



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Steering Committee and TPB Technical Committee
FROM: John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planner
 Arianna Koudounas, COG Regional Planner
SUBJECT: Projects recommended for funding in FY 2022 in Maryland and the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program
DATE: July 9, 2021

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. This memorandum includes recommendations for funding for FY 2022 in Maryland and the District of Columbia. The recommendations are listed below. On July 9, 2021, the TPB Steering Committee will be asked to adopt two resolutions, which are attached, to approve the recommendations.

Maryland – TA Set-Aside Funding Recommendations, FY 2022

Project Name	Jurisdiction/Agency	Funding
ADA Crosswalk at Lerner & MD 197	City of Bowie	\$40,000
Greenbelt Metro Hiker-Biker Trail	City of Greenbelt	\$853,837
MD 187 & Cordell Avenue	Montgomery County	\$20,000
MD 188 (Wilson Lane) at Cordell Avenue	Montgomery County	\$46,664
New Design Road Side Path, Phase 1	Frederick County	\$500,000
Oxon Cove Trail Resurfacing & Bridge	National Park Service (Prince George’s Co.)	\$1,228,000
TOTAL		\$2,688,501

District of Columbia – TA Set-Aside Funding Recommendations, FY 2022

Project Name	Jurisdiction/Agency	Funding
11th Street NW Safety Improvements	DDOT	\$221,774
Permanent Curb Extension Study	DDOT	\$108,413
Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation Planning	National Park Service	\$449,190
Washington Union Station Restoration in East Hall	DDOT (USRC)	\$251,612
TOTAL		\$1,030,989

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), community improvements, historic preservation, 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, and 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/.

The program provides sub-allocated funding for large metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like the TPB (those MPOs 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 funding 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 based on Visualize 2045 and the TPB’s other policy documents. Applicants from the National Capital Region are asked to show how their projects will serve these priorities when they seek TA Set-Aside funds. The priorities also provide the basis for the selection criteria that the TPB’s selection panel uses when it reviews TA Set-Aside applications and recommends projects for funding.

Since the establishment of this program in 2012, the TPB has combined its solicitations with the state departments of transportation in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. As part of this process, TPB staff works with the DOTs to conduct the selection processes.

PROJECT SELECTION

For FY 2022, two selection panels – one each for Maryland and D.C. – were assembled to determine funding recommendations for the TA Set-Aside funds. TPB staff invited representatives from state DOTs in our region, along with representatives from COG/TPB staff, to participate on these panels.

This year’s selection panel participants included:

- Pam Liston, Virginia Department of Transportation (both MD and DC)
- Jonathan Rogers, District Department of Transportation (MD only)
- Christy Bernal, Maryland Department of Transportation (DC only)
- Michael Farrell, COG/TPB Staff (both MD and DC)
- Arianna Koudounas, COG Staff (both MD and DC)
- John Swanson, COG/TPB Staff (both MD and DC)

For the MD panel discussion, MDOT staff member Christy Bernal served as a technical resource. For the DC discussion, DDOT staffer Kelsey Bridges served as a technical resource.

Prior to the panel meetings, individual panelists reviewed and scored applications for a maximum of 110 points. The total score for each project combined each reviewer's professional assessment (50 points) and regional selection criteria (60 points). The professional assessment is based on each panel member's transportation planning expertise, knowledge of transportation planning in the region, evaluation of the project budget, and project management experience. 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:

- *Focus on expanding transportation options (10 points):* Will the project significantly increase transportation options for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-drivers? Will the transportation benefits of the project be more than just recreational?
- *Support for Regional Activity Centers (10 points):* Does the project enhance walkability and accessibility within or between the region's 141 Activity Centers? (Regional Activity Centers are places where jobs and housing are concentrated and it should be easy to walk, bike, or take transit.)
- *Access to high-capacity transit (10 points):* Will the project improve ped/bike access to transit facilities, such as Metrorail, VRE, or bus rapid transit? In particular, does the project increase access in Transit Access Focus Areas, which have been identified by the TPB as priority locations for walk/bike improvements?
- *Access in Equity Emphasis Areas (10 points):* Does the project promote accessibility for communities in Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs)? (EEAs are locations that the TPB has identified as having high concentrations of low-income and/or minority populations.)
- *National Capital Trail Network (10 points):* Does the project include a segment of the NCTN or improve access to the NCTN?
- *Safe access to schools (5 points):* Does the project enhance safe ped/bike access to schools?
- *Increased access for people with disabilities (5 points):* Does the project promote accessibility for people with disabilities?

