

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

Transportation Committee

November 22, 2016

Date: TUESDAY, November 22, 2016

Time: 1:30 PM

Location:

**VDOT Residency Conference Room,
23096 Courthouse Avenue
Accomac, 23301**

PROPOSED AGENDA:

- I. Call to order
- II. Approval-September 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes
pp. 3-5
- III. Staff Update pp. 6-10 & pp. 49-59 (for articles)
- IV. Unfinished business
 - A. Website update – Title VI Civil Rights
 - B. HB2 “Smart Scale” Update
- V. New business
 - A. Revised Work Plan by TTAC meeting
based on VDOT planning schedule pp. 11-14
 - B. Comments needed by December 7, 2016
for 2016 Rural Transportation Cooperation
Processes draft pp. 15-48
- VII. Public participation
- VI. Next meeting – January 23, 2017, 1:30 p.m.
- VII. Adjourn

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Joe Bulin, ESCSB, Alt.
Vanessa Cousineau, ESAAA/CAA representative
Larry DiRe, Cape Charles representative
Robert Duer, Town of Exmore
Barb Haxter, Accomack Airport*
Granville Hogg, A-NPDC*
Tim Holloway, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel*
Chris Isdell, VDOT Accomac Residency*
Abra Jacobs, Center for Independent Living
William Kerbin, Town of Onancock
Larry LeMond, ANTDC*
John Maher, STAR Transit
Rich Morrison, Accomack County*
Alex Parry, Bay Coast Railroad
Jerry Pauley, VDOT, Alt.
Rob Marney, Chincoteague*
Ivan Rucker, FHWA
Lisa Sedjat, ESCSB
Peter Stith, Northampton County*
Eric Stringfield, VDOT District Planner*
Kristen Tremblay, Accomack County, Alt.

STAFF:

Elaine Meil, A-NPDC
Barbara Schwenk, A-NPDC
Dinah Oliver, VDOT
Curt Smith, A-NPDC
Keisha Williams, VDOT

CONTACT:

Barbara Schwenk
bschwenk@a-ndpc.org
757-787-2936 x127

FOLLOW US:

www.a-ndpc.org

*Voting Members

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
23372 Front Street
P.O. Box 417
Accomac, VA 23301



Podemos ofrecer servicios de interpretación para la reunión. Por favor, llámanos tres días de anticipación para que podamos servir mejor a usted. 757-787-2936, ext. 127

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DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016,
1:30 p.m.
VDOT Residency Conference Room
23096 Courthouse Avenue, Accomac

A meeting of the A-NPDC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee was held at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27, 2016 in the VDOT/Accomack Residency Commission conference room in Accomac, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry DiRe, Town of Cape Charles
Granville Hogg, A-NPDC
Chris Isdell, VDOT
William H. Kerbin, Jr, Town of Onancock
John Maher, STAR Transit
Rich Morrison, Accomack County
Dinah Oliver, VDOT
Jerry Pauley, VDOT
Peter Stith, Northampton County
Barbara Young (for Lisa Sedjat), ESCSB

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joe Bulin, ESCSB
Vanessa Cousineau, ESAAA/CAA
Robert Duer, town of Exmore
Abra Jacobs, ES CIL
Barbara Haxter, Accomack Airport
Tim Holloway, CBBT
Larry LeMond, A-NTDC
Alex Parry, Bay Coast Railroad
Ivan Rucker, FHWA
Kristen Tremblay, Alternate, Accomack County

OTHERS:

Elaine Meil, A-NPDC, staff
Barbara Schwenk, A-NPDC, staff

1. Call to Order
Vice-Chairman Morrison deferred running of the meeting to Mr. Hogg who convened the meeting at 1:40 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes
The May 24, 2016 minutes were approved as present by motion of Stith and seconded by Morrison. Meetings minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Staff Report

On September 1, Barbara Schwenk replaced Connie Morrison as the Transportation Program Manager for the A-NPDC. She reported progress on the FY17 Work Program.

The approach for building Sidewalk Gaps project was discussed. Mr. Maher suggested that bus stops be considered within this project, specifically at locations for which STAR Transit had requests. Mr. Hogg suggested that the curb cuts without sidewalks attached to them be investigated as part of the project as well.

Ms. Schwenk will review the photos that Sue Simon took in several towns and find a way to identify where these are relative to the centerline data. There was a suggestion to pick one town and match up the photos and the centerline data to see if this will be a useful way to proceed.

Ms. Schwenk asked if there were any materials available regarding the Rural Roads project, and Mr. Morrison informed the group that Accomack County had sent suggestions for road inclusion for this project. Further research will be needed for Northampton County roads that qualify. The Committee discussed the criteria for inclusion and Fooks Lane, which qualifies under this program, was cited as an example of a project meeting the criteria.

4. Unfinished Business

A. State of Good Repair – Mr. Isdell reported on how funds are allocated for this program, and that primary roads are resurfaced yearly and secondary roads are done every 5 years or when tested and deemed in need of resurfacing.

B. 2017 Work Program – Ms. Schwenk reported on progress to date:

- a. A Resolution of Support was prepared from the A-NPDC for the Smart Scale Applications by Accomack and Northampton counties.
- b. Accomack County has prepared four Smart Scale applications:
 - i. Implement countermeasures recommended in the Eastern Shore Safety Study, 2016, Site specific location #23 for State route 13/Route 175 Chincoteague Road Intersection Access Management
 - ii. Implement countermeasures recommended in the Eastern Shore Safety Study, 2016, Site specific locations #21 and 22, and request that signal be added for State Route 13/Temperanceville and Saxis Roads Intersection
 - iii. T-602 Cemetery and Lee Road (Accomack County section) – widen, grade, and repave because traffic volume has increased by 50% between 2002 and 2010.
 - iv. Route 13/Industrial Park/Eastern Shore Community College intersection at Parkway – request that a signal be added, and that improvements be made as recommended in the Route 13/Wallops Island Access Management Study Plan, 2002.
- c. Northampton County has prepared three applications:
 - i. Implement countermeasures recommended in Eastern Shore Safety Study, 2016, Site Specific Location #2 for Route 13/Stone Road (184) intersection improvements and consider adding an access road between Food Lion shopping center on Route 13 and Business Route 13.

- ii. Implement countermeasures recommended in Eastern Shore Safety Study, 2016, Site Specific Location #3 at Eyrehall Drive segment of Route 13
 - iii. T-602 Cemetery and Lee roads (Northampton County section) – widen, grade, and repave because traffic volume has increased by 50% between 2002 and 2010.
 - C. Title VI – Civil Rights Compliance.
 - a. On September 23, VDOT Civil Rights personnel conducted an audit of the A-NPDC’s compliance with Title VI provisions. Several suggestions were made to streamline compliance reporting and record keeping. Staff will add the Title VI language and procedures to the website as suggested.
 - D. Professional Development conferences, workshops, training
 - a. The November 10 fall conference was discussed and staff is requested to send conference materials to the Committee as soon as they are available. Mr. Morrison stressed the importance of representation at the meeting. There was also a question of who our CTB representative is:
John Malbon, Hampton Roads District (Term expires June 30, 2017)
 4920 Southern Blvd.
 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462
 757-499-5977
 - E. Website – Staff reported that the A-NPDC website was up and functioning well. Committee members and the public can now easily check on meeting details and program progress whenever convenient.
 - F. HB2 Smart Scale Update – grant applications are due by midnight on September 30. See B. above for application details.
5. New Business
- A. Discussion ensued on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) which has grant applications due November 1.
 - a. Mr. Hogg asked whether a study could be done of the intersection of Townsend Drive and Route 13 in southern Northampton County. Trucks have difficulty turning safely onto Route 13 but crash statistics are not high for that intersection. Mr. Maher said that the STAR Transit buses have the same difficulty at that intersection. Mr. Isdell will look into what might be done to study that location.
 - b. It was mentioned that some of the HB2 application locations (above) would also qualify for the HSIP.
6. Public Participation – none.
7. Adjournment – at 2:40 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Morrison, seconded by Stith, and approved unanimously.

Next meeting: November 22, 2016, 1:30 p.m.

Copy teste:

Larry LeMond	Date
Chairman	
Barbara Schwenk	Date
Secretary	

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Barbara Schwenk, Transportation Program Manager

DATE: November 22, 2016

SUBJECT: Staff Update

Committee Attendance Record

The Committee Attendance Report for calendar year 2016 is attached.

Information Items

1. The resolution establishing the TTAC is attached for your information. I understood that TTAC members asked to see this previously but it was not readily available.
2. Kristen Tremblay, Granville Hogg, Chris Isdell, Jerry Pauley, Eric Stringfield and I attended the VDOT Fall meeting in Chesapeake on November 10. It was a review of the "SmartScale" applications that have been submitted. However, no decisions have yet been made about which will be left on the list or which will be funded. An independent team reviewed them and will make the evaluations available to the Commonwealth Transportation Board in January. Aubrey Lane and others explained how and why SmartScale was developed, and he took questions from the audience. He also explained how the allocations are divided up:
 - a) 45% goes to State of Good Repair – estimated to take 10 years to bring infrastructure up to an acceptable standard.
 - b) 27-1/2% goes to the Districts, and projects compete within each district
 - c) 27-1/2% goes to statewide priorities, where each project competes with ALL projects in Virginia.
3. In the interest of aligning the TTAC work with VDOT's planning process, I've outlined a rough draft of those items that the TTAC could address or be informed of at each of its upcoming 2017 meetings. Your review and comments would be most welcome at the November 22 meeting. I've listed this item in new business on the agenda.
4. Also under new business, VDOT has requested feedback on its draft **2016 RURAL TRANSPORTATION COOPERATION PLANNING PROCESSES**. VDOT would like our comments by December 7.
5. Articles of Interest (attached)

- a) USDOT Requests Applications for \$850 Million in FASTLANE Transportation Infrastructure Grants
- b) U.S. Maritime Administration Releases Report on Zero Emission High-speed Passenger Ferry
- c) Transportation Infrastructure Flooding: Sensing Water Levels and Rerouting Traffic Out of Danger
- d) Safe Routes to School in Small Rural Communities: Challenges and Strategies to Accessing Funding

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission
TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
2016 ATTENDANCE RECORD

Member	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Joe Bulin, Alt. ESCSB	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Vanessa Cousineau ESAAA/CAA/Head Start	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Larry DiRe Town of Cape Charles	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Robert Duer Exmore	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Barbara Haxter Accmk County Airpt	*	*	X	*		*	*	*		*		
Granville Hogg A-NPDC	---	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Tim Holloway CBBT	*	*	X	*		*	*	*		*		
Chris Isdell VDOT Residency	*	*		*		*	*	*	X	*		
Abra Jacobs Center for Independent Living	*	*		*	X	*	*	*		*		
William Kerbin Onancock	*	*		*		*	*	*	X	*		
Mike Leahy ESCSB	---	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Larry LeMond ANTDC	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*		*		
John Maher STAR Transit	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Ron Marney Chincoteague	*	*		*	(X)	*	*	*		*		
Rich Morrison Accomack County	*	*	X	*		*	*	*	X	*		
Dinah Oliver VDOT	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Alex Parry Bay Coast Railroad	*	*	X	*		*	*	*		*		
Jerry Pauley VDOT	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Ivan Rucker FHWA	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Barbara Schwenk A-NPDC	*	*	X	*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Lisa Sedjat ESCSB	---	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Peter Stith Northampton County	*	*		*	X	*	*	*	X	*		
Eric Stringfield VDOT	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Kristen Tremblay, Alt. Accomack County	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		
Curt Smith A-NPDC	*	*	X	*		*	*	*		*		
Keisha Wilkins VDOT	*	*		*		*	*	*		*		

X: Present *: No meeting that month (:): Alternate ---: Not a member that month

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation desires for the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission to provide transportation planning assistance to the local jurisdictions within the planning district in order to comply with provisions of 23 U.S.C. 135; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation desires to provide the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission with Federal Highway Planning and Research (HPR) funds to provide said transportation planning assistance to the local jurisdictions within the planning district; and

WHEREAS, the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission desires to provide transportation planning assistance to the local jurisdictions within the Accomack-Northampton Planning District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission directs its staff to assist the Virginia Department of Transportation in transportation planning related matters for the Accomack-Northampton Planning District as necessary to comply with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 135; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission directs its staff to administer the Federal Highway Planning and Research (HPR) funds made available by the Virginia Department of Transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission authorizes its Executive Director to execute all documents necessary to provide said transportation planning assistance and all documents necessary for the expenditure of HPR funds.

