



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: John Swanson, Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Projects recommended for funding in FY 2021-2022 in Virginia under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program
DATE: February 7, 2020

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).

For FY 2021 and FY 2022 in Virginia, the TPB was provided a sub-allocation of \$5,579,514. A selection panel has recommended that the projects list below be approved by the TPB at its meeting on February 19, 2020. The recommendations will leave a remainder of \$28,240 unspent from the TPB's sub-allocation.

TPB Selection Panel Project Recommendations Virginia Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program, FY 2021-2022		
Project Name	Jurisdiction	Selection Panel Recommendations
Columbia Pike Complete Streets Improvements - Phase I	Fairfax County	\$780,000
Orange Hunt Elementary School SRTS	Fairfax County	\$160,000
Central Elden Walkability Improvements	Town of Herndon	\$1,011,908
W&OD Trail At-Grade Improvements	Loudoun County	\$1,157,162
Wellington Road Shared-Use Path Gap	City of Manassas	\$675,092
Old Bridge Rd SW-Oakwood to Forest Hills Sidewalk & Pedestrian Improvements	Prince William County	\$1,360,000
Timber Fence Trail - Phase II	Town of Warrenton	\$407,112
	TOTAL	\$5,551,274

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, 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 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.

FY 2021-22 SOLICITATION FOR VIRGINIA

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 Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to administer the TA Set-Aside for Northern Virginia.

During the past two cycles, VDOT has conducted two-year solicitations. This current solicitation covers FY 2021 and FY 2022. For the first time, applicants were required to submit a pre-application, which had a deadline of July 1, 2019. The applications were due on October 1, 2019.

For applicants from Northern Virginia, the VDOT application included a supplementary form requesting information about how projects responded to the TPB’s regional priorities related to Activity Centers, transit station access, and multimodal transportation options.

For the portion of Virginia in the TPB’s planning area, VDOT received 24 applications representing a total of \$24,945,009 in requested funding. These applications are eligible for statewide TA Set-Aside funding as well as the TPB’s sub-allocated funds. The TPB was sub-allocated \$5,579,514 in available funding.

As in the past, Virginia conducted a three-part process for project selection for this two-year cycle:

1. The district members of Virginia’s Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) each were allocated \$2 million for project selection (plus previously unallocated funding) from the statewide pot of funding;
2. Large MPOs select projects for sub-allocated funds;
3. The at-large members of the CTB select projects for the remainder of the statewide money.

This week, the CTB District Member for Northern Virginia, Mary Hynes, let VDOT and TPB staff know her project selections for the funding allocated to her district, which was \$2.1 million (Ms. Hynes’ sub-allocation included \$100,000 from previously unallocated funding). Ms. Hynes’ project selections are listed below.

Project Selections Mary Hynes, CTB Northern Virginia District Member		
Project Name	Jurisdiction	CTB District Member Selections
Streetscape Phase 2A	Town of Clifton	\$453,259
Sager Avenue Sidewalk	City of Fairfax	\$424,000
City of Fairfax Bike Share	City of Fairfax	\$336,800
Shreveewood Elementary School - Safe Routes to School	Fairfax County	\$560,000
Bikeshare Stations	Town of Vienna	\$217,920
	TOTAL	\$1,991,979

Because the TPB’s planning area includes a small portion of Fauquier County, the TPB was asked to consider any TA Set-Aside applications in this area, which is not part of VDOT’s Northern Virginia District but instead lies within VDOT’s Culpeper District. VDOT received one application for this area from the Town of Warrenton. The TPB’s Selection Panel recommended this project for funding.

PROJECT SELECTION

The TPB is responsible for completing the second part of the selection process presented above. To determine funding recommendations, TPB staff invited representatives from the District of Columbia and Maryland to participate on the TPB’s selection panel. The panel met on February 3, 2020. Panel participants included:

- Christy Bernal, Maryland State Highway Administration
- Kelsey Bridges, District Department of Transportation
- Michael Farrell, COG/TPB Staff
- Jaleel Reed, COG Staff
- John Swanson, COG/TPB Staff

Panel members individually reviewed and scored applications for a maximum of 100 points. The total score is a composite based on each reviewer's professional assessment (50 points) and regional selection criteria (50 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, bicyclists 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?
- *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.)
- *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 panel met via WebEx on February 3, 2020. To provide a basis for discussion, each member provided their scores in advance of the meeting. Staff developed average scores for each project and ranked them their average scores. The group discussed the projects in that order and jointly determined whether to fund them. The final recommendations are the result of consensus. They are not simply based on a sum of the panelists' individual scores.

