

# STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



**DATE:** January 3, 2014

**TO:** Transportation Commission/Transit & Intermodal Committee

**FROM:** Mark Imhoff, Director, Division of Transit & Rail

**SUBJECT:** 2015 FASTER Transit Project Recommendations

## Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to brief the Transit & Intermodal Committee on the FY 2015 FASTER Transit project recommendations, and to present the proposed guidelines for the development of a FASTER Transit funds redistribution for FY 2016 and beyond.

## Action Requested

No action is requested in January; the agenda item is for information only, and T&I input is sought. The FY 2015 FASTER Transit project recommendations will be brought to the Transportation Commission in February for approval.

## Executive Summary

The FY 2015 recommended projects for FASTER Local funds and FASTER Statewide funds are listed in the attachment following this memo; a table is also included for projects not recommended, with a brief reason. The FY 2015 project recommendations will come before the Transportation Commission in February for approval.

Staff is developing a recommendation for a redistribution process for allocating the FASTER Transit funds to begin in FY 2016, with emphasis on achieving the PD 14 performance objectives:

- Performance Goal, Infrastructure Condition; Transit Asset Condition.
- Performance Goal, System Performance; Transit Utilization and Transit Connectivity.

We have begun a process through the Transit & Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC), and including the Region Planners and CASTA, to devise a more effective project selection process. We seek Transit & Intermodal Committee input on the redistribution guiding principles:

- Transit Utilization - Fund the highest priority transit projects throughout the state.
- Transit Asset Condition – Utilizing the capital inventory of local bus fleets, identify a replacement schedule for all urban and rural transit vehicles (excluding RTD). Focus the FASTER Transit Local funds, in combination with the FTA capital programs, toward replacing local vehicles when needed. Over time the goal would be to replace all transit vehicles (subject to funding availability); this is thought to be an equitable distribution of FASTER Local transit funds.

- Transit Connectivity – The annual allocation of FASTER Statewide Transit funds to the Interregional Express bus program is a key element of the redistribution. In addition, encouragement to local entities to provide more regional services is sought, possibly through an annual allocation of Statewide Transit funds as operating assistance to local transit providers that operate regional service.
- Streamline the FASTER Transit distribution process if possible.

### Background

In the past, FASTER Local funds were distributed to the Regions by formula, and each Region selected the respective projects following an application process and working in conjunction with the local MPOs and TPRs. FASTER Statewide funds were distributed based upon a statewide competition, using an application and evaluation process. Both the FASTER Local and Statewide processes followed a two-year planning horizon. Therefore, during the FY 2014-15 cycle FY 2014 projects were finalized and FY 2015 projects were tentatively (preliminary) selected, pending updates, additions, withdrawals and formalization during the FY 2015 cycle. Local entities have used the FY 2015 preliminary program of projects as a planning guide for their capital programs. Therefore, significant deviation from the FY 2015 preliminary list would be problematic at the local level, and is not recommended. The Regions have agreed to honor the FY 2015 preliminary program of projects.

MAP-21 made a number of significant changes to transit funding. Under SAFETEA-LU the FTA Section 5309 program utilized “earmarks” for distributing bus and facility capital funds. Colorado, through the Colorado Transit Coalition, submitted one 5309 application for the state’s bus and facility needs, and did very well in the “earmark” system (\$8-13M/year in recent years). MAP-21 replaced this program with Section 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities, and now distributes funds to states on a formula basis. The MAP-21 Section 5339 program allocates Colorado \$2.1 Million to Colorado by formula for small urban and rural transit systems; the three large urbanized areas each receive their own formula funding, totaling \$2.7M. The resulting funding gap at the local level has caused a reassessment of the best utilization of FASTER Transit Local funds, and how best to ensure safe and reliable bus fleets. The PD 14 category, Transit Asset Condition, emphasizes this priority.

Regional transit connectivity is also a needed element in the statewide transit system/network. The development of the Statewide Transit Plan (on-going) is getting consistent feedback that more interregional and regional transit services are needed. The TBD Colorado effort of 2012 also received similar input around the state which led to a TBD recommendation: “The state should play an enhanced role in helping to catalyze and secure funding for transit projects, such as interregional bus service”. In addition, during the Interregional Express Bus plan development, the supporting local transit entities stressed the need for operating assistance for local entities that provide regional service; without such operating assistance the ability to provide needed regional service at the local level likely will be infeasible. The PD 14 category, Transit Connectivity, emphasizes this priority.