Duly adopted at its regular meeting of February 16, 1993, by the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission.

Julia E. Major
Chairman

9/15/1993
Date

ATTEST:

Paul F. Berge
Executive Director

9/15/1993
Date

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Work Plan DRAFT

Thursday, October 27, 2016 8:57 AM

VDOT Work Plan Items For TTAC Meetings

1. JANUARY

- a. SmartScale evaluations released by CTB
- b. Six-Year Financial Plan (SYFP) provided for annual update of the Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP)
- c. Early March - VTRANS recommendations development webinar

2. MARCH

- a. Report on VTRANS webinar
- b. February through April - CTB Considers evaluated projects for inclusion in SYIP
- c. April and May - SYIP Spring Public Meetings held in each district
- d. Late April/early May - VTRANS Regional Forums to share consolidated needs and solicit input on priorities and recommendations

3. MAY

- a. Report on SYIP Spring Public Meetings attended
- ? b. April - draft SYIP presented to CTB - obtain copy
 - i. Provide CTB representatives with comments
 - ii. June - Final SYIP presented to CTB for adoption

4. JULY

- a. SYIP - Project budgets posted in VDOT's financial system; Early coordination with VDOT/DRTP on candidate projects
 - i. August through September - solicit candidate projects from local governments and regional entities
- b. VTRANS draft recommendations developed
 - i. July and August - finalize recommendations; regional outreach for 2040 scenarios
 - 1) Web engagement throughout scenario and recommendations development
 - 2) Multimodal Working Group (MMWG), Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), Freight Technical Committee (VFTTC) throughout

5. SEPTEMBER

- a. Fall transportation meetings held in October and November to share information and gather input. Included:
 - i. SmartScale (2018)
 - ii. VTRANS - input on drivers for 2040 scenarios gathered
- b. October through January - screen and evaluate projects for inclusion in SYIP based on SmartScale process
- c. **Deadlines for applications**
 - i. September 30, 2018 - SmartScale
 - ii. October 31st - Revenue Sharing

- iii. October 31st - SYIP
- iv. November 1st - Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- v. November 1st - Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- vi. November 1st - Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program

6. NOVEMBER

- a. Report on Fall transportation meetings attended
- b. December - Governor's Budget Submission and revenue forecasts from the Department of Taxation initiate the development of the Six-Year Financial Plan (SYFP)

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. SmartScale (HB2) - 2 year cycle - last one September 30, 2016 (next in 2018)

The SMART Portal includes application submission for Revenue Sharing, Transportation Alternatives, Highway Safety and Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Programs as well as Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) projects.

From <<http://vasmartscale.org/>>

2. Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)

- a. **Fall Transportation Meetings** held to share information and gather input
 - i. **October thru January** - screen and evaluate projects based on HB2 process
 - ii. **October 31st** - Application deadline for Revenue Sharing
 - iii. **November 1st** - Application deadline for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
<http://www.virginiadot.org/business/prehancegrants.asp>
- b. **Winter**
 - i. **December** - Governor's Budget Submission and revenue forecasts from the Department of Taxation initiate the development of the draft Six-Year Financial Plan (SYFP)
 - ii. **January** - SYFP provided for annual update of the SYIP; Evaluation of Smart Scale (HB2) projects released
- c. **Spring**
 - i. **February thru April** - CTB considers evaluated projects for SYIP
 - ii. **April** - Draft SYIP presented to CTB, public hearings are held, and SYFP revised based on legislative actions
 - iii. **April thru May** - SYIP Spring Public Meetings held in each district
- d. **Summer**
 - i. **June** - Final SYIP presented to CTB for adoption
 - ii. **July** - Project budgets posted in VDOT's financial system; Early coordination with VDOT/DRTP on candidate projects
 - iii. **August thru September** - Solicit candidate projects from local governments and regional entities

3. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

<http://www.virginiadot.org/business/ted_app_pro.asp> - **deadline for application November 1, 2016**
 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) was passed into law July 2012 and extended to authorize the federal surface transportation programs for highways,

highway safety, and transit. MAP-21 continues the core HSIP, administered by Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), structured and funded to make significant progress in reducing highway fatalities and severe injuries on all public roads following United States Code Title 23, Sections 130, 148, and 154. The federal aid contributes 90 to 100 percent of certain safety improvements. HSIP is a data-driven, strategic approach program for infrastructure improvements for all highway travel modes. Emphasis is placed on strategies and actions with expected performance outcomes as documented in Virginia's 2012-16 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). With Virginia's vision that everyone should Arrive Alive we should work towards zero highway deaths, infrastructure and operational "engineering" improvements must mission with education, enforcement and emergency response partners to reduce crashes and their consequences.

- a. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program - **deadline for application November 1, 2016**
 - b. Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Program
4. Revenue Sharing Program - application deadline **October 31st**
- a. <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-access-programs.asp>
 - b. Revenue Sharing Program Guidelines
http://www.virginiadot.org/VDOT/Business/asset_upload_file105_74839.pdf
 - c. Can be applied to Airport Access, Economic Development Access, and Recreational Access programs as well
 - d. Can be used for projects not listed on SYIP as well as new construction of sidewalks, bike trails, etc.
 - e. In the most recent round of awards, the state approved over \$171M to assist localities with identified projects (1:1 match). No ESVA projects were initiated.
5. Airport Access
- a. http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/local_assistance/access_programs/AirportAccessProgramGuide.pdf
6. Economic Development Access
- a. http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/local_assistance/access_programs/EconomicDevelopmentAccessProgramGuide.pdf
7. Recreational Access Program
- a. http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/local_assistance/RecreationalAccessProgramGuide_2009.pdf
 - b. Could possibly be used to connect bike/hike trail from ESNWR to Kiptopeke State Park by crossing Route 13 and improving Arlington Road by adding a bike path along shoulder.
8. Safe Routes to School Program
- a. http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/tes Rt2_school_pro.asp
9. Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)
- a. Under MAP-21, the core Federal Lands Highway Programs were restructured. With this new transportation bill, the Forest Highway Program (FHP) and Public Lands Highways Discretionary Program (PLHD) came to an end. The new Federal Lands Access Program (Access Program), which is administered by Eastern Federal Lands (EFL), builds upon the structure of the former programs. The goal of the Access

Program is to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. Similar to the FHP, the statute requires a Tri-party committee to make programming decisions and develop a multi-year program of projects. This committee will be known as the Programming Decision Committee (PDC). The PDC is comprised of a representative of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), a representative of the Virginia Department of Transportation, and a representative of a county or other local governments within that State. Projects will be selected through an application process. The PDC will consider the selection criteria and Federal Land Management Agency input to optimize the use of the statewide Federal Lands Access Program funds. The funds available to Virginia from this program vary from year to year and are subject to being reduced each year by applicable rescissions, set-asides, or any other limitations cited in law. Unlike the FHP and PLHD, a local match of 20 percent is now required for the Federal Lands Access Program.

- b. Currently being used to develop a feasibility study of Phase III - Bike/Hike Trail that originates at the ESNWR from Capeville Road to Cape Charles along abandoned railroad ROW.

10. Transportation Alternatives Program

- a. http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/transportation_enhancement/TA_FY2018_FINAL_Applicant_Workshop_Presentation.pdf

11. VTRANS Development (Statewide Transportation Plan)

- a. **Fall - Input** on Drivers for 2040 scenarios gathered at Statewide Fall Meetings
- b. **Early March:** Recommendations development webinar
- c. **Late April/Early May:** Regional Forums to share consolidated needs and solicit input on priorities and recommendations
- d. **July:** Draft recommendations
- e. **July/August:** finalize recommendations; regional outreach for 2040 scenarios
- f. Web engagement **throughout** scenario development and recommendations development
- g. Multimodal Working Group (MMWG), Multimodal Advisory Committee (MAC), Freight Technical Committee (VFTTC) **throughout** both

Barbara Schwenk

From: Fiol, Marsha C. (VDOT) <Marsha.Fiol@VDOT.Virginia.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2016 3:15 PM
To: Gage Harter; lland@vaco.org; e-mail@vml.org; jareson@vml.org; vapdc@associationbuilders.com; Mauney, patrick I
Cc: Sundra, Edward (Ed); Yan, Cheng; 'john.simkins@dot.gov'; Debruhl, Jennifer (DRPT); Ramchandani, Jitender (DRPT); District Transportation Planners (VDOT); Mitchell, Diane L. (VDOT); Pryor, Kimberly (VDOT); Thomas, Wendy E. (VDOT); Halacy, Todd M, PE (VDOT); Sawyer, Shane (VDOT); Ray, Margie W. (VDOT); Brown, Julie R. (VDOT); Dudley, Russell A. (VDOT); Brown, Terry. (DRPT); Arabia, Christopher (DRPT); Sherman, Neil (DRPT); VDOT Planning and Investment Managers (VDOT); CO TMPD RLRP Contacts (VDOT); Curling, Samuel F. (VDOT); Grier, Robin (VDOT); Mannell, Ben (VDOT); Tucker, Chad J. (VDOT); Hofrichter, Robert W. (VDOT); Detmer, Chris E. (VDOT); Johnson, Darrel S. (VDOT); Graham, Katherine A. (VDOT); Shelton, Brad R., AICP (VDOT)
Subject: Comments are sought on the Draft 2016 Rural Transportation Cooperation Processes

October 4, 2016

Dear Virginia Association of Counties, Virginia Municipal League, and Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions,

Virginia is updating its Rural Transportation Cooperation Processes document. Please inform your affiliated non-metropolitan local officials and other persons who have transportation planning interests that their review and comments are sought on the draft document by no later than Wednesday, December 7, 2016.

At least every five years State Departments of Transportation are federally required to formally review and solicit comments on the effectiveness of the statewide rural transportation cooperation process and any proposed changes for improving the process. The document presenting the recommended **2016 RURAL TRANSPORTATION COOPERATION PROCESSES** is available for review and comment at <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/planners.asp>. The current 2011 Virginia Transportation Rural Consultation Processes document also is available for reference and/or comparison purposes from that same website.

