

Amend CSSB 548 (senate committee printing) by adding the following appropriately numbered SECTION and renumbering subsequent SECTIONS accordingly:

SECTION _____. (a) Chapter 201, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Subchapter I-1 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER I-1. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

Sec. 201.751. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Day" means a calendar day.

(2) "Federal Highway Administration" means the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

(3) "Highway project" means a highway or related improvement that is:

(A) part of the state highway system; or

(B) not part of the state highway system but funded wholly or partly by federal money.

(4) "Local government sponsor" means a political subdivision of the state that:

(A) elects to participate in the planning, development, design, funding, or financing of a highway project; and

(B) is a municipality or a county, a group of adjoining counties, a county acting under Chapter 284, a regional tollway authority operating under Chapter 366, a regional mobility authority operating under Chapter 370, a local government corporation, or a transportation corporation created under Chapter 431.

Sec. 201.752. STANDARDS. (a) The commission by rule shall establish standards for processing an environmental review document for a highway project. The standards must increase efficiency, minimize delays, and encourage collaboration and cooperation by the department with a local government sponsor, with a goal of prompt approval of legally sufficient documents.

(b) The standards apply regardless of whether the environmental review document is prepared by the department or a local government sponsor. The standards apply to work performed by the sponsor and to the department's review process and

environmental decision.

(c) The standards must address, for each type of environmental review document:

(1) the issues and subject matter to be included in the project scope prepared under Section 201.754;

(2) the required content of a draft environmental review document;

(3) the process to be followed in considering each type of environmental review document; and

(4) review deadlines, including the deadlines in Section 201.759.

(d) The standards must include a process for resolving disputes arising under this subchapter, provided that the dispute resolution process must be concluded not later than the 60th day after the date either party requests dispute resolution.

Sec. 201.753. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW LIMITED TO CERTAIN PROJECTS. (a) A local government sponsor or the department may prepare an environmental review document for a highway project only if the highway project is:

(1) identified in the financially constrained portion of the approved state transportation improvement program or the financially constrained portion of the approved unified transportation program; or

(2) identified by the commission as being eligible for participation under this subchapter.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a local government sponsor may prepare an environmental review document for a highway project that is not identified by the commission or in a program described by Subsection (a) if the sponsor submits with its notice under Section 201.755 a fee in an amount established by commission rule, but not to exceed the actual cost of reviewing the environmental review document.

(c) A fee received by the department under Subsection (b) must be deposited in the state highway fund and used to pay costs incurred under this subchapter.

Sec. 201.754. SCOPE OF PROJECT. If an environmental review document is prepared by a local government sponsor, the local

government sponsor must prepare a detailed scope of the project in collaboration with the department before the department may process the environmental review document.

Sec. 201.755. NOTICE TO DEPARTMENT. (a) A local government sponsor may submit notice to the department proposing that the local government sponsor prepare the environmental review document for a highway project.

(b) The notice must include:

(1) the project scope prepared under Section 201.754;
and

(2) a request for classification of the project.

Sec. 201.756. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES. A local government sponsor that submits notice under Section 201.755 is responsible for preparing all materials for:

(1) project scope determination;

(2) environmental reports;

(3) the environmental review document;

(4) environmental permits and conditions;

(5) coordination with resource agencies; and

(6) public participation.

Sec. 201.757. DETERMINATION OF ADMINISTRATIVELY COMPLETE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DOCUMENT. (a) A local government sponsor's submission of an environmental review document must include a statement from the local government sponsor that the document is administratively complete, ready for technical review, and compliant with all applicable requirements.

(b) Not later than the 20th day after the date the department receives a local government sponsor's environmental review document, the department shall either:

(1) issue a letter confirming that the document is administratively complete and ready for technical review; or

(2) decline to issue a letter confirming that the document is administratively complete and ready for technical review, in accordance with Section 201.758.

Sec. 201.758. DEPARTMENT DECLINES TO CONFIRM THAT DOCUMENT IS ADMINISTRATIVELY COMPLETE. (a) The department may decline to issue a letter confirming that a document is administratively

complete and ready for technical review only if the department sends a written response to the local government sponsor specifying in reasonable detail the basis for its conclusions, including a listing of any required information determined by the department to be missing from the document.

