



DATE: April 3, 2015
TO: Transportation Commission
FROM: Herman Stockinger, Office of Policy & Government Relations
SUBJECT: USDOT’s “TIGER VII” Discretionary Grants

Purpose

To provide information to the Transportation Commission on the next round of federal TIGER grants, and seek approval on which projects CDOT should develop applications for in the round of TIGER.

Action Requested

Approve a resolution authorizing the Department to submit up to three (3) of the following project applications for the federal Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) VII discretionary grant program. Project summaries for the three CDOT projects are included with this memorandum.

Project	Region	County	Project Cost	TIGER Request	Match	Partners
I-70 West SSMARTT Operational Improvements	1,3	Eagle, Summit, Clear Creek	-\$10 M	-\$6 M	TBD -\$4 M	CMCA, I-70 Coalition
I-70 Simba Run (Vail) Underpass	3	Eagle	\$29 M	\$8 M	CDOT RAMP \$14.6 M CDOT Other \$0.2 M Local \$6 M	Town of Vail
I-25 Bus on Shoulder, US 36 to Downtown Denver (potential co-applicant)	1	Adams, Denver	-\$20 M	-\$13 M	TBD -\$7 M	RTD, US 36 Coalition

Upon Commission approval, the Department will prepare and submit applications for up to three (3) of the projects to the USDOT based on final assesment of project viability and competitiveness.

In addition, the Department may provide letters of support to the USDOT Secretary for priority projects submitted for a TIGER VII grant by other Colorado applicants.

Background

On April 2, 2015 the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the application process for the TIGER VII discretionary grant program. TIGER VII is very similar to previous TIGER grant rounds. Under TIGER VII \$500 million is available for project awards – a decrease of \$100 million from the 2014 TIGER VI round. No less



than \$120 million may be awarded to projects in rural areas. In urban areas grant requests must be at least \$10 million, while projects in rural areas have a \$1 million minimum grant size.

Over the past several months, the Department analyzed previous TIGER rounds, received a debrief on CDOT projects from USDOT, and began identifying and vetting potential projects for the TIGER VII program.

Internal Vetting Process

Due to the analysis of previous rounds of TIGER, the Office of Policy & Government Relations expanded their solicitation of potential projects, working with CDOT Regions, TSM&O, HPTE, DTD and DTR, as well as external partners, such as RTD to identify potential projects. The following timeline details the quick work that will be necessary to complete project applications.

- February 24-March 24, 2015 – Internal vetting and evaluation of potential projects
- March 27, 2015 – Presentation of projects to the STAC
- April 2, 2015 – USDOT publishes Notice of Funding Availability for TIGER VII
- April 16, 2015 – Presentation and approval of projects by the Transportation Commission
- May 4, 2015 – Pre-applications due
- June 5, 2015 – Final applications due

Evaluation Factors

Based on prior TIGER grant rounds, and in analyzing prior successful and unsuccessful applications, the Department weighed a variety of factors in considering which projects to recommend to the Commission, including:

- Request Size: Funding needed from TIGER should be \$15 million or less
- Percent of Project to be Completed with TIGER Funds: While only a 20% match is required, the most competitive applications provide matches in excess of 20%
- Project Type: Of the 72 projects awarded funds in the 2014 TIGER VI round, 53 (74%) were primarily bicycle/pedestrian/complete streets projects (21), transit projects (19), or freight projects (13). Traditional roadway and freeway widening projects tend to be less competitive

Other Projects Considered

The Department looked to several sources for candidate TIGER applications including 2014 TIGER VI applications, RAMP projects, Bridge projects, SB 228 projects, and locally advocated projects. Many notable CDOT projects were considered as possible TIGER VII applications. The following list includes some of the projects that were considered. These are valuable projects for the state, but are not expected to compete in the TIGER VII pool as strongly as the projects recommended to the Commission.

- I-70 Peak Period Shoulder Lanes (RAMP Shortfall)
- State Highway 50 Multimodal Connector
- C-470 Tolled Express Lanes
- State Highway 96 Bridge Replacement (east of Boone)
- I-25/State Highway 34 Interchange Reconfiguration (Add Kendall Pkwy transit slip ramps)



- I-25/State Highway 7 Diverging Diamond Interchange and transit facilities
- State Highway 9 Frisco to Breckenridge (Iron Springs Alignment and Vail Pass Multi-Use Path)
- US 287 Connifer to Laporte Bypass
- Vail Sediment Control Action Plan Implementation

Details on the Recommended Projects

I-25 Bus on Shoulder, US 36 to Downtown Denver

This project would modify I-25 from US 36 to Downtown Denver to allow bus on shoulder operations. This operation would supplement the US 36 BRT program by providing transit service reliability in the non-peak hour direction of travel on I-25.

Bus on shoulder operation is a low-cost treatment that can provide immediate benefits to transit whenever mainline travel is experiencing moderate to heavy degrees of congestion. Bus on shoulder operation allows authorized transit buses with trained drivers to operate on the highway shoulders in order to bypass congestion and maintain transit schedules.

