

## **ITEM 10 – Action**

April 19, 2023

### Approval of FY 2024 TLC Technical Assistance Recipients

**Action:** Approve TLC technical assistance recipients under the FY 2024 TLC Program.

**Background:** The TPB's Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program has provided support to local jurisdictions as they deal with the challenges of integrating land-use and transportation planning at the community level since 2006. Staff solicited applications for the FY 2024 TLC round of technical assistance between January 6 and March 3, 2023. The board will be briefed and asked to approve the applications that are being recommended for funding in FY 2024.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
**FROM:** John Swanson, Transportation Planner  
Justine-Ivan Gonzalez-Velez, Transportation Planning Intern  
**SUBJECT:** FY 2024 Transportation Land-Use Connections Technical Assistance Funding Recommendations  
**DATE:** April 13, 2023

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This memo provides information on the recommendations of the Selection Panel for the FY 2024 round of technical assistance under the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. At the panel's meetings on March 28 and March 31, the group identified 10 projects to recommend for funding in FY 2024. The TPB is scheduled to vote on the panel's recommendations on April 19.

### FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY 2024

A total of \$755,000 will be provided for the TLC Program in FY 2024 through funding in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The TLC Selection Panel is recommending 10 projects for funding.

The recommended slate of projects is highly consistent with key TPB objectives: All 10 projects are in/near Activity Centers or positively affect Activity Centers; 9 projects are in/near Equity Emphasis Areas or positively affect EEAs; 9 projects are in or near high-capacity transit station areas, and 6 of these 6 are in/near Transit Access Focus Areas (TAFAs); All 10 projects support the National Capital Trail Network (NCTN)—directly or indirectly.

The 10 projects recommended for funding are described below:

#### **East Street Redesign 30% Design**

*City of Frederick, \$80,000*

With more than 250 years of history behind it, East Street has long been Frederick's primary industrial strip but in recent years, the city has sought to make it more walkable and bikeable. This project will fund 30%-design plans to construct recommendations from a FY 2022 TLC study which called for new sidewalks, protected bikeways, and pedestrian crossing improvements. The project will focus on how to accommodate active industry as part of a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

#### **Safe Routes to School Priority Improvements Study**

*Gaithersburg, \$80,000*

This project will make it safer and easier for kids to walk, bike, and roll to school in Gaithersburg. For three selected schools, the study will identify sidewalk gaps and other pedestrian needs, and will prioritize steps for implementation. The study will develop a prioritization methodology that can be applied to the other schools in the city.

### **FLEX Microtransit Post-COVID Planning Study**

*Montgomery County, \$60,000*

FLEX, Montgomery County's microtransit service, was launched in June 2019 but suspended less than a year later because of COVID. Since restarting in July 2022, the service has been grappling with post-pandemic changes in travel patterns. This new study will reevaluate travel behaviors and conditions, market opportunities, and service delivery options to reimagine FLEX for the future. The study will build upon a FY 2019 TLC-funded study which evaluated the first six months of FLEX and identified new areas for possible expansion. The study's timing will be integrated with two major studies of fixed-route bus service – RideOn Reimagined and WMATA's Better Bus Study – whose preliminary results are expected this fall.

### **Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study**

*Prince George's, \$80,000*

This study will develop a framework for making decisions for quick-build bus stop projects that improve the speed, efficiency and reliability of bus service where delays are the greatest or stops lack accessible features. Potential facility and roadway investments might include curb extensions at bus stops, ADA treatments, shelter placements, lighting, and drainage enhancements. The project will develop a bus stop safety and accessibility prioritization tool and a checklist that will be used to identify specific recommendations along a selected number of corridors, but which can also be used throughout the county to identify and implement bus stops improvements.

### **Mannakee Street Complete Streets Feasibility Study**

*Rockville, \$80,000*

Mannakee Street borders the Rockville Town Center neighborhood and Montgomery College and travels through an older residential neighborhood. This study will assess possible pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that could be added to this road in the city of Rockville, as well as determine the impact of these new facilities on existing transportation patterns. The project is within a COG Equity Emphasis Area and regional Activity Center and is adjacent to a large park and recreational facilities.

