RFTA Planning Department Monthly Update
February 8, 2018

RFTA Vision Statement
RFTA pursues excellence and innovation in providing preferred transportation choices that connect and support vibrant communities.

RFTA Planning Department Vision Statement
We will work creatively, cooperatively and comprehensively with our partners in the public, private and nonprofit sectors and other groups to create healthy and vibrant communities.

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Colorado Communities Symposium

Colorado is leading the way on State-led initiatives tackling big issues from environmental protection to clean energy across all sectors. According to an Executive Order set forth by Governor John Hickenlooper on July 11, 2017, "the vast majority of our residents, and indeed the country, expect us to help lead the way toward a clean and affordable energy future. In this process, we no doubt can address climate change while keeping a priority on household budgets."

This EO kickstarted many conversations and actions at the state and national level. After returning as an invited participant at the the Paris Climate Accord in December 2015, Aspen Mayor Steve Skadron was disillusioned that the United States backed out of the international climate pact. Returing home to the valley, Mayor Skadron turned to direct action by conducting a meeting of the minds in Aspen. At a City of Aspen statewide climate summit on May 23, 2017, elected officials and senior staff representing 27 local Colorado governments pledged to initiate a network called the *Compact for Colorado Communities*; a powerful tool for creating uniform climate change education, action, and policy statewide. The Colorado Compact is a chapter of the national Association of Climate Change Officers (ACCO). The early adopters were determined to by lead by example; especially in rural mountain communities where there are fewer urban resources and smaller budgets. The compact has now grown to 33 Colorado signatories and there is a lot of momentum for additional towns/counties to sign on.

On Jan. 31st, 2018 Governor Hickenlooper galvanized the State movement by announcing a revised Colorado Climate Plan. This rollout also kicked off the first ever conference for the *Compact for Colorado Communities,* which was organized and conducted by the ACCO in Aurora. With an overwhelming 450 attendees from every corner of the State, the conference was charged with excitement and a desire to really roll up the sleeves to communicate, collaborate and connect the existing dots of social and environmental capital in rural and urban areas. Attendees from a wide range of perspectives included resiliency planning, clean transportation, agriculture and forestry, energy efficiency/clean energy and economic vitatlity. Speakers included Governor John Hickenlooper, U.S. Senator Michael Bennett and CDOT Executive Director John Lewis.

The Roaring Fork Valley had quite the contingency at the conference including RFTA, CORE, CLEER, Garfield Clean Energy and several RFTA member jurisdictions. Highlights included: an award of excellence for Garfield Clean Energy (GCE), accepted by Garfield County Commissioner Tom Jankowsky and RFTA Planner Jason White, and a lot of great brainstorming and visioning around cleaner transportation and transit across the State.

Governor John Hickenlooper delivers a keynote address at the *Colorado Communities Symposium* on Feb. 1, 2018 in Aurora, CO.

Potential 2018 Statewide Ballot Question

Herman Stockinger, Director of CDOT's Office of Policy and Governmental Relations reported to the CDOT Transportation Commission in January that CDOT intends to adopt a draft list of projects, including a strategy for statewide programs, in anticipation of new funding sources.

Transportation advocates conducted polling in December, and have stated their continued intent to file a ballot question with the Secretary of State in late January, 2018. Additionally, it was discovered that the new federal tax law, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) will likely create an uptick in state revenue, as much as $300 million per year.

On January 2, Governor Hickenlooper submitted an update to his budget request that laid out a plan to provide the State Highway Fund (SHF) with $148.2 million in upcoming FY '18-'19 (beginning July 1, 2018) for "high-priority state transportation projects." Moreover, he has proposed that a portion of the new state revenue (approximately $130 million per year) be provided to the State Highway Fund on an ongoing basis. If successful, the available revenue from the General Fund for transportation may allow transportation advocates to pursue a smaller tax question in November.

A variety of transportation advocates are considering ballot questions for transportation in 2018, including a group led by the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. Because high priority state projects are expected to be a cornerstone of the effort, CDOT has been asked to develop a list of projects that could be funded with a successful ballot question by the time they file with the Secretary of State. The level of funding potentially available for state transportation projects is similar to what we speculated in December (up to $360 million per year). However, the General Fund money, without an additional ballot question, would likely not be bonded

against and would be more of a “pay as you go” program, which doesn’t necessarily change the list of projects, but does change how the overall program would be staged and rolled out.