The draft 2016 document focuses on the processes that rural area local officials, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) follow in carrying out state long range transportation plans and short range transportation programs in support of highway, transit, and passenger rail improvements. Proposed revisions for this update include, but are not limited to, discussions on:

- Federal requirements on the cooperative development of statewide transportation plans and programs,
- The state requirements and processes involving preliminary reviews by VDOT of new/revised local comprehensive plan transportation plan components, and/or of local zoning actions that would substantively impact highways,
- The state requirements and processes involving the prioritization and selection of most transportation capital improvement projects (SMART SCALE), and of highway and bridge maintenance projects (State of Good Repair),
- Updates on the state's Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP), including specific roles for rural transportation officials,
- Updates on DRPT coordination with the SYIP, including the DRPT's Online Grant Administration system, and,
- Updates regarding the development of the statewide transportation plan (VTrans).

Written comments are due on the draft 2016 Rural Transportation Cooperative Processes document by no later than December 7, 2016. The written comments on the draft document should be sent to me, VDOT's state transportation planner, at Marsha.Fiol@VDOT.Virginia.gov, and/or to the DRPT's Transit Planning and Project Development Manager, Jitender Ramchandani, at Jitender.Ramchandani@drpt.virginia.gov.

Questions regarding this request should be directed to Mr. Darrel S. Johnson at (804) 371-8868 or Darrel.Johnson@VDOT.Virginia.gov. We anticipate that an updated final Rural Transportation Consultation Processes document will be available in early 2017.

Sincerely,

Marsha

Marsha Fiol
Transportation and Mobility Planning Director
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond VA 23219
804 786-2985 W
804 225-4785 F



THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

RURAL TRANSPORTATION COOPERATION PROCESSES

Preliminary
Review Draft
September
2016 Update

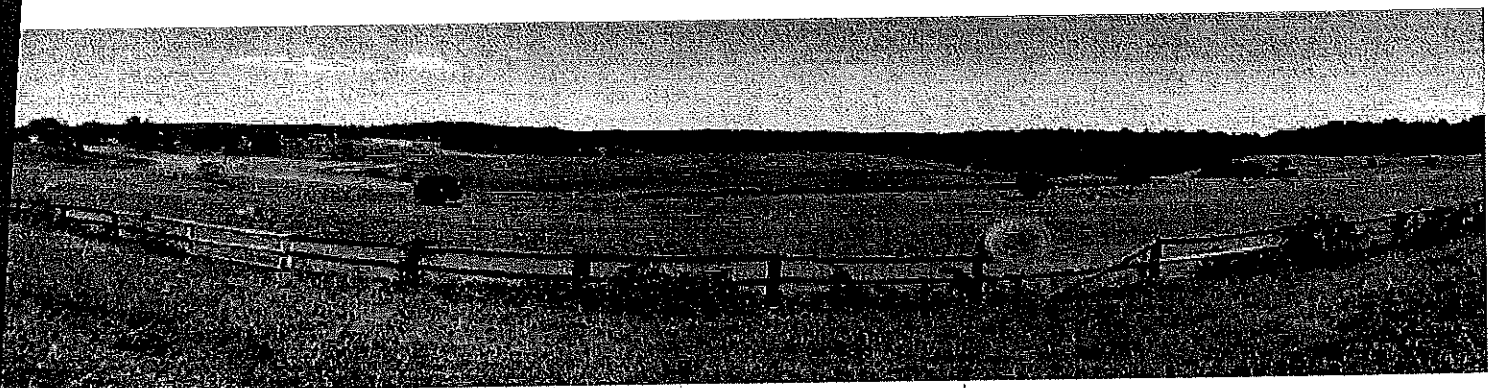


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>I. Virginia Transportation System Boards and Agencies</u>	3
<u>II. The State Requirements on Local and Regional Governments</u>	5
<u>III. The Rural Transportation Cooperation Methods Used by Virginia</u>	10
<u>IV. Looking Ahead- Rural Cooperation in Virginia</u>	11
<u>Appendix A – Discussion of the Rural Transportation Cooperation Methods</u>	13
<u>Appendix B – Map of the VDOT Construction Districts</u>	29
<u>Appendix C – Map of the Virginia PDCs</u>	30
<u>Appendix D – Graphic on the Key Input Opportunities with SYIP Development</u>	31

Introduction

Virginia's regional and local officials work together with state transportation entities to carry out essential functions in identifying and responding to the transportation system needs of the public. The statewide transportation plan, program and project development and delivery processes rely on supportive and cooperative state, regional and local government. Virginia's policies distinctively integrate land use planning with transportation planning and programming. Laws require that the state interact with regional and local governments in state transportation proposals. Law also requires that regional and local Virginia governments (rural as well as urbanized local governments) interact with state agencies on regional or local land use planning proposals that will affect transportation.

Virginia improves and maintains the third largest State-maintained highway system in the nation, just behind North Carolina and Texas. The state highway system mileage in Virginia is predominantly non-urban. Virginia oversees support of several of the largest public transportation systems and high-occupancy vehicle networks in the nation. The state also supports many freight and passenger rail initiatives, providing funding and advocacy for freight and passenger improvements. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) serve lead roles in planning the state's highway, rail and public transportation systems. Each are executive-branch state agencies directed by the Commonwealth's Secretary of Transportation and the Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB).

This VDOT-DRPT guidebook updates the Commonwealth of Virginia's Rural Transportation Planning Consultation Processes and documents the methods used by VDOT and DRPT in interacting, participating and cooperating with Virginia's non-metropolitan regional and local officials regarding transportation planning and programming. To meet federal requirements, this document is separate and discrete from documentation provided on the public participation processes.

For quick-reference, rural transportation officials can advance to pages 3 through 5 to find State contact or hyperlink information regarding the CTB, VDOT and/or DRPT. VDOT's and DRPT's plans, programs and projects are readily accessed and described in the hyperlinks, including access to funding program(s) information. VDOT events and opportunities that provide for outreach, participation and input are announced in the webpages and in press releases. Similarly, DRPT events and opportunities are announced on DRPT's website and in press releases. In addition to information in this guidebook, other guidance documents are available that describe transportation programs and processes that involve the state, and its regions and localities. The document on Public Participation in Virginia's Planning and Programming Process provides further guidance on the opportunities available for input at the planning and programming stages. Providing inputs on specific VDOT projects in the project development stage is the topic of the VDOT document, Public Involvement Manual for Public Participation in Transportation Projects. A quick, general reference guide to common VDOT activities is available in the latest annual update to the "Board of Supervisors Manual" from the VDOT webpage at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance.asp>.

Federal Legislation and Regulations- "Cooperation" means working together

Documentation, review and update of the rural cooperation processes for the development of the Statewide Transportation Plan and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a federal transportation planning requirement (23 CFR 450.210(b)): *"The State shall provide for nonmetropolitan local official participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. The State shall have a documented process(es) for cooperating with nonmetropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose local government and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process and provides an opportunity for their participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP"*

This guidebook offers citations and hyperlinks to the Code of Federal Regulations, the Code of Virginia and the Administrative Code of Virginia which are applicable as of the date of this document's edition and, yet, are subject to legislative or regulatory change.

Federal statutes require the cooperative development of statewide transportation plans and programs by the state, the metropolitan planning organizations for urbanized areas, and by the affected jurisdiction's non-metropolitan officials having responsibility for transportation in rural areas. The requirements for cooperative development apply in respect to the transportation planning of highways as well as in public transportation projects in general per 23 USC 135(a)(3) and (e)(1), and 49 USC 5304(a)(3) and (e)(1); in the development of the statewide transportation plan per 23 USC 135(f)(2)(B) and 49 USC 5304(f)(2)(B); and in the development of the State Transportation Improvement Program per 49 USC 5304(g)(2)(B). "Cooperation" is federally defined, wherein the parties involved in carrying out the transportation planning and programming processes work together to achieve a common goal or objective.

I. Virginia Transportation System Boards and Agencies

This document's focus is on the interaction, participation and cooperation of VDOT, DRPT and non-metropolitan local officials in the planning and programming of highway, transit, and rail project improvements for long-range transportation plans and short-range transportation programs. Identifying and responding to needs on the multimodal transport of people and/or freight involves broad coordination and teamwork with many participants. Beyond the CTB, VDOT and DRPT, some other state transportation boards and/or agencies are involved, as recognized below. A rural government may want to contact and interact with one of these state transportation entities. All of the state entities discussed below report to and/or advise the Virginia Secretary of Transportation (with the Secretary's Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment), while the Secretary of Transportation reports to the Governor:

- CTB (<http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/>)
 - VDOT (<http://www.virginiadot.org/>)
 - DRPT (<http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/>)

Additional state-level transportation entities (other than the Motor Vehicle Dealer Board and the Commercial Space Flight Authority Board) include:

- The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) (<http://www.dmv.state.va.us/>)
- The Virginia Aviation Board (<http://www.doav.virginia.gov/vab.htm>) which directs the Department of Aviation (DOAV) (<http://www.doav.virginia.gov/>)
- The Virginia Port Authority Board of Commissioners which directs port facility operations performed by the Virginia International Terminals (VIT) (<http://www.portofvirginia.com/>)

The CTB

The CTB is the policy board authorized in state code at § 33.2-200, et sequel, which oversees VDOT and DRPT, and related state highway, rail and public transportation actions. VDOT and DRPT agency planners work together to coordinate the State transportation plans and programs with other State agencies responsible for other modes of transportation, including aviation and nautical travel modes. The CTB's 17 members (see hyperlink below for contact information) are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. Membership includes the Commonwealth's Secretary of Transportation, the Commissioner of Highways, the Director of DRPT, and fourteen citizen members with nine of those citizens from each VDOT construction district (Appendix B), and the other five citizens from Virginia at-large with at least two as urban at-large and two as rural at-large. Virginia's Secretary of Transportation serves as chairman of the CTB. The Director of the DRPT serves as a non-voting member of the CTB. CTB business meetings are usually held monthly. The meetings are announced in advance and, as with other regular State government meetings, are generally open to the public. Virginia encourages regional transportation officials and authorities to attend the CTB's meetings and provide inputs on their priorities. The CTB website with information on CTB members may be accessed at <http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/>.

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

VDOT

VDOT facilitates organizational planning, construction, operation and maintenance of the vast network of state highways, bridges and tunnels in Virginia through having nine regional VDOT construction districts: Bristol, Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Hampton Roads, Lynchburg, Northern Virginia, Richmond, Salem, and Staunton (see Appendix B for a district map or the website at <http://www.virginiadot.org/about/districts.asp>). The VDOT District Office is the major field office charged with oversight of each region. District offices are supported by residency offices, which typically handle one or more jurisdictions. There are 29 VDOT residencies statewide, along with numerous additional area offices. The Central Office is in the City of Richmond. The primary role of the VDOT Central Office is to provide administrative, policy and program support to the VDOT District offices. VDOT responsibilities include various additional highway-related policies and programs, such as ones involving state bicycle planning, commuter parking lots, safe routes to school programs, roadside advertising, highway access management, and special use permits. Information on applications for the main grant programs is available at <http://vasmartscale.org/>, with special grant programs at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance.asp>. The main VDOT website is at <http://www.virginiadot.org/>. Useful VDOT contact information is available to rural officials and the public by calling 1-800-FOR-ROAD (1-800-367-7623) for customer service or by visiting the VDOT site at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/info/contactus.asp>. This includes information and methods for submitting state highway maintenance work requests. Depending on the rural local official's geographic area(s) of interest and type(s) of request for action or information, the customer service center will refer the matter to an appropriate VDOT office for response. For example, a request regarding a maintenance work request for a segment of state-maintained roadway is normally referred to one or more VDOT field office maintenance engineer, administrator, manager and/or other staff, typically in a VDOT residency office. A local or regional project planning or programming issue typically would be referred to the VDOT District planning office.

