

**ITEM 10 – Action**

July 24, 2019

FY 2020 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program  
for the District of Columbia

**Action:** Adopt Resolution R3-2020 to approve projects for funding under the Federal Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program for DC for FY 2020.

**Background:** A portion of the federal Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program is sub-allocated to the TPB for project selection in the District of Columbia. The board will be briefed on the recommended projects and asked to approve them.



**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20002**

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PROJECTS FOR  
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET ASIDE PROGRAM  
FUNDING UNDER THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM  
FOR FY 2020 IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), which is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the FAST Act's Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set Aside) Program, which is part of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), provides a portion of funding based on the relative share of the total State population sub-allocated to large urbanized areas, and the MPO is required "to develop a competitive process to allow eligible entities to submit projects for funding in consultation with the relevant State"; and

**WHEREAS**, the TA Set Aside Program provides funding for transportation programs and projects defined as eligible per Section 1109 of the FAST Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) are responsible for determining the total federal funding amount allocated to the TPB, determining project eligibility, project implementation, and project oversight; and

**WHEREAS**, the TA Set Aside Program provides an opportunity to fund projects that implement regional policies reflected in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and in the seven initiatives endorsed by the TPB in December 2017 and January 2018, which include promoting Regional Activity Centers, improving pedestrian and bicycle access to transit, and completing the National Capital Trail; and

**WHEREAS**, the TA Set Aside is a complementary component of the TPB's Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program, which supports planning-related projects and events of TPB member jurisdictions; and

**WHEREAS**, a solicitation for TA Set Aside projects was conducted by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation from March 26 to May 17, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB staff and representatives from partner agencies have reviewed the applications and, based on an assessment of project readiness and eligibility and support for

the TPB's regional selection criteria, staff has recommended providing full funding for all four of the applications received; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 12, 2019, the TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the recommended projects;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board approves the projects for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program for FY 2020 in the District of Columbia as described in the attached materials.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board  
**FROM:** John Swanson, Transportation Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Projects recommended for funding in FY 2020 in the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program  
**DATE:** July 18, 2019

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## SUMMARY

Under the federal Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA Set Aside) Program, the TPB is responsible for selecting projects using sub-allocated funding for Suburban Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The TA Set Aside, which is part of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, was previously known as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and that name is commonly still used.

For FY 2020, staff is recommending full funding for all the projects that received for this round of funding. The projects are listed below:

Project	Agency/Project Advocate	Recommendation
Prather's Alley Safety Improvements	DDOT/ Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District	\$135,000
Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District	DDOT/Capital Riverfront Business Improvement District	\$120,000
Union Station Masonry Restoration Project	DDOT/Union Station Redevelopment Corporation	\$440,000
Total		\$695,680

## BACKGROUND

The Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA Set Aside) Program was established by federal law to fund a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails, safe routes to school (SRTS) projects, community improvements, and environmental mitigation. MAP 21, the surface transportation legislation enacted in 2012, established the program as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The FAST Act of 2015 renamed the program as the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TA Set Aside) Program, but the key features of the program largely remain the same. Information on the TA Set Aside is available from FHWA at: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/).

The program provides sub-allocated funding for large metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like the TPB (classified as "Transportation Management Areas") to fund local projects. In addition to

these sub-allocated funds, a portion of the TA Set Aside funding is reserved for statewide project selection, which is conducted by the state departments of transportation.

For the National Capital Region, the program offers an opportunity to support and enhance regional planning activities. At the direction of the TPB, our region's TA Set Aside is framed as a complementary component of the TPB's Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program, which provides technical assistance for small planning studies to TPB member jurisdictions.

The TA Set Aside offers the region the ability to fund projects that support regional priorities and goals. Applicants from the National Capital Region are asked to show how their projects will serve regional criteria when they seek TA Set Aside funds. The criteria, which are rooted in TPB policies and programs, include: focus on expanding transportation options; support for Regional Activity Centers; access to high-capacity transit; access in Equity Emphasis Areas; support for the National Capital Trail; and increased access for people with disabilities.

