

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Division of Transit and Rail
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TO: Transit and Intermodal Committee

FROM: Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

DATE: January 6, 2012

RE: Action Item re recommended project lists

The purpose of this memo is to outline to the Transit and Intermodal Committee an action item being presented to the Commission next month: the approval of a list of projects recommended for award from FY2013 Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) Transit funding. For the sake of the newer Commission members I will first provide some background information on FASTER Transit funding and the project selection process.

BACKGROUND – Colorado’s FASTER legislation, in addition to funding bridge and safety projects, also provides \$15 million annually for transit projects. Of this \$15 million, \$5M per year is dedicated to local transit projects and \$10M is dedicated to a statewide pool for multimodal, transit-related projects. The \$5M Local pool is allocated by formula to the six CDOT Regions for selection and award to local transit projects. The \$10M Statewide pool gives priority to statewide and regional projects, which are selected by DTR in collaboration with the CDOT Regions, DTD, the Policy Office and the Colorado Association of Transportation Agencies (CASTA). Approximately \$1M is used for Division administration, planning and match for federal grants. The Statewide pool funds are not geographically allocated, but the selection committee does take geographic equity into consideration during its deliberations.

FASTER Transit funds are made available on a competitive basis to public and private nonprofit organizations for capital expenses and planning—but not for operating expenses. CDOT can be an applicant for Statewide pool funds but cannot apply for funding from the Local pool.

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS - In late 2011 DTR issued a broad Call for Projects for FY 2013 FASTER Transit funds. The specific criteria used to evaluate projects are unique to the type of project being requested but in general include readiness to proceed, the age of equipment proposed to be replaced, the criticality of the project, agency financial capacity and need, and anticipated project impacts. Because of the state of the economy and an

existing backlog of “state of good repair” needs, a “fix it first” approach was emphasized this year—that is, replacing or repairing buses and existing facilities was a higher priority than fleet or facility expansion projects.

We received applications for 78 projects requesting nearly \$36 M. DTR staff made determinations as to what constituted a Statewide or Local project. Once those initial decisions were made, DTR, in collaboration with the aforementioned partners, selected the Statewide projects. Projects that were not recommended for funding from the Statewide pool, but were deemed to be eligible for consideration in the Local pool were then referred to the appropriate Regions. This approach gave the Regions an opportunity to rank and fund these project(s) in addition to the previously identified Local projects from their respective regional allocations. The end result of this process is two lists (attached) of recommended awards: one for Statewide projects and another for Local projects.

DTR is advancing for Transportation Commission consideration and approval a recommended list of projects in February. It is DTR’s intent to have the list discussed this month by the T&I Committee at its January 18th meeting, as well as by the STAC and the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee on January the 12th.