At the end of the meeting on February 3, the selection panel recommended seven projects for funding. A table listing all the submitted applications and funding recommendations is attached to this memorandum.

The panel determined that six of the seven recommended projects should receive 100% of the federal funding that was requested. One project, for crossing improvements on the W&OD Trail in Loudoun County, was selected to receive \$1,157,162 out of a total funding request of \$2,204,118. The panel determined that it would be appropriate to fund this project on a partial basis because the application essentially comprised a package of eight geographically distinct crossing projects along the trail. VDOT staff concurred with the panel's decision to fund this application partially. Based on the priority ranking of the eight crossings in the application, the selection panel recommended funding for the following four crossings: Ashburn Road (\$34,034), Hirst Road (\$544,547), Smith Switch Road (\$544,547), and North Hatcher Avenue (\$34,034).

NEXT STEPS

The TPB will be asked to approve the selection panel's recommendations on February 19, 2020. Following the board's action, TPB staff will forward information regarding the approved projects to VDOT for inclusion in the Commonwealth's Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) for Transportation.

At its meeting on February 20, the CTB will consider whether to award funding, using the statewide TA Set-Aside funds, to the remaining Northern Virginia applications.

Once all selections are finalized, VDOT staff will work with applicants to administer funding.

**FY 2021-2022 Applications and Funding Recommendations for the
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program in Northern Virginia**

	Project Name	Jurisdiction	Funding Request	TPB Selection Panel Recommendations	CTB District Member Selections
1	Arlington Boulevard Trail Enhancements	Arlington County	\$2,000,000		
2	Seminary Road Sidewalk	City of Alexandria	\$800,000		
3	Sager Avenue Sidewalk	City of Fairfax	\$424,000		\$424,000
4	City of Fairfax Bike Share	City of Fairfax	\$336,800		\$336,800
5	Wellington Road Shared-Use Path Gap	City of Manassas	\$675,092	\$675,092	
6	Columbia Pike Complete Streets Improvements	Fairfax County	\$780,000	\$780,000	
7	Shrevewood Elementary School SRTS	Fairfax County	\$560,000		560,000
8	Bikeshare Expansion	Fairfax County	\$500,000		
9	Orange Hunt Elementary School SRTS	Fairfax County	\$160,000	\$160,000	
10	Mason Neck Trail	Fairfax County	\$800,000		
11	W&OD Trail At-Grade Improvements*	Loudoun County	\$2,204,118	\$1,157,162	
12	Yorkshire Lane Sidewalk	Prince William County	\$3,280,000		
13	Old Bridge Rd SW-Oakwood to Forest Hills Sidewalk and Pedestrian Improvements	Prince William County	\$1,360,000	\$1,360,000	
14	Streetscape Phase 2A	Town of Clifton	\$453,259		\$453,259
15	Central Elden Walkability Improvements	Town of Herndon	\$1,011,908	\$1,011,908	
16	East Broad Way 2A Streetscape Project	Town of Lovettsville	\$1,856,800		
17	Round Hill Greenway	Town of Round Hill	\$1,360,000		
18	BikeShare Stations	Town of Vienna	\$217,920		\$217,920
19	Glyndon Street NE Sidewalk	Town of Vienna	\$1,424,000		
20	Glyndon Street SE Sidewalk	Town of Vienna	\$1,936,000		
21	Pleasant Street SW Sidewalk	Town of Vienna	\$572,000		
22	Kenyon Road NE Trail	Town of Vienna	\$386,000		
23	Ayr Hill Ave and Center St N Sidewalks	Town of Vienna	\$1,440,000		
24	Timber Fence Trail - Phase II	Town of Warrenton	\$407,112	\$407,112	
		TOTAL	\$24,945,009	\$5,551,274	\$1,991,979
		TPB Sub-Allocation		\$ 5,579,514	\$ 2,100,000
		Remainder		\$ 28,240	\$ 108,021
	* The first four (out of eight) priority crossings are recommended for funding.				