

ITEM 12 – Action
October 17, 2018

Approval of Projects Recommended for Funding Under the FY 2019
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for the
District of Columbia

Staff Recommendation: Adopt Resolution R8-2019 to approve projects for funding under the Federal Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program for DC for FY 2019.

Issues: None

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 2019 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 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 July 2, 2018 to August 15, 2018; 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 October 5, 2018, 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 2019 in the District of Columbia as described in the attached materials.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: John Swanson, Transportation Planner
Michael Farrell, Transportation Planner
Nicole McCall, Regional Planner
SUBJECT: Projects recommended for funding in FY 2019 in the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program
DATE: October 11, 2018

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 2019, four applications were received from D.C. applicants for a combined request of \$1,190,000 in funding. This year’s TA Set Aside sub-allocation for D.C. is \$1,190,000, which means that funding is available to fully fund all the applications. Based upon a review of the applications, staff is recommending full funding for all the projects, which are listed below:

Project	Sponsor	Total Cost	TAP Funding Request (80%)	Recommendation
Palisades (Glen Echo) Trolley Trail Preliminary Design	District Department of Transportation	\$1,053,806	\$600,000	\$600,000
Capital Crescent and C&O Canal - Georgetown Trail Improvements	Georgetown Business Improvement District	\$180,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Rock Creek Park Military Road Feasibility Study	National Park Service	\$240,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Union Station Legionnaires and Interior Restoration	District Department of Transportation	\$288,000	\$240,000	\$240,000

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/.

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 2018 SOLICITATION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

For FY 2019 in the District of Columbia, DDOT informed TPB staff that the TPB has responsibility for project selection for \$1.19 million. DDOT has discretion for decision-making over the remainder of the FY 2019 funds, which will be used for Safe Routes to School projects.

DDOT conducted the project solicitation for the FY 2019 TA Set-Aside funding during the summer of this year. The applications were due on August 15. 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 four applications, representing a combined total of \$1,190,000. This requested amount is precisely equivalent to the amount available in FY 2019 for TPB project selection.

The federal regulations for the TA Set-Aside require a 20% local match. For all four applications, the match has been provided and, in some cases, the match amount exceeds 20%.

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 was an applicant for two projects in this funding round.

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 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 State Highway Administration and the Virginia Department of Transportation to provide comments about the projects and submit questions for further investigation.
- *Interviews with applicants:* TPB and DDOT staff jointly conducted conference calls with each of the project applicants 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 2019 PROJECTS

Based upon this review process, staff is recommending full funding for the four projects briefly described below.

- **Palisades (Glen Echo) Trolley Trail Preliminary Design**
District Department of Transportation, \$600,000
This project will complete preliminary designs for the first phase of a multi-use trail along a former streetcar line that originally connected Georgetown to Glen Echo Park. Much of this project will focus on the rehabilitation of the Historic Foundry Trestle Bridge, originally built in 1886, and currently in a state of deterioration. In addition, the project will develop designs for the first phase of the proposed Palisades (Glen Echo) Trolley Trail, providing access between Foxhall Road, Canal Road, and Georgetown. which was included in DDOT's 2005 bicycle Master Plan and in DDOT's 2015 moveDC long-range plan. The segment covered by this first phase, which is 3.5 miles in length, is between Foxhall Road and Prospect Street, NW. The project is within the Georgetown Activity Center and across the river from the Rosslyn Activity Center. It is less than ½ mile from the National Capital Trail.

- **Capital Crescent and C&O Canal - Georgetown Trail Improvements**

Georgetown Business Improvement District, \$150,000

Building upon recent improvements, this project will create a new trailhead at the Georgetown connection point of the Capital Crescent Trail and the C&O Canal towpath, two of the most heavily travelled bicycle and pedestrian trail routes in the region. TAP grant funding will be used to fund a suite of improvements including landscaping, planting, lighting, a trailhead meeting area, and an improved staircase. The site, which is currently in a neglected condition, is located where the remnant Aqueduct Bridge, Capital Crescent Trail, and Water Street intersect. The project lies directly on the National Capital Trail network and is within the Georgetown Activity Center.