DRPT

DRPT provides guidance and funding for grants in: rail, public transportation (both rural and urbanized transit), and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) activities such as ridesharing and telework. This includes providing guidance and funding for coordinated human service providers (Coordinated human service mobility plans offer special transit service solutions such as transporting elderly and/or disabled persons). Also in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Social Services, citizens can access a Virginia 2-1-1 telephone operator, printed information or website at <http://www.211virginia.org> to learn about specialized transportation available in various communities. Citizens can also find transit, human services transportation and TDM services information on DRPT's Service Locator on the DRPT website at <http://drpt.virginia.gov>.

DRPT activities and projects are essential components of long- and short-range state transportation planning and programming. DRPT administers federal and state capital and operating financial assistance programs to fund planning, technical studies, operations, and

capital improvement programs for public transportation system and transportation demand management agencies. A summary compilation of many recent DRPT funding activities is available by examining pages of the FY 2017 Rail and Public Transportation Improvement Program at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/media/1876/fy17-final-syip-6-8-2016.pdf> . Several of the funding programs are of interest and available to rural localities (however, some transit programs are reserved solely for urbanized area use, such as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 program). Federal grant-match transit programs are identified by their section numbers in Title 49, Chapter 53 of the United States Code. Main federal transit funding programs of potential rural interest include:

- FTA section 5310 - provides transportation grants for enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities and capital assistance to human service agencies
- FTA section 5311 – public transportation grants for rural areas

The FTA section 5311 grant program is reserved for funding rural area public transportation (the “other than urbanized area” program). It provides capital, operating, administrative, planning and technical financial assistance to rural areas for public transportation services. The DRPT follows a general transit grant program application calendar, a schedule common to most DRPT grant programs: <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/grantees/transit-grants/>. DRPT also administers state financial assistance programs to support rail industrial access projects requested by localities, and rail capital improvements for short line railroads. Additional DRPT grant programs for commuter assistance/transportation demand management, Technical Assistance, Internships and Demonstration projects may also be utilized by rural areas.

II. The State Requirements on Local and Regional Governments-working together with the state on transportation plans and programs

Local Comprehensive Plans- General Background

Virginia localities (rural or urbanized) have certain transportation and/or land use planning responsibilities that require them to contact and interact with state transportation authorities in regard to a locality’s comprehensive plan. Each Virginia local government has a governing body (board of supervisors, or city or town council) and a local planning commission (§ 15.2-2210). The local planning commissions are state-authorized to coordinate and cooperate with other entities regarding their local plans and land use developments, including interactions with state agencies (§ 15.2-2211). A local comprehensive plan is required for the physical development of each locality. It must undergo review and then be recommended by the local planning commission for adoption by the local governing body. A local comprehensive plan must include a local transportation plan with a map of the roads and other transportation improvements as well as the cost of such roads and other transportation improvements that take into account the current and future local and planning district regional needs (§ 15.2-2223). A local

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

comprehensive plan is general in nature. It designates the approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and indicates where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use (§§ 15.2-2223 and 15.2-2232). Local government subdivision and/or zoning ordinances implement and support the local comprehensive plan (§ 15.2-2224) by applying directives that further guide and control local planning issues, such as specifying requirements on land and/or building uses. The approach may include designation of one or more Urban Development Areas for high density development (§ 15.2-2223.1). A locality must review its local comprehensive plan for update at least every five years (§ 15.2-2230).

Reviews and other Steps in the Development and Update of Local Comprehensive Plans

In the development or update of the local comprehensive plan, the local planning commission shall consult with the CTB or the local VDOT and/or DRPT representative as to any streets under the jurisdiction of the CTB, and, prior to recommendation of the locality's transportation map to the governing body, shall submit the map to VDOT for review of its consistency with state transportation plans and programs (§§ 15.2-2223, and 33.2-214). {This includes reviews of the recommended local comprehensive plan updates of Arlington and Henrico Counties who maintain certain roads in their jurisdictions.} A local transportation plan would generally be considered consistent if it includes the state transportation projects of VTrans, the Six-Year Improvement Program, CTB-selected route locations, and does not include recommendations that would prevent those projects from advancing. Not all projects contained in the Six-Year Improvement Program need be incorporated into local transportation plans in order for those plans to be consistent; only those projects that are "significant new, improved, or relocated" highway projects need be included. This means projects on Major Collector or higher classification roadways that involve a new location, a relocated roadway, or an addition of one or more through lanes or interchange. If VDOT determines that a comprehensive plan's transportation plan is inconsistent, VDOT must notify the CTB of such inconsistency and the CTB may take appropriate action to encourage consistency between the state plans and programs and the local transportation plan. This action might include removing CTB funding from projects. Any recommendation of the CTB that is not incorporated into the local transportation plan shall be forwarded to the local governing body when the plan is recommended by the local planning commission. When a locality has adopted a transportation plan, a certified copy of that plan and ordinance adopting it shall be sent to the VDOT.

Following the CTB adoption of an update on the Statewide Transportation Plan (§ 33.2-353) and written notification to the affected local governments, each local government through which one or more of the designated Corridors Of Statewide Significance traverses, shall, at a minimum, note such corridor(s) on the transportation plan map included in its local comprehensive plan for information purposes at the next regular update of the transportation plan map. Prior to the next regular update of the transportation plan map, the local government shall acknowledge the existence of corridors of statewide significance within its boundaries (§ 15.2-2232).

Reviews to Develop Certain Local Land Use Decisions

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

State law also requires certain proposed land use re-zonings (§§ 15.2-2286, 15.2-2297, 15.2-2298, or 15.2-2303) or changes in local comprehensive plans (§§ 15.2-2223, 15.2-2228 or 15.2-2229) to be state-reviewed and considered for their traffic impacts (§ 15.2-2222.1) prior to their adoption by the local governing body. Prior to submittal for adoption by the local governing body, a local planning commission shall submit a proposed plan or amendment to VDOT for review and comment if the rezoning, comprehensive plan or amendment will substantially affect transportation on state-controlled highways as defined by VDOT regulations (Virginia Administrative Code: 24 VAC 30-155). VDOT (and/or DRPT) comments on the proposed plan or amendment shall relate to plans and capacities for construction of transportation facilities affected by the proposal. In Northern Virginia (Planning District 8), the state's considerations and comments shall include traffic congestion, emergency mobility, and measures and costs to mitigate impacts.

Using the “SMART SCALE” Process with Local and Regional Project Applications for Most CTB (VDOT/DRPT) Funds

As a condition for the receipt of funding for most CTB (VDOT or DRPT) transportation capital improvement projects, applications are required as a part of Virginia's SMART SCALE application, screening, evaluation and selection process. The process provides for the prioritization of most projects (§ 33.2-214.1) to fund transportation projects. From August 1 to September 30, applications are sought from regional transportation planning entities, local governments, and public transit agencies. The process generally applies to all rural or urbanized localities, regional governments and /or public transit agencies that seek state CTB-approved (VDOT or DRPT) funding. Officials of the regional Planning District Commissions (PDCs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), local governments and/or public transit agencies should work with their governing body to identify and describe their top transportation construction projects, and coordinate with their DRPT and/or local VDOT office contacts to prepare and complete information for these applications. Officials are encouraged to coordinate with their DRPT and/or VDOT contacts far in advance of the September 30 deadline, and discuss a project's eligibility under Virginia's transportation funding programs and processes.

Projects seeking funding from most state and federal discretionary fund categories are required to go through the SMART SCALE prioritization process. However, several specific types of funding programs are exempt from the SMART SCALE prioritization process. Regional transportation revenue funds specific to Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads are exempt from the SMART SCALE process. Other exemptions currently include, but are not limited to, projects seeking funding in the following program categories:

- Revenue Sharing (separate application process- see page 20)
- Transportation Alternatives Program, which is a set aside of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (separate application process- see page 21)
- Access Program Funding (see page 20)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Other Safety Program Funds
- Telefees and Unpaved Road Related Funding

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

- Dedicated Bridge Program Funding (through FY2020)
- State of Good Repair Program (This program provides funds to meet the asset management needs of bridges and highways as directed in §§ 33.2-352 and 33.2-369. The CTB uses a needs-based State of Good Repair prioritization process that examines criteria on the maintenance-condition of highway bridges and/or pavements to allocate the funds and, thereby, guide the reconstruction and replacement of structurally deficient state and locally-owned bridges, and/or the reconstruction and rehabilitation of certain deteriorated pavements, including certain municipality-maintained primary extensions. The State of Good Repair prioritization process significantly differs from the SMART SCALE prioritization process in process, schedule, and criteria. For example, SMART SCALE considers criteria on congestion reduction, safety, accessibility, environment, economic development, and land use and transportation coordination to guide the development of Virginia's capital improvement projects. State of Good Repair process on locally-owned bridges involves a locality's review of VDOT bridge recommendation information and submittal of a formatted bridge funding request by the locality. State of Good Repair process on municipality-maintained primary extension pavements involves the locality's review of VDOT pavement condition information and submittal of a formatted funding application by the locality. Recent web-information on Virginia's State of Good Repair program and locally-owned bridges and/or municipality-maintained primary extension pavements is available at http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local_assistance_division_funding_programs.asp.)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding (CMAQ)
- Regional Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funding (the portion of federal STBG program funds that must be obligated in certain regional population areas)
- FTA program funds that are apportioned to the DRPT for public transportation are generally applied to fund operation and maintenance of transit services and facilities and are exempt. Requests to use nonexempt federal funds such as those for developing capital improvement transit projects (i.e.: the FTA 5309 program), however, would be subject to SMART SCALE scoring.

A few other particular programs also retain a separate request-application funding process, such as the Appalachian Regional Commission Local Access and the Federal Lands Access Programs.

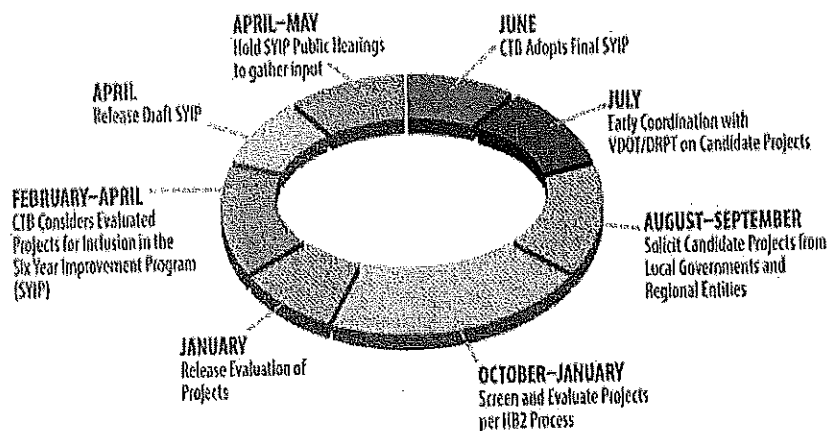
Under the SMART SCALE prioritization process, a region or local government, or public transit agency is responsible for identifying its top regional/local transportation priorities and providing the governing body's request or resolution of support, accompanied by the SMART SCALE application form and supporting information for each project recommendation. SMART SCALE candidate highway, transit, rail, operational improvements and transportation demand management projects and strategies must meet needs identified in VTrans2040 for a Corridor of Statewide Significance, Regional Network, or Urban Development Area, or an identified safety need. The eligible projects may include improvements that address a safety, congestion and/or other need. Applications require the region/locality/transit agency to coordinate with DRPT and/or VDOT and identify information on the project's various attributes. The applications are designed to describe each project, and allow a quantitative evaluation by the state with measures assessed for congestion reduction, safety, accessibility, environment, economic development,

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

and land use and transportation coordination. The prioritization process is summarized in information online at <http://vasmartscale.org/>.

