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/fed-and-state-programs/highway-safety-improvement-program/federal-transportation-improvement-program-ftip