The selection panel for Maryland met on June 30, 2021 and reconvened on July 7 to finalize their decisions. The selection panel for DC met on July 7.

To provide a basis for discussion, each panel member provided their scores in advance of the meeting. Staff developed average scores for each project and ranked them by their average scores. It should be emphasized, however, that the final recommendations listed below are the result of discussion and consensus and are not simply based on a sum of the panelists' individual scores.

MARYLAND FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Maryland conducts its solicitation on an annual basis. This year's solicitation period opened on April 1 and closed on May 17, 2021. For jurisdictions in the National Capital Region, the MDOT application included a supplementary form requesting information about how proposed projects responded to the TPB's regional priorities.

For the portion of Maryland in the TPB's planning area, MDOT received ten eligible applications representing a total of \$13,269,768 in requested funding. In its FY 2022 TA Set-Aside sub-allocation for Maryland, the TPB has \$2,930,671 available.

The selection panel recommended six projects for funding, totaling \$2,688,501. These recommendations leave \$242,170 unallocated. MDOT has informed TPB staff that it intends to roll over these funds into the statewide TA Set-Aside funding, which will be used to select projects in September. Unfunded projects in the Washington region will be eligible to receive those funds.

The federally required local of match of at least 20% will be provided by the applicants. In some cases, applicant matches were higher than 20%.

Consistency with Regional Priorities

The six recommended projects described below will serve many of the TPB's key regional policies. Five of the projects are in Activity Centers. The two largest projects (Greenbelt and Oxon Cove), which account for 77% of the TPB's suballocation, are both in Equity Emphasis Areas.

Three of the projects improve access to transit, and one of these (Greenbelt) is a Transit Access Focus Area (TAFA). The TPB identified 49 TAFAs throughout the region in 2020 as priority locations for improving walk/bike access to transit.

All six projects support the National Capital Trail Network (NCTN), a region-wide system of trails that, when completed, will connect all the region's jurisdictions. Two of the projects (New Design Road and Greenbelt) are for unbuilt segments of the NCTN, one will fund rehabilitation of an existing NCTN segment (Oxon Cove), and the other projects all support access to the network.

It should also be noted that many of the projects are directly or indirectly focused on safety. As a result of the work that will be funded through these grants – including improvements in sidewalks, trails, and crosswalks – fewer pedestrians and cyclists will die or get hurt on our roads. This is particularly true for children, older adults and people with disabilities.

Finally, several of the projects are related to previous work funded by the TPB. The three largest projects (Greenbelt, Oxon Cove, and New Design Road) build upon planning studies that were previously funded by the TPB's Transportation Land Use (TLC) Program.

Maryland Project Descriptions

- **ADA Crosswalk at Lerner and MD 197**

City of Bowie, \$40,000

Fast-moving traffic on MD 197 makes this crossing extremely dangerous, especially for older adults and people with disabilities. This project will design an ADA pedestrian walkway that will include a new concrete landing and extension of the walkway towards a regional trail, traffic beacons and lights, the relocation of existing signboards, and the rerouting of a drainage ditch. These improvements will increase access to a segment of the National Capital Trail Network along MD 197.

- **Greenbelt Metro Station Hiker-Biker Trail**

City of Greenbelt, \$853,837

This project will construct a multi-use trail to connect and expand multi-modal opportunities at the Greenbelt Metro Station which offers WMATA rail and bus service, MARC service and a planned County Bikeshare station. The Trail will connect neighborhoods and provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connection to commercial properties, regional parks and the trail network including Indian Creek Trail and Lake Artemisia. The project is consistent with recommendations in a TLC project on Cherrywood Lane that was completed in 2020. The station vicinity was classified by the TPB as a Transit Access Focus Area in 2020.

- **MD 187 and Cordell Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements**

Montgomery County, \$20,000

This dangerous intersection in Bethesda will receive funding to design geometric and ped beacon safety improvements to increase pedestrian safety and help achieve the state and the county's Vision Zero goals.