The current SMART SCALE prioritization process is depicted in the graphic below. Pending further consideration and potentially subject to change, the CTB plans to revise the current annual SMART SCALE process to a biennial cycle. CTB adopted an October 27, 2015 resolution and policy on the development of the SYIP wherein SMART SCALE process and associated funding programs would be updated in even-numbered fiscal year SYIP updates. Other programs that are exempt from the SMART SCALE prioritization process (described on the previous pages) would be updated annually or on other cycles. The new policy is scheduled to be implemented starting with the Fiscal Year 2018-2023 SYIP Update.

The Current Annual SMART SCALE Process



Transit Development Plans (TDPs) Are Required of Public Transit Operators

Every public transit operator receiving state funding is required to adopt and submit a TDP. All transit operators in Virginia are required to update their TDP every six years. DRPT has worked with transit operators across the Commonwealth to complete the TDPs. These provide a solid foundation for funding requests and important capital and operating information for the programming and planning requirements process. TDPs must be adopted by the operator's governing body and a letter must be submitted annually describing progress with implementing the TDP and any significant changes. Further information on TDP requirements and copies of final transit operators TDPs are available at the DRPT website: <http://drpt.virginia.gov/transit/major-transit-initiatives/major-transit-planning/transit-development-plans/>.

III. THE RURAL TRANSPORTATION COOPERATION METHODS USED BY VIRGINIA

VDOT and DRPT interact, provide for participation, and cooperate with rural local and regional officials in multiple ways, encompassing informal and formal means that range from simple daily communication between rural officials and VDOT District or DRPT contacts to preparing and holding public meetings or hearings on proposed allocations of funds for updating the Virginia SYIP. There are several steps and opportunities that provide for interaction, participation and cooperation between VDOT, DRPT and rural officials. The following specific methods are used:

A) General Interaction Activities

- Local meetings and public forums
- Use of the internet
- Informal activities (such as e-mails, phone calls or meetings with contact persons)

B) Cooperation in Programming with the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) and the STIP

Transportation programming identifies the near-term funding that will be used to implement specific highway, rail and public transportation proposals. This includes funds for public transit operators and coordinated human service providers (who offer special transit service solutions such as transporting elderly and/or disabled persons). The programming process provides for rural interaction, participation and cooperation with the exchange of thoughts and information during several steps in the development of updates or amendments to the short-range programs under the SYIP. The SYIP provides the basis for coordination and financial planning that is essential for development of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The key programming steps and opportunities include:

- The CTB SMART SCALE project proposal application, screening, evaluation and selection process (described on pages 7 through 9)
- The CTB State of Good Repair Program's prioritization and recommendation process that includes provisions on local inputs regarding locally-owned bridges and/or municipality-maintained primary extension pavements (described on page 8)
- Development of Virginia's SYIP (with CTB draft SYIP public meetings or hearings each spring, as well as fall and other CTB meetings pertaining to the SYIP) with roles for VDOT, DRPT and rural local officials including specific roles for certain rural local officials on the:
 - The urban highway maintenance program
 - The Secondary Six-Year Plan (SSYP) with annual County meetings (§ 33.2-331) on secondary state highway system improvement project budget priorities and/or plans
 - Specialized funding programs which apply grant request processes that are distinct and separate from the CTB SMART SCALE application process (such as for Rural

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

Rustic Roads, Revenue Sharing, Recreational Access, Economic Development Sites and Airport Access Roadways, Safe Routes to School, Transportation Alternatives, etc.)

- Development of the STIP which is updated at least every four years, with a draft made available for public review and comment.

C) Cooperation in Transportation Systems Planning with the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan

Long-range transportation planning offers additional steps in rural interaction, participation and cooperation between VDOT, DRPT and rural officials. It involves development of updates or amendments to long-range plans for multiple travel modes including rail, transit and highways. Steps with opportunities at the planning stage include:

- The long-range statewide transportation plan development (VTrans- the long-range plan for all modes- air, marine, rail, transit and highways)
- The VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan development (VMTP- the highways, public transportation, and passenger and freight rail plan which is superseding the Virginia Surface Transportation Plan)
- Regional Long-Range Plans (RLRPs for rural area PDCs) and Transit Development Plans (TDPs)
 - The Rural Transportation Planning Program (RTTP) for rural area PDCs
 - Transportation technical committees with the rural area PDCs
- MPO transportation plans and programs (for those rural areas that adjoin metropolitan areas)

As required by the Code of Virginia, the state also reviews local comprehensive transportation plans and zoning actions that may affect the transportation network to examine their consistency with state transportation planning documents and assess potential impacts. More information regarding Virginia rural cooperation processes is presented in Appendix A. Appendices B and C provide maps of the VDOT Districts and Virginia's PDC areas, respectively. Appendix D provides a summary graphic showing how key input opportunities relate to the cooperative development of the important CTB SYIP, which affects Virginia's transportation investments over the next six years.

IV. LOOKING AHEAD- RURAL COOPERATION IN VIRGINIA

Federal regulations direct that at least once every five years, the State shall review and solicit comments from non-metropolitan local officials and other interested parties for a period of not less than 60 calendar days regarding the effectiveness of the cooperation process and any proposed changes. Key review comments will be solicited, recognized and addressed with the final document. Comments on this review draft document and highways should be sent in writing to VDOT's state transportation planner, Mrs. Marsha Fiol, at

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

Marsha.Fiol@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Comments on rail and/or public transportation should be sent in writing to the DRPT's Transit Planning and Project Development Manager, Jitender Ramchandani, at Jitender.Ramchandani@drpt.virginia.gov.

Virginia recognizes that cooperation with rural local officials is paramount to the success of the state transportation plans and programs. VDOT and DRPT will continue to work cooperatively with rural local and rural regional governments and other partners and continue to enhance opportunities for participation, access and input to the transportation planning and programming processes.

The rural cooperation processes may need to change periodically subject to procedural improvements or activities such as changes in federal directives in transportation planning regulations, or state directives in transportation prioritization processes. The State review of the rural transportation cooperation process will be repeated at least every five years in accordance with federal regulations, although an interim review and update of the consultation methods may occur if conditions warrant.

APPENDIX A

DISCUSSION OF THE RURAL COOPERATION METHODS

A) General Interactive Activities

VDOT and DRPT officials attend county board of supervisors meetings, and town or city council meetings/ forums, on request, to inform, consult and cooperate with local officials about roadway, transit or rail issues or projects. The internet is a valuable tool for sharing information with state, regional and local officials, and the general public. VDOT's website (www.virginiadot.org) includes links to corridor studies, the SYIP, the STIP, rural Regional Long-Range Plans (as the RLRPs become available from the PDCs), VTrans and the VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan, a Board of Supervisors Manual and other local assistance VDOT information. The SYIP provides an overview of projects in the preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction stages and allows external customers to view details (e.g., location, estimates, funding) for any of the thousands of projects scheduled for construction or currently being constructed. DRPT also maintains a website (www.drpt.virginia.gov) which provides links to information on transit and commuter assistance services, major public transportation projects, critical DRPT rail and public transportation programs, information on key DRPT contacts and the Online Grant Administration system (OLGA) for DRPT's grant programs and grantees. Internet hyperlinks to access these and other DRPT websites are provided on [pages 4 and 5](#). In addition, interested stakeholders can contact a State representative through various e-mail links, or VDOT or DRPT telephone numbers (discussed next).

VDOT and DRPT carry out a number of informal, general interactions with rural officials. For example, VDOT and DRPT staff are available to meet with local officials regarding transportation issues and projects in their respective jurisdictions. In addition, transportation planners at VDOT and DRPT regularly answer inquiries and provide information to their counterparts in rural and urbanized jurisdictions, by e-mail and phone. As discussed on [page 4](#), VDOT field offices often receive requests from local officials for maintenance (state highway maintenance work requests) or planning information. To reach someone in a VDOT construction district office, see VDOT region and contact information at <http://www.virginiadot.org/about/districts.asp> or call the VDOT main toll-free customer service number at 1-800-FOR-ROAD (800-367-7623). Information for reaching key staff at DRPT is available at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/about-us/our-staff/> or by calling 804-786-4440.

B) Cooperation in Programming with Virginia's SYIP and STIP

State code at [§ 33.2-214](#) authorizes the CTB to coordinate the planning for financing of transportation needs, including operational, maintenance and capital improvements for highways, railways, seaports, airports and public transportation, and to allocate funds for these needs. Programming focuses on where to invest Virginia's funding for transportation over the next six years. This critical step is achieved in the development of annual updates to the CTB's Six-Year

APPENDIX A

Improvement Program (SYIP). The SYIP is an allocation plan that allots all funds from all sources for all projects for the next six years. The STIP is a federally-required four-year obligation plan that identifies the regionally significant projects and/or federally funded projects. The CTB seeks rural officials' inputs to guide the CTB's decisions on upcoming highway, rail and transit project selections. Rural officials are essential in cooperatively selecting the local components of the SYIP with respect to CTB's allocations of construction funds for the High Priority Project program (§ 33.2-370) and the Highway Construction District Grants program (§ 33.2-371), as well as for the highway system maintenance priorities. Virginia is using a SMART SCALE (§ 33.2-214.1) application, screening, evaluation and selection process that provides for the prioritization of capital improvement highway (VDOT) and public transit (DRPT) transportation project proposals. From August 1 to September 30, SMART SCALE applications are sought from regional and local governments, and public transit agencies, Virginia-wide, that seek state transportation funding by the CTB.

Rural and other localities are formally consulted for input during the development of the SYIP for upcoming allocations for construction projects and maintenance components, and on the extent to which funds are expected to be available. The state's historic funding methodology that traditionally funded the construction of capital improvements for the primary system, urban system and the secondary system was repealed July 1, 2016 per Chapter 684 (HB1887) of the 2015 Acts of Assembly. The historic funding method is replaced with a method (§ 33.2-358) that uses three new key state programs: a State of Good Repair Program, a High Priority Projects Program, and a Highway Construction District Grants Program. See the discussion on the SMART SCALE process beginning on page 7. Besides submitting applications that propose project candidates using the SMART SCALE process for High Priority Projects and the Highway Construction District Grants Programs, rural officials can and should apply for other special federal and/or State transportation grant programs of interest, all of which need to be coordinated with the SYIP.

In review, the transportation highway, primary, rail and public transportation system(s) improvements scheduled for rural areas are determined by the locality in cooperation with CTB during the SYIP development process. Eligible rural area entities can apply for funding through various programs, such as highway safety and other statewide discretionary funds, as determined by the CTB.

The Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)

The SYIP is a document that is updated annually and allocates funding to State highway, rail and transit projects over the next six years. The exchange of information and decisions made in the SYIP process affect the highway and transit federal funding actions that subsequently update or amend the Virginia STIP (discussed later). The CTB reviews the SYIP for update at least every year and coordinates with regional and metropolitan planning groups, localities, various transportation stakeholders, interested parties, and the public in deciding how to allocate funds

APPENDIX A

for rail, public transportation, and highway projects, including the funding of Virginia's surface transportation network system's connections to support airports and ports. The programming financial process refines and coordinates short-range transportation project implementation based on plans, requests and applications to CTB for project funding needs (such as the SMART SCALE process), project budgets and schedules, and evaluations of priorities for construction, development or implementation. The creation of the SYIP can be summarized in several steps:

- 1) *Soliciting, Receiving, and Evaluating New Inputs.* Candidate project funding requests are filled out and submitted, screened, processed and evaluated; CTB holds fall meetings (typically in November) to further review, discuss and consider the inputs received and any additional input (the request/application deadlines vary depending on the funding program, an application period may close as early as September or as late as December). Evaluation results are released (typically in January).
- 2) *Forecasting Revenue.* Anticipated revenues are determined or updated based on the current federal authorization program and the latest revenue forecasts and debt management policy (typically in December or January).
- 3) *Developing Planning and Engineering Estimates.* Cost-budgets and schedules are developed and/or updated for each project in the SYIP (typically in December).
- 4) *Developing the Six-Year Financial Plan (SYFP).* The amount of funding available for allocations to the SYIP is determined (typically in January).
- 5) *Drafting the SYIP.* The CTB uses the current SYIP along with the latest SYFP, schedules, cost-budgets, and evaluations of project applications and requests to develop the initial draft for the new SYIP.
- 6) *Developing the draft SYIP and Soliciting Public Comment via Internet.* The draft SYIP is made available for public comment via the internet at www.virginiadot.org (typically released in April, with comment from April to May).
- 7) *Holding Public Meetings and/or Hearings.* Public meetings and/or hearings are held in various locations throughout the State to solicit feedback on the draft SYIP (typically from April to May, in time for adoption of a final SYIP by CTB in June). Note that, besides these hearings, other events and opportunities exist for local officials to provide feedback to VDOT, DRPT, CTB or other transportation contacts, as noted in the sections and links of this document.
- 8) *Obtaining CTB Approval.* The CTB formally approves the SYIP, which is then posted on the internet at www.virginiadot.org, (typically in a June CTB meeting) and becomes effective July 1st annually.

Public Meetings and/or Hearings with the SYIP

At least annually, the CTB issues public notices and media announcements, and holds public meetings and/or hearings for the SYIP at different accessible locations covering urbanized as well as rural areas of the State. Copies of the review draft SYIP are available at the public meetings and/or hearings and on VDOT and DRPT's websites prior to the hearings. VDOT and

APPENDIX A

DRPT information and contacts are provided for questions or comments. The latest VDOT web information on the SYIP usually is posted at <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/syp-default.asp>. DRPT SYIP information is posted at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/about-us/six-year-improvement-program/>. The hearings provide for participation by the general public and local and State officials to provide input regarding a draft SYIP. Advice and input are solicited from members of the General Assembly, county boards of supervisors, city and town councils, planning districts, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, other public officials, and the general public. Rural local officials will use these meetings and/or hearings to provide input on proposed transportation improvements and critical needs on the primary and interstate highway systems and on rail, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In the typical annual cycle, based on input received from early communications and meetings, the State transportation staff prepare a draft of the SYIP. The work needs to be consistent with directives that include placing a priority on maintenance needs, paying off deficits on completed projects and not creating new deficits, ensuring use of available federal funds, fully funding construction projects within twelve months of completion, bringing phased projects or programs to a reasonable stage of completion, and requiring that new projects added to the program be eligible for federal funds or consistent with priorities as determined by the CTB. The draft of the SYIP is created and issued for public review, usually in spring, and then several meetings are subsequently held across areas of the State to accept input and consider comments on the draft. Subsequently, a final SYIP must be adopted by July 1st of each year, when the State begins its new fiscal year. For further information such as how public meeting and/or hearing notice is provided, where notices are published and the availability of review material prior to the meetings and/or hearings.

VDOT and DRPT roles with the SYIP

As noted earlier, Virginia is using a SMART SCALE (§ 33.2-214.1) application, screening, evaluation and selection process that provides for the prioritization of most capital improvement highway (VDOT) and public transportation (DRPT) project proposals. From August 1st to September 30th, applications are sought from regional and local governments, and public transit agencies, Virginia-wide, that seek such state transportation funding by the CTB. Requests for funding of projects for specialized programs (discussed in a later section), involve distinct and separate request processes, other than the SMART SCALE process.

The process of developing the DRPT related rail and public transportation components of the SYIP involve grant based funding and timely reviews of new or revised grant applications. This is distinct from VDOT processes for specialized program project requests. The DRPT process is a partnership among CTB, VDOT, DRPT, local governments, rail and public transportation interests, public transportation officials, transportation demand management program operators, and human service agencies. Usually in December, DRPT annually advertises in newspapers across the State the availability of State and federal grant funds for public transportation, transportation demand management, and human service agency programs. DRPT assistance available for rural areas includes FTA 5310 and 5311 funding programs. Local officials apply for existing programs and prospective new operations and/or maintenance programs via DRPT's Online Grant Administration (OLGA) system, accessible at <http://olga.drpt.virginia.gov/>. DRPT

APPENDIX A

staff members are available to answer questions and to assist applicants with the online application process. Grants are awarded for the fiscal year beginning in July of the following year (federal grants are awarded beginning in October 1). Similarly, rail related grants are generally available for short line railroads under the Rail Preservation Program at <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/activities/railfunding.aspx> and Class I railroads under the Rail Enhancement Program. Those local officials that have public transportation programs also are asked for estimates of the capital projects to be undertaken in each of the following six years. Tentative allocations of federal and State funds to support future rail and public transit projects are included in the SYIP. All rail and public transportation grants and the tentative allocations of future revenues are included in the CTB's draft SYIP and are approved in June of each year.

To the extent that revenues are available, VDOT and DRPT cooperatively plan and program transportation system improvements with non-metropolitan city and town councils (along with any improvements managed and improved by the municipal public works department). The same is true for non-metropolitan county boards of supervisors. Both VDOT and DRPT will continue to work with rural local governments and other partners to continue to enhance opportunities for participation, access and input to the transportation planning and programming processes. Code of Virginia (§ 33.2-3202) directs the development and implementation of a State transportation decision making process that provides "*metropolitan planning organizations and regional transportation planning bodies a meaningful opportunity for input*". For the SYIP, the CTB is to provide its (draft) priorities to MPOs and regional transportation planning bodies, and provide the MPOs and regional transportation planning bodies opportunity to identify their regional priorities for consideration.

Specific Roles for Certain Rural Local Officials for Urban Maintenance and Secondary Roadway Systems and Specialized Programs with the SYIP

The opportunities to recommend candidate projects for funding under the SMART SCALE process should be carefully examined, as described beginning on page 7. Rural local officials should also attend the CTB (fall) meetings and (spring) meetings and/or hearings regarding the development of the SYIP. Virginia provides local transportation officials with specific decision-making roles in annually, cooperatively selecting transportation improvement projects with the SYIP for urban maintenance and secondary roadway systems under the Urban Highway Maintenance Program, and the Secondary Six-Year Plan, respectively. Additionally, rural areas of Virginia are eligible to participate and receive funding as applicants for several special VDOT programs including, but not limited to, the following programs (separate from the SMART SCALE application process):

- Revenue Sharing Program
- Recreational Access Program
- Industrial, Airport, and Rail Access Program (Roadway Portion)
- Safe Routes to School Program
- Transportation Alternatives Programs

APPENDIX A

- Highway Safety Improvement Program

The above programs are discussed in subsequent sections. Rural areas also can qualify for other funding for certain programs, such as certain highway safety and other statewide discretionary funds, as determined by the CTB.

The predictability and amount of funding for these is greatly dictated by the financial climate of the times, and changes of funding levels by the State and/or federal government. In dealing with future allocations for these systems, the state is dealing with approximations or projections. Annual funding updates allow the participants to update schedules and estimates of current projects. The process gives citizens a chance to identify or request new improvements annually; allows city and town councils, and county board of supervisors to evaluate their programs and update them for any changes in priorities annually; and helps VDOT or other designated local project managers ensure the effective obligation and use of federal funds.

The Urban Highway Maintenance Program with the SYIP

Currently 81 municipalities participate in this urban system transportation program, and many include rural cities and towns. (Many Virginia cities and towns have a population of 3,500 or more and thus are urban but, nevertheless, are situated outside of a metropolitan area. Farmville (8,216 persons per the 2010 census) is an example of a rural, but non-metropolitan, town that participates in VDOT's urban programs). The program is based on statutes in the Code of Virginia. Section 33.2-319 of the Code authorizes the CTB to make payments to the cities and towns in the urban system for maintenance of roads and streets meeting specific criteria and under certain conditions. Annually, the CTB approves mileage additions and deletions and approves the payments to municipalities in the urban system for maintenance purposes. Payments are made to these localities on a quarterly basis. As noted in earlier discussions on the SMART SCALE process, the traditional urban system construction funding program was repealed by HB 1887 and allocations under that program are replaced by the new State of Good Repair, and SMART SCALE related High-Priority Projects and Highway Construction District Grant Programs.

VDOT has assigned a VDOT district representative to serve as the primary liaison with urban municipalities. VDOT coordinates the development of the Urban Maintenance Program (both for non-metropolitan and metropolitan areas) with the CTB SYIP. The urban maintenance program thereby becomes a component of the SYIP and the STIP. Information on the program is available from the VDOT website at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-programs.asp>.

APPENDIX A

The Secondary Six-Year Plan (SSYP) with the SYIP

The SSYP shows the road improvements planned using funds proposed for the next six years on the secondary road system. The development of the SSYP is a partnership between a county government and VDOT, including a non-metropolitan county (§ 33.2-331). Although VDOT has authority for the construction and maintenance of the secondary road system, the county board of supervisors and a VDOT official in the VDOT district jointly prioritize and consider projects on the secondary road system for each county based on funding projections provided by the State.

The process begins with a meeting between VDOT and the county. The VDOT official representative(s) in the VDOT district usually provides recommendations for projects to be included in the SSYP. The projects may come from current VDOT improvement programs, and/or new needs identified by the county using the SMART SCALE application process or an alternate funding request process on a special project funding program. The board of supervisors and the VDOT representative jointly establish draft project priorities, and VDOT staff prepare a draft SSYP. At that time, the draft plan is available for public review at the VDOT district office, and a public hearing is held for input on the plan and budget for the upcoming year. Following the hearing, the board of supervisors establishes project priorities by adopting a resolution approving the plan and/or budget priority list for the upcoming year, with concurrence of the VDOT representative. Once each county has an approved SSYP per the Code of Virginia and the type of funding applicable to each project is determined, VDOT includes these priorities (both for non-metropolitan and metropolitan areas) along with the priorities that are set by the CTB in the SYIP. The SSYP becomes a component of the SYIP and the STIP. Further SSYP information is in the VDOT Board of Supervisors Manual, accessible at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance.asp>.

Specialized Funding Programs with the SYIP (These specialized funding programs have application processes which are distinct and separate from the CTB SMART SCALE application process)

-Rural Rustic Roads Program

Under this program generally authorized in the Code of Virginia at § 33.2-332, a county has the option of designating particular low-volume roads with low-density development as a “rural rustic road” where the county agrees to limit growth along the road through zoning and planning. In addition to having no more than 1500 vehicles per day, the road should be within the VDOT secondary system, should be a priority in the Secondary Six-Year Plan, and should serve the local population. The Rural Rustic Road Program is a practical approach to paving Virginia's unpaved low-volume roads. Its goal is to keep traditional rural lane ambience, while improving the road surface within the current right-of-way. While there are no funds associated with the

APPENDIX A

program at the time of this update, it does allow a low cost alternative for paving qualifying roads. Information on this and certain other related rural programs is available through links provided at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-programs.asp#Rural%20Rustic>.