Buses can only use shoulders when travel speeds are below 35 MPH in the main lanes, and buses can only travel up to 15 MPH faster than other vehicles. In addition, bus on shoulder operation is a subservient use of the shoulder: the use of the shoulder as a breakdown lane for emergency operations continues as today, and buses must yield to everything in the shoulder.

Bus on shoulder operations were first implemented in Minnesota around 20 years ago, with nearly 300 shoulder-miles in use today. More than 10 states now use bus on shoulder, and no state has discontinued an operating bus on shoulder program for operational or safety reasons once commenced.

Minnesota has identified a number of benefits with bus on shoulder operation, including:

- Shorter and more predictable and reliable transit times
- Fewer missed transfer connections
- Increased transit ridership
- Reduced driver overtime
- Decreased operational costs

I-70 West Corridor SSMARTT Improvements

SSMARTT refers to corridor improvements that focus on **Security, Safety, Mobility, and Reliability** using **Technological Tools**. This project will make improvements through a comprehensive plan to manage all aspects of the corridor through integrated operational strategies. The project has four emphasis areas: 1) Improve commercial and freight vehicle operations and safety; 2) Improve Emergency Management capabilities; 3) Improve the capability of the Corridor Traffic Management Center and field staff to effectively manage traffic and incidents; and 4) Provide for integrated corridor-wide Active Traffic Management (ATM) capability, which will greatly improve commercial



vehicle safety and operations and maximize traffic flow leading up to the peak period should lane.

Some specific components of the project may include:

- Automated chain station parking management, lighting, and improved capacity
- Implementation of roadway friction sensors
- Improved chain law and driver education
- In pavement LED lights for improved lane visibility
- 100% communication interoperability with Digital Trunked Radio (DTR) of all jurisdictions
- Video analytics for incident detection
- Enhanced mobile application with voice alerts
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) integration of all jurisdictions
- Enhanced Traffic Incident Management Training
- Expanded camera coverage
- Predictive weather analytics development and integration into Traffic Management Systems for improved winter maintenance and operations
- Variable speed limits (VSL) implementation
- Active Traffic Management (ATM) with Dynamic Lane Control near known crash hot spots
- US 6 on ramp acceleration lane and ramp meter improvements
- Expanded metering and improved adaptive metering systems

I-70 Simba Run (Vail) Underpass

This project is located along the I-70 corridor between West Vail and Main Vail and will connect the north and south I-70 frontage roads by means of a new underpass for vehicles, transit and pedestrians. The underpass project includes two new structures on I-70 (one each direction), lowers the frontage roads approximately 12 to 15 feet to allow a new connection under the interstate with roundabouts at each frontage road intersection.

The project will decrease congestion at the west and main Vail I-70 interchanges and reduce backups that regularly occur on the mainline of I-70. It will provide a safe pedestrian crossing and provide an alternate route for local transit, decreasing transit travel times.

Attachments

CDOT Policy Brief on TIGER VII: The attached Policy Brief summarizes key evaluation criteria, timelines, and requirements provided in the TIGER VII Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). This Policy Brief was provided to the STAC, planning partners, and local government partners.





COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Office of Policy and Government Relations

April 3, 2015

Summary

On April 2, 2015, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the start of a seventh round of “Transportation Infrastructure Generating Economic Recovery” (TIGER) discretionary grants, also referred to as “National Infrastructure Investment” grants. This grant round will be substantially similar to recent grant rounds, with minor changes in evaluation criteria and a lengthier application timeframe. One significant change from 2014 is that there will not be a planning project category. This policy brief summarizes the key components and requirements of the TIGER VII grant round.

TIGER VII Overview

Timeline/Deadlines. Pre-applications are required and must be submitted by May 4, 2015. Final Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. Submissions may be made beginning May 5, 2015 and received no later than June 5, 2015, at 9:59 p.m. MST.

Available Funding/Award Ranges. Under TIGER VII \$500 million is available for project awards - a decrease of \$100 million from the 2014 TIGER VI round. Of this amount, a small percentage will be retained by the USDOT for administration of the program. No state may receive more than \$125 million in total grants. No less than \$100 million may be awarded to projects in rural areas. Grants must be in the \$10 million to \$200 million range. For projects in rural areas, the minimum grant size is \$1 million.

Applications Cap. At maximum, an eligible applicant may submit up to three applications. Bundling or combining applications to evade the application cap is not permitted. The applications cap does not apply to organizations that are partnered with a lead applicant.

Match Requirements. The match requirement remains the same as in previous grant rounds - a minimum 20 percent state/local match minimum. Priority is given to projects in which TIGER dollars fill the final piece of an overall project financing package. It is important to note that in the previous five TIGER grant rounds, on average, for every one TIGER grant dollar awarded, three and one-half dollars were provided as state/local match from the applicant.

