THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

Every highway project is unique with opportunities to integrate the design with the surrounding natural and human environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide SHA project managers with an aid to identify these opportunities/issues that will improve the overall quality of a project and to track those issues through the design development process.

This checklist is organized by topics that often arise in the course of a project. These topics include various elements, such as special paving or other material finishes, which may, or may not, have been identified through interaction with regulatory agencies or community groups. In situations where these topics have been identified and committed to the project, it is hoped that this checklist will assist the project manager with identifying ways to incorporate design solutions that are most appropriate to meeting the goals of the specific project. An excellent reference for this approach is Publication No. FHWA-PD-97-062 “Flexibility in Highway Design” prepared by the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

It is very possible that issues/opportunities may arise that are not identified in this checklist. If so, they should be added to the checklist and followed through the design development process. It is hoped that this checklist will stimulate the project manager to identify these opportunities.

A well defined scope which outlines the goals and objectives for the project should be the basis for applying the checklist to individual projects. Establishing the scope should include appropriate input from local groups, highway users, and organizations within the project limits. There may be items identified for the project which are beyond the funding capabilities of SHA. These items should be considered when developing the plans so that if in the future funds become available from other sources these elements can be incorporated with little disruption to the project design.

Selection of appropriate team members relative to the project type is important. For example, in an historic town, environmental planners, historians, landscape architects and archeologists will play a key role in developing appropriate design alternatives which are sensitive to the context of the area. It is important that the appropriate disciplines and
resources necessary for designing the project are identified early in the process. As other issues are identified that are of a unique nature, appropriate personnel/resources should be assigned to provide expertise for the particular issue. They should be given a briefing of the design goals and objectives established for the project.

There is often more than one way to meet the goals and objectives for a project. It is most important that we develop design solutions that are appropriate for the project and provide a positive contribution to the environmental quality of the area.
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

TOPICS

SECTION 1. Aesthetic or historic character of the existing community

SECTION 2. Roadsides - open and closed sections

SECTION 3. Medians - open and closed sections

SECTION 4. Existing vegetation

SECTION 5. Landscaping opportunities

SECTION 6. Sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and hiker/biker trails

SECTION 7. Stormwater ponds, drainage swales and structures

SECTION 8. Slopes and retaining walls.

SECTION 9. Noise abatement walls

SECTION 10. Traffic barriers and fencing

SECTION 11. Signing and lighting

SECTION 12. Specific project needs
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USE

PROJECT PLANNING:

- Update at key milestones of project planning phase
- Transfer checklist to design phase project manager as part of project documentation.
- Coordinate checklist with OED project team member

DESIGN:

- Update checklist at key milestones
- Review checklist with project sponsors
- Coordinate with OED project team member

CONSTRUCTION:

- Verify that elements included in the checklist are not compromised

NOTE: The project manager has the unique opportunity to draw upon the resources within the design team to assist with the development and implementation of this checklist. Periodic reviews and updates of this checklist throughout the design development process will assist all involved with identifying these issues early in the process and monitoring their implementation through the planning, design and construction phases. It is encouraged that the project manager be an advocate for this checklist. Where appropriate, it should be supplemented and modified to meet the specific needs of the project.
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 1. Aesthetic or Historic Character of the Existing Community.

A. What community/communities are impacted/affected by this project?

B. Does this community have a unique or historic character?  Yes  No

C. What are the unique characteristics of this community?
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________

D. What characteristics of this community should be incorporated into the highway project?
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________

E. Are there elements that can be added to the highway project that will enhance the character of the community?  Yes  No

If so, what are they?
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________

F. What does the community feel are its unique characteristics?
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 2. Roadsides - Open and Closed Sections

A. GENERAL.

1. What is the quality of the existing view from the highway?

2. Is screening desirable? Yes No

3. Can screening be provided by:
   a. Landscaping?
   b. Berming?
   c. Other?

4. Are there existing attractive views or features that should be enhanced? Yes No

5. Does the community want landscaping and or aesthetic treatments? Yes No

6. Is there sufficient R.O.W. to accomplish the goals and objectives established for the project. Yes No

Comments/recommendations.

