February 14, 2008

Traffic Light Synchronization Program Guidelines

General Program Policy

1. Authority and purpose of guidelines. The Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, and Port Security Bond Act of 2006, approved by the voters as Proposition 1B on November 7, 2006, included a $250 million program to fund traffic light synchronization projects and other technology-based improvements to improve safety, operations and the effective capacity of local streets and roads. This Traffic Light Synchronization Program (TLSP) is funded from funds deposited in the Highway Safety, Rehabilitation, and Preservation Account. The funds are available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the Department of Transportation (Department), as allocated by the California Transportation Commission (Commission).

   In 2007, the Legislature enacted implementing legislation (Senate Bill 88) that designated the Commission as the administrative agency responsible for programming TLSP funds and the agency authorized to adopt guidelines for the program. SB 88 also specified various administrative and reporting requirements for all Proposition 1B programs, and it directed that $150 million from the TLSP be allocated to the City of Los Angeles for upgrading and installing traffic signal synchronization within its jurisdiction.

2. TLSP Program of Projects. The Department will develop a proposed program of projects for the TLSP on the basis of project applications prepared by regional agencies or recipient local agencies. The Commission will adopt the program upon finding that it is consistent with the program intent, which is to improve safety, operations and the effective capacity of local streets and roads.

   In developing the proposed program of projects, the Department will give priority to projects that result in an effective and sustainable integrated local or regional transportation system. The system should be coordinated with other transportation facilities through a corridor system management plan or other documented coordinated management strategies for the local street and road system. The Department will evaluate project nominations on the basis of regional mobility and safety benefits, especially in highly congested corridors, in terms of congestion reduction benefits or time savings and estimated reduction in deaths and injuries.

3. Program Schedule. The Commission and the Department intend to implement the program on the following schedule:

Commission adoption of TLSP guidelines.	February 14, 2008
TLSP project applications due to Department.	March 28, 2008
Department releases its proposed program of projects.	April 30, 2008
Commission adopts the initial TLSP program of projects.	May 28-29, 2008

4. Eligibility of applicants and projects. The Department will consider applications submitted by a regional agency or by a public agency responsible for development of a proposed project. Eligible projects are traffic light synchronization projects or other technology-based improvements to improve safety, operations and the effective capacity of local streets and roads.

   Under statute, the applicant agency must provide a project funding plan that demonstrates that the non-TLSP funds in the plan (local, state, or federal) are reasonably expected to be available and sufficient to complete the project. The Department and Commission expect that TLSP project funding will be limited to the costs of construction and acquisition and installation of equipment. Project development costs should be covered with other funding.

   The useful life of a TLSP project shall not be less than the required useful life for capital assets pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law, specifically subdivision (a) of Section 16727 of the Government Code. That section generally requires that projects have an expected useful life of 15 years or more. The corridor system management plan discussed in Section 5 should include the actions necessary to maintain and operate the facility to ensure this minimum useful life.

5. Project Applications. Project applications and their supporting documentation will form the primary basis for the Department's development of the proposed TLSP program of projects. Each project application should include:

   - A cover letter with signature authorizing and approving the application.
   - A brief narrative that provides:
     - A concise description of the project scope proposed for TLSP funding.
     - A specific description of non-TLSP funding to be applied to the project and the basis for concluding that the non-TLSP funding is reasonably expected to be available.
     - A description of the transportation corridor and the function of the proposed project within the corridor, including how the project would improve safety, operations and the effective capacity of local streets and roads in the corridor.
     - A description and quantification of project benefits, citing any documentation in support of estimates of project benefits. Where applicable and available, this should include a description of how the project would support transportation and land use planning goals and the quantification of emission reductions due to the project.
     - A description of the corridor system management plan or other coordinated management strategy being implemented by the applicant agency and other jurisdictions within the corridor. The corridor system management plan

should include a discussion to illustrate how the corridor integrates into the local or regional transportation system; the agreements between jurisdictions, and when appropriate the Department, to provide for coordinated management of the corridor within the local or regional transportation system; and the actions necessary to effectively maintain and operate the improved facility for a minimum of 15 years to be consistent with the useful life expectation for general obligation bonds. The agreements between jurisdictions should demonstrate compliance with ITS Regional Architecture, where appropriate.

