



EAGLE COUNTY

Board of County Commissioners

970-328-8605

970-328-8629(f)

eagleadmin@eaglecounty.us

www.eaglecounty.us

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
374 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

RE: Request for federal funds to support the Lake Creek Village Electrification and Transit Improvements Project and the CASTA Statewide Transit Improvement Proposal

Dear Senator Bennet and Senator Hickenlooper,

We support ECO Transit's request for funding through CASTA's Statewide Senate Earmark proposal for improvements to the Lake Creek Apartment bus stop in West Edwards, including on-route charging infrastructure and related facility improvements. As the Eagle County Board of Commissioners, we encourage you to look favorably upon this project.

ECO Transit is a rural transit agency that connects communities along the I-70, U.S. Highway 6, and U.S. Highway 24 corridors including Vail, Avon, Eagle, Gypsum, and Leadville, in west-central Colorado. ECO Transit service extends for more than 70 miles one-way, and provides over 1 million trips per year to residents and visitors. ECO Transit connects to local transit systems in Vail, Avon, and Beaver Creek, as well as the Eagle County Regional Airport and the statewide Bustang transit service.

ECO Transit's service is critical to maintaining economic vitality and quality of life in Eagle County. ECO Transit provides safe, affordable, reliable transportation for a diverse community that faces high housing costs and long commutes to work, school, and health care. It reduces traffic congestion coming into and out of job and entertainment centers such as Vail, Avon, and Beaver Creek. Last but not least, it mitigates the impacts of traffic and population growth on our air quality and natural environment - critical assets for our outdoor-oriented economy.

ECO Transit has already deployed Battery Electric Bus (BEB) technology supported by previous Low-No Grant funding. The 2021 Statewide Transit Improvement Proposal offers ECO Transit the opportunity to build on its existing BEB program by funding installation of a 500kW inverted pantograph on-route charger and related site improvements at a heavily used transit stop serving the West Edwards community. These improvements would allow ECO Transit to optimize the use of electric buses on its most productive route, improve safety and circulation, and spur additional county-led investments in roadway and pedestrian infrastructure improvements in an area with documented environmental justice issues.

Grant funding to support electrification efforts is critical as demand for transit in our region is growing and local resources are insufficient to meet all of our needs. ECO Transit and its technology partner, Proterra, are highly professional and reputable organizations with a long history of successfully transit delivery and efficient and effective use of grant funds. I support the proposed project and encourage you to support ECO Transit's efforts to improve electric charging infrastructure, increase use of zero emission BEBs, and expedite fleet electrification plans.

Sincerely

Matt Scherr
Chair

Jeanne McQueeney
Commissioner

Kathy Chandler-Henry
Commissioner