



**COLORADO**  
Department of Transportation  
Division of Transit & Rail

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**DATE:** May 11, 2018

**TO:** Transit & Rail Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Michael Snow, Transit Infrastructure Specialist, Division of Transit & Rail

**SUBJECT:** Transit Development Program

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the Transit Development Program and related planning outreach activities.

Action

TRAC is requested to review and provide comments on a recommended Tier 1 Planning Target and the Regional Planning Allocation formula forwarded by the TRAC subcommittee.

Background

The Transit Development Program (TDP) is an inventory of capital project needs throughout the state for which there is not an identified source of expected funding. This serves as a planning tool with two purposes: 1) to assess the capital transit project needs in Colorado and 2) to prepare for unexpected new funding opportunities by identifying a subset of capital projects that are the highest-priority. This high-priority subset, called the Tier 1 Transit Development Program, would be used to identify the best projects to receive funding should new revenues become available.

The current draft TDP contains approximately 215 projects identified in existing statewide, regional and local transit plans and studies, with a total estimated cost of roughly \$5.1B. Division of Transit & Rail (DTR) staff began outreach to TPRs and MPOs in April to engage transit stakeholders statewide in identifying additional capital projects, obtaining updated information on existing projects in the inventory and to facilitate a collaborative process within each region to identify their Tier 1 priorities by early to mid-summer.

Details

Previous versions of the draft Development Program contained both transit and rail capital projects. These have now been separated into two distinct programs, the Transit Development Program and the Intercity Rail Development Program, to delineate these project types based on how they are funded and by the type of transportation solutions they solve. The TDP will contain local rail transit such as FasTracks, while the IC Rail program will contain only long-distance rail projects such as the Advanced Guideway Systems (AGS) along the I-70 corridor, the Intercity Connectivity Study (ICS) rail concepts along the Front Range and the Southwest Chief in southern Colorado.

The TDP is part of a larger planning objective to fully assess Transit needs in the State of Colorado. In addition to capital expansion needs, a full need assessment will also include Operational shortfalls and Asset Management backlog, which includes needed vehicle replacements, equipment replacements and facility rehabilitations. These latter two components of transit need will be addressed in separate and subsequent planning efforts. To support this objective, however, the existing TDP now includes information capturing the Annual Operational Cost associated with capital expansion projects.

The Transit & Rail Advisory Committee's (TRAC) Subcommittee was formed in March to support the Tier 1 prioritization process. The Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) also nominated four additional members to this subcommittee, giving it a broad representation of urban, rural and mountain region stakeholders. The role of this Subcommittee has been to determine an optimal Tier 1 Planning Target and to develop a Regional Planning Allocation formula. The Planning Target serves to constrain the size of the Tier 1 Program to an appropriate total dollar amount in anticipation of several possible new transportation funding opportunities, including State General Fund proposals and the 2018 Ballot Initiative. The Regional Planning Allocation Formula



serves to provide a proportional amount of the total Planning Target to each region of the state, such that each will have a total dollar amount of projects to assign to their Tier 1 program.

The TRAC Subcommittee has now met four times since early April to determine the Tier 1 Planning Target and to develop a Regional Planning Allocation formula. In preparation for TRAC's review, a final meeting of the Subcommittee will take place to finalize their recommendations, which will be presented at this May 11 meeting. Their recommended allocation reflects several important factors recognizing general need for equity, urban vs. rural differences, current and anticipated levels of transit dependency, and existing levels of service. Many factors were considered, including but not limited to Population, Zero-vehicle households, Senior, Low-income and Disabled Populations, Employment, Ridership, and Passenger Trips.

#### Options and Recommendations

The urgent timeline for determining the Tier 1 Transit Development Program hinges upon the likely need to produce CDOT's recommended candidate project list in July for the 2018 Ballot and for the initial years of the SB267 program. This depends upon TRAC and STAC's finalizing their recommendations for the Regional Planning Allocation in time for TPRs and MPOs to submit their Tier 1 priorities. It is important to recognize that it is not critical or necessary that the Regional Planning Allocation formula be permanently finalized at this time. The formula can be adjusted as deemed desirable based on the ongoing planning process. DTR staff therefore encourages TRAC to provide concurrence with the Subcommittee's recommendation at this time. Options at this time include:

1. Concur with the Subcommittee's recommendations at this time.
2. Submit a request to the Subcommittee to reconvene and consider additional formula recommendations.

#### Key Benefits

At the time of this writing, the Colorado Legislature was considering a number of potential transportation funding bills with only five days remaining in the Session. Meanwhile, the potential remains that a citizen group will move to put one of several versions of a sales tax funding initiative on the November ballot. Should the latter move forward, CDOT may be asked in late July or August to provide a candidate list of transit projects for capital bond funding should the ballot issue pass. Additional capital projects need to be prioritized should any new state funding bill pass, in addition to the need to identify projects for the initial years of SB267, which was passed at the close of the 2017 session. With the Tier 1 Transit Development Program on schedule to be compiled by early July, CDOT should be prepared to respond with the best candidate projects should any come to fruition.

#### Next Steps

Following TRAC's review and recommendation on May 11, STAC will review and provide recommendation on May 18, in preparation for TC review and concurrence in June.

TPR and MPO meetings began in April and will continue through May and June, with each expected to finalize and approve their Tier 1 programs no later than early July.

#### Attachments

None.