## **FY 2020 SOLICITATION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

For FY 2020 in the District of Columbia, DDOT informed TPB staff that the TPB has responsibility for project selection for up to \$1.15 million. DDOT has discretion for decision-making over an additional \$1.15 million, which will be used for Safe Routes to School projects.

DDOT conducted the project solicitation for the FY2020 TA Set-Aside funding between March 26 and May 17. The DDOT application included a supplementary form requesting information about how projects address the TPB's regional priorities, including promoting non-motorized circulation within Activity Centers, enhancing access to transit stations, and increasing multimodal transportation options.

DDOT received three applications, representing a combined total of \$695,680, which is far below the amount available for TPB project selection.

The federal regulations for the TA Set-Aside require a 20% local match. For all three applications, the match has been provided by DDOT.

Federal regulations typically prohibit state DOTs from receiving TAP funding. However, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has ruled that DDOT, in its function as a department of local government, is eligible to apply for TAP funding. DDOT is officially the applicant for all three projects this year, although in all three cases, the applications and concepts were developed by other organizations that are listed as "project advocates" on the applications. These project advocates will act as the de facto project sponsors in close coordination with DDOT.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW**

Because there is sufficient funding for all this year's applications for the DC TA-Set Aside Program, TPB staff determined it would not be necessary to convene a selection review panel. Nonetheless, a thorough review of the applications was conducted to ensure they are appropriate for funding and will help to promote the region's transportation policies.

The review process was conducted in two ways:

- *Application review:* In addition to conducting an internal staff review, TPB staff sought input from our agency partners who would typically have been asked to participate in a selection panel. In recent years, these panels have typically included representatives from the two state DOTs that are not the location of the applications under consideration. Therefore, staff asked representatives from the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide comments about the applications and submit questions for further investigation.
- *Interviews with applicants:* TPB and DDOT staff jointly conducted conference calls with the project advocates to discuss the details of their proposals, get answers to questions that were raised in our review of the applications, and explore the ways in which these projects serve regional policies.

## FY 2020 PROJECTS

Based upon this review process, staff is recommending full funding for the three projects briefly described below. All the projects will serve myriad policy priorities of the TPB, including promoting Regional Activity Centers, Equity Emphasis Areas, access to transit, and proximity to the National Capital Trail.

- **Prather's Alley Safety Improvements**

*District Department of Transportation/Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District*  
\$169,600

Situated at the heart of the Mount Vernon Triangle, Prather's Alley has increasingly become one of the area's most active multimodal passageways, which has created concerns about safety as walkers, cyclists, cars and trucks compete for use of the alley. This project, which was conceived by the Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District, will design and construct a series of traffic calming measures in the alleyway. A neighborhood survey and design charette have already been conducted to identify the project elements. The safety measures that would be funded by this project will precede forthcoming artistic placemaking initiatives in and around the alley. As the region seeks to create more pathways for walking and biking, this unusual project can become a useful model for both the city and the region.

- **Protected Mobility Lanes on M Street, SE**

*District Department of Transportation/ Capital Riverfront Business Improvement District*  
\$150,000

Although the Capitol Riverfront has undergone a dramatic transformation in recent years, in many ways, its street network remains largely auto-oriented. With six lanes of vehicular traffic, M Street has excess capacity even during peak travel times and with frequent speeding, the street is hostile to bicyclists and pedestrians. This project would fund design for bi-directional protected mobility lanes on M Street, SE, giving bicyclists and scooters much-needed streamlined and protected east-west access from the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to Half Street, SE, the heart of the Capitol Riverfront. The project would be approximately one mile in length and would remove a vehicular travel lane, narrowing the M Street crossing for pedestrians. Creating safer streets for cyclists

and pedestrians will be essential for the accomplishment of Vision Zero goal of eliminating pedestrian deaths in the District.