Both the TC and STAC agreed in December to create one list, effectively tying SB 267 funds and a ballot list together into a roughly $6 billion list, but expressed concern about a permanent linkage. CDOT staff agrees with the concerns about tying the lists together through a November ballot vote, but based on now a potentially third source of revenue (additional state General Fund dollars) and a fourth source via a potential federal transportation funding package, Stockinger believes it is important for CDOT to send a message that CDOT has a list of critical transportation improvements to move Colorado forward. In fact, FHWA recently used the ballot list as example project when asked whether Colorado would be ready to act if a federal transportation package was approved. Continuing to have this one large list of needs also allows flexibility to select projects from the list as appropriate. Adopting a draft list should also help provide legislators and other transportation advocates confidence that it is unnecessary for them to choose projects themselves.

Details & Decision Points

Creation of Statewide Strategic Programs

- Both STAC and the TC supported development of statewide programs to supplement the specific project lists, and discussed many possibilities for programs, with a general agreement that $500 million may be the right range to cover those programs. Programs considered include:
- ADA Sidewalk Improvements (curb ramps)
- Technology & Innovation (RoadX)
- Technology & Fiber
- Safety Shoulder (shoulder construction)
- Passing Lanes
- Rest Area Restoration
- Wildlife Crash Mitigation (wildlife crossing)
- Freight Improvements (small freight projects & truck parking)
- Pavement Preservation (surface treatment)
- Rockfall Mitigation
- Bike and Pedestrian Improvements

Over the last several weeks since the December special TC meeting, staff has researched and discussed the statewide program concept and made several observations which ultimately impacted the staff recommendation for this month.

Don't Spread the Money too Thin

Staff considered what it would take to fund the statewide programs in a robust way, and determined that if the programs are to have a significant impact, there should be fewer programs. For example, staff discovered that construction of new shoulders where no shoulders exist costs about $1 million per mile of new shoulder, and Colorado has over 1,500 miles of highway with no shoulders, and more than 2,000 miles of inadequate shoulders. Additionally, laying one mile of new fiber is estimated to cost about $400,000. Too many statewide programs will either reduce critical projects from the specific project list or reduce the impact we can make on critical needs.

Specific is Better

Programs that already have specific projects on the "ballot list" associated with them (freight corridors and passing lanes) probably don't need a statewide program as well. In some cases, Regions were finding they were reducing or dropping specific large freight or passing lanes projects in favor of a generic program to support freight and passing lanes projects.

Staff Recommendation: Remove large freight corridor projects and passing lanes projects as categories in the statewide programs fund.

Asset Management Categories

Several programs proposed for the statewide program category (rockfall and surface treatment) are existing asset categories with specific budget line items. The hope/expectation is to have a flexible pot of money (including the additional revenue projected as tax revenue grows over time) to enable us to help sustain our existing system. That can include the rockfall and surface treatment categories.

Staff Recommendation: Remove rockfall and surface treatment as categories in the statewide programs fund. If it becomes clear no money would be made available to sustain the existing system, staff would recommend revisiting this decision.

Each Region has Different Needs

By specifying a dollar amount for every statewide program category, region and local partner project selection flexibility is lost. With limited dollars in programs such as the Regional Priority Program (RPP), it would be beneficial for each Region to work with their planning partners to determine how best to utilize funds for smaller projects in their area.

Staff Recommendation: Combine Safety Shoulders, Rest Area Restoration, Small Freight and Truck Parking and Wildlife Crash Mitigation into a single statewide program and allow each region the flexibility to work with their planning partners to select small projects in any of those categories based on regional need. Additionally, provide Region 1 additional specific project funds rather than funding in this small project category. This does not eliminate the possibility

that some of R1's project funds may be spent on the statewide categories listed above, but funding for those would come from adjustments to their existing project list.

Embrace Specific Statewide Programs That Are Truly Statewide

Fiber & Technology and the existing but underfunded ADA Pedestrian Sidewalks commitment (curb ramps) are examples of statewide need that is best coordinated and executed at the statewide level. The ADA Sidewalk Improvement program has an unfunded commitment of $61 million, and Fiber, Technology and RoadX-type innovation can make use of a significant amount of money to improve mobility statewide. Fiber also has the added benefit of being able to make use of public-private and public-public partnerships to stretch the funding a bit further.

Staff Recommendation: Fund Fiber & Technology and ADA Sidewalk Improvement Programas individual statewide programs.

Bike/Pedestrian Project Should Be Covered

It appears a multi-modal project category that includes a variety of items such as transit improvements will have a bike/pedestrian component.

Staff Recommendation: Remove this category from statewide programs. Should we determine there is no other source of funds for these projects, staff would recommend revisiting this decision.

