



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
 Division of Transit & Rail

2829 W. Howard Place
 Denver, CO 80204-2305

DATE: June 15, 2019
 TO: Transportation Commission
 FROM: David Krutsinger, Director - Division of Transit & Rail
 RE: Amtrak Southwest Chief - BUILD Grant Application Match Request - \$1 M

Purpose: Finish the job to replace the old track, and maintain Amtrak Southwest Chief service in Colorado.

Action: Request approval for \$1 Million in CDOT funds towards this grant, with nearly \$8 Million in matching funds from other entities.

Background

The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the USDOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Previously known as Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER discretionary grants, Congress has dedicated nearly \$7.1 billion for ten rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact. This BUILD grant opportunity will be the 11th such opportunity. Colorado has participated with Kansas, New Mexico, Amtrak, and BNSF Railway to proactively pursue grant funding opportunities to keep the Amtrak Southwest Chief Service in Colorado.

Details

BNSF and Amtrak identified in 2011, that to keep the Amtrak Southwest Chief train operating through rural western Kansas, southeastern Colorado, and Northern New Mexico, it would take \$100 Million in one-time capital and \$100 million in on-going maintenance costs. BNSF agreed to assume responsibility for the \$100 Million in on-going maintenance costs, and Amtrak to continue the service if one-time capital costs could be paid for. A relationship of over 35 city, town, county, state, federal, and private partners has been successful in obtaining \$75.3 Million toward that goal. This BUILD grant, if successful, would finish the job. If successful, CDOT will have expended \$4 Million, to receive a \$100 Million benefit, and a commitment that the train will operate for the next 20 years.

Grant Program	Year Offered	CDOT Match	Other Partner's Match	Federal Amount Granted	Total Project Size	Miles of Track	Number of Crossings	Year Completed
TIGER VI	2014	\$1 M	\$10.8 M	\$12.5 M	\$24.3 M	48	12	2016
TIGER VII	2015	\$1 M	\$8.2 M	\$15.2 M	\$24.4 M	61	13	2018
TIGER IX	2017	\$1 M	\$9.6 M	\$16.0 M	\$26.6 M	29	24	2020 est.
Total to Date		\$3 M	\$28.6 M	\$43.7	\$75.3	138	49	2016-2020
BUILD Grant Request	2019	\$1 M proposed	\$9 M proposed	\$15 M proposed	\$25 M	22	18	2022

Key Benefits

Improve the efficiency of freight & passenger rail service through southern / southeastern Colorado, and connecting to markets/destinations, in adjacent states of Kansas & New Mexico, and longer-distance connections to Los Angeles and Chicago. Improve the safety and efficiency of operations of rural Colorado roads crossing the railroad.

BNSF Railway is covering the costs for a consultant to assemble the application.

Next Steps

- Support the City of Trinidad with information
- Submit the application by July 15, 2019
- Await award announcements, expected Fall 2019

Resolution #TC-19-X-XX

Instructing the Department to submit applications for projects under the USDOT 2019 BUILD Discretionary Grant program and support priority projects submitted by other Colorado applicants.

Approved by the Transportation Commission on June 20, 2019.

WHEREAS, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 includes a \$900 million authorization for National Infrastructure Investments, referred to by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) as BUILD Discretionary Grants; and

WHEREAS, a Notice of Funding Availability was issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) on April 23 for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or “BUILD Transportation grants,” program for federal FY 2019; and

WHEREAS, applications for the BUILD Transportation grants program are due to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation on July 15, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the USDOT's consideration of BUILD Transportation 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 USDOT’s consideration of BUILD Transportation grant applications will also give special consideration to projects which emphasize improved access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for communities in rural areas;

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

WHEREAS, the BUILD Transportation grant application for the Amtrak Southwest Chief project will be led and submitted by the City of Trinidad;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, CDOT will submit its DOT-led applications for highway safety projects statewide, and also financially support this rural application by Trinidad;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commission commits to providing up to \$1 million of state match from available SB 267 funds for a local grant application to enhance the viability of the SW Chief Amtrak line in Colorado. The funds will be allocated to the project if the grant application is successful.

Herman Stockinger, Secretary
Transportation Commission of Colorado

Date