-Revenue Sharing Program

This program is authorized by § 33.2-357 of the Code of Virginia and provides funding for use by a county, city, or town to construct, reconstruct, or improve qualifying highway projects. Locality funds are matched with State funds at a 50 to 50 percent match, with statutory limitations on the amount of State funds authorized per locality. Funds are allocated annually by the CTB based on existing statute and policies. Application for program funding must be made by resolution of the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting the funds. Construction may be accomplished by VDOT or by the locality under an agreement with VDOT.

-Recreational Access Program

The program is authorized by § 33.2-1510 of the Code of Virginia and provides funds for recreational access roads or bikeways that make a “publicly developed recreational area or historic site” accessible, provided such a site is not private or federally maintained. The purpose is to make these recreational or historic sites accessible as opposed to creating solely a new transportation facility; e.g., a bikeway funded under this program might connect an area having heavy bicycle traffic to a park that presently is not accessible to cyclists.

-Economic Development Sites and Airport Access Program (Roadway Portion)

Section 33.2-1509 of the Code of Virginia authorizes this program, which provides access to certain qualifying business operations or employment centers and licensed public use airports. Adequate access, in consideration of the type and volume of traffic anticipated to be generated by the subject site, may require the construction of a new roadway, improvement of an existing roadway, or both to serve the designated site. More information on this access program, as well as the recreational access program and the revenue sharing program is at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance-access-programs.asp>.

-Safe Routes to School Program

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program began in 2005 from provisions in SAFETEA-LU and is administered by each State. The current SRTS program involves projects eligible in a competitive grant process under the new Surface Transportation Block Grant (STGB) program set-aside for the Transportation Alternatives Program (see the section following this). Applying for funding for SRTS activities is a competitive process. VDOT administers two types of funds:

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

APPENDIX A

- Non-infrastructure funds are for education, encouragement, enforcement (law) and evaluation activities which further the stated purposes of SRTS
- Infrastructure project funds are for improvements that provide bicycle and pedestrian accommodations or safety enhancements.

All SRTS projects will be implemented using the Transportation Alternatives Program selection process. The purposes of the SRTS program are to:

- 1) Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
- 2) Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
- 3) Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

All non-infrastructure projects require a formal endorsement by a school or school division.

The Virginia SRTS Program requires that applicants create an Activities and Programs Plan for the affected School(s). The plan is a written document stating the school community's intentions for making walking and bicycling to school(s) sustainable and safe. The plan must be submitted to VDOT and approved in advance of the submittal of applications for funding.

Information about non-infrastructure applications and other SRTS materials can be found on the VDOT SRTS website at: www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes.

-Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Under the federal FAST Act enacted on December 4, 2015, a core Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program provides set-aside funds for projects that have been eligible under the Transportation Alternatives Program. The Transportation Alternatives Program, thus, has been rolled into, and is part of, that larger program. Previously eligible TAP project categories have been preserved in title 23 USC and continue to include:

- 1) Transportation alternatives, as defined in section(s) 23 USC 101(a)(29) or 23 USC 213 on the day before the date of enactment of the FAST Act
 - (A) Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)

APPENDIX A

- (B) Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs
 - (C) Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users
 - (D) Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
 - (E) Community improvement activities, including-
 - (i) Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising
 - (ii) Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
 - (iii) Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control and
 - (iv) Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title
 - (F) Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to-
 - (i) Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329; or
 - (ii) Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats
- 2) The recreational trails program under 23 USC 206
 - 3) The safe routes to school program under section 1404 of the SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 402 note; Public Law 109-59)
 - 4) Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways

The STIP and Its Update

The STIP is a federally required program that, in Virginia, is based on the SYIP. The STIP identifies planned obligations for funding the preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction phases of project development for regionally significant projects and/or federally funded projects. It also identifies planned obligations for maintenance and operational improvements. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the FHWA determines Virginia's federal obligation authority, from which VDOT requests obligation amounts for preliminary engineering, right of way, and construction. The FTA is the cognizant transit agency for DRPT and provides similar information for transit projects. Rural officials, PDCs, and the general public are able to use the internet to access both the STIP and the SYIP.

Virginia's STIP is composed of all highway, rail, and transit projects anticipated to receive federal funding obligation in the next four years. It also includes projects of regional significance, requiring FHWA or FTA action, even if they are not anticipated to receive federal funding obligation in the four year timeframe of the STIP. Federally funded projects are

APPENDIX A

identified from the Virginia SYIP, each MPO's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), Secondary Six-Year Plans, and other programs. As discussed in the prior sections, rural local officials are requested to provide funding recommendations through the SYIP development SMART SCALE prioritization process, and other input methods in the process of the development of the SYIP, which forms a basis for updates and/or amendments of the STIP.

Fall CTB meetings are held to discuss transportation improvement priorities for prospectively updating the SYIP and STIP. A draft SYIP is made available for public review and comment during public meetings and/or hearings that are held in the spring, and the SYIP is adopted by the CTB before July. The STIP is updated at least every four years, and a draft is also made available for public review and comment.

C) Cooperation in Transportation Systems Planning with the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan

The Statewide Transportation Plan (VTrans)

VTrans is Virginia's statewide multimodal transportation plan, which identifies goals, strategies and policies to address multimodal transportation needs over a 20-year planning horizon in accordance with requirements of 23 U.S.C. 135 and VA Code § 33.2-353. VTrans serves as the "umbrella" planning document for the state, establishing the direction from the Transportation Secretariat for all transportation planning initiatives.

The legislative requirements for the statewide multimodal transportation plan include: carrying out a continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated statewide multimodal transportation planning process in the development of a statewide multimodal transportation plan that advances Virginia businesses and attracts a 21st century workforce by improving goods movement and supporting strategic placemaking.

VTrans also identifies Corridors of Statewide Significance, Regional Networks and Urban Development Areas that are critical to the multimodal transportation system across and within the state, and identifies recommendations for improvements to those areas based on seven VTrans Guiding Principles to ensure future mobility:

- Optimize Return on Investments
- Ensure Safety, Security, and Resiliency
- Efficiently Deliver Programs
- Consider Operational Improvements and Demand Management First
- Provide Transparency and Accountability through Performance Management
- Improve Coordination between Transportation and Land Use
- Ensure Efficient Intermodal Connections

APPENDIX A

The goals of VTrans include: Economic Competitiveness and Prosperity; Accessible and Connected Places; Safety for All Users; Proactive System Management; and Healthy and Sustainable Communities.

The development of the statewide transportation plan update, VTrans2040, is underway under the oversight of the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment. Its development is guided and supported by a Multimodal Working Group, which includes planners from the state transportation agencies and the Office of the Secretary of Transportation. In development of an update to VTrans, rural local officials are provided a number of opportunities to participate in the process and provide input. The statewide transportation plan update process entails having the state transportation entities, rural localities, rural regional PDCs, and MPOs coordinate and work together (as well as have other interested parties and the public contribute) in identifying current and future transportation needs, and in providing the transportation plans, programs, and project concepts that will respond to the needs.

On December 9, 2015 the CTB adopted and forwarded to the Governor and General Assembly a VTrans2040 Vision and a Needs Assessment of Virginia's Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS), Regional Networks (RN), and Urban Development Areas (UDA). The report was developed with inputs from a Multimodal Advisory Committee, with extensive stakeholder and public outreach as part of the VTrans2040 development. Outreach included two rounds of regional forums where the needs assessments were developed for all geographies (CoSS, RN, UDA), as well as additional 2 to 3 meetings at the MPO regional level; with a two week comment period from August 1st to August 18th, 2015. Further work for VTrans2040 is underway. The CTB also directed that a VTrans action plan and 2040 Scenario Assessment shall be provided to the CTB by the end of 2016, and that the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment shall coordinate the work with all state transportation agencies and other stakeholders and the public. Additional information about VTrans can be found at www.vtrans.org.

The VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan (VMTP)

The VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan (VMTP), a 20-year or more long-range plan, is updated in concert with the VTrans Vision. It outlines needed highway, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, public transit and rail improvements. The improvements focus on the Corridors of Statewide Significance, regional networks and locally designated Urban Development Areas. The plan provides information for potential long-term and short-term projects and policies based on the goals and needs identified in VTrans, as well as the goals and needs of regions and localities. This input is gained through a series of in-person regional forums and continuing online engagement. The purpose of the VMTP is to recommend transportation system improvements that are needed to accommodate existing and future capacity, and/or to address geometric and safety deficiencies. It focuses on tying the inter-regional and intra-regional good movement and passenger travel needs with the future economic needs of the various regions in the Commonwealth. The VMTP is used to implement VTrans policies and identify projects that warrant consideration for funding within the Six-Year Improvement Program; it also serves to

APPENDIX A

highlight those projects that would be suitable for SMART SCALE applications.

The VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan (VMTP) is superseding and updating the Virginia Surface Transportation Plan (VSTP). The VMTP is to be developed before the end of 2016. The scope of the VMTP is broader than the scope of the VSTP, in that the VMTP shall include planning for key projects and programs concerning additional modes of transportation, such as airports and marine ports. For information updates and upcoming events on the development of the VMTP visit <http://www.vtrans.org/vtrans2040.asp>.

Regional (PDC Rural) Long-Range Plans (RLRPs) and Transit Development Plans

RLRPs are transportation plans that contain highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, operational, and freight recommendations for areas of the State not covered by an MPO. They are cooperatively developed in association with the Rural Transportation Planning Program, discussed later. The development of RLRPs is a recent process, and expanded outreach is being conducted for improving public participation in the development of future updates. The RLRPs are available online at: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/rural_regional_long-range_plans.asp. They identify transportation funding priorities and assist in transportation and other planning and programming for rural areas. These plans conform to requirements similar to the program federally mandated for the metropolitan planning process. They contain a 20-year planning horizon and five year update cycle, undergo public review and serve as a tool for providing a regional perspective on transportation issues and strategies for local governments in rural areas. The roadway improvements identified and officially documented in these plans feed into the VSTP/VMTP and VTrans which were discussed earlier. The Regional Long-Range Plans:

- Cover roadways functionally classified major collectors and above
- Identify operational improvements (intersection improvements, access management strategies, signalization, turning lanes, roundabouts, etc.)
- Determine the location and potential impact of high growth areas (residential, retail and distribution) using local comprehensive land use plans
- Identify critical freight infrastructure and routes, and associated improvements
- Target facilities for bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Identify corridors to preserve right-of-way for future transportation improvements
- Identify potential setback requirements for corridors for local enforcement
- Determine potential zoning or corridor overlay tools for local use
- Outline the need for on-demand transit services and
- Allow for local and regional discussion of planned projects and further the rural interaction, participation and cooperation efforts of the state.

Regarding the public transportation component of rural long-range planning, DRPT has implemented a requirement that all transit agencies, including rural providers, have a current Transit Development Plan (TDP) updated every 6 years. As part of the TDP planning process,

APPENDIX A

the transit agency or provider is required to assemble a stakeholder group that may consist of local elected officials, planning staff, members of the public, etc. through the development of the TDP. Each TDP contains a constrained six-year financial element that identifies the agency's capital and operating revenues and expenses for the six-year planning horizon. The TDP contains recommendations for improvements that may be identified in the constrained element of the plan. TDPs must be adopted by the operator's governing body. A letter must be submitted annually describing progress in implementing the TDP and any significant changes, and updating the TDP to refine the TDP by modifying recommendations and extending the constrained six-year financial element out an additional year. The TDP is expected to provide a basis for the near-term transit recommendations that are identified in the RLRPs.