### **Laurel Avenue Street Closure Traffic Study**

*Takoma Park, \$60,000*

In a post-COVID context, this study will analyze the potential impact of a full closure of Laurel Avenue in Takoma Park. There is growing interest in expanding the existing pandemic-initiated partial closure to include both sides of the one-block boulevard, creating the newest and largest public plaza in the city. To assess whether this project is viable, this study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the traffic impacts of such a dramatic reorientation of road use, including potential roadway redesigns, intersection changes, signage, and traffic patterns. The study will require coordination with the District of Columbia.

### **South Pickett Street Corridor Improvements Study**

*Alexandria, \$80,000*

This project would produce conceptual design plans to enhance mobility, access, safety, and comfort for all roadway users on South Pickett Street between Duke Street and Edsall Road. Improvements may include bicycle lanes, new crosswalks, enhancements to existing crosswalks, medians, landscaping, signs, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, signal timing modifications, bus stop improvements, and sidewalk improvements. This project would support the city's adopted Alexandria Mobility Plan goals of creating a safe, comfortable walking and biking environment, and making transit easier to use.

### **Ped/Bike Connection Between the W&OD Trail and West End Feasibility Study**

*Falls Church, \$80,000*

Improving ped/bike access to transit and supporting the National Capital Trail Network are two key TPB initiatives, and this project in Falls Church supports both of them. The study will look at options for providing an East-West pedestrian and bicycle connection between the W&OD Trail and the city's West End. The study will assist the city in identifying pathways, general design of those pathways, and other recommended improvements for the connection.

### **Yorkshire Multimodal Corridor Planning Study**

*Prince William County, \$80,000*

The Yorkshire corridor is both a regional Activity Center and an Equity Emphasis Area with a large immigrant population, yet it is extremely pedestrian-unfriendly. Over \$100 million in federal and regional transportation funding is slated for investment in the Route 28 corridor, which runs directly through the Yorkshire Activity Center. While these large transportation projects focus primarily on roadway operations, the timing of this work presents an opportunity to implement additional improvements to create a more walkable, transit-oriented corridor to include bus pull-off areas, bus shelters, and pedestrian/bicycle facilities/amenities. The study, which will identify gaps and make recommendations for improvements, will require close coordination with Manassas, Manassas Park, as well as the OmniRide system.

### **Green Infrastructure Study**

*Prince William County, \$75,000*

As Prince William rapidly grows and urbanizes, the county has allocated more than \$1.2 billion in its Capital Improvement Program for transportation improvements. This TLC project will establish a process for ensuring the infrastructure constructed is in alignment with locally adopted goals for sustainability, resiliency, and climate change mitigation. The project will evaluate green infrastructure alternatives, including permeable surfaces, rain gardens and landscaping. The study will be coordinated with the process of revising the county's Construction Standards Manual and it may include case studies for applying green infrastructure in Prince William County.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

On January 6, 2023, the TPB issued a call for projects for the FY 2024 round of TLC technical assistance. The deadline for application submissions was March 3. Applicants were invited to submit optional abstracts which provided applicants an interim opportunity for TPB staff to review project concepts and to provide feedback on how to develop stronger TLC applications.

This year, the funding ceiling was increased for the first time in more than a decade to adjust for inflation. Planning projects were eligible to receive up to \$80,000 in technical assistance—an increase of \$20,000 from previous years. The ceiling for design projects remained \$80,000.

As another enhancement, the TLC application process was combined with the Regional Roadway Safety Program, which is a TPB program that operates on the same model as TLC. The application timelines for both programs were synchronized to simplify the application process for interested member jurisdictions. Applicants had the opportunity to submit one joint application for both programs – or they could choose to apply just for one program. Three applications were submitted for both programs.

The TPB received 16 TLC applications for FY 2024 – eight from Maryland and eight from Virginia. No applications from the District of Columbia were received. The total funding request for the entire application package was \$1.2 million.

