



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Office of Policy and Government Relations

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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>.

