CURRENT

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

COUNCIL POLICY

SUBJECT: PRIORITIZING TRANSPORTATION AND DRAINAGE CIP PROJECTS
POLICY NO: 800-14
EFFECTIVE DATE: January 19, 2006

BACKGROUND:

The commitment of resources to the Transportation and Drainage Capital Improvements Program (CIP) projects within the City has traditionally not had the benefit of a comprehensive evaluation to determine overall needs so that projects can be ranked accordingly and efficiently funded. This approach has limited the overall effectiveness of available transportation and drainage resources by providing projects with fewer resources than is needed to accomplish major project milestones, such as the planning and design phases of a project. This has limited the City's ability to compete for outside grant funding, since these grant programs place emphasis on having the design and the associated activities completed.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish an objective process for evaluating transportation and drainage CIP projects with respect to the overall needs of the City's transportation system. The resultant ranking of transportation CIP projects would be used for allocation of all transportation resources including funding and staff, as well as in the pursuit of grant funding opportunities. The goal is to maximize available resources so projects are completed effectively and efficiently, resulting in more projects delivered citywide.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1) Project Categories

In order to ensure that the comparison is conducted between similar types of projects, all transportation and drainage CIP projects shall be separated into categories according to the most predominant type of facility in the project. Project Categories shall include:

a. New Roads, Roadway Widening, and Roadway Reconfigurations.
b. Street Enhancements including medians and streetscape.
c. Bridge Replacement, Retrofit, and Rehabilitation.
d. Bicycle Facilities (all classifications).
e. Pedestrian Facilities including sidewalks but not curb ramps.
f. Pedestrian Accessibility Improvements including curb ramps.
g. Street Lighting including mid-block and intersection safety locations.
h. New Traffic Signals.
i. Traffic Signal Upgrades and Modifications.

j. Traffic Signal Interconnections and other signal coordination work.
k. Traffic Calming, Flashing Beacons, and other speed abatement work.
l. Guardrails, Barrier Rails, and other structural safety enhancements.
m. Drainage including pipes, channels, and storm water pump stations.
n. Erosion control, slope stabilization, and retaining walls supporting transportation facilities.
o. Other miscellaneous transportation and drainage facilities.

All Transportation and Drainage Capital Improvement Program budgets shall reflect project allocations according to these categories. These project categories shall include resource allocation for environmental mitigation, property acquisition, and all other activities necessary to complete the project.

2) Project Phases

In order to ensure that the comparison is conducted between projects with a similar level of completion, all transportation and drainage CIP projects shall be separated into the following standard phases of project development within each Project Category:

a. Planning (including a feasibility study, detailed scope, and budget).
b. Design (including the environmental document, plans, and specifications).
c. Construction (including construction contingencies).

To ensure a continuous development of CIP projects and prepare for grant opportunities, a minimum of five percent (5%) of transportation resources shall be allocated to projects in the Planning phase and a minimum of thirty percent (30%) to projects in the design phase.

3) Project Criteria

For the evaluation of the relative importance of each project, the following criteria and weighting shall be used:

a. Health & Safety

This criterion shall include an assessment of the degree that the project improves the safety of the public using the facility. This criterion also includes an assessment of the degree that a project is under a regulatory order or other legal mandates relating to public safety. Examples of such projects include:

1. Modifying a roadway where a significant number of accidents have occurred.
2. Improving the seismic safety rating of a bridge.

3. Upgrading an undersized storm drain, where significant flooding problems have occurred.
4. A project that reduces response times by emergency vehicles.
5. A legal order to complete a project by a certain date.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute twenty-five percent (25%) of a projects total score.

b. Capacity & Service (Mobility)

This criterion shall include an assessment of the degree to which the project improves the ability of the transportation system to move people under all modes of travel including vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian usage. This criterion shall also include an assessment of the degree to which the project improves the overall connectivity and reliability of the City's transportation and drainage system. Examples of such projects include:

1. Reconfiguration of an intersection to reduce delays.
2. Improvement of parallel road to bypass a congested intersection or provide an alternative route.
3. Traffic Signal Interconnection that reduces travel times along a congested corridor.
4. Transit facilities such as priority signals that speed up high usage bus routes.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute twenty percent (20%) of a projects total score.

