



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** TPB Technical Committee  
**FROM:** Lamont B. Cobb, Transportation Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Funding Recommendations for the FAST Act Surface Transportation Block Grant/Transportation Alternatives Program in Suburban Maryland  
**DATE:** July 8, 2016

Under the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, also known as Transportation Alternatives (STP/TAP), the Federal Highway Administration sub-allocates funds to the TPB for project selection in Suburban Maryland, Northern Virginia and the District of Columbia. For FY 2017 in Maryland, the TPB’s STP/TAP Selection Panel recommends \$1,100,114 in funding for projects. The TPB will be asked to approve the funding recommendations via resolution on July 20, 2016.

The TPB’s Selection Panel recommends the following projects for approval at the July 20 TPB meeting:

<b>City of Frederick – East Street Rails with Trails</b>	<b>\$479,000</b>
<b>College Park – Sidewalks for Safe Routes to School</b>	<b>\$57,464</b>
<b>Prince George’s County - Central Avenue Connector Trail Phase III</b>	<b>\$109,400</b>
<b>Prince George’s County (Town of Edmonston) – Crittenden and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Improvements for Safe Routes to School</b>	<b>\$179,250</b>
<b>Takoma Park – Improvements for Safe Routes to School</b>	<b>\$275,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,100,114</b>

**BACKGROUND**

The Transportation Alternatives Program was a MAP-21 formula program that provided funding to projects “alternative” to traditional highway capacity expansion. TAP combined three former federal programs: Transportation Enhancements (TE), Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS), and Recreational Trails (RTP). MAP-21 specified that in urbanized areas with populations over 200,000, the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) shall, “through a competitive process, select projects in consultation with the State.” Eligible recipients included local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource or public land agencies, school districts and agencies,

and other appropriate local or regional governmental entities. Non-profits could also apply, through partnership with local government agencies.

Under the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST), TAP was integrated into the new legislation as a Set Aside under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. The types of recipients previously eligible to receive funding under the MAP-21 TAP funds are still eligible under the new program. In addition, FAST extended eligibility to non-profit organizations with local government sponsors. The funding formulas and level of MPO involvement remain unchanged from the previous TAP. The FAST Act provides funding for STP/TAP through FY 2020.

For the National Capital Region, the program offers an opportunity to support and enhance regional planning activities. At the direction of the Board, our region's STP/TAP 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 funding also offers the region the ability to fund projects that support regional priorities and goals, based on recommendations outlined in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and Region Forward. The regional component of Maryland's application and the regional selection criteria are based on these priorities. In particular, these priorities support better non-motorized circulation within Regional Activity Centers and improved bicycle and pedestrian access to transit.

TPB staff works with Maryland's State Highway Administration (SHA) to conduct a cooperative solicitation for Suburban Maryland. Since the establishment of TAP in 2012, and STP/TAP in 2015, the TPB continues to combine its solicitations with the state departments of transportation in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

## **FY 2017 SOLICITATION**

SHA conducts a year-round solicitation for STP/TAP projects. The deadline to apply for FY 2017 funds was May 16, 2016. SHA included a separate application for projects in the National Capital Region, with a supplement requiring information on how projects respond to TPB priorities for the region, including multimodal access, accessibility to transit and employment, proximity to Activity Centers and rail stations, transportation access to disabled persons and other disadvantaged groups, and local funding commitment. SHA forwarded eight projects to TPB staff, for a total of \$2,858,205 in funding requests. The projects are eligible for the TPB's MPO sub-allocation, as well as statewide STP funding.

After SHA received project recommendations from the TPB and other Maryland MPOs, the agency will convene the state's TAP Technical Committee. The Technical Committee reviews all Maryland STP/TAP applications and forwards their recommendations to the TAP Executive Committee, made up of the executive leadership of SHA, and Maryland's Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Maryland Transit Administration Historic Preservation Office. The TAP Executive Committee makes their funding decisions based on a summary of all project applications, availability of uncommitted STP/TAP funds, the overall distribution of projects, and TAP Technical Committee recommendations. Maryland has \$12 million in statewide STP/TAP funds.

## PROJECT SELECTION IN MARYLAND

Representatives from the District of Columbia and Virginia Departments of Transportation were invited to participate on the TPB's regional review panel with staff. The panel met on June 28. SHA also contributed on the panel as an ex-officio participant. Panel participants included:

- John Swanson, Plan Development and Support Manager, COG/TPB staff
- Michael Farrell, Senior Transportation Planner, COG/TPB staff
- Lamont Cobb, Transportation Planner, COG/TPB staff
- Cindy Engelhart, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Northern Virginia District, Virginia Department of Transportation.
- Michael Alvino, Bicycle Program Specialist, District Department of Transportation
- Christy Bernal, Assistant Transportation Alternatives Program Liaison, Maryland State Highway Administration

Panel members individually reviewed and scored applications up to 100 points. The total score is a composite based on each reviewer's professional assessment (50pts) and regional selection criteria (50pts). The professional assessment is based on the panel member's knowledge of transportation planning in the region and local project management experience, as well as project readiness as presented in the applications.

