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## TRAC FASTER Redistribution Sub-Committee Meeting #1 Minutes

**Date Held:** Monday, February 24, 2014  
**Time Held:** 10:00 – 11:30 AM  
**Location:** CDOT Headquarters, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Aspen Conf. Room and by Telephone/Web Conference

### Subcommittee Attendees (“Y” if present):

Y Rob Andresen, Grants Mgr, CDOT-DTR	Y Tracey MacDonald, Sr. Transit Plnr, CDOT
Y David Averill, Plng & Infrastructure, CDOT	Y Tom Mauser, Transit Section Mgr, CDOT
Y Craig Blewitt, Mountain Metro Transit	Y Ryan Mulligan, RTD Syst. Plng/FasTracks
Y John Elias, RTD Syst. Plng/FasTracks	Y Kurt Ravenschlag, General Mgr, TransFort
Y Matthew Helfant, DRCOG	Y Ann Rajewski, Co Exec-Director, CASTA
Y Mark Imhoff, Director, CDOT-DTR	Y Marissa Robinson, R4 Liaison, CDOT-DTD
Y Will Jones, Greeley Transit	Vince Rogalski, Gunnison Valley TPR/STAC
Y Lizzie Kemp, CDOT Region 1/FasTracks	Y Mark Rogers, CDOT Region 3
Y Lenna Kottke, Special Transit	Y Mike Timlin, Bus Services, CDOT
Y David Krutsinger, Rail & Spec Proj, CDOT	Elena Wilken, Co Exec Director, CASTA
	Y Kathy Young, Mesa County/GVT

### Additional Copies:

Leah Ware, Mgr., DTD/DTR Business Ofc. Jeff Sudmeier, Sr. Planner, CDOT DTD

### Agenda:

Welcome / Introductions  
Review of FASTER Legislation  
Transportation Commission & Operating Committee Feedback  
FASTER Redistribution Principles (Overview)  
Discussion  
Schedule for FASTER Redistribution  
Adjournment

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### Welcome / Introductions

Members of the subcommittee introduced themselves and David Krutsinger gave an overview of the meeting goals: (1) Share the policy background for this committee as a common foundation for approaching this topic, (2) Explore (at this point, not making decisions/recommendations until later meetings) CDOT’s role in fairly distributing FASTER dollars, (3) Understand how changes to FASTER distribution might relate to FTA funding pools and overall funding flows, and (4) To raise questions/issues for future meetings to address.

### Review of FASTER Legislation

Mark Imhoff provided the background on FASTER legislation, both the funding streams to various programs, and the direction given the Division of Transit & Rail (DTR). The \$15 Million per year in DTR’s purview is fixed, unadjusted for inflation, and unadjusted for any changes in the number of auto registrations either up or down per year. Mark highlighted DTR’s authorized responsibilities: to plan, design, finance, operate, maintain and contract for transit services. The \$15 Million is split, \$5 M/yr to a

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local project pool, and \$10 M/yr to statewide project pool. Rob Andresen reviewed the 119 projects awarded in FASTER's existence so far:

- 58 projects / 49% to vehicle purchases and replacements;
- 22 projects / 18% to fareboxes, equipment and studies;
- 17 projects / 14% to major stations and transit facilities,
- 14 projects / 12% to improved transit access including park-and-rides, bike/ped facilities, and bus shelters; and
- 8 projects / 7% for transit communications including mobile data terminals, radios, and routing/dispatching software.

Tom Mauser provided an overview of how FY2015 capital dollars, including both FTA and FASTER funds have been awarded. He noted that FY2015 was somewhat an exception because older, unused / returned funds were being awarded in addition to normally available annual capital funds.

### **Transportation Commission & Operating Sub-Committee Feedback**

David Krutsinger reviewed a year's worth of CDOT Transportation Commission feedback on FASTER, noting that all CDOT funding is moving towards performance-based distribution. The CDOT Transportation Commission (TC) has likewise directed FASTER fund distribution move in that direction. The TC is supportive of a primary focus on capital replacements, consistent with asset management themes for the rest of the transportation system, and consistent with US DOT policy (MAP-21). The TC has been more cautious about use of FASTER funds for operating, particularly to local services.

A single Operating Sub-Committee meeting was held in September, prior to, and somewhat evolving into the current FASTER Redistribution Sub-Committee discussion. That Operating Sub-Committee had espoused that if FASTER funds are to be used for operations the goals for such projects should be:

- To expand/grow above existing services (aka maintenance of effort principle) not be used to replace existing funding or existing services;
- Regionally significant;
- Have strong performance;
- Supported with local commitment / match; and
- Incentivize "forward" momentum on cooperation (i.e. IGA's, transportation authorities, etc).

### **FASTER Redistribution Principles (Overview)**

FTA's guidance for asset management and CDOT's Policy Directive 14 (PD 14), guiding the state planning process, are the starting point for FASTER Redistribution. The four main principles are:

1. Transit Utilization: fund the highest priority projects
2. Transit Asset Condition: focus funding first on vehicle replacements
3. Transit Connectivity: connect existing local transit agency services
4. Streamline Distribution: request & use agency data information/data sparingly and efficiently

There were questions about the degree to which large urban, small urban, and rural transit services/agencies are currently and should be considered through these principles. Mark Imhoff answered that CDOT is striving for the best overall transit system possible. Other TRAC members noted that this definitional question pivots around what CDOT can reasonably be accountable and responsible to influence. David Averill explained the Capital Inventory Project currently underway and said there are 800 to 900 vehicles in the rural fleet, moving from what has been an incomplete database historically, to a more complete database. He noted that "Your CDOT Dollar" (YCD) tracks all levels of systems, large

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urban, small urban, and rural. The group asked that the link for YCD be forwarded to all subcommittee members. Mike Timilin and Rob Andresen reviewed connectivity and streamline principles, respectively.