For this application cycle, \$755,000 is available. This includes four funding sources:

- \$260,000 from the TPB’s FY 2024 UPWP core regional planning funds. Applications from all TPB jurisdictions are eligible for these funds
- \$310,000 from the Maryland UPWP Technical Assistance account for projects in Maryland
- \$185,000 from the Virginia UPWP Technical Assistance account for projects in Virginia

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection panel included the following members:

- Deborah Bilek, Panel Chair, Urban Land Institute Washington Chapter
- Ralph Buehler, Virginia Tech
- Mike Farrell, COG/TPB staff
- Greg Goodwin, COG staff
- Douglas Noble, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
- Claire Randall, Transportation Research Board
- John Swanson, COG/TPB staff

Janie Nham of the COG staff participated in the panel meetings as a technical resource for safety and freight-related questions.

The selection panel met twice— on March 28 and March 31— to review the applications and develop a list of recommended projects for the FY 2024 round of TLC technical assistance. The selection panel used established regional evaluation criteria and their own extensive industry knowledge to assess the proposed projects. The selection panel members individually reviewed and scored each application in advance of the meetings based on their assessments of the projects as well as regional criteria. The panel members then used their scores to divide the applications in rankings of high/medium/low. The rankings served as a starting point for the panel’s collective discussion.

Based upon discussion of the regional and local merits of the applications, the selection panel developed a list of 10 projects to recommend to the TPB for approval. The panel believes this package of projects will be locally and regionally beneficial. In developing the list, the panel strove to equitably allocate funding shares of different sizes among the region’s jurisdictions, while also attempting to create a slate of projects that addresses regional priorities across a diversity of topics affecting core, inner, and outer jurisdictions.

## **PROPOSED PROJECT COMPLETION TIMELINE**

On April 19, 2023, the TPB will be asked to approve the proposed slate of 10 projects for funding under the FY 2024 TLC technical assistance program. Upon approval of the projects, TPB staff will begin to coordinate with the jurisdictions that have been awarded technical assistance to commence the consultant selection process from the pre-qualified list of TLC consultants. All projects will begin

soon after consultant task orders are signed. The projects will be scheduled for completion by June 30, 2024.

For further information regarding the TLC program, contact John Swanson ([jswanson@mwkog.org](mailto:jswanson@mwkog.org); 202-962-3295) or Justine-Ivan Gonzalez-Velez ([jvelez@mwkog.org](mailto:jvelez@mwkog.org)) of the TPB staff.

TLC Program  
 FY 2024 Applications and Recommendations

Jurisdiction or Agency	State	Project Name	TLC Request	Funding Recommendations
Frederick, City of	MD	Golden Mile Connectivity Study	40,000	
Frederick, City of	MD	East Street Redesign 30% Design	80,000	80,000
Frederick, City of	MD	Jefferson-Patrick Redesign Study	80,000	
Gaithersburg	MD	Gaithersburg Safe Routes to School - Priority Improvements	80,000	80,000
Montgomery Co.	MD	Planning for Restarting and Expanding FLEX Service	60,000	60,000
Prince George's Co.	MD	Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study	80,000	80,000
Rockville	MD	Mannakee Street Complete Streets Feasibility Study	80,000	80,000
Takoma Park	MD	Laurel Avenue Street Closure Traffic Study	60,000	60,000
<b>MARYLAND TOTALS</b>			<b>560,000</b>	<b>440,000</b>
Alexandria	VA	South Pickett Street Corridor Improvements	80,000	80,000
Arlington Co.	VA	Custis Trail Needs Assessment & Priority Improvements Study	80,000	
Falls Church	VA	East-west pedestrian/bicycle connection between W&OD Trail	80,000	80,000
Falls Church	VA	Wilson Boulevard Road Diet	80,000	
Prince William Co.	VA	Yorkshire Multimodal Corridor Planning Study	80,000	80,000
Prince William Co.	VA	The Landing at Prince William Transit Center	80,000	
Prince William Co.	VA	Sudley Road Corridor Placemaking Study	80,000	
Prince William Co.	VA	Green Infrastructure in Urbanized Capital Projects	80,000	75,000
<b>VIRGINIA TOTALS</b>			<b>640,000</b>	<b>315,000</b>
<b>TOTALS (MD+VA)</b>			<b>1,200,000</b>	<b>755,000</b>