



DATE: March 16, 2016
TO: Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC)
FROM: Debra Perkins-Smith, Director, Division of Transportation Development (DTD)
 Herman Stockinger, Director, Office of Policy and Government Relations
SUBJECT: Discretionary Grants Programs

Three federal discretionary grant programs are currently accepting applications for projects. These programs include an eighth round of the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program, the new Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) program, and the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP). CDOT plans to submit applications under each of these programs and will provide an overview of the programs and the proposed projects at the STAC meeting on March 18.

TIGER

On February 23, 2016 USDOT announced the application process for the TIGER VIII discretionary grant program. Under TIGER VIII \$500 million is available for project awards. No less than \$100 million may be awarded to projects in rural areas. Grants may be used for up to 80 percent of the costs of a project located in an urban area and up to 100 percent of the costs of a project located in a rural area. The most competitive applications, however, have matching funds of greater than 50%. Funds must be obligated by September 30, 2019.

Staff is recommending that CDOT sponsor only one application for TIGER VIII. The North I-25 project will build one TOLLED Express Lane in each direction on I-25 for 14 miles, from SH 14 in Fort Collins to SH 402 in Loveland, providing much needed capacity and travel time reliability on this congested corridor. These improvements will include replacement of both the Cache La Poudre River Bridge and the Union Pacific Grade Separation Bridge. The Poudre River Bridge will also be designed to accommodate the 100-year flood flow rate, improving resiliency of the corridor, and the corresponding trail is an important segment of the Colorado Front Range Trail, recently identified as one of Governor Hickenlooper’s “16 in 2016” priority trails. The widening of the Great Western Railroad Bridge and the Big Thompson Bridge are also necessary to accommodate the increased capacity.

The total cost for this series of improvements is \$210-\$230 million. Staff recommends that financing of \$100 million be considered based on the prospect that various segments of the I-25 corridor can generate revenue through the collection of user fees. In addition to this \$100 million construction loan, state dollars totaling up to \$80 million, along with pledged local and private funds totaling \$21 million and an anticipated TIGER VIII award of \$25 million will bridge the current funding gap.

Table 1: Recommended TIGER VIII Project Application

Project	Region	County	Funding Request (\$M)	Total Cost (\$M)	Match (\$M)	Partners
North I-25 Segments 7 & 8 Managed Lanes	4	Larimer, Weld	-\$25.0	\$210.0-\$230.0	-\$201.0	Larimer County, Fort Collins, private developer, others



Additionally, the Southwest Chief (SWC) Commission is working with Kansas and New Mexico and looking for a project sponsor for a TIGER VIII application for Phase III of the track replacement/repair. CDOT will not sponsor an application. However, the Southwest Chief Commission is requesting that CDOT support an application with a \$1 million match commitment if an award is made. Staff recommends the Transportation Commission allocate \$1 million of residual transit funds from SB1 (total residual is approximately \$12 million). These funds would be expended only if a SWC TIGER VIII grant is awarded.

The Transportation Commission will be asked in March to approve the submittal of North I-25, and to approve the match request for the SWC. Applications are due on April 29, 2016.

Counties, tribes, local governments, transit agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local government may also apply for the TIGER program. Additional information on TIGER is available at: <https://www.transportation.gov/tiger>.

FASTLANE

Different from TIGER, the FAST Act established a new discretionary grant program for nationally significant freight projects. On February 26, 2016, USDOT announced the 2016 application process for the program. Congress authorized \$800 million for this program in 2016. Of the \$800 million available for grants in 2016, \$76 million is reserved for small projects (less than \$100 million) and \$190 million is reserved for projects located in rural areas (defined as outside of an Urbanized Area with a population over 200,000). Other than the set aside for small projects, the total project cost must be over \$100 million with a minimum grant amount of \$25 million (\$5 million for small projects). The share of project costs funded from this program may not exceed 60% and the total Federal share from all sources may not exceed 80%. Projects must be able to demonstrate an ability to go to construction prior to September 30, 2019.

The very short application period necessitated an expedited process to identify projects that met the requirements of the program and that were likely to compete well nationally. (NOFO issued on February 26, with applications due on April 14). Based on a review of competitive freight improvements, CDOT staff identified four priority projects for potential submission to USDOT for FASTLANE grant funding. Staff recommends submitting the Multi-State Truck Parking Information and Management System (Small Category) and is working to further refine the three Large Category projects to identify the most competitive two projects for submission.

Table 2: Recommended FASTLANE Project Applications

Project	Region	County	Funding Request (\$ M)	Total Project Cost (\$ M)	Example "up to" Match* (\$ M)	Partners
Multi-State Truck Parking Information and Management System	All		\$6.0	~\$10.0	~\$4 (TBD)	CMCA, Nebraska, Utah, Wyoming
US 287 Lamar Truck Reliever Route	2	Prowers	\$96.0	\$160.0	\$32 (freight formula) \$27 (SB 228/Other State) \$5 (RPP)	Lamar County, Prowers County
US 85 Highway/Rail Corridor	1, 4	Adams, Weld	\$52.5	\$100.0	\$25 (freight formula) \$20 (SB 228/Other State) \$2.5 (RPP)	UPRR
US 550/US 160 Connection	8	La Plata	\$52.0	\$140.0	\$25 (freight formula) \$20 (SB 228/Other State) \$13 (RPP) \$8 (Surface Treatment)	

*Example only. Details TBD.