- **MD 188 (Wilson Lane) and Cordell Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements**

Montgomery County, \$46,664

This Safe Routes to School project will construct pedestrian access improvements to Bethesda Elementary School as part of county- and state-wide effort to reach Vision Zero goals.

- **New Design Road Side Path, Phase I**

Frederick County, \$500,000

This key segment of the National Capital Trail Network will undergo 100% design funding with this grant and will be ready to move toward implementation. The 2.5-mile trail segment is between Manor Woods Road and English Muffin Way. This is the first of three phases for a side path along New Design Road that will eventually tie Frederick City with the C&O Canal National Park. The project will build upon 35% design work funded through the TLC Program in 2020.

- **Oxon Cove Trail Resurfacing and Bridge Replacement**

National Park Service (Prince George's County), \$1,228,000

The project includes resurfacing and rehabilitating one mile of Oxon Cove Trail in unincorporated Oxon Hill and replacing a pedestrian bridge that was destroyed by flooding in 2015. It will improve the condition and safety of a key segment of the broader regional trail network and restore critical local connections between Oxon Cove Park, nearby commercial centers and the Town of Forest Heights. The project is a segment of the National Capital Trail Network and in fact, was part of the "Bicycle Beltway" concept that has long been championed by the TPB. The project will build upon recommendations from a 2019 TLC study "Eastover and Forest Heights Trail Improvements."

Maryland Surplus

As noted above, the panel's recommendations leave \$242,170 unfunded from the FY 2022 suballocation due to MDOT restrictions on partially funding projects. MDOT has informed TPB staff that the TPB surplus will not be rolled over into next year's TPB TAP suballocation and will instead be rolled into the statewide TAP funds, which will be allocated through an MDOT process this fall.

For the selection of projects using the statewide funds, the TPB selection panel encourages funding for the following two projects, listed in priority order. The selection panel was unable to fund these projects, in part because of their large costs:

- Metzerott Road Safety Improvements (Prince George's County's request was \$3,488,000)
- Frederick and Pennsylvania Trail (Frederick County's request was \$2,560,000)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Like Maryland, the District of Columbia conducts its TAP solicitation on an annual basis. This year's solicitation period opened on March 31 and closed on May 12, 2021. The DDOT application included a supplementary form requesting information on how proposed projects responded to the TPB's regional priorities.

For FY 2022 in the District of Columbia, DDOT informed TPB staff that the TPB has responsibility for project selection for up to \$1,030,989. DDOT received four eligible applications representing a total of \$1,030,989 in requested funding. This funding amount is equal to the amount available, so all the submitted applications can be funded.

Federal regulations typically prohibit state DOTs from receiving TA Set-Aside 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 this program funding. Three of the four applications this year were submitted by DDOT.

Following review and discussion regarding the applications, the selection panel recommended full funding for all four projects, which are described below.

The federally required local match of 20%, at a minimum, will be provided by DDOT, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, and the National Park Service.

Consistency with Regional Priorities

Like the Maryland projects, the projects recommended for D.C. are highly consistent with regional priorities. All four of them are in Activity Centers, all are in Equity Emphasis Areas, and all are close to high-capacity transit. One of the projects, the Capital Crescent Trail, is a vital link in the National Capital Trail Network.

Also similar to Maryland, several of the projects listed below will improve the safety of our roads, sidewalks, and trails. They represent incremental and practical steps toward the TPB's objective of reducing fatalities and injuries on our roads, as well working toward the District's Vision Zero goals.

D.C. Project Descriptions

- **11th Street NW Safety Improvements**
DDOT, \$221,774

The 11th Street NW Safety Improvements Project will improve bicycle infrastructure in and adjacent to existing facilities as well as incorporate pedestrian improvements through shortened crossings and improved visibility. The two intersections slated for improvements are 1) at 11th, Vermont, and S Street, and 2) at 11th, Rhode Island, and Q Street.

- **Permanent Curb Extension Study**
DDOT, \$108,413

This study will use DDOT's existing inventory of tactical installations (such as the plastic flexible posts seen throughout the city) and develop a methodology for identifying locations for upgrades to potentially make permanent changes. The study will include a prioritization phase and a feasibility phase, and will take 20 locations to a concept design that will be ready to move toward permanent improvements.

