

Plans, Specifications, & Estimates Review

<u>Project ID:</u>	<u>Total Time for Completion</u>
00-000x-xxxx	8 hours (District) 1 hour (HQ)

Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the Division of Local Assistance personnel, tasks, basic steps and time required to review Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) packages received from the local agencies. This SOP identifies the direct activities for efficiently reviewing complete PS&E package. The actual time to review a PS&E package may be depending on the circumstances and nature of the project and the project sponsor’s familiarity with the federal requirements.

There is no specific Project ID for this task, however, Construction RFA review can be charged.

As part of Request for Authorization of Federal funds for construction phase, local agency submits several forms to District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE) as per Chapter 3 of Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM). With respect to PS&E package, local agency shall submit the following completed forms:

Exhibit 12-D: PS&E Checklist is to be attached to all PS&E Certification Letters submitted to DLAE. The checklist has been developed to address the flexibility allowed under federal regulations and still ensure that the minimum required provisions are included in each set of contract documents. However, if any of the required provisions are left out of a construction contract, the project will not be eligible for federal reimbursement.

Checklist Review by DLAE

The DLAE will review each checklist to ensure that the local agency has completed the form in accordance with the instructions in LAPM. Except as discussed below, this review will be limited to the actual checklist and will not involve a review of the PS&E package.

DLAE Acceptance of the Checklist

The DLAE will indicate acceptance of the checklist by checking the type of review (i.e. whether the checklist review included a review of the special provisions) and signing the form. The local agency’s request for authorization for the construction phase of a project will not be forwarded to the Division of Local Assistance for approval prior to acceptance by the DLAE.

Scope of Project

Prior to the approval of Request for Authorization of Federal funds for construction phase, agency shall certify that the scope of project and the PS&E package are consistent with the scope of work identified in scoping document or funding application of the project. Environmental Certification (NEPA), Permits, Right-of-Way Certificate and PS&E shall be consistent with the approved project scope. If the scope of work was revised during later phase of project development, all applicable approving documents such as Project Reports, Environmental Certification (NEPA), Permits, Right-of-Way Certification, PS&E and any other related documents must be revised and approved to reflect the final scope of project prior to the approval of Request for Authorization of Federal funds for construction phase.

Process Review

Process review of a random sample of local agency PS&E packages will be conducted as needed. The process reviews will be conducted by teams involving District Area Engineer (DAE), headquarters Area Engineer (AE), Senior Transportation Engineer-policy and procedures and representatives from FHWA.

In general, the PS&E package is reviewed under the following eight categories. Some of the critical items to be emphasized while reviewing is listed under each category. Some items may not be applicable for all projects. Recommended time required for review by District and HQ are allocated as requested by the reviewer.

CADD – project title, location map, north arrow, scale, project number, limits, agency name, seal and signature of designer/project engineer.
ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE – All permits received, processed and conditions incorporated in plans and specs? Environmental commitments in the environmental document addressed? Environmental construction windows identified? Non-standard specifications identified and approved for inclusion in the contract? Regional air quality conformity requirements satisfied?
DESIGN – Preliminary structures studies if any, preliminary materials investigation, materials reports for various components of the project, construction staging plans, construction easements, permits identified/acquired/status, correlation to specifications, utility plans, railroad involvement, Hazardous materials.
CONSTRUCTION – Conflicts with other projects, cross sections include existing conditions. Number of working days, detours, traffic handling plans, Utility plans with high risk utilities identified and located, log of test boring, drainage profiles, construction work windows per environmental permits, water pollution control. Water source- recycled and potable, irrigation systems, mitigation or replacement planting, electrical service for irrigation and controllers.
TRAFFIC – Traffic management plan cost data sheet, staging/traffic handling plans, maintaining traffic specifications with lane closure charts, pedestrian detours, standard lane and shoulder widths, vertical and horizontal clearances

HYDRAULICS/HYDROLOGY – preliminary drainage report, approved vertical and horizontal alignment, preliminary/final drainage plans, subsurface conditions including groundwater control, drainage for construction staging, drainage facilities, drainage plans, profiles and details, grading plans, erosion control plans
GEOTECH – Test methods comply with California Test methods or ASTM or AASHTO alternatives? Geotechnical baseline info? Material handouts, seismic design criteria, earthwork and ground water control.
HAZARDOUS WASTE – Initial Site Assessment (ISA) conducted on all properties involved? Extent and nature of hazardous waste sites identified? Hazardous waste mitigation prior to construction included documentation to ensure mitigation completion? Hazardous waste mitigation during construction in accordance with final plans and specifications? Construction hazardous waste contingency plan?