- **Rock Creek Park Military Road Feasibility Study**

National Park Service, \$200,000

Military Road, the primary east-west connector through Rock Creek Park, is currently inhospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists. A feasibility study funded through this grant will evaluate conceptual alignments for the construction of a multi-use trail, which was identified as a priority in the 2016 NPS paved Trails Study and recommend in moveDC. The project will study a length of 1.3 miles between 16th Street and Oregon Avenue. The project would connect Equity Emphasis Areas on the east of Rock Creek Park.

- **Union Station Front Portico Roman Legionnaires & Vestibules Restoration**

District Department of Transportation, \$240,000

This restoration project represents another important step in preserving and maintaining Union Station, an essential hub in our region's transportation system. The project will complete a series of tasks that were initiated with repairs to the station's ceiling following the earthquake of 2011. Building on restoration efforts funded with previous TAP grants, this project will fund vital restoration of the station's vestibules and entryway statues. Preservation of Union Station 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.

NEXT STEPS

Following the TPB's action on the FY 2019 recommendations, which is scheduled for October 17, TPB staff will forward information regarding the approval to DDOT, which will proceed with project implementation.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM

District of Columbia Project Recommendations for FY 2019

John Swanson
Transportation Planner

Transportation Planning Board
October 17, 2018



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #12

Overview

- TA Set Aside
- TLC Program
- Regional Criteria
- FY 2019 Project Recommendations
- Project Overviews
- Next Steps



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #12: D.C. TA Set Aside
October 17, 2018

2

TA Set Aside

- *PURPOSE:* A federal formula program that provides funding to projects considered “alternatives” to traditional highway construction
- *FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION*
 - MAP-21 (2012) - Established as the “Transportation Alternatives Program”
 - FAST Act (2015) - Renamed “Transportation Alternatives Set Aside”
- *TPB ROLE:* Large MPOs are sub-allocated funds and given the responsibility for selecting projects for those funds



TLC Program

- In our region, the TA Set Aside Program is a component of the TPB’s TLC Program
- The TLC Program also includes:
 - Technical assistance projects
 - TLC PeerX (Peer Exchange Network)
- These programs promote regional goals and priorities, including:
 - Multimodal transportation options (RTPP Goal 1)
 - Regional activity centers (RTPP Goal 2)



Regional Policies Criteria

- Expanding multimodal transportation options for non-drivers
- Support for Regional Activity Centers
- Access to high-capacity transit
- Access in Equity Emphasis Areas
- Support for the National Capital Trail
- Increased access for people with disabilities



FY 2019 Project Recommendations

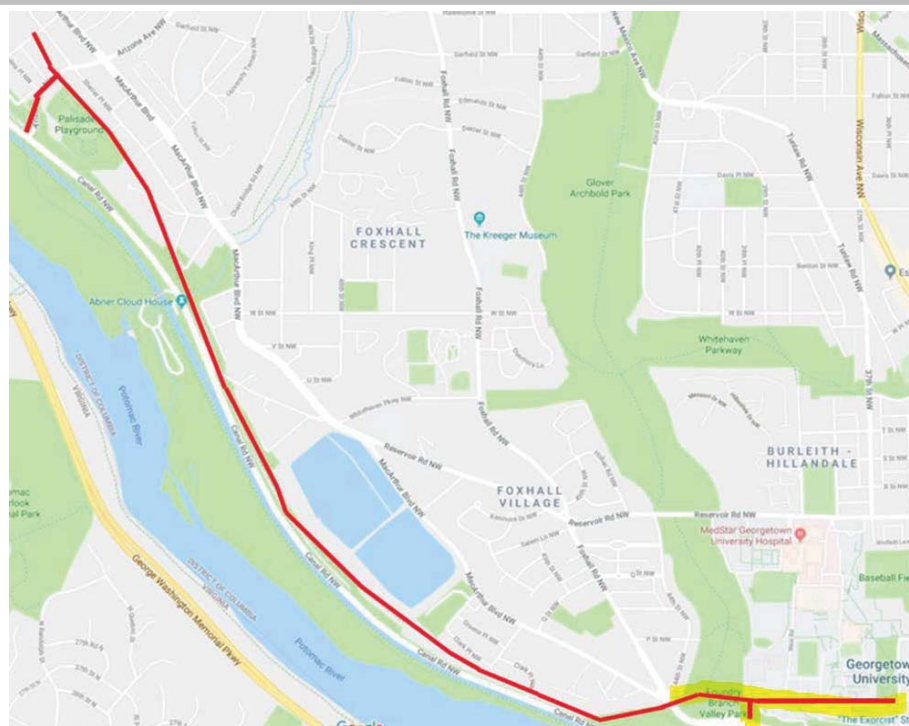
- TPB received \$1,190,000 in funding requests for 4 projects in D.C.
- TPB's TA Set Aside sub-allocation for D.C. is \$1,190,000
- The four submitted applications are recommended for full funding