B. OPEN SECTIONS.

1. Are there opportunities to provide landscaping within the right of way? Yes No

2. Remarks/Recommendations:

C. CLOSED SECTIONS.

1. Are there opportunities to provide landscaping within the right of way? Yes No

2. Remarks/Recommendations:
SECTION 3. Medians - Open and Closed Sections

A. GENERAL.

1. Are existing medians aesthetically pleasing? Yes No

2. Would the project benefit by enhancements to the median? Yes No

3. Is there existing landscaping or features in the median that should be protected, or preserved? Yes No

4. Remarks/Recommendations: ____________________________

B. OPEN MEDIANS.

1. What is the existing or proposed width of the median? ________________

2. Is the width sufficient for plantings? Yes No

3. Should the median be modified to provide sufficient room for plantings? Yes No

4. Are the soils in the median suitable for planting? Yes No

5. Is there need for improving drainage systems? Yes No

6. Remarks/Recommendations: ____________________________

C. CLOSED MEDIANS.

1. What is the existing or proposed width of the median? __________________

2. Are the existing medians aesthetically pleasing? Yes No

3. Is landscaping or hardscape treatment (pavers, etc.) in the median appropriate for this project? Yes No

4. Remarks/Recommendations: ____________________________
SECTION 4. *Existing Vegetation*

A. Will existing vegetation be impacted by this project? Yes No

B. What is the quality of the existing vegetation? Good Fair Poor

C. Are there significant individual trees or unique vegetation that will be impacted by the project? Yes No

D. Will existing vegetation be impacted that is currently screening residences or unsightly views? Yes No

E. Are there opportunities to minimize impacts to existing vegetation? Yes No

If yes, what can be done?

1. ___________________________________________________________________

2. ___________________________________________________________________

3. ___________________________________________________________________

F. Will reforestation be required for this project? Yes No

G. Remarks/Recommendations:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 5. Landscaping Opportunities

A. Can this project be enhanced by additional landscaping?  Yes  No

B. Is there sufficient right of way within the project limits to provide additional landscaping?  Yes  No

C. If no, is it feasible to consider planting outside of our right of way on easements or with entry agreements?  Yes  No

D. Are there unique situations that would require or benefit from landscaping?  Yes  No

E. If yes, what are they?
   1. ________________________________________________
   2. ________________________________________________
   3. ________________________________________________

F. Is there local support to assist with maintaining landscaping?  Yes  No
   If yes, who are they? _______________________________________

G. Is this project a “gateway” to a community that would require some level of special treatment?  Yes  No

H. Landscaping suitable for this project.
   1. Trees.__________________________________________
   2. Shrubs.________________________________________
   3. Annuals, perennials and bulbs_____________________
   4. Wildflowers.____________________________________
   5. Turf renovation._________________________________

Remarks/Recommendations: ____________________________________
SECTION 6. Sidewalks, Pedestrian Crossings and Hiker/Biker Trail

A. SIDEWALKS.

1. Are sidewalks required for the project? Yes No

2. If required, what is the proposed width? __________

3. Does this project warrant special treatment for sidewalks? Yes No

4. Should improvements be considered for existing sidewalks? Yes No

5. Does the project comply with A.D.A. guidelines? Yes No

6. Remarks/Recommendations: _______________________________________________________

B. SPECIAL PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

1. Are there opportunities/requirements for special treatment at pedestrian crossings? Yes No

2. Are special treatments at pedestrian crossings appropriate? Yes No

3. Remarks/recommendations: ______________________________________________________

C. HIKER/BIKER TRAILS

1. Are hiker/biker trails required for this project? Yes No

2. Are there opportunities/requirements for special treatments of the hiker/biker trails? Yes No

3. Remarks/recommendations: ______________________________________________________
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 7. *Stormwater Ponds, Drainage Swales and Structures*