The Transportation Commission will be asked in March to approve the submittal of up to three projects under the FASTLANE program. Applications are due on April 14, 2016.

Counties, tribes, local governments, transit agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local government may also apply for the TIGER program. Additional information on TIGER is available at: <https://www.transportation.gov/FASTLANEgrants>.

TIGER and FASTLANE Match

When applying for federal discretionary grants, there is usually a required state match of at least 20% to be eligible, and an overmatch of non-federal funds makes a project more competitive. While most of the recommended projects have already identified some state and local funds to be included in the applications, additional funds are required for each project to meet minimum match requirements and/or make the projects more competitive nationally.

Staff believes that CDOT should not “pass” on the opportunity to leverage state funds in order to receive additional federal and local funds to fully fund a project and allow us to stretch available state dollars as far as possible. Additionally, committing state funds only if a grant is awarded by the USDOT provides the flexibility to choose any project if a federal award is not made, and allows the flexibility to identify the appropriate state funding source after an award is made. It would be highly unusual for Colorado to receive more than one of these grants, so the expected actual funding commitment would be for only one of these projects.

FLAP

The FLAP is a competitive, discretionary program for states, counties, tribes and local governments. The program provides funds for transportation facilities that provide access to, or are located on or adjacent to Federal lands, with emphasis placed on facilities that improve access to high use Federal recreation sites or economic generators. Eligible projects include engineering, rehabilitation, restoration, construction, reconstruction, transportation planning, and research of Federal lands access transportation facilities. Each State is required to create a committee composed of a representative of the FHWA, a representative of the State DOT, and a representative of the appropriate political subdivisions of the State. This committee, known as the Colorado Programming Decisions Committee, makes programming decisions for FLAP funds.

Applications are now being accepted for FY 19 - FY 22, with approximately \$60 million available for projects in Colorado. The CDOT Regions were asked to propose projects for consideration. A FLAP project evaluation team, composed of staff from DTD, the Regions, and the Office of Policy and Government Relations, met to review and score candidate projects based on the criteria used by the Colorado Programming Decisions Committee. This includes: Access, mobility, and connectivity; Economic development; Facility condition; Safety; Resource protection; Funding, coordination, and cost.

Table 1 summarizes the staff recommended priority list. The Transportation Commission will be asked in April to approve the submittal by CDOT of up to four of the recommended projects. Table 1 summarizes the staff recommended priority list. Applications are due on May 21, 2016.



Table 3: Recommended FLAP Project Applications

Priority	Project	Region	County	Funding Request (\$ M)	Total Project Cost (\$ M)	Federal Lands Accessed
1	US 160 Passing Lanes North of Towaoc	5	Montezuma	\$7.9	\$9.5	Mesa Verde National Park; Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Lands; Yucca House National Monument; Canyons of the Ancients National Monument; Hovenweep National Monument
2	US 50 Blue Creek Canyon	3	Gunnison	\$18.0	\$26.0	Gunnison National Forest; Curecanti National Recreation Area; Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park; BLM lands
3	US 550 Corridor - CR 218 to CR 302	5	La Plata	\$17.4	\$21.0	San Juan National Forest; Southern Ute Tribal Lands; BLM lands
4	SH 139 Little Horse South	3	Rio Blanco	\$9.2	\$12.0	Canyon Pintado National Historic District; Dinosaur National Monument; BLM lands

As noted previously, counties, tribes, and local governments may also apply for the FLAP. Additional information on the Colorado FLAP is available at: <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/co>.

Next Steps

Staff will move forward with preparing applications for each of the projects identified for submittal under TIGER, FASTLANE, and FLAP. A final decision on which two to three projects will be submitted under FASTLANE will be made by the end of March, based on a review of the draft applications at that time and a determination of which projects appear most competitive nationally.

The very-fast turnaround with respect to FASTLANE (roughly six weeks) did not provide sufficient time for an involved process with planning partners. However, the FASTLANE program is anticipated to continue for four additional years, the TIGER program has now gone through eight cycles of funding, and another round of FLAP can be anticipated in a few years. Recent discussions relating to the Development Program have been focused on “getting ahead” with these processes by identifying projects with funding needs, soliciting planning partner input, and identifying priorities in advance in order to be ready for funding opportunities as they arise. Staff plans discussions with STAC and the Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) in the months ahead to better prepare for future rounds of funding through these programs and to prepare for other unanticipated funding opportunities. In addition to these discretionary programs, the FAST Act also created a new formula freight program. Staff will be working with STAC, the TPRs, and the Freight Advisory Council (FAC) to identify priorities for implementing this new program.