FY 2019 Project Recommendations

Project	Jurisdiction/Agency	Recommendation
Palisades (Glen Echo) Trolley Trail Preliminary Design	District Department of Transportation	\$600,000
Capital Crescent and C&O Canal - Georgetown Trail Improvements	Georgetown Business Improvement District	\$150,000
Rock Creek Park Military Road Feasibility Study	National Park Service	\$200,000
Union Station Legionnaires and Interior Restoration	District Department of Transportation	\$240,000
Total		\$1,190,000

Glen Echo Trolley Trail Design



Glen Echo Trolley Trail Design



Photo Credit: Brett Young, GreaterGreaterWashington

- Preliminary design of a multi-use trail between Foxhall Road and Prospect St NW
- Segment includes historic trestle bridge
 - Poor condition
 - Needs stabilization/rehabilitation



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #12: D.C. TA Set Aside
October 17, 2018

9

Capitol Crescent Trailhead – C&O Trail Connection



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #12: D.C. TA Set Aside
October 17, 2018

10

Capitol Crescent Trailhead – C&O Connection



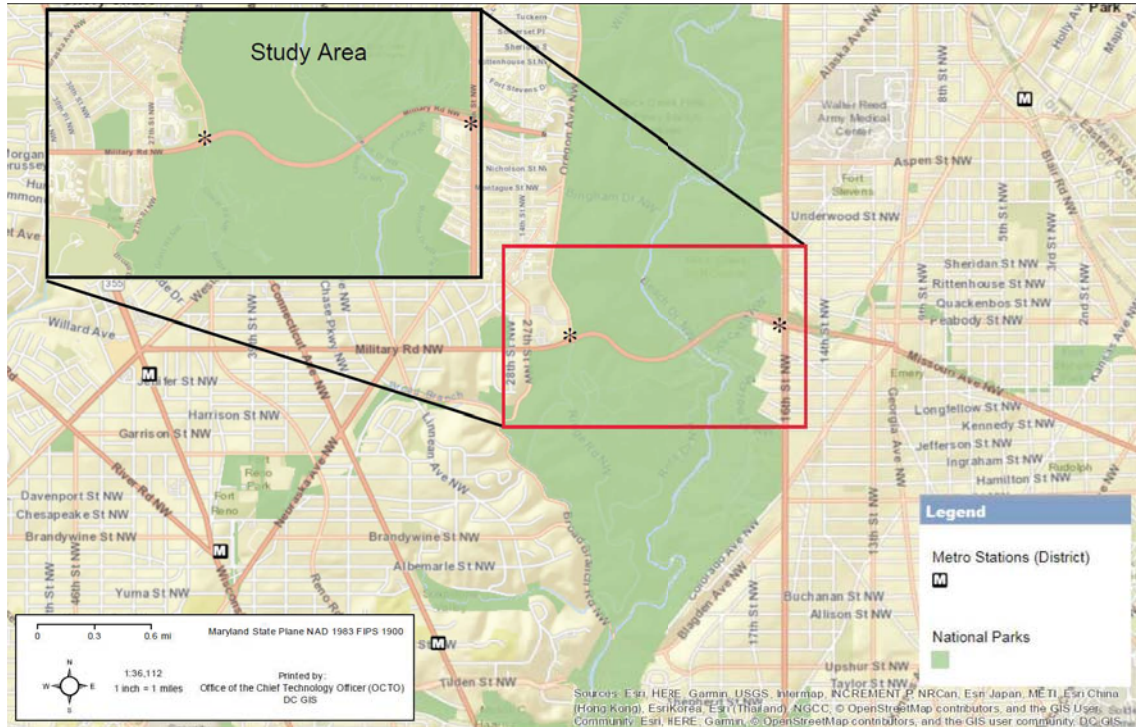
Protected Trailhead Area

To include:

