



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Development

Transportation Performance and Multimodal Planning Branch
4201 E. Arkansas Ave. Shumate Bldg.
Denver, CO 80222-3400

TO: STAC

FROM: Debra Perkins-Smith, Director, Division of Transportation Development

DATE: April 11, 2014

RE: **FASTER Safety Mitigation Program**

FASTER Safety is currently allocated to the Regions for a total of \$87M. FASTER Safety funds are for construction, reconstruction or maintenance needed to enhance safety of a state highway. Beginning in FY 15, \$40 million of FASTER safety funds will be allocated to asset management programs that directly support safety. The remaining funds will support the FASTER safety mitigation program.

FASTER safety has been discussed with STAC at several meetings. At the October 2013 STAC meeting, Debra Perkins-Smith discussed the possible use of FASTER safety funds for asset management programs that have clear safety benefits. To increase accountability and transparency, the Commission did decide to direct \$40M of FASTER safety funds to asset management including bridge, tunnels, culverts, rockfall, and specific maintenance where projects can be prioritized using the Risk Based Asset Management Plan and for which safety benefits can be demonstrated and reported. The remaining \$47M would remain in the FASTER Safety line item and be applied to the FASTER safety mitigation program. In November, the STAC had a presentation on the FASTER safety audit report by CDOT's Audit Director and a summary of the observations in that report. In January 2014, STAC was updated on the progress of the FASTER Safety Program reassessment to better define program goals, consistent project selection criteria, measurable metrics for evaluating projects, and an allocation that addresses the goals. Additionally, STAC was informed on other safety programs and how FASTER Safety is integrated into CDOT's safety program.

The FASTER Safety Program was examined by the CDOT Audit Division. The audit report found that CDOT is in compliance with requirements established by the legislature for the program, but that there were areas for improvement including: timely reports to management on funds and expenditures; better link of expenditures to safety improvement metrics; and a consistent project selection process. One recommendation from the FASTER Audit states, "The Director of the Division of Transportation Development and the Chief Engineer should present to the Transportation Commission alternatives to the current allocation method of FASTER safety funds in order to ensure the most critical safety projects are addressed."

In response to the audit report, a working group comprised of the Region Traffic Engineers and Headquarters staff from several disciplines examined a number of options for administration and reporting for the FASTER safety mitigation program. Additionally, this interdisciplinary team developed consistent safety metrics for project



selection and evaluation. The recommendations developed by the work group were reviewed by an Executive Oversight Team of senior managers and presented to the RTDs for selection of a staff recommendation. As part of the program, a consistent statewide system for tracking and reporting of project benefits will also be developed.

Three potential options for administration of the FASTER safety funds are:

1. Region Allocation
2. Statewide Pool with Region Planning Estimates
3. Statewide Pool for Statewide Program

The details of these options will be explained in a presentation at the STAC meeting.

The staff recommendation is program Option #2 - a Statewide Pool with Region Planning Estimates. Some reasons for this recommendation include:

- statewide pool allows a holistic look at safety needs;
- region planning estimates allow for a multi-year planning parameter for projects;
- includes flexibility to adjust region amounts with changing safety needs;
- includes joint statewide/region project selection and consistency in evaluation;
- region priorities and statewide safety benefit analysis are combined.

Attachment A is a table with options for distribution methods for FASTER safety funds. The staff recommendation is Option #4 which is based on the National Safety Council weighting for fatalities, injuries, and other crashes. This option uses data from a national safety organization, recognizes the much higher societal and economic cost of fatalities, and provides a reasonable distribution of funds to the regions.

FASTER safety funds can be used to address both remedial measures at specific high accident locations and known safety needs, as well as proactive safety measures that help avoid or reduce the potential for future accident occurrence. For either approach, project selection would involve consistent statewide criteria and evaluation processes to identify the most critical needs and most effective safety improvement investments. Consistent statewide tracking and reporting will also be required.

Next Steps: Commission workshop on FASTER safety mitigation program in April and TC adoption of program option and formula in May.