Summary of Categories for $6 Billion List					
	Base Projects $5.5b via RPP	Additional R1 large projects instead of Statewide program funds	Fiber & Technology	ADA Sidewalk Improvement Program	Safety Shoulders, Rest Area Restoration, Small Freight Projects & Truck Parking, Wildlife Crash Mitigation
R1	$1,960,923,000	$120,700,000	TBD	TBD	
R2	$1,094,643,000		TBD	TBD	$67,660,000
R3	$786,149,000		TBD	TBD	$48,620,000
R4	$1,274,640,000		TBD	TBD	$78,880,000
R5	$390,591,000		TBD	TBD	$24,140,000
Total	**$5,506,946,000**	**$120,700,000**	**$100,000,000**	**$61,000,000**	**$219,300,000**

Review of Project Lists

The current list of priority projects can be found here , totaling about $5.6 billion, divided roughly by the RPP formula. If the Transportation Commission approves this draft list, staff will continue to refine project scopes and begin creating fact sheets for the projects which will quantify the need and benefits of each project. Highlighted in red are the projects that were reduced or adjusted in some way since December.

Transit (now Multi-Modal Mobility Funds)

Ballot advocates continue to discuss transit programs. There was widespread support in failed HB 17-1242 for a "multi-modal mobility" program that would include a wide variety of alternative modes/strategies, including fixed route and on-demand transit needs (both capital and operating), bicycle and pedestrian programs, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and innovative forms of multi-modal mobility and other multi-modal options. It is currently proposed that all funds come with a significant local/state match. Current conversations center on how to divide these multi-modal mobility funds, and three categories are rising to the top:

Bond for large projects: This would be no more than a third of the multi-modal funds, and would bond for large transit and bicycle/pedestrian needs around the state. CDOT would likely be tasked with working with planning partners to determine the projects, and they would eventually be listed on the ballot. Because of the match requirement, CDOT would need to work with local partners to determine their interest/willingness to provide a match before a project is added to the project list. Project examples could include Colfax BRT, SH 119 and SH 7 BRT, Colorado Springs downtown transit center, Glenwood Springs maintenance facility (RFTA), large commuter bike path projects, etc.

Local decision-making: At least half of the funds would be divided around the state by some to-bedetermined formula, with major metropolitan areas (like DRCOG) receiving pass-through funds from CDOT to select projects, and more rural areas (Transportation Planning Regions) helping to decide local funding through a process set up by CDOT (likely to mirror an existing selection process, such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) process.

State-wide priorities: About 10% of the funds would go to CDOT to prioritize statewide needs, such as Bustang, Bustang Outrider, statewide transportation studies, and park and ride construction.

CDOT's Division of Transit and Rail (DTR), as well as the bicycle/pedestrian arm of the Division of Transportation Development (DTD) have been considering potential projects for the bonded portion of the multi-modal mobility funds. CDOTanticipates presenting a list for adoption by the Transportation Commission in 2018.

The Front Range boom is leading to choked highways and a desire to find additional Statewide funding for transportation and multimodal projects.

Senate Bill 267 Transit Funds

Background

SB 267 "Concerning the Sustainability of Rural Colorado" authorizes the execution of lease-purchase agreements on state facilities totaling $2 billion, to be issued in equal amounts over four years, beginning in State Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19. CDOT will be the steward of $1.88 billion of those proceeds, of which 10% must go to transit ($188 million) and a minimum of 25% to counties with a population of less than 50,000 as of July 2015 ($470 million all projects, $47 million of that to transit projects in counties under 50,000 population).

For transit projects funding, the Division of Transit & Rail (DTR) has outlined the following principles for discussion.

1. Largely follow the highway project selection criteria: readiness, strategic, supported, achieves statewide and regional plan goal areas, leverages other funds where possible, and supports a statewide transportation system.
2. Due to timing requirements, use a current recommended projects list based on established project priorities for SB 267 Year 1 and Year 2 funds. This would entail up to approximately $45 M of the $88 M available for Years 1 and 2 transit projects.
3. Based on transparency and fairness expectations, complete a longer-term process (3-6 months) to refine the Transit Development Program, both the overall list and a Tier 1 list. This would be the basis for selecting projects for the remaining $143 M in SB 267 funds.

Slection Criteria

Transit projects, as part of the Development Program effort, have been included in discussions with the STAC dating back to 2015. The most recent full Development Program posting from March 2017 included 89 candidate transit projects from around the state, totaling $483 Million, or just under half a billion in candidate projects. At the time this list was created, CDOT received feedback that urban area (MPO) projects were not fully represented.

