



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
 Division of Transit & Rail

2829 W. Howard Place 4th Floor
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DATE: January 10, 2020
TO: Transit & Rail Advisory Committee
FROM: Qing Lin, Programming Unit Manager
RE: DTR 2020 Super Transit Project Call Proposal

Purpose

This intent of this memo is to 1) propose the idea of “Super Transit Project Call” in April 2020 to solicit all Capital, Admin/Operating (A/O), and Planning transit projects in one call, and 2) seek input from the members of TRAC on this proposal.

Action

CDOT is seeking TRAC committee’s feedback and directions on the proposal of Super Call in April 2020.

Background

1. For many years, **due to capacity issues**, CDOT DTR has been doing at least three separate project calls in each calendar year:
 - In Spring, CDOT DTR issues Admin & Operating Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and calls for Admin/Operating/Mobility Management projects;
 - In Summer, the NOFA is released for planning projects;
 - In Fall, CDOT announces the NOFA for Capital projects.

2. At the beginning of year 2019, a new programming unit was formed with three programming specialists and one unit manager. The purpose of the unit is to use performance-based planning information created by the planning unit to carry out the application process, for capital, planning, and administrative & operating projects, making preliminary determinations of awards, and with the approval of the DTR Director, issuing award notices and award letters, developing scope of works, budgeting projects, STIP-ing and/or TIP-ing the projects, and execution of grant agreements. As part of overall financial management, this unit is also responsible for Price Agreements, FTA Grants development and closeout, including POPs and TrAMS, and Vertiba/COTRAMS Project Management.

3. In 2019, the programming unit successfully conducted four projects calls and worked with five evaluation committees to review 145 applications. Please see details in the below Table 1.

Table 1: 2019 Transit Project Calls Summary

Project Calls (2020 = FY 19/20)	Dates the Calls Were Released	Number of Applications	Requested Amount	Awarded Amount
2020 CDOT/DRCOG Joint A&O and Capital Call	Apr-19	20	\$3,500,000	\$3,000,000
2020 A&O Call	Apr-19	57	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000
2019 Planning Call	May-19	9	\$300,000	\$300,000
2020 Capital Call (CCCP)	Sep-19	59	\$68,000,000	\$34,000,000
Total		145	\$86,800,000	\$52,300,000

4. During the 2020 CDOT/DRCOG Joint Call, we sought capital and A&O projects in one call for DRCOG area applications, without doing separate calls. The result proved it is achievable to combine two project types into one call, and it was also beneficial for applicants.
5. Over the years, CDOT has developed different types of electronically-delivered applications (Capital applications, A/O applications and planning applications) in COTRAMS (DTRs award management system). The release of applications has been made much easier than before.

Details

CDOT feels confident with these experiences, and believes the capacity exists internally to further integrate calls-for-projects. Therefore, CDOT is proposing to streamline multiple project calls into one super call for capital, A&O and planning transit projects, and incorporate three NOFAs into one super NOFA, then release the NOFA and applications in April 2020.

CDOT anticipates the NOFA will make approximately \$54 million available in capital and O&M dollars, from both FTA and State transit funds for the year of 2021.

Considering local transit providers may need longer time than the normal 45 days to prepare for the applications of capital, A&O and planning, CDOT proposes to spread out the due dates for applications, by project type. Please see Table 2 for the proposed application due dates.

Table 2: 2020 Transit Application Due Date proposal

Application Types	Application Start Date	Application Due Date
2021 A/O Applications	4/1/2020	5/15/2020
2021 CCCP Applications	4/1/2020	6/15/2020
2020 Planning Applications	4/1/2020	6/30/2020

Key Benefits

Benefit 1 There are ample duplications of effort among these NOFAs as separate transit calls. By consolidating the NOFAs, CDOT can cut down many labor hours and be more effectively manage the application and award process.

Benefit 2 Having separate calls has caused the same year’s A&O and Capital projects to be TIPed and STIPed in the two state fiscal year cycles, which has been very confusing for MPOs and FTA. The combination of calls will help reduce or avoid this confusion.

Benefit 3 FTA usually announces each year’s annual transit apportionments in March. CDOT has not, in the past, been able to apply for the funds in a timely manner because the capital projects were not selected until almost a year later (following March). If this proposal is implemented, CDOT would be able to have all projects selected within 9 months of the apportionment, rather than 12 months.

Options and Recommendations

CDOT is looking for input and comments on this proposal.

Next Steps (if applicable)

Based on comments from TRAC, CDOT will either have more discussion at a future meeting, or proceed with the target for 2020 Super Call on April 1, 2019.