(b) If the department provides notice under Subsection (a), the department shall undertake all reasonable efforts to cooperate with the local government sponsor in a timely manner to ensure that the document is administratively complete.

(c) The local government sponsor may resubmit any environmental review document determined by the department under Section 201.757 not to be administratively complete, and the department shall issue a determination letter on the resubmitted document not later than the 20th day after the date the document is resubmitted.

Sec. 201.759. REVIEW DEADLINES. (a) The following deadlines must be included in the standards adopted under Section 201.752:

(1) the department shall issue a classification letter not later than the 30th day after the date the department receives notice from a local government sponsor under Section 201.755;

(2) for a project classified as a programmatic categorical exclusion, the environmental decision must be rendered not later than the 60th day after the date the supporting documentation is received by the department;

(3) for a project classified as a categorical exclusion, the environmental decision must be rendered not later than the 90th day after the date the supporting documentation is received by the department;

(4) for a project that requires the preparation of an environmental assessment:

(A) the department must provide all department comments on a draft environmental assessment not later than the 90th day after the date the draft is received by the department; and

(B) the department must render the environmental decision on the project not later than the 60th day after the later of:

(i) the date the revised environmental assessment is submitted to the department; or

(ii) the date the public involvement process concludes;

(5) the department must render the environmental decision on any reevaluation not later than the 120th day after the date the supporting documentation is received by the department; and

(6) for a project that requires the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the department shall render the environmental decision not later than the 120th day after the date the draft final environmental impact statement is submitted.

(b) Review deadlines under this section specify the date by which the department will render the environmental decision on a project or the time frames by which the department will make a recommendation to the Federal Highway Administration, as applicable.

(c) A deadline that falls on a weekend or official state holiday is considered to occur on the next business day.

Sec. 201.760. SUSPENSION OF TIME PERIODS. The computation of review deadlines under Section 201.759 does not begin until an environmental review document is determined to be administratively complete, and is suspended during any period in which:

(1) the document that is the subject of the review is being revised by or on behalf of the local government sponsor in response to department comments;

(2) the highway project is the subject of additional work, including a change in design of the project, and during the identification and resolution of new significant issues; or

(3) the local government sponsor is preparing a response to any issue raised by legal counsel for the department concerning compliance with applicable law.

Sec. 201.761. AGREEMENT BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPONSOR AND DEPARTMENT. Notwithstanding any provision of this subchapter or any other law, a local government sponsor and the department may enter into an agreement that defines the relative roles and responsibilities of the parties in the preparation and review of

environmental review documents for a specific project. For a project for which an environmental decision requires the approval of the Federal Highway Administration and to the extent otherwise permitted by law, the Federal Highway Administration may also be a party to an agreement between a local government sponsor and the department under this section.

Sec. 201.762. REPORTS TO COMMISSION AND LEGISLATURE. (a) Not later than June 30 and December 31 of each year, the department shall submit a report to the commission at a regularly scheduled commission meeting identifying projects being processed under the procedures of this subchapter and the status of each project, including:

(1) how the project was classified for environmental review;

(2) the current status of the environmental review;

(3) the date on which the department is required to make an environmental decision under applicable deadlines;

(4) an explanation of any delays; and

(5) any deadline under Section 201.759 missed by the department.

(b) Not later than December 1 of each year, the department shall submit a report to the members of the standing legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over matters related to transportation regarding the implementation of this subchapter, including a status report for the preceding 12-month period that contains the information described in Subsection (a).

(c) The department shall post copies of the reports required under this section on its Internet website and shall provide a copy of the report required by Subsection (b) to each member of the legislature who has at least one project covered by the report in the member's district.

(d) The department shall make available on its Internet website and update regularly the status of projects being processed under this subchapter.

(b) The Texas Transportation Commission shall adopt rules to implement Subchapter I-1, Chapter 201, Transportation Code, as added by this Act, not later than March 1, 2012.

(c) Subchapter I-1, Chapter 201, Transportation Code, as added by this Act, applies only to a notice of a local government sponsor proposing the sponsor's preparation of an environmental review document that is received by the Texas Department of Transportation on or after the effective date of this Act. Submissions to the Texas Department of Transportation received before the effective date of this Act are governed by the law in effect on the date the submission was received, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.