Eligible Applicants/Eligible Projects. The following entities are eligible to apply for an award: state governments; local governments; tribal governments; transit agencies; metropolitan planning organizations; state and local government political subdivisions; and multi-state coalitions or groups. Eligible projects are identical to that of all previous TIGER grant rounds. Specific to Colorado’s transportation network, this includes: highway or bridge projects (eligible under title 23 of the U.S. Code and including bicycle and pedestrian related projects); public transportation projects (eligible under chapter 53 of title 49 of the U.S. Code); passenger and freight rail projects; port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure); and intermodal projects. As in prior grant rounds, research, demonstration, or pilot projects that do not result in publicly accessible surface transportation infrastructure are not eligible.

Evaluation Criteria

USDOT has two levels of selection criteria: (1) primary selection criteria (which will receive more weight during evaluations); and (2) secondary selection criteria. Demonstrated project readiness is also a key component of any application’s evaluation. Successful TIGER projects leverage resources, encourage



partnership, catalyze investment and growth, fill a critical void in the transportation system or provide a substantial benefit to the nation, region, or metropolitan area in which the project is located.

Primary Selection Criteria. USDOT will give priority to projects that have a significant impact on desirable long-term outcomes for the U.S., a metropolitan area, or a region. Applications that do not demonstrate a likelihood of significant long-term benefits will not be successful. The following types of long-term outcomes are given priority:

State of Good Repair - improving the condition of existing transportation facilities and systems, with particular emphasis on projects that minimize life-cycle costs and improve resiliency.

Economic Competitiveness - contributing to the economic competitiveness of the U.S. over the medium- to long-term.

Quality of Life - increasing transportation choices and access to transportation services to persons in communities across the U.S.

Environmental Sustainability - improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and benefiting the environment.

Safety - improving the safety of U.S. transportation facilities and systems, and the demonstration of quantitative data in support.

Secondary Selection Criteria. Secondary consideration will be given for: (1) innovation; and (2) partnership. For innovation, USDOT will give priority to projects using innovative strategies to pursue the long-term outcomes outlined above.

Other Considerations

Demonstrated Project Readiness. Projects must be able to demonstrate that funds will be obligated by September 30, 2017. USDOT will evaluate each application to determine whether a project is likely to meet this deadline, by examining technical feasibility, financial feasibility, project schedule, and assessing project risks and mitigation strategies.

Priority for Long-term Job Growth for the Middle Class. Additional weight will be given to projects that contain benefits to strengthen opportunities to expand the middle class and stimulate long-term job growth, particularly in economically distressed areas.

Project Readiness/Longer Range Projects. In the previous TIGER rounds, immediate spending ability was critical. In TIGER VII applications that require slightly longer schedules are encouraged, stating that projects must be able to obligate funds by September 30, 2017 and expend such funds by September 30, 2022.

Co-applicants. Applications that identify co-applicants or project partners must be signed by not only the lead applicants, but also each co-applicant and/or partner organizations.

For detailed information, the TIGER VII notice of funding availability (NOFA) is available online at <http://www.dot.gov/tiger>. For more information or questions, please contact Ron Papsdorf, CDOT Office of Policy & Government Relations, at (303) 757-9105 or ron.papsdorf@state.co.us. This and other Policy Briefs are available on the CDOT Office of Policy & Government Relations website at: <http://coloradodot.info/about/governmentrelations/new-publications/policy-briefs>.



Resolution Number TC-

Instructing the Department to submit applications for projects under the USDOT TIGER VII Discretionary Grant program and support priority projects submitted by other Colorado applicants.

WHEREAS, on December 16th, the President signed the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 that includes a \$500 million authorization for National Infrastructure Investments, referred to by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) as TIGER Discretionary Grants; and

WHEREAS, a Notice of Funding Availability was issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) on April 2 for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant Program (also known as TIGER VII); and

WHEREAS, pre-applications for the TIGER VII discretionary grant program are due to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation on May 4, 2015 and final applications are due on June 5, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the USDOT's consideration of TIGER VII discretionary grant applications will be based on state of good repair, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental sustainability, and safety as primary selection criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) staff evaluated and analyzed potential projects for the Department to submit under the TIGER VII discretionary grant program; and

WHEREAS, the USDOT limits eligible applicants to three grant applications that may be submitted for consideration; and

WHEREAS, CDOT may co-sponsor other applications without those applications counting against the application limit imposed by USDOT; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Department is instructed to submit applications for the following projects under the USDOT TIGER VII Discretionary Grant program:

- Capital Project: I-25 Bus on Shoulder, US 36 to Downtown Denver (co-sponsor with RTD)
- Capital Project: I-70 West SSMARTT Corridor Improvements
- Capital Project: I-70 Simba Run (Vail) Underpass

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, should any of the above listed projects not be able to meet the financial, technical or other requirements for a competitive TIGER VII application, said project will not be submitted by the Department.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Department may provide letters of support for priority projects submitted for a TIGER VII grant by other Colorado applicants.

Herman Stockinger, Secretary
Transportation Commission of Colorado

Date