c. Project Cost and Grant Funding Opportunity

This criterion shall include an assessment of the amount of funding needed to complete the current project phase and the entire project. This criterion shall also include assessments of the amount of City funding in the project compared to the amount of funding provided by grants funds from outside agencies. For example:

1. A project that would bring grant funds from an outside agency into the City would score higher.
2. A project that only relies on City-wide discretionary funds (TransNet, etc) would score lower.
3. A project that requires a higher amount of City funding would score lower.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute twenty percent (20%) of a projects total score.

d. Revitalization, Community Support & Community Plan Compliance

This criterion shall include an assessment of the degree to which the project is in compliance with the General Plan, Community Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, or an approved City-wide master plan. This criterion shall also include an assessment of the degree to which the project is officially supported by the Community Planning Group(s), the Councilmember(s), or a Regional Agency (such as SANDAG). This criterion shall also include an assessment of the degree to which the project contributes towards economic development and revitalization efforts. For example:

1. A project that would benefit a pilot village in the City of Villages Strategy or further Smart Growth.
2. A project that implements a portion of the City-wide master plan or corridor study would score higher.
3. A project that has overwhelming and documented support from throughout the community or the region would score higher.
4. A project that implements a portion of an approved Redevelopment Area infrastructure plan would score higher.
5. A project that would provide transportation facilities for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) eligible area would score higher.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute fifteen percent (15%) of a projects total score.

e. Multiple Category Benefit

This criterion shall include an assessment of the degree to which the project provides highly rated facilities for multiple project categories (see Section 1 for project categories). Examples of such projects are:

1. A roadway project that also provides for the replacement of a highly deteriorated storm drain.
2. A streetscape project that also provides street lighting at critical intersections.
3. A bikeway project that provides slope stabilization at a point of known erosion problems.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute ten percent (10%) of a projects total score.

f. Reduces Maintenance Needs

This criterion shall include an assessment of the degree to which the project reduces maintenance expenditures by the City. For example:

1. A roadway widening project that replaces an area of pavement in poor condition would score higher.
2. A roadway widening project that installs a highly rated traffic signal would score higher.
3. A storm drain replacement project that reduces the need for cleaning or repairs would score higher.
4. A project with equipment that requires frequent maintenance would score lower.

A project with special maintenance needs (decorative pavement, landscaping, artwork, etc) whose costs are covered by a secured outside funding source such as Maintenance Assessment District would not be affected by this criterion. The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute five percent (5%) of a projects total score.

g. Project Readiness

This criterion shall include an assessment of the time required for a project to complete its current project phase (see Section 2 for project phases). For example:

1. A complex project that would require a long time to complete design would score lower for design.
2. A project with a completed environmental document would score higher for design.
3. A project that requires a policy change to implement would score lower for any phase.
4. A project that has all of its maintenance needs secured would score higher for construction.
5. A project that completed the previous phase for more than a year would score higher for any phase.

The evaluation results of this criterion shall constitute five percent (5%) of a project's total score.

4) Implementation Process

a. Using these project categories, phases, and criteria, the Mayor shall develop a prioritization score for each CIP project that proposes to utilize City-wide transportation and drainage resources. The Mayor shall then rank all Transportation CIP projects within their respective categories and phases according to their project score. In case of tie project scores, the Mayor shall evaluate the overall infrastructure deficiency within the communities for each project as the deciding factor.

b. The resultant ranking list for each category and phase of transportation and drainage CIP project shall be reported by the Mayor to the Council as part of the annual CIP budget with recommendations for funding for each project within the list. Each project category shall contain a contingency of at least 15% of the total category allocations.

c. Upon approval of the CIP budget by the Council, the Mayor shall pursue the completion of each project phase according to the priority ranking resulting from this process up to the total amounts authorized by Council for each project category. The Mayor shall also utilize the resultant priority ranking for the pursuit of all outside grant funding opportunities.

d. The Mayor shall update the priority score as the conditions of each project change or other new information becomes available. When changes occur that would alter a project's priority ranking, the revised priority list shall be reported to the Council, prior to allocating additional resources to any projects whose rankings are affected. Similarly, resources shall not be withdrawn from a project prior to the completion of its current phase, unless a revised priority list is presented to Council.