- A programming request form (Attachment A), together with a map of the project location, that describes the project scope, useful life, cost, funding plan, delivery milestones, and major project benefits. Cost estimates should be escalated to the year of proposed implementation. The project delivery milestones should include the start and completion dates for environmental clearance, land acquisition, design, construction bid award, construction completion, and project closeout.

- TLSPEN and Safety Index Calculation worksheets (Attachments B and C). Mobility benefits will be calculated using the TLSPEN worksheet and safety benefits will be calculated using the Safety Index Calculation worksheet. Applicants should provide the data specified in the instructions available with the forms. All attachments are available at:

  http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/sysmgtpl/TLSP/

- Documentation supporting the benefit and cost estimates cited in the application. This should be no more than 10 pages in length, citing or excerpting, as appropriate, the project study report, environmental document, regional transportation plan, and other studies that provide quantitative measures of the project's costs and benefits.

6. Submittal of project applications. For the initial program of projects, the Department will consider only projects for which a nomination and supporting documentation are received in the Department by March 28, 2008, in hard copy. Applications will include the signature from an officer authorized by the nominating agency. Where the project is to be implemented by an agency other than the applicant agency, the application will also include the signature of the authorized officer of the implementing agency.

   The Department requests that each project application include six copies of the cover letter, the narrative description, the programming request form (Attachment A), and the TLSPEN and Safety Index Calculation worksheets (Attachments B and C), together with two copies of all supporting documentation. All application materials should be addressed or delivered to:

   California Department of Transportation
   Traffic Operations, TLSP Program
   1120 N Street, Mail Station 36
   Sacramento, CA 95814

7. Application from the City of Los Angeles. The City of Los Angeles may submit a single application for a program of projects within the City for funding from the $150 million designated for the City by statute. The City's application, however, should provide sufficient documentation for each element of its program to permit the Department and Commission to determine that each element meets the eligibility requirements and intent of the program.

Project Selection and Programming

8. Program of projects based on applications. The Department will develop its proposed TLSP program of projects and propose a TLSP project priority listing from the applications received by the application due date. The priority listing may be by specific project, group, or category as the Department finds appropriate. The listing may take into account the amount of funds appropriated.

9. Project application scoring. The Department will evaluate and score project applications on a 100 point scale according to the following weighting:

   A. 50 points - effectiveness of the project in providing transportation benefits, including the improvement of safety, operations, energy conservation and effective capacity of local streets and roads in a corridor, and the commitment to sustain these benefits as documented in a corridor system management plan or similar coordinated management strategy. The Department will measure operational improvement and capacity benefits in terms of hours of delay saved per dollar expended. The Department will measure safety benefits in terms of the estimated reduction in the number of deaths and injuries.

   B. 20 points - date when the project will be ready for award of the construction contract, giving higher priority to projects that can be delivered earlier.

   C. 10 points – the degree to which the project contributes to corridor or air basin emissions reduction of particulates and other pollutants.

   D. 20 points - the degree of financial contribution from non-state funds by the local agency in the capital costs of the TLSP project, giving higher priority to projects with a higher local contribution. State and Federal funds under the applicant's authority may be considered as local contributions for purposes of this evaluation. For this purpose, funds allocated through the STIP, the SHOPP, the TCRP, or any Proposition 1B program will not be regarded as local contributions, nor will expenditures from any source for work performed prior to the adoption of the project into the program. Contributions from local funds, state gasoline tax subventions, RSTP, CMAQ, or other state or federal funds that are directly programmed by or apportioned to regional and local agencies will be considered as local contributions.

10. Evaluation committee. The Department will form a committee to conduct a review and objective evaluation of project applications, with representatives of staff from the Federal Highway Administration, the Department, and the Commission.