Until the passage of SB 267 in May 2017, funding for transit projects had been limited to on-going FASTER funds, and a smaller infusion of funds from two years of SB 228. These prior funds were allocated through regular call-for- project processes (FASTER), and through direct prioritization discussions with STAC, TRAC, and the Transportation Commission (SB 228 funds). With 267's passage, the funding stream is significant enough such that transit project selection needs to be elevated to the same level of process as for highway projects. Section processes may include:

1. Largely Follow Highway Selection Criteria

Transit projects can largely use the same criteria as highway projects with several nuances noted below:

Project Readiness – Ready to proceed to construction by end of the state fiscal year for which funds are available (June 30, 2020, for the first two years of SB 267 funding).
Strategic Nature – Project is of regional or statewide significance or is part of a statewide programmatic need (e.g., state of good repair). Some strategic projects may not be CDOT-owned and are instead best delivered, operated, and maintained at the local level. Examples include maintenance facilities, bus stations, transfer centers, and some locally-owned transit-served park-and-rides. While intercity/inter-regional bus service needs can be served by such local facilities, they are likely only a small part of its overall functionality.
Stakeholder Support – Identified as high priority by Region or TPR(s) or identified as a high priority in a Regional Transportation Plan
Statewide Transit Plan Goal Areas – Supports statewide plan goal areas of system preservation and expansion, mobility/ accessibility, transit system development and partnerships, environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and safety.
Leveraging Other Funds – Leverages other funds, such as discretionary grants, local funds, or toll revenue.
Supports Statewide System – Supports a statewide transportation system, with consideration of transportation needs throughout the state.

DTR removed one of the criteria used for highway projects because it did not apply to transit projects: **Potential to Offset Repayment Impact** – Helps to offset potential repayment impacts to existing programs (i.e., tolling projects, asset management projects).

2. Current Recommended Projects

In November's Transportation Commission actions, a policy was emphasized for the Division of Transit & Rail to manage all transit revenues as a whole program. As such, multiple park-and-rides (served by transit), originally being developed and slated to be funded by SB 228 funds, were included in the TC action to be moved to the SB 267 program. The approved action supported the policy of utilizing annual, sustainable funds (FASTER) for operating purposes at a time when there are significant growth, aging/retirement of society, and minimum-wage pressures on local operations. FASTER funds, originally programmed for capital expenses, now moved to help on the operating side, are replenished by SB 228 and SB 267 funds. In addition, currently proposed highway project selections make other park-and-rides a higher priority investment item because of the cost savings (economies of scale) that can be realized from simultaneous construction of highways and park-and-rides together. The following is a resulting list of projects, consistent with the TC action, that are recommended for early prioritization for SB 267 transit funds, assuming they meet the stakeholder support and local match criteria above.

Project	Estimated Total CDOT Share Needed from SB 2671
Bus Capital Fund "Protection"	$20m
Idaho Springs Transit Center / Parking Structure	$2m
Monument (I-25 / SH 105) bus slip ramps	$8m
Longmont (SH 119 / I-25) park-and-ride	$2m
Castle Rock park-and-ride	$5m
Berthoud (SH 56 / I-25) park-and-ride	$5m
Harmony parkand-ride expansion	$3m

3. Use Transit Development Program for Future Project Selection

As noted above, the Transit Development Program inventory from March 2017 includes just under $0.5 Billion in projects. At the time this list was created, CDOT received feedback that urban area (MPO) projects were not fully represented. It is true that some attempt had been made to represent an equivalent "Tier 1 and Tier 2" level of transit projects. So completion of RTD FasTracks corridors, commuter/high-speed rail along I-25 from Fort Collins to Pueblo, and high speed transit/AGS technology along the I-70 Mountain corridor from Eagle County Regional Airport to DIA were not included. It is also true that some projects in urban areas were not included by virtue of those urban agencies receiving direct-recipient Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, rather than CDOT passthrough funds. These larger projects and urban partnership opportunities, if included, result in an unconstrained Transit Development Program list estimated to be in excess of $50 Billion.

CDOT, with consultant assistance, is in the process of reaching out directly to transit agencies throughout the state, including those in urban areas, to compile a more comprehensive Development Program. When this information is compiled and analyzed, expected in February or March, the updated list can then be brought back to STAC, TRAC, and Transportation

Commission's T&I Committee. From there, the evaluation process can proceed from the overall $50+ Billion being whittled down to select projects for the remaining SB267 program funds.

Next Steps

Time Frame	Task
February - March 2018	Return to STAC, TRAC, and Transportation Commission's T&I Committee with updated Transit Development Program Inventory and engage in discussion about SB267 evaluation process
April – June 2018	1. INFRA Decisions are likely to be known, and influence transit projects from the current recommended project list above. Make decisions about which projects move forward. 2. Authorize design and national environmental policy act (NEPA) work on other projects which may receive Year 1 or Year 2 SB 267 funds. 3. Short-list projects which may receive remaining Year 3 or Year 4 SB 267 funds. These projects would be subject to later approvals as those funds become available.

Next Steps for RFTA

RFTA has provided the list of ITSP projects to CDOT, and will work with CDOT to refine the list, based on emerging funding and selection criteria.

Neither SB267 nor the statewide ballot initiatives are likely to provide significant funding to the western slope, particularly for multimodal projects.