The regional criteria are rooted in TPB policies and programs, with the understanding that some projects would not meet all criteria. Regional selection criteria included the following:

- **Transportation options (10pts):** Will the project significantly increase transportation options for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-drivers? Will the transportation benefits of the project be more than just recreational?
- **Regional Activity Centers (10pts):** Does the project enhance walkability and accessibility within or between Regional Activity Centers?
- **Safe routes to schools (5pts):** Does the project enhance safe ped/bike access to schools?
- **Disadvantaged communities (5pts):** Does the project promote accessibility for disadvantaged communities?
- **People with disabilities (5pts):** Do project components significantly promote accessibility for people with disabilities?
- **Local commitment (5pts):** Does the application provide local matches greater than the 20 percent minimum requirement?

At the review panel's meeting on June 28, each member provided rankings of the project applications under consideration as high/medium/low based on the total scores. The panel then grouped and evaluated the projects for funding based on the rankings.

At the end of the June 28 meeting, the review panel recommended five projects for funding. A detailed list of recommended projects is at the end of this memo.

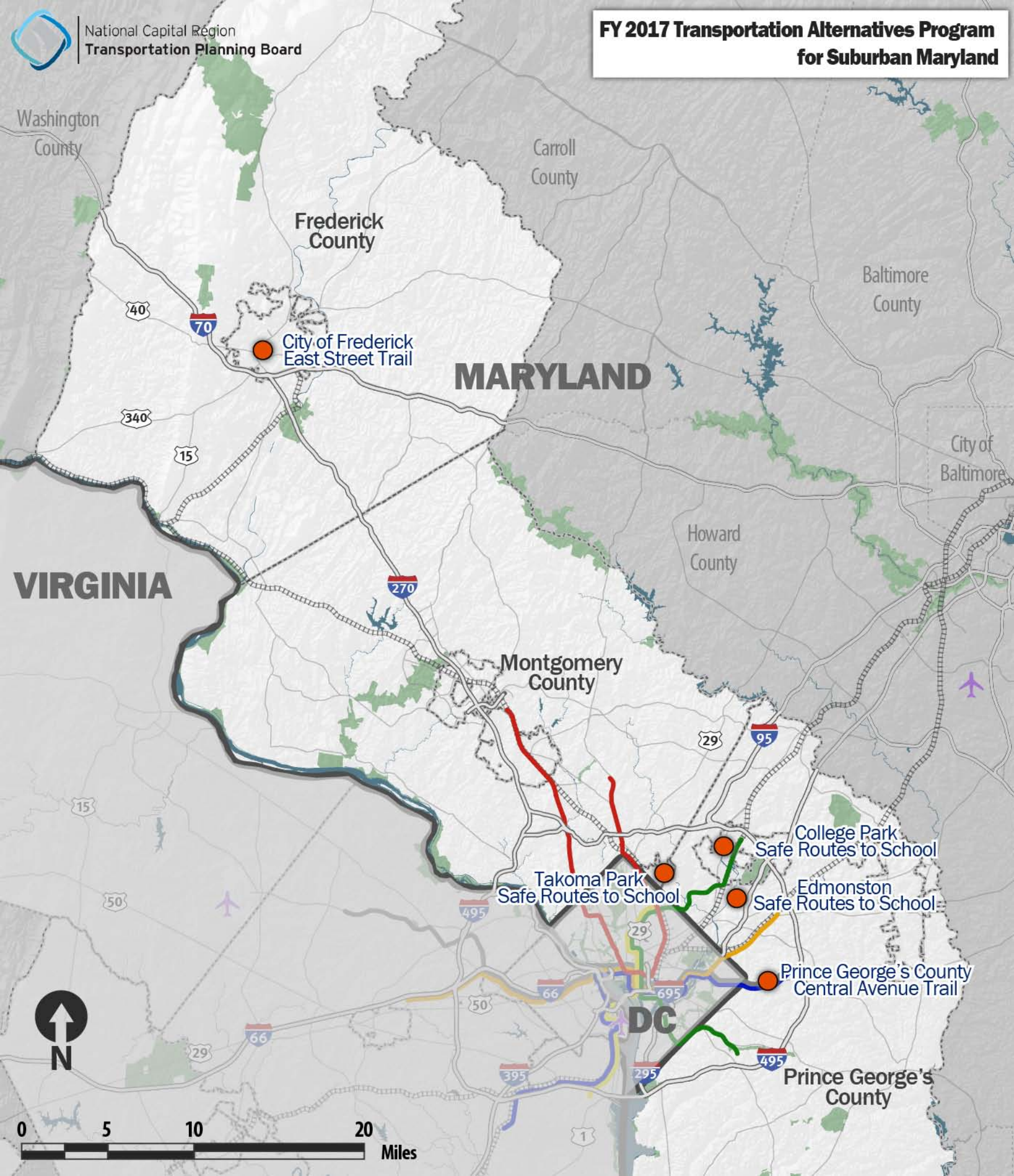
## NEXT STEPS

Following the TPB's action on July 20, TPB staff will forward information regarding the selected projects to SHA as they convene Maryland's TAP Technical and Executive Committees. SHA has \$12.3 million available for statewide STP/TAP funds. Once all selections are finalized, SHA staff will work with applicants to administer funding.

The TPB will participate in the Virginia Department of Transportation's solicitation for FY 2018 STP/TAP projects. The deadline for those applications is November 1st, 2016.

The TPB is currently working with DDOT on their STP/TAP project selection.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>TPB Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Funding Request</b>	<b>Local Match</b>	<b>Recommended Funding</b>	<b>Regional Activity Center</b>	<b>Rail Station</b>	<b>Safe Routes to School</b>
East Street Rails with Trails	City of Frederick	Construction of a 3.7 mile off street shared use path and waysations along an old rail bed from the MARC Station to Mill Island.	\$1,016,859	\$338,953	\$479,000	Downtown Frederick, East Frederick Rising	Frederick MARC	N/A
