

Rail Enhancement Fund: Stakeholder Comments and Program Changes

May 19, 2015

CTB Rail Subcommittee



Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Legislative Directive

HB 1887

“That the Commonwealth Transportation Board shall develop no later than December 1, 2015, a legislative proposal to revise the public benefit requirements of the Rail Enhancement Fund...”



Legislative Directive

Current REF Code (Effective July 1, 2012)

- “acquiring, leasing, or improving railways or railroad equipment, rolling stock, rights-of-way, or facilities...”
- “Funds...may also be used as matching funds for federal grants to support passenger or freight rail projects.”
- “Projects...shall be limited to those the Board has determined will result in public benefits...that are equal to or greater than the investment of funds under this section. Such public benefits shall include the impact of the project on traffic congestion and environmental quality and, whenever possible, give due consideration to passenger rail capacity on corridors identified by the Board that have existing or proposed passenger rail service.”
- “Such projects shall include a minimum of 30 percent cash or in-kind matching contribution from a private source.”



Summary of Stakeholder Comments

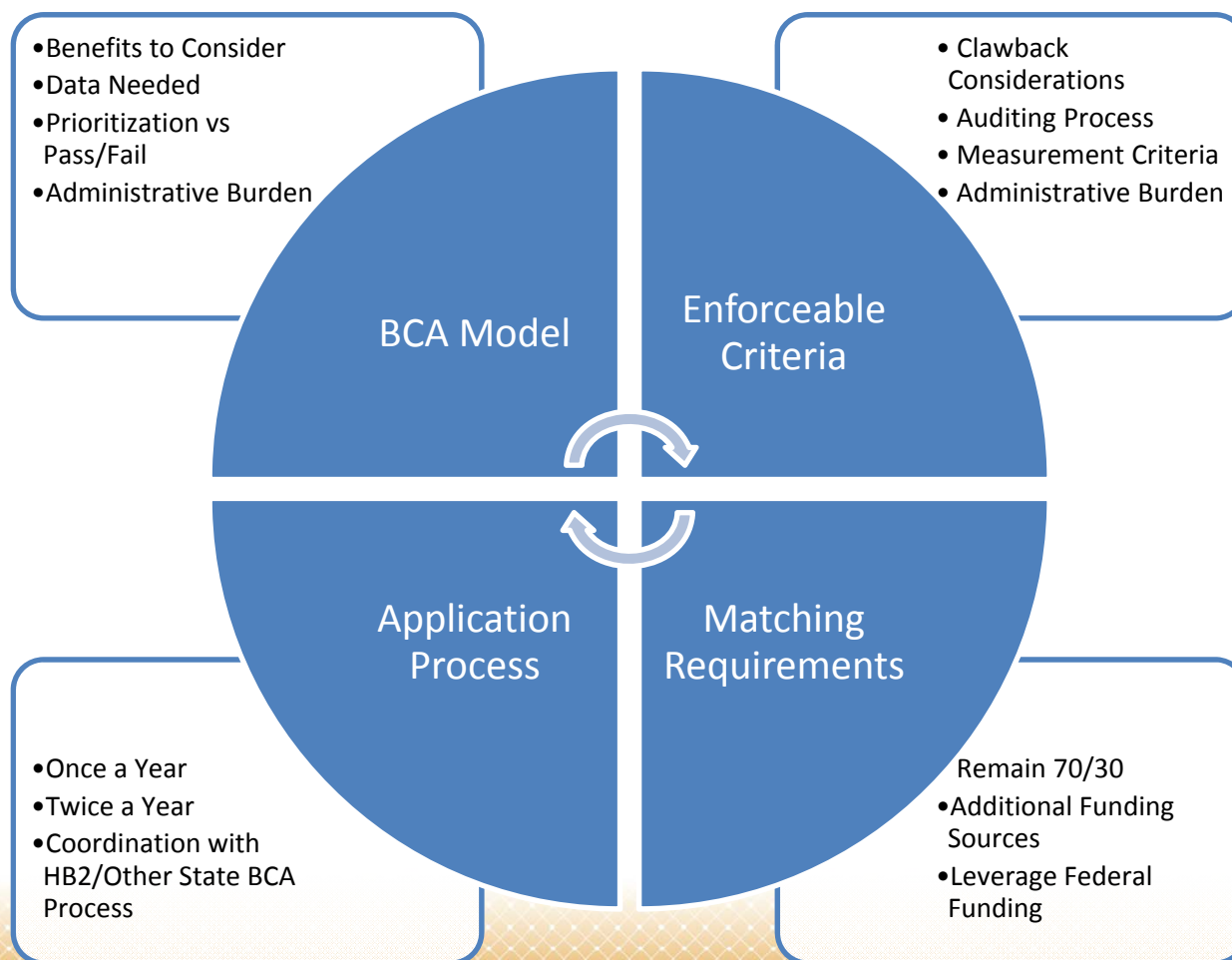
- REF for State of Good Repair (SoGR)
 - Most stakeholders are interested in allocating REF fund for SoGR purposes;
 - Some, including Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR), are against that allocation;
 - ShortLine railroads suggest a set amount of REF for rail preservation
- 30% Match Requirement
 - Some stakeholders in favor and some against;
 - Stakeholders suggest policy update to allow for other state or federal funds to serve as match.
- Broadening the current cost/benefit model to consider public benefits other than carloads and containers;
 - Account for the cost of deferred maintenance;

Summary of Stakeholder Comments

- Allow for classification of projects, Passenger vs. Freight or both;
- Allow for consideration of multi-State Funding of Projects (Corridors and where the port connects);
- Support investment in rail facilities/infrastructure other than track;
- Transparent and solid documentation process;
- Some stakeholders, such as VRE, suggest allowing a portion of REF to be used for operational funding;



Focus Areas for REF Review



REF Program Totals

(From 2006 – 2016)