### **Discussion**

After the key principle overview, discussion, input, and questions from the entire subcommittee began.

#### *Ridership Principle*

- Transit agency service should not “backslide” due to lack of funding for existing services.
- Transit agencies cannot be expected to grow ridership [substantially] without increases in operating funding.
- Some ridership growth can occur with efficiency gains, and marketing/awareness of existing services.
- Every agency should have a 3-5 year business plan, and grant applications should follow the plan
- There should be flexibility built into funding decisions to accommodate immediate needs, which may vary by agency, whether one is in a capital replacement peak cycle, others are between capital replacement cycles.
- CDOT should be careful about when to consider ridership. Ridership may be more appropriate for operating fund requests, and less appropriate for capital replacement requests.
- Possibly there should be some minimum existing ridership/utilization (performance) standards considered alongside the potential for ridership growth.
- Passengers per revenue mile, and passengers per revenue hour are standard measures used in the industry, and there should be care taken how to apply them. Probably there needs to be a “tiering” of rural, regional, urban, suburban, and resort services. FASTER so far has recognized three categories: resort, rural, and small urban.
- At a recent SWTA meeting, attendees noted less concern about ridership growth, and growing concern & interest about capital / fleet funding needs due to the changes in Federal (MAP-21) funding.

#### *Transit Asset Condition Principle*

- Capital Inventory Project is an effort to create a *tool*, striving towards greater predictability of capital funding. It is not a push-button, automated tool. It will help, not replace decision making.
- How do low- or no-emission vehicles fit into this picture, with some of the “boutique” funding programs that come and go through FTA policy / grants?
- How does preventive maintenance for vehicles fit into this picture? In the past, this has been used by exception, rather than as the norm due to the high need for vehicle replacements.
- Expectations for vehicle replacements should be communicated to encourage good maintenance practices and discourage poor maintenance practices or unnecessarily early replacements.
- One example was offered that local match rates can be used to provide incentives for good maintenance, X% if a vehicle is replaced at the minimum mileage/life, Y% if a vehicle is replaced beyond the minimum mileage/life, where the local match rate is less later. Example: encourage a “5 year” vehicle to go 6 years, a “10 year vehicle” to go 12 years.
- What do transit agencies with “young” average fleet ages do? Are they excluded from vehicle replacements until they have an “old” average fleet age?

- What about transit agencies like RTD (with light rail) and RFTA and TransFort (with BRT buses)? Is it better for FASTER distribution to allow some agencies to replace other vehicle or system components, than to put in requests for these types of vehicles?

*Transit Connectivity Principle*

- The definition of “regional” is a hard nut to crack, but is at the core of potential operating assistance.
- State Transit Plan comments are indicating an interest in local operating assistance, as much as the “regional” services. How to balance? How to structure overall funding?
- How many projects should be eligible? If \$1 Million were split among all current grant partners in the state (about 50 to make the math simple), the operating assistance would be \$20,000 each. If split among fewer, truly “regional” and “interregional” projects, then it might be as much as \$200,000 in assistance (5 projects).
- The expressed need for operating assistance should not be interpreted at the extremes of either 0% operating / 100% capital, nor that interest in operating assistance will automatically lead to the opposite of 100% operating / 0% capital.
- FTA 5311, 5310 already provide local operating funds.
- How many 5311 & 5310 operating requests to date have gone un-funded?

*Streamline Grant Process Principle*

- Need to consider eligibility carefully. Limited to only transit agencies, or eligible also for cities/counties who might flex HUTF dollars to have local match available?
- Also RTA’s have a similar effect. They can offer more local matching dollars, stretching how far FASTER dollars can go. On the opposite side of the coin, RTA’s can raise expectations for local match higher, and making it harder for non-RTA areas, smaller areas to meet match requirements.
- Urbanized areas make up the largest base of FASTER fees paid. Be careful not to exclude or disproportionately treat urban areas in FASTER fund distributions. Transit agencies, including RTD, MMT, TransFort, and RFTA are all cognizant of the balancing that needs to occur to receive a fair share, but not dominate FASTER distributions.
- Address how changes to the grant decision process affect local input re: \$5 M Local Pool.

**Schedule for FASTER Redistribution**

Overall the goal is to complete FASTER Redistribution in a way that enables a capital call for projects to occur in August 2014. This means significant work for the subcommittee over the next two months, March and April, for discussions to make it through full TRAC, STAC, Statewide Plan Team, and Transportation Commission processes.

**Requests / Action Items**

Start	Complete	Action	Lead(s) for Response
2/24/2014		Set future meetings, approx. every 2 weeks	Krutsinger
2/24/2014		Show how all DTR funds add up as background information for this discussion	Andresen, MacDonald
2/24/2014	2/25/2014	Provide “Your CDOT Dollar” Link	Krutsinger
2/24/2014		Any unfunded 5311 & 5310 operating requests?	Mausser, Andresen