These considerations prompted the evaluation of the FASTER Transit program, and whether a redistribution of funds could help to better meet the PD 14 performance objectives. The

proposed guiding principles listed above have been developed, and are proposed to guide staff and the TRAC Sub-Committee in re-structuring the distribution of FASTER Transit funds beginning in FY 2016. .

### Details

The immediate need is to finalize the FY 2015 FASTER Transit projects; the recommended projects for both Local and Statewide are listed in the attachment at the end of this memo. The FY 2015 project recommendations honors the FY 2014-2015 two-year planning cycle, and incorporates the Regional distribution formulas from that time. A revised system will be developed over the course of the winter for use starting in FY 2016.

The FY 2015/16 call for “capital” projects was a combined call for both FASTER (Local and Statewide) and the FTA capital programs (Sections 5310, 5311 and 5339). Assessing and programming all capital requests in one batch is a more comprehensive approach to capital funding. In total, for FY 2015 \$18.78M in capital funding is available:

- \$5.0M – FASTER Local pool
- \$6.0 M – FASTER Statewide pool (note: Total Statewide pool is \$9.0M with \$3.0M allocated to Interregional Express Bus program.)
- \$1.38 M – FTA Section 5310
- \$4.3 M – FTA Section 5311
- \$2.1M - FTA Section 5339

For FY 2015 109 applications were received from 46 transit entities, totaling \$50.6M. The attached tables represent the FY 2015 FASTER project recommendations; FY 2016 was portrayed as a planning exercise to prepare for the revised FASTER distribution model. The FTA capital project awards have tentatively been assigned, and will be finalized and announced once funding becomes available through the federal FY 2014 cycle.

### Key Benefits

Beginning in 2016, achieve a better utilization of the FASTER Transit funds, alignment with the PD 14 performance objectives and coordination with the award of FTA capital funds.

### Next Steps

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission approve the FY 2015 FASTER Transit projects in February 2014.

A revised distribution program will be developed over the winter using the guiding principles listed above (updated to include T&I Committee input as appropriate) for use in distributing FY 2016 FASTER Transit funds. Recommendations will be brought to the Transportation Commission for approval by July 2014

**Table A: Projects Recommended for FY15 FASTER Transit Statewide Funding, 1/3/2014**

Applicant (agency rank if more than one application)	Project	FY15 request	FY15 Preliminary Awards (a)	FY 15 Additional Awards (b)	FY15 recommended award
NFRMPO (c*)	Vanpool replacement vehicles (36)	\$64,000	\$64,000		\$64,000
RTD 2	Thornton Park-n-Ride Expansion	\$997,404	\$997,404		\$997,404
Mountain Metro 2	Vanpool Vehicle Replacements (9)	\$216,000	\$216,000		\$216,000
DTR	Service Development Plan for North Front Range Commuter Rail	\$95,100	\$95,100		\$95,100
Superior/Louisville	DDI Transit Improvements	\$463,610	\$463,610		\$463,610
Aspen 1	Rubey Park Transit Center Redevelopment	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000
Thornton	SH 7 at I-25 Carpool Lot	\$521,988	\$521,988		\$521,988
City of Greeley	Greeley Evans Transit Regional Transfer Facility (d)	\$1,509,920	\$0	\$1,176,035	\$1,176,035
RTD 6	Church Ranch P-n-R Boarding Platforms Relocation	\$2,604,781	\$0	\$1,031,978	\$1,265,863
City of Fort Collins	Preventative Maintenance for FLEX	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000
	Totals	\$4,314,701	\$3,358,102	\$2,408,013	\$6,000,000
<b>NOTES:</b>					
(a): FY15 Preliminary Awards were made in February 2013					
(b): FY 15 Additional Awards are recommended based on consolidated call for capital projects issued 10/18/13 and utilizing funds not committed in February 2013					
(c*): Denotes funds that will be used to match federal grant funds					
(d): Remainder of City of Greeley project funded from FASTER Local (Table B)					