- Paved trailhead meeting area
 - Separated from traffic
- Landscaping and plantings
- Lighting
- Improved staircase connection to C&O Towpath



Military Road in Rock Creek Park Study



Military Road in Rock Creek Park Study



- Feasibility study for an on or off-road paved trail between Glover Road/Oregon Avenue and 16th Street NW along Military Road
- Rock Creek Park is a significant obstacle to East/West Bicycle and Pedestrian Movement



Union Station Legionnaires and Interior Restoration

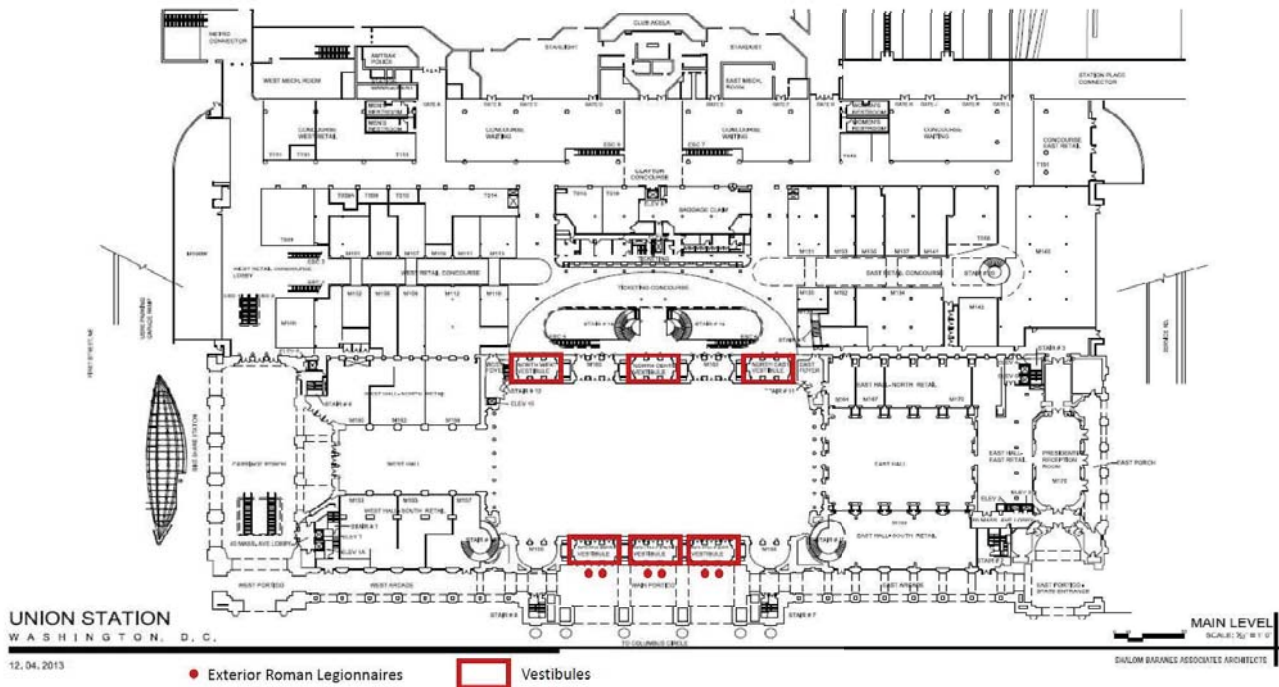


- Clean and restore exterior statues, interior vestibules
- Historic restoration
- Heavily used facility

Union Station Legionnaires and Interior Restoration



Union Station Legionnaires and Interior Restoration



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item #12: D.C. TA Set Aside
October 17, 2018

17

Next Steps

- The TPB is scheduled to vote on the projects on October 17, 2018
- TPB staff will forward information regarding the approved projects to DDOT
- Once all selections are finalized, DDOT staff will work with applicants to administer funding



National Capital Region
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Agenda Item #12: D.C. TA Set Aside
October 17, 2018

18

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