

White Paper for NATA Board

Priority Projects/2018 Master Project List

12-14-17

Intent & Background:

NATA's mission drives the development and subsequent updates to its priority list of projects while advocating for member jurisdictions' local needs. We have accomplished this by 'actively advocating' for advancement of construction/service implementation for our regionally significant projects while providing letters of support for member jurisdictions' local projects.

NATA has typically updated its priority list of projects every 3-4 years, using '3 tiers' for project categorization. "Tier I" has represented our top priorities where NATA actively advocates for advancing these specific priority projects over multiple years with RTD, CDOT, DRCOG, private sector, and through federal grant programs, as applicable, etc. NATA provided letters of support for member projects and services on the Tier II and Tier III lists.

Recently, the NATA board has found this framework to be inflexible when new initiatives or funding opportunities were presented. To address this concern, NATA staff is proposing a new, more flexible framework for 2018.

NATA would still approve an updated 'Master List of Projects' annually in January, but with the assurance we can add new projects or elevate existing projects on the Master List anytime during the year to respond to timely funding opportunities. The key proposed changes include identifying the funding initiatives and the subsequent projects from our Priority Projects that best meet the eligibility requirements; goals and objectives of the initiative; and subsequently will score well against the criteria. This new approach allows NATA more flexibility to target specific high-quality regional projects that advance the mission of board.

Proposed New Framework for NATA's Master Project List:

At the January Annual Meeting NATA Board approves Work Plan to include:

- Approving a 'Master List of Projects' divided into three categories:
 1. Priority Projects – these are the regional projects that meet the mission of NATA to actively advocate for construction and/or service implementation.
 2. Endorsement Projects – these are locally sponsored projects NATA has pre-approved to provide letters of support by requesting NATA members and organizations. This helps maintain flexibility to respond to timely NATA member requests.
 3. Horizon Projects – these are projects still in a pre-construction phase (E.g., planning or NEPA). If a Horizon Project meets the *mission of NATA*, we would actively advocate for it; if it is local, then NATA could provide a letter of support upon request.
- Compile list of key funding mechanisms which could fund NATA projects; e.g. federal, state, DRCOG, local ballot measures, legislation, grant programs.
- Determine which NATA "Priority Projects" for the Board to focus on throughout the year.

- Selects projects from Priority Project and applicable Horizon Project lists for each initiative that will:
 1. Meet NATA's Mission;
 2. Meets an initiative's eligibility requirements, goals & objectives, as applicable; and
 3. Will score well against the initiative's criteria.
- End of 3Q18 -- Request for revisions to Master Project List
- End of 4Q18 -- Compile list of any known funding initiatives for upcoming year.

Amendments to NATA's Master Project List or Adding New Regional Funding Initiatives

Amendments to the Master Project List or adding a new regional funding initiative may occur on a quarterly basis or if there is an unanticipated need from a NATA board member, at the discretion of the Board Chair. Through the amendment process, projects can also be moved to another category.

Amendments must be submitted	NATA Board Action
Beginning of February	February Board Meeting
Beginning of May	May Board Meeting
Beginning of August	August Board Meeting

- Eligibility and Criteria for Amendment:
 - If proposed for Priority Project List, explain how it meets NATA's Mission.
 - Identify which current or new funding initiative member jurisdiction is applying for, and how it meets the eligibility requirements and criteria of the initiative.
 - Identify category (E.g., Priority, Endorsement, Horizon).

Recommendations & Questions for Discussion:

- For the Priority Projects List, recommend only projects that are within /start or end within the NATA boundary.
- For Endorsement and (local) Horizon Projects, recommend any project within a NATA-members jurisdiction (not confined to NATA boundary).