The process review is conducted on a post audit basis. The review is done to ensure that local agency has followed all requirements of Title 23 and State policies as stated in Chapter 11 and 12 of LAPM and other requirements as described in Local Assistance Program Guidelines (LAPG). Based on the findings and recommendations of the process review, Local Assistance procedures may need to be improved, modified and/or updated.

All project deficiencies must be brought to the attention of local agency implementing the project. The local agency will be expected to take appropriate action immediately to correct the deficiencies. For unrecoverable project deficiencies which make portions or complete project ineligible for Federal and/or State funds, the corrective action shall include the recovery of appropriate Federal and/or State funds.

Master Agreement and subsequent Program Supplements related to the project states the terms, conditions and legal responsibilities of local agency and Caltrans on the project. While informing the results of process review to local agency, Caltrans explicitly mentions that process review will not take away any responsibility of local agency to direct, construct, oversee, participate, control, advertise, award, administer the project. The local agency shall retain complete responsibility and liability on the project. Through the process review, Caltrans or FHWA shall not be liable on the project in anyway.

Personnel

District

- A. Senior Transportation Engineer
- B. Transportation Engineer

Headquarters

- A. Senior Transportation Engineer (Area Engineer [AE])
- B. Transportation Engineer (Assistant Area Engineer [AAE])
- C. Senior Transportation Engineer – Policy and Procedures

Procedures

District Area Engineer (DAE) shall review the PS&E package under the guidelines of LAPM Chapter 11 and 12. DAE may consult HQ AE/AAE or Senior TE (Policy and Procedures) for clarifications and confirmations. All deviations and deficiencies in the PS&E package shall be forwarded to local agency and HQ Senior TE (Policy and Procedures). Proper notifications may be issued to prevent such occurrences in the future and appropriate Corrective Action Plans (CAP) may be recommended.

Law/Regulation

- A. Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM)
- B. Local Assistance Program Guidelines (LAPG)
- C. Local Programs Procedures (LPPs)
- D. Title 23 - Code of Federal Regulations

References

- E. Caltrans Cooperative Agreement Manual
- F. Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM)
- G. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 23 (Highways), Part 771.113 (23 CFR 771.113)
- H. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- I. Caltrans Standard Plans
- J. Standard Plans for Public Works Construction
- K. AASHTO Highway Drainage Guidelines, Volume III
- L. Erosion and Sediment Control in Highway Construction, 1992
- M. Transportation Management Plan Guidelines
- N. Part 6 of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Device (MUTCD)
- O. AASHTO Roadside Design Guide

Definitions

Design Standards - The standards, specifications, procedures, guides and references listed herein that are acceptable for application in the geometric and structural design of federal aid projects (see Chapter 11, “Design Standards” of the LAPM).

Controlling Criteria - The specific minimum criteria and controls contained in the design standards for highway projects that are considered of primary importance for safety. Deviations from these controlling criteria require design exception approval (see Chapter 11, “Design Standards” of the LAPM).

Design Exception Approval - A process to justify, approve, and document allowable deviations from controlling criteria.

Specifications - The directions, provisions, and requirements contained in the contract documents for a specific construction project. Included are various proposal conditions, contract administration provisions, required construction methods and technical requirements for materials.

Standard Specifications - A published document that contains commonly used specifications developed for use as a reference for construction contract documents.

Standard Plans - A collection of plan details developed for use as a reference for construction contract documents. Included are standard abbreviations, symbols, design notes, design conditions and data, construction details, specifications, layouts, and measurement and payment details.