A. Are stormwater ponds required for this project?  
   Yes  No

B. Will the stormwater ponds be visible from the highway?  
   Yes  No

C. Are the stormwater ponds located in the vicinity of residential areas?  
   Yes  No

D. What are the opportunities to minimize the visual impact of the stormwater pond(s)?  
   1. Landscaping
   2. Contour grading to pleasing shapes
   3. Vinyl coated fencing

E. Are there opportunities to make the ponds a feature of the highway instead of an eyesore?  
   Yes  No

F. Are drainage swales and structures visually compatible with the character of the highway?  
   Yes  No

G. Remarks/Recommendations:

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________


THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 8.  Slopes and Retaining Walls

A. SLOPES.

1. Is the construction and finish treatment of the slopes compatible with the character of the highway?  Yes  No

2. Is it feasible to modify slopes to minimize impacts to existing vegetation? Yes  No

3. Are there other opportunities to enhance slope areas?  Yes  No

4. If yes, what are they?
   a. ________________________________________________________________

   b. ________________________________________________________________

B. RETAINING WALLS AND STRUCTURES.

1. Are retaining walls included in the project? Yes  No

2. Will the face of the wall be visible from the highway? Yes  No

3. Will the face of the wall be visible from residential side? Yes  No

4. Is the treatment of the face of the retaining wall appropriate with the character of the highway and surrounding environment? Yes  No

5. Can the retaining walls be enhanced with landscaping? Yes  No

6. Are there other opportunities to improve the appearance of the retaining walls and structures? Yes  No

7. If yes, what are they?
   a. ________________________________________________________________

   b. ________________________________________________________________
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 9. *Noise Abatement Walls*

A. Are noise abatement walls required for this project? Yes No

B. Are proposed noise walls designed to minimize impacts to existing vegetation? Yes No

C. Are there opportunities to consider unique finishes to the noise walls that would increase their visual quality? Yes No

D. Is adequate and appropriate landscaping of the noise walls included in the project? Yes No

E. Has the treatment of the space between the noise wall and adjacent residential properties been determined? Yes No

If yes, what is the treatment?

F. Remarks/Recommendations:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________
THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 10.  Traffic Barriers, Fencing and Guard Rail

A. TRAFFIC BARRIERS.

1. Are traffic barriers required on the project?  Yes  No

2. Is aesthetic treatment of the traffic barrier appropriate for this project?  Yes  No

3. Will aesthetic treatment of the traffic barrier enhance the visual quality of the project?  Yes  No

4. Remarks/recommendations: ______________________________________________________

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B. FENCING.

1. Is fencing required for this project?  Yes  No.

2. Is vinyl coating of the fencing appropriate for this project?  Yes  No

3. Remarks/Recommendations: ______________________________________________________

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C. GUARDRAIL.

1. Is special treatment of guardrail finish appropriate for this project?  Yes  No

2. Remarks/Recommendations: ______________________________________________________

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THINKING BEYOND THE PAVEMENT CHECKLIST

SECTION 11. *Signing and Lighting*

A. Is it appropriate to provide aesthetic treatment for signing and lighting structures on this project? Yes  No

B. Has the location of signing and lighting structures been coordinated with proposed landscaping? Yes  No

C. Does the location of this project and nature of its environment require special treatments of signing and lighting structures? Yes  No

   If yes to C above, what are these treatments?

   1. __________________________________________

   2. __________________________________________

   3. __________________________________________

D. Does this project warrant special consideration of selection of light poles and luminaires to enhance the quality of the highway corridor and to be consistent with the character of the neighborhood. Yes  No

E. Are there other opportunities to modify the location and appearance of the signing and lighting structures that would enhance the visual quality of the highway corridor? Yes  No

   If yes, what are they?

   1. __________________________________________

   2. __________________________________________

   3. __________________________________________

F. Remarks/Recommendations: __________________________________________

_________________________________________