- **Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation Phase 1, Planning and Design**
National Park Service (DC), \$449,190

This is the first step in a two-phase project to fully rehabilitate all 3.7 miles of the Capital Crescent Trail in DC. Phase 1 is for design, planning, and environmental compliance. The trail is heavily used and is a segment of the National Capital Trail Network, approved by the TPB in 2020.

- **Washington Union Station Restoration in East Hall**
DDOT/Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, \$251,612

The primary goal of the Washington Union Station Restoration of the Historic East Hall Decorative Finishes project is to clean, repaint, and conserve the historic decorative finishes on the upper walls above the pilasters and the ceiling. 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.

NEXT STEPS

The TPB Steering Committee on July 9, 2021 will be asked to approve the two attached resolutions to fund the panel's recommendations for Maryland and the District of Columbia. The Steering Committee actions will be included in material provided to the TPB as part of the Director's Report (Item 5) for its meeting on July 21. The Steering Committee approval and TPB concurrence will constitute approval by the TPB of the recommendations and will be consistent with the board's responsibility as an MPO under federal law for project selection for the TA Set-Aside Program.

Following the board's action, TPB staff will forward information regarding the approved projects to MDOT and DDOT for actions at the state level. In Maryland, as noted above, all unfunded projects in our region will be eligible for funding using the statewide TA Set-Aside funds.

For more information regarding the TPB's role in these processes, please contact:

- John Swanson, jswanson@mwkog.org, 202-962-3295
- Arianna Koudounas, akoudounas@mwkog.org, [202-962-3312](tel:202-962-3312)

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

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PROJECTS IN MARYLAND FOR TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM FUNDING UNDER THE SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FOR FY 2022**

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing American's Surface Transportation Act (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, in the Equity Emphasis Areas, 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 applications for FY 2022 was conducted by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation between April 1 and May 17, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the TPB’s TA Set-Aside Selection Panel for D.C. met on June 30 and July 7, 2021 and recommended funding six applications received based on project readiness and eligibility and each project’s ability to meet the regional selection criteria; and

WHEREAS, on July 9, 2021, the TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the recommended projects; and

WHEREAS, this resolution shall not be considered final until the Transportation Planning Board has had the opportunity to review and accept these materials at its next full meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Steering Committee of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board approves the projects for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for FY 2022 in Maryland, as described in the July 9, 2021 memo entitled “Projects recommended for funding in FY 2022 in Maryland and the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program” and as listed below:

ADA Crosswalk at Lerner & MD 197	City of Bowie	\$40,000
Greenbelt Metro Hiker-Biker Trail	City of Greenbelt	\$853,837
MD 187 & Cordell Avenue	Montgomery County	\$20,000
MD 188 (Wilson Lane) at Cordell Avenue	Montgomery County	\$46,664
New Design Road Side Path, Phase 1	Frederick County	\$500,000
Oxon Cove Trail Resurfacing & Bridge	National Park Service	\$1,228,000
TOTAL		\$2,688,501

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

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM FUNDING UNDER THE SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FOR FY 2022**

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing American's Surface Transportation Act (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, in the Equity Emphasis Areas, 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 applications for FY 2022 was conducted by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation between March 31 and May 12, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the TPB’s TA Set-Aside Selection Panel for D.C. met on July 7, 2021 and recommended funding four applications received based on project readiness and eligibility and each project’s ability to meet the regional selection criteria; and

WHEREAS, on July 9, 2021, the TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the recommended projects; and

WHEREAS, this resolution shall not be considered final until the Transportation Planning Board has had the opportunity to review and accept these materials at its next full meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Steering Committee of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board approves the projects for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for FY 2022 in the District of Columbia, as described in the July 9, 2021 memo entitled “Projects recommended for funding in FY 2022 in Maryland and the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program“ and as listed below:

11th Street NW Safety Improvements	\$221,774
Permanent Curb Extension Study	\$108,413
Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation Planning	\$449,190
Washington Union Station Restoration	\$251,612
TOTAL	\$1,030,989