- **Union Station Masonry Restoration Project**

*District Department of Transportation/Union Station Redevelopment Corporation*  
**\$549,182**

This project will mark the completion of Union Station’s Main Hall Restoration by wrapping up a series of tasks that began with repairs to the station’s ceiling following the earthquake of 2011. Building on restoration efforts funded with previous TAP grants, this project would restore the masonry walls in the historic structure, as well as the metal portions of door frames and windows. Union Station is both a national treasure and is the region's premier multimodal transportation facility, serving over 37 million people annually or approximately 100,000 per day. Union Station’s continuous role as a transit hub dates back to its opening in 1907. The nearby NoMa neighborhood is projected to have 16,700 residents by the end of 2023, up from fewer than 1,000 in 2009. This projected growth is expected to make NoMa the densest neighborhood in the District of Columbia.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Following the TPB’s action on the FY 2020 recommendations, which is scheduled for July 24, 2019, TPB staff will forward information regarding the approval to DDOT, which will proceed with project implementation.





# FY 2020 DC TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM PROJECTS

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John Swanson  
TPB Transportation Planner

TPB Presentation  
July 24, 2019



National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #10

## Process

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- A portion of the federal Transportation Set-Aside Alternatives (TA) Program is sub-allocated to the TPB for project selection in D.C.
- Three DC applicant funding requests were received totaling less than the DC sub-allocation of TA funding
- Staff recommends full funding of all three projects



National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board

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# Project Recommendations

Project	Sponsor	Project Advocate	Total Cost	TAP Funding Request (80%)	Recommendation
Prather's Alley Safety Improvements	DDOT	Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District	\$169,600	\$135,680	\$135,680
Protected Mobility Lanes on M Street, SE	DDOT	Capitol Riverfront Business Improvement District	\$150,000	\$120,000	\$120,000
Union Station Masonry Restoration Project	DDOT	Union Station Redevelopment Corporation	\$549,182	\$440,000	\$440,000

## M Street Mobility Lane

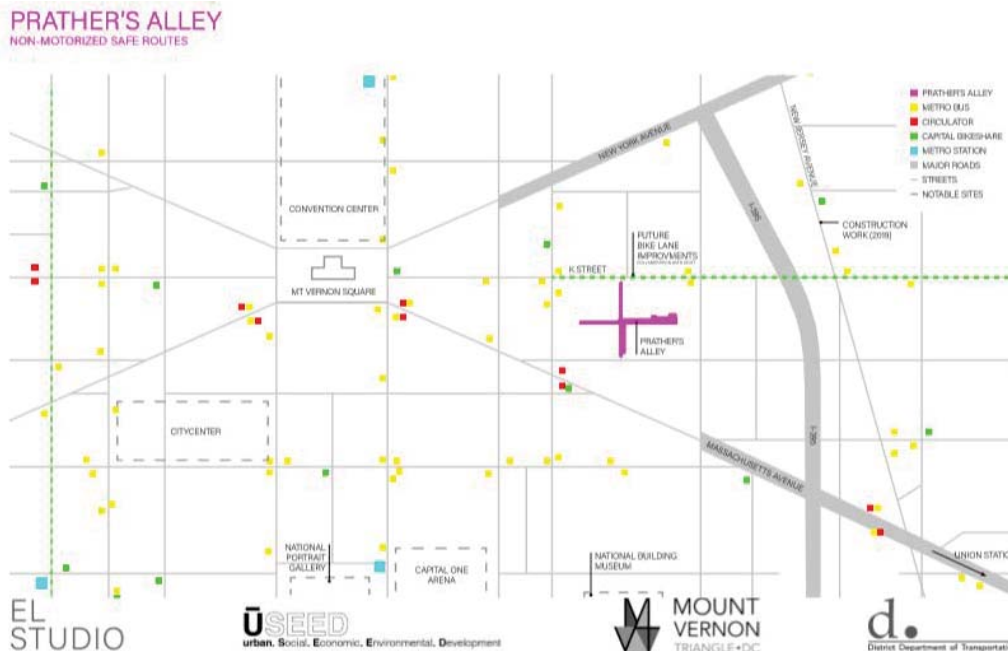


# M Street Mobility Lane

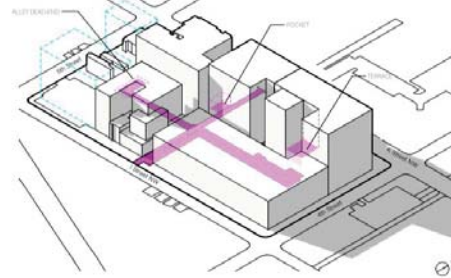


- Increase micromobility connectivity across the Capitol Riverfront neighborhood and the overall District
- The project builds on the District's Vision Zero and sustainability goals by providing protected mobility lanes on M Street
- A major east-west connection in Capitol Riverfront that links Nationals Park, Audi Field and the Navy Yard/Ballpark Metro station to the Barracks Row/Navy Yard area