College Park Sidewalks - Safe Routes to School	College Park	Construction of new sidewalk, curbs, and gutters on Berwyn Rd, Potomac St, Quebec St, and Rhode Island Avenue. Intersections will include crosswalks, water quality devices at drainage inlets, and pedestrian detection signals	\$57,464	\$14,366	\$57,464	N/A	N/A	Holy Redeemer ES
Rock Creek Trail Bridge over Silver Creek	Montgomery County	Design and construction of Rock Creek Hiker/Biker Trail improvements near the intersection of Beach Drive at Kensington Parkway, enhance the trail to meet ADA compliance and to complete design and construction for a pedestrian bridge over Silver Creek.	\$558,960	\$139,740		Kensington	N/A	N/A
Pinecrest Park - Safe Routes to School	Montgomery County	Construction of pathways and sidewalk connections through Pinecrest Local Park, adjacent to Pinecrest Elementary School	\$402,466	\$80,493		N/A	N/A	Pinecrest ES
3300 Rhode Island Avenue Pedestrian Enhancement Project	Prince George's County	Design landscape and hardscape improvements along the existing R-O-W between 3300, 3308 and 3310 Rhode Island Ave. The design will include new pedestrian walkways and bike racks to connect the residential and retail uses along Rhode Island Ave with the Metrobus transportation hub.	\$66,000	\$16,500		N/A	N/A	N/A
Central Avenue Connector - Phase III	Prince George's County	Preliminary Engineering (30% Design) for 0.32 miles of pedestrian/bicycle bridge structures, and two trail crossings. This phase of the trail starts at Capital Beltway/I-495, connecting to underground and above ground Metro lines, traveling from Morgan Boulevard Metro Station to Largo Town Center Metro Station.	\$109,400	\$27,350	\$109,400	Largo, Morgan Boulevard	Largo Metrorail Station, Morgan Boulevard Metrorail Station	N/A
Crittenden and 52nd Avenue Improvements - Safe Routes to School	Prince George's County	Construction of new sidewalk, ramps, curbs and gutters along 52nd Avenue and Crittenden Street. Funds will also support outreach events around public safety.	\$179,250	\$41,227	\$179,250	N/A	N/A	Rodgers Heights ES, William Wirt MS
Takoma Park Improvements - Safe Routes to School	Takoma Park	Construction of a bump out and crosswalks at the intersection of Philadelphia and Park Avenues. Sidewalk installation along Hodges Lane and Chestnut Avenue to connect to the schools and a raised intersection at Hodges Lane and Holly Avenue. Funds will also support enforcement activities, outreach, educational programming, and maintenance.	\$467,806	\$93,561	\$275,000	N/A	N/A	Five Schools
			<b>\$2,858,205</b>		<b>\$1,100,114</b>			



**VIRGINIA**

**MARYLAND**

**DC**