**Table B: Projects Recommended for FY15 FASTER Transit Local Funding, 1/3/2014**

Applicant (agency rank)	Project	FY15 request	FY15 preliminary award (a)	FY15 Additional Awards (b)	FY 15 Recommended Awards
<b>Region 1: \$2,535,750 available</b>					
Breckenridge 2	Replacement buses (2)	\$637,500	\$450,000	\$0	\$450,000
Douglas County	Replacement Vehicles to be Leased to private operator (4)	\$0 (c*)	\$48,000	\$0	\$48,000
Seniors' Resource Center 2 (d)	Replacement Vehicles (4)	\$24,720	\$24,000	\$0	\$24,000
Summit County 2	Bicycle Racks	\$0 (c*)	\$13,405	\$0	\$13,405
Arvada 2	Olde Town Arvada Bus Transfer Facility phase 2	\$1,338,521	\$1,338,521	\$0	\$1,338,521
RTD 1	Civic Center Station Phase II	\$594,879	\$594,879	\$0	\$594,879
Seniors' Resource Center 1 (d)	Vehicle Replacements - SRC Urban and A-Lift (8)	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$0	\$48,000
		\$2,643,620	\$2,516,805	\$0	\$2,516,805
<b>Region 2 \$765,500 available</b>					
Mountain Metro 4	Fixed Routed Vehicle Replacment (4)	\$1,216,000	\$765,000	\$0	\$765,000
		\$1,216,000	\$765,000	\$0	\$765,000
<b>Region 3 \$608,250 available</b>					
Allpoints 1 (d)	Replacement Buses (7)	\$46,883	\$46,883	\$0	\$46,883
Crested Butte 3	Replacement 38 foot bus #28	\$132,000	\$132,000	\$0	\$132,000
Eagle County	Cutaway Replacement (3)	\$0 (c*)	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Mesa County 1 (d)	Grand Valley Transit bus replacement (7)	\$521,737	\$239,367	\$0	\$239,367
Snowmass 2	Light-Duty Medium-Sized Cutaway Vans (4)	\$100,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
Town of Avon	Bus Replacements (3)	\$656,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000
		\$1,456,620	\$608,250	\$0	\$608,250
<b>Region 4 \$830,050 available</b>					
Boulder 2	Boulder Transit Stop Enhancements	\$54,800	\$54,800	\$0	\$54,800
Fort Collins 2	Implementation of Network Management System	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$0	\$120,000
Greeley 3 (d)	Fixed Route Service Vehicle Replacements (3)	\$179,478	\$179,478	\$0	\$179,478
Greeley 4 (d)	Paratransit/Demand Response Vehicle Replacements (4)	\$47,099	\$47,099	\$0	\$47,099
NECALG	Vehicle Replacement	\$94,788	0	\$94,788	\$94,788
City of Greeley	Greeley Evans Transit Regional Transfer Facility (e)	\$1,509,920	0	\$333,885	\$333,885
		\$2,006,085	\$401,377	\$428,673	\$830,050
<b>Region 5 \$260,450 available</b>					
Durango 2	Type I vehicle replacement	\$0 (c*)	64,000	0	64,000
SUCAP 1 (d)	Road Runner Transit Fixed Route Bus Repl. (3)	\$11,200	11,200	0	11,200
Town of Mountain Village 1	Gondola - Main Drives and Motors End-of-Service-Life Replacement	\$466,000	176,741	0	176,741
		\$477,200	\$251,941	\$0	\$251,941
<b>NOTES:</b>					
(a): FY15 Preliminary Awards were made in February 2013					
(b): FY 15 Additional Awards are recommended based on consolidated call for capital projects issued 10/18/13 and utilizing funds not committed in February 2013					
(c*): Requests shown as \$0 were requested for 2014 but deferred to FY15 due to lack of available funding in FY14					
(d): Denotes funds that will be used to match federal grant funds					
(e): Remainder of City of Greeley project funded from FASTER Statewide (Table A)					

**Table C: Key Factors in the Evaluation of Proposed Projects Not Recommended for Full FY15 FASTER Statewide Transit Funding**

Applicant	Project	FY15 request	FY15 Recommended Award	Key Factors
RTD 6	Church Ranch P-n-R Boarding Platforms Relocation	\$2,604,781	\$1,031,978	Partial award - large request relative to amount of funding available; consider additional funding if any other funds are returned
Blackhills Stage Lines	Vehicle Replacement (1)	\$448,800	\$0	Route might be profitable enough for private funding; will be considered for FTA funding; DTR would have to sponsor, as FASTER cannot be awarded to a for-profit entity
Burlington Trailways	Vehicle Replacement (1)	\$497,970	\$0	Route might be profitable enough for private funding; DTR would have to sponsor and lease bus, as FASTER cannot be awarded to a for-profit entity; will be considered for FTA funding
Colorado State University	University Station MAX/BRT Bike Shelter and Wayfinding	\$115,709	\$0	Considered a lower priority overall, especially as an expansion; unsure of impact on transit ridership; unsure of how many bike securements used by transit riders as opposed to general student population
Vride	Public/Private Vanpool Partnership	\$289,075	\$0	No local match proposed; DTR essentially asked to sponsor the project but is not prepared to do so; needs further review; expansion project