# Prather's Alley Safety Improvements



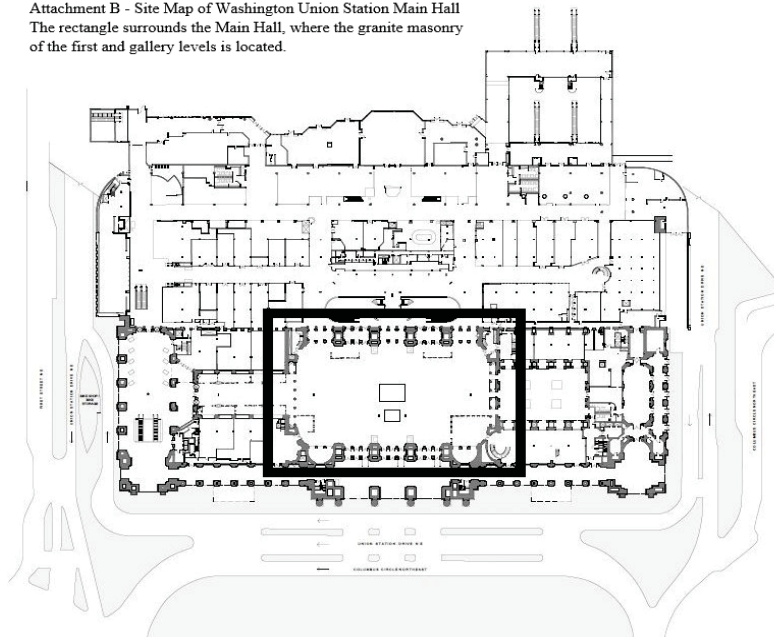
# Prather's Alley Safety Improvements



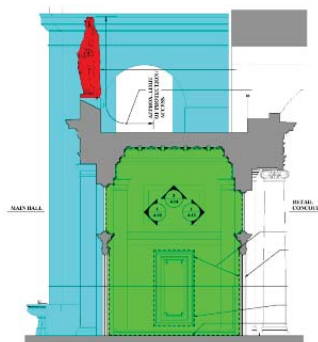
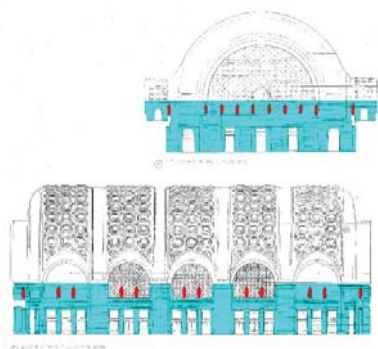
- Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District with EL Studio and urbanSEED, conducted a first use study of Prather's Alley in September 2018
- This project will focus on traffic calming devices and speed reduction mechanisms through the inclusion of signage and proactive design controls

# Union Station Front Portico Roman Legionnaires & Vestibules Restoration

Attachment B - Site Map of Washington Union Station Main Hall  
The rectangle surrounds the Main Hall, where the granite masonry of the first and gallery levels is located.



# Union Station Front Portico Roman Legionnaires & Vestibules Restoration



TYP. NORTH VESTIBULE, INTERIOR ELEVATION - LOOKING WEST  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

- The Main Hall is accessed by most of the approximately 100,000 transit users and pedestrians that travel through Union Station daily
- Currently, the masonry is in need of cleaning and conservation, which has not been done since the station's restoration in the late 1980s



## Next Steps

- Recommend approval of TA Set-Aside funding for these three projects
- Approve R3-2020



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National Capital Region  
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