



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Coordination and Program Director
SUBJECT: Northern Virginia SMART SCALE application process - TPB resolution of support to apply for funding
DATE: June 1, 2018

The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) has often been asked by its members to provide letters of support for various grant applications to implement transportation projects (for example, federal TIGER grant applications, etc.). In June, the TPB will be asked to approve a resolution of support for Virginia transportation projects that are being submitted by Virginia members to the 2018 Virginia SMART SCALE prioritization process to compete for Virginia SMART SCALE funding.

BACKGROUND

Virginia House Bill 2, signed by the Virginia Governor on April 6, 2014 and effective as of July 1, 2014, required the development of a prioritization process, now known as SMART SCALE, and directed the Commonwealth Transportation Board to develop and use a scoring process for project selection by July 2016. Virginia's SMART SCALE (§33.2-21.4) is about picking the right transportation projects for funding and ensuring the best use of limited tax dollars. The purpose of SMART SCALE is to fund the right transportation projects through a prioritization process that evaluates each project's merits using key factors, including: improvements to safety, congestion reduction, accessibility, land use, economic development and the environment. The evaluation focuses on the degree to which a project addresses a problem or need relative to the requested funding for the project. Once projects are scored and prioritized, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has the best information possible to select the right projects for funding.

As part of the SMART SCALE prioritization process, Virginia law states that Northern Virginia localities, agencies and public transportation providers that wish to submit projects for Virginia SMART SCALE funding must show that the project is included in or is exempt from inclusion in each Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). If the project is not in an MPO's CLRP, it must have a MPO resolution of support.

There are several projects that Virginia TPB members wish to be considered for the SMART SCALE prioritization process, therefore the TPB, as the MPO representing Northern Virginia, is being asked to approve a resolution of support for those projects that are not in the TPB's current long-range plan. This resolution will not be an endorsement of a project, rather it will enable a project to be submitted for review. If the project does get awarded with SMART SCALE funding, it will then re-enter the TPB process as a new project and will be evaluated accordingly as specified in the TPB's Technical Solicitation Submission Guide. In addition, the first year of the awarded funding will be 2024, therefore there will be time for any project that gets awarded to be amended or included in the MPO's future long-range plans.

2018 PROJECT SUBMISSIONS AND SCHEDULE

For each biennial SMART SCALE cycle, basic preliminary applications must be submitted by June 1 of the calendar year, and final project applications must be submitted by August 1. The TPB will be asked to approve a resolution and project list at the June 20 TPB meeting, in order to meet the August 1, 2018 Virginia SMART SCALE deadline.

All highway and transit projects are submitted the same way to the VDOT SMART SCALE internet portal. This year, the preliminary application deadline was extended through June 8. VDOT will provide the list of preliminary submissions received as of June 8 for the TPB to consider.

Each larger Virginia jurisdiction can submit up to ten applications, and the smaller jurisdictions may submit up to four. Due to the timing of the process, the resolution that will be considered by the TPB will include all preliminary applications submitted by June 8. Many Virginia localities will develop and submit more preliminary applications for the June 8 deadline than they are eligible to submit for the August 1 deadline. Because there is a maximum limit to how many applications each jurisdiction can submit, and because jurisdictions are still going through their own processes to identify exactly which application will be submitted as final, the list that will be approved by the TPB will contain more projects than what will actually be submitted as final on August 1.

Once all projects have been submitted, evaluation teams work through December to screen and score all projects and provide project rankings to the CTB in January. The TPB will ask Virginia to provide both the list of projects that were officially submitted, and the TPB will ask for a report on which projects receive funding.

NEXT STEPS

On June 20, the TPB will be asked to approve Resolution R20-2018 to support submission of Northern Virginia projects that are not currently in the 2016 CLRP to the Commonwealth of Virginia SMART SCALE Project Prioritization Process.