11. Program adoption. The Commission will adopt the initial TLSP program of projects after holding at least one public hearing. The Commission anticipates that authorized TLSP funding will be fully programmed with the initial adoption. If the authorized funding is not fully programmed, however, the Department may propose and the Commission may adopt amendments to add new projects to the program at a later time. The Department may, if it finds it necessary or appropriate, advise potential applicants to submit new or revised applications.

Project Delivery

12. Project baseline agreements. Within three months after the adoption of the TLSP program of projects, the Department and the implementing agency will execute a project baseline agreement, which will set forth the project scope, benefits, delivery schedule, and the project budget and funding plan. The funding plan will identify the source of non-TLSP funding. The Commission may delete a project for which no project baseline agreement is executed, and the Commission will not consider approval of a project allocation prior to the execution of a project baseline agreement.

13. Quarterly delivery reports: As a part of the project baseline agreement, the Commission will require the implementing agency to submit quarterly reports on the activities and progress made toward implementation of the project, including those project development activities taking place prior to a TLSP allocation and including the commitment status of other funding identified in the project baseline agreement.

    As mandated by Government Code Section 8879.50, the Commission shall forward these reports, on a semiannual basis, to the Department of Finance. The purpose of the reports is to ensure that the project is being executed in a timely fashion and is within the scope and budget identified when the decision was made to fund the project. If it is anticipated that project costs will exceed the approved project budget, the implementing agency will provide a plan to the Commission for achieving the benefits of the project by either downscoping the project to remain within budget or by identifying an alternative funding source to meet the cost increase. The Commission may either approve the corrective plan or direct the implementing agency to modify its plan. Where a project allocation has not yet been made, the Commission may amend the program of projects to delete the project.

14. Amendments to program of projects. The Commission may approve an amendment of the TLSP in conjunction with its review of a project corrective plan as described in section 13. The Department may also recommend and the Commission may approve an amendment of the program at any time. An amendment need only appear on the agenda published 10 days in advance of the Commission meeting. It does not require the 30-day notice that applies to a STIP amendment.

15. Allocations from the TLSP. The Commission will consider the allocation of funds from the TLSP for a project or project component when it receives an allocation request and recommendation from Caltrans, in the same manner as for the STIP. The recommendation will include a determination of the availability of appropriated TLSP funds. The Commission will approve the allocation if the funds are available, the allocation is necessary to implement the project as included in the adopted TLSP program, and the project has the required environmental clearance. Expenditures made prior to the adoption of the project into the program and allocation by the Commission are not be eligible for reimbursement.

16. Final delivery report. Within six months of the project becoming operable, the implementing agency will provide a final delivery report to the Commission on the scope of the completed project, its final cost as compared to the approved project budget, its duration as compared to the project schedule in the project baseline agreement, and performance outcomes derived from the project as compared to those described in the project baseline agreement. The Commission shall forward this report to the Department of Finance as required by Government Code section 8879.50.

    The implementing agency will also provide a supplement to the final delivery report at the completion of the project to reflect final project expenditures at the conclusion of all project activities. For the purposes of this section, a project becomes operable at the end of the construction phase when the construction contract is accepted. Project completion occurs at the conclusion of all remaining project activities after acceptance of the construction contract.

17. Audit of project expenditures and outcomes. The Department will ensure that project expenditures and outcomes are audited. For each TLSP project, the Commission expects the Department to provide a semi-final audit report within 6 months after the final delivery report, and a final audit report within 6 months after the final delivery report supplement. The Commission may also require interim audits at any time during the performance of the project.

    Audits will be performed in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards promulgated by the United States Government Accountability Office. Audits will provide a finding on the following:

    - Whether project costs incurred and reimbursed are in compliance with the executed project baseline agreement or approved amendments thereof; state and federal laws and regulations; contract provisions; and Commission guidelines.
    - Whether project deliverables (outputs) and outcomes are consistent with the project scope, schedule and benefits described in the executed project baseline agreement or approved amendments thereof.