The Rural Transportation Planning Program (RTPP) is funded with State Planning and Research (SPR) program funds, which are federally provided to Virginia for conducting transportation planning and research. Under the RTPP Assistance Program, PDCs develop, in cooperation with VDOT, DRPT, transit providers and localities, the Regional Long-Range Plans (RLRPs) for rural transportation. The RTPP is not a State or federally mandated program and is carried out at VDOT's discretion. The associated Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program (Assistance Program) provides funding to certain PDCs to carry out transportation planning activities in rural areas. A PDC is eligible to receive these funds if it encompasses rural areas defined "outside the metropolitan study area boundaries approved by the metropolitan planning organizations" under Section 134 of Title 23 of the United States Code. A map depicting the geographical boundaries for Virginia's 21 PDCs is provided in Appendix C. At the time of this update, each eligible PDC receives \$72,500 to carry out transportation planning activities annually in its rural areas. VDOT provides \$58,000 in SPR funds and the PDCs provide the remainder (\$14,500 or 20 percent of the total).

State transportation agency staff regularly attend and participate in the transportation technical committee meetings coordinated by the rural regional PDCs. In the urbanized areas, MPOs have similar committees which VDOT and DRPT staff also participate in. All of the PDCs receiving RTPP funds have established a rural transportation technical committee. The PDC technical committees are composed of rural local officials and planning staff. The meetings serve as a forum where regional transportation issues are discussed and rural officials present information and get feedback on statewide, regional, and local transportation plans.

MPO Long-Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs

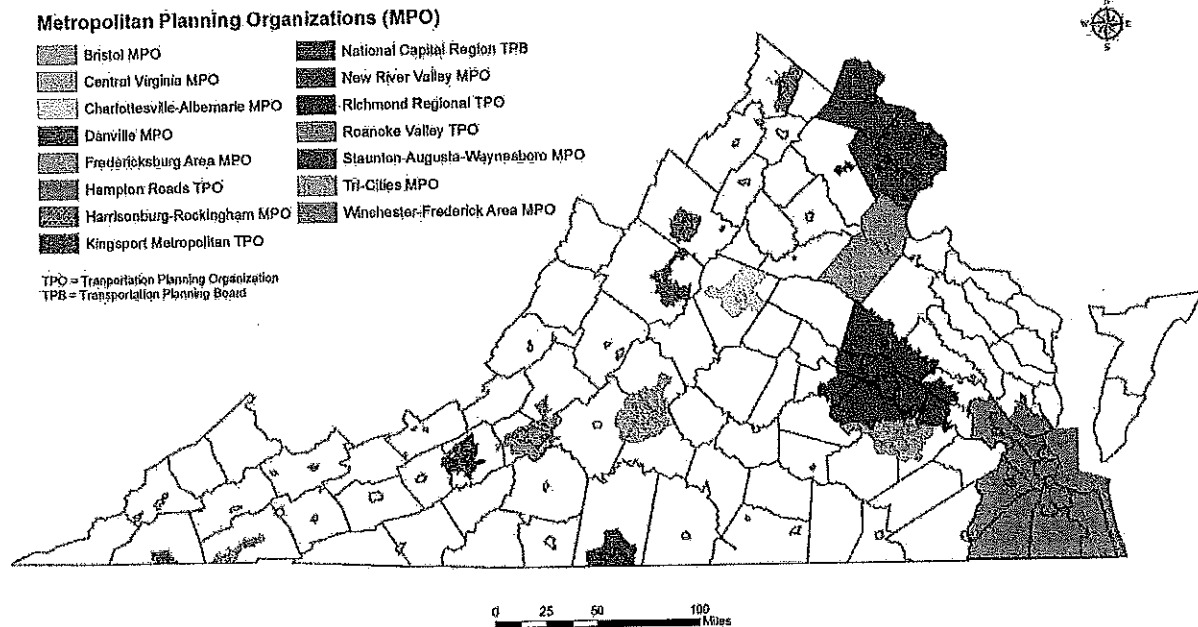
MPO activities are not part of the rural planning process, but discussion of the MPOs is relevant because a rural locality might be an "interested party" in an MPO proposed transportation plan or program. Many metropolitan areas adjoin a rural area, and the MPO planning could affect the rural area. Some counties have both MPO and rural areas, providing the county direct opportunities for coordination of the MPO and the rural activities of a PDC region.

The roadway, public transit and rail improvements that are identified and officially documented

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

APPENDIX A

in MPO plans and programs feed into the VSTP/VMTP and VTrans. At the time of this update, there are 15 MPOs with special transportation decision-making roles for the urbanized areas.



The primary functions of an MPO are to:

- 1) Approve an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and budget
- 2) Prepare and adopt a Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP)
- 3) Recommend projects for implementation from the CLRP through the adoption of the short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- 4) Approve an air quality conformity determination, if applicable, to support a CLRP and/or TIP

VDOT's general role is to participate as a voting member representing the State, and provide policy guidance and technical assistance to the MPOs in cooperatively developing the urbanized areas' transportation plans and programs. DRPT participates as a voting member on all of the MPO Technical Advisory Committees and is a voting member of the Hampton Roads and Roanoke Valley TPO. A rural locality adjoining an MPO should note that MPOs are required to provide reasonable opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the metropolitan planning process, including but not limited reasonable opportunity for interested parties to comment on the MPO's draft CLRP or TIP.

Virginia Rural Transportation Cooperation

APPENDIX A

Similar to its planning requirements that apply to local governments, the Code of Virginia at § 33.2-214 contains provisions on the coordination and consistency of metropolitan regional long-range transportation plans or regional Transportation Improvement Programs with the CTB Statewide Transportation Plan (VTrans), the CTB SYIP, and the CTB selection of route locations for state controlled highways.

Federal regulations in 23 CFR 450 require that a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process (3C) be conducted in all areas of a state, including each urbanized area (areas of 50,000 or more population). Compliance with the requirements is necessary for a State department of transportation, MPO or other authority to be eligible for federal transportation funds and approvals. Special metropolitan planning and programming requirements apply to the urbanized areas. Long-range plans and short-range programs must be developed and updated by each area's designated MPO in cooperation with the State and applicable public transportation operators, with input from the public and affected entities. The MPO long-range and short-range costs for the transportation system and projects must be financially constrained to balance with reasonably available, committed or available revenues.

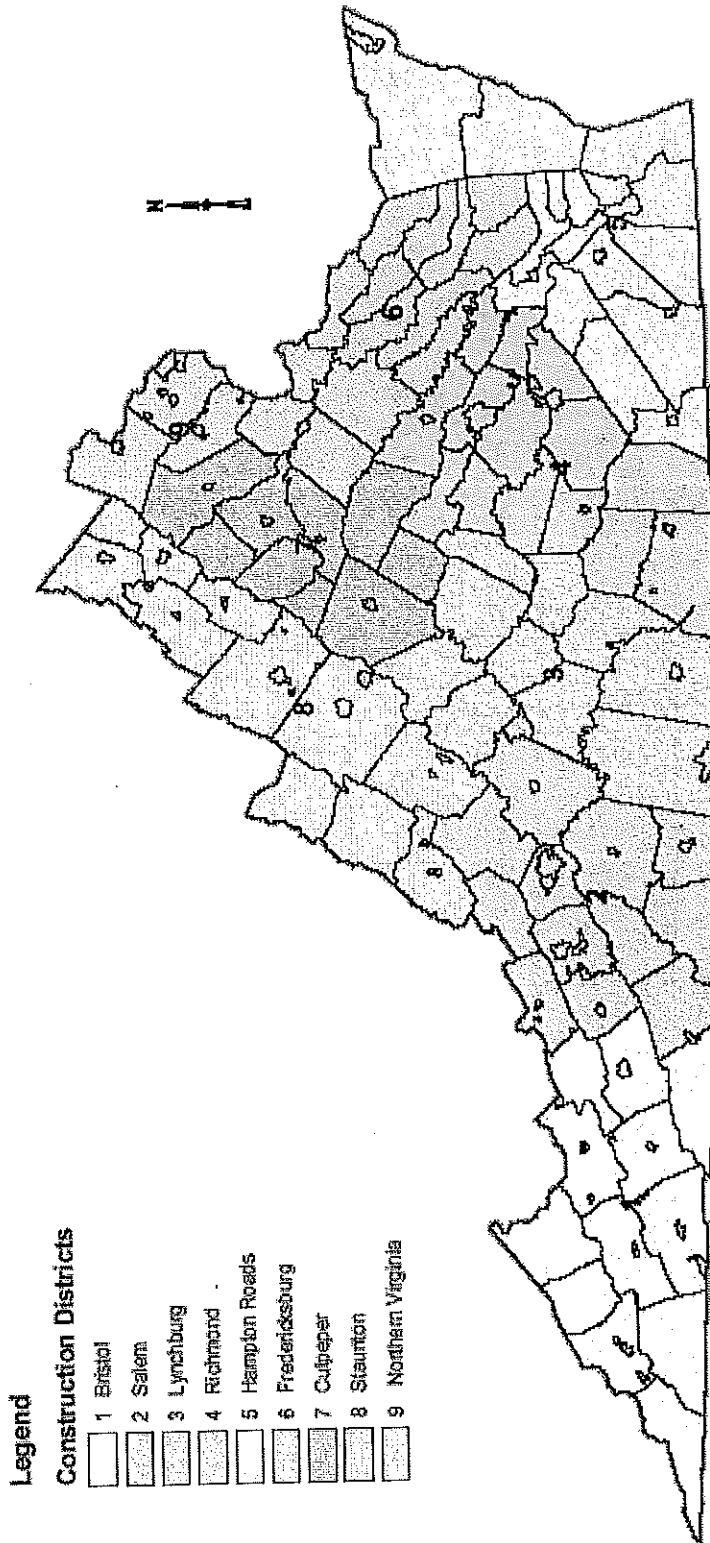
MPO Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)

Unlike the SYIP which the CTB must update at least annually, an MPO TIP must be updated at least every four years, typically in conjunction with the update of the STIP. The MPO short-range TIP must be consistent with the MPO long-range CLRP. The State and MPO, nevertheless, must appropriately coordinate the project planning and programming actions that affect an MPO area. Most MPOs provide annual or more frequent amendments for their TIP.

In overview, the State provides information, such as financial forecasts and costs, consistent with the current and/or draft SYIP to an MPO for use in preparing a preliminary draft MPO TIP update or amendment. MPO staff, in cooperation with VDOT and DRPT staff, will make any changes necessary, and the preliminary draft TIP is developed, reviewed and approved by the MPO technical committee. Next, the MPO policy committee approves it for release as the draft TIP for public review in accordance with each MPO's adopted public involvement procedures. If applicable, air quality conformity analysis and testing also would be conducted in developing the preliminary draft TIP in those MPOs designated as air quality non-attainment or maintenance areas. Conformity analysis and testing takes approximately six to eight weeks to conduct, at which time the MPO technical and policy committees respectively would approve the release of the draft TIP as well as its conformity analysis for public review. Public review of the draft TIP typically lasts for two weeks (30 days in Northern Virginia), with public comments considered and responded to in the MPO's approval of the final TIP. The final is submitted for the Governor's designee's approval. A final TIP for an air quality conformity area, however, needs an additional 45 day federal review to receive full approval. Once fully approved, a final TIP is included without change in the State's STIP.

APPENDIX B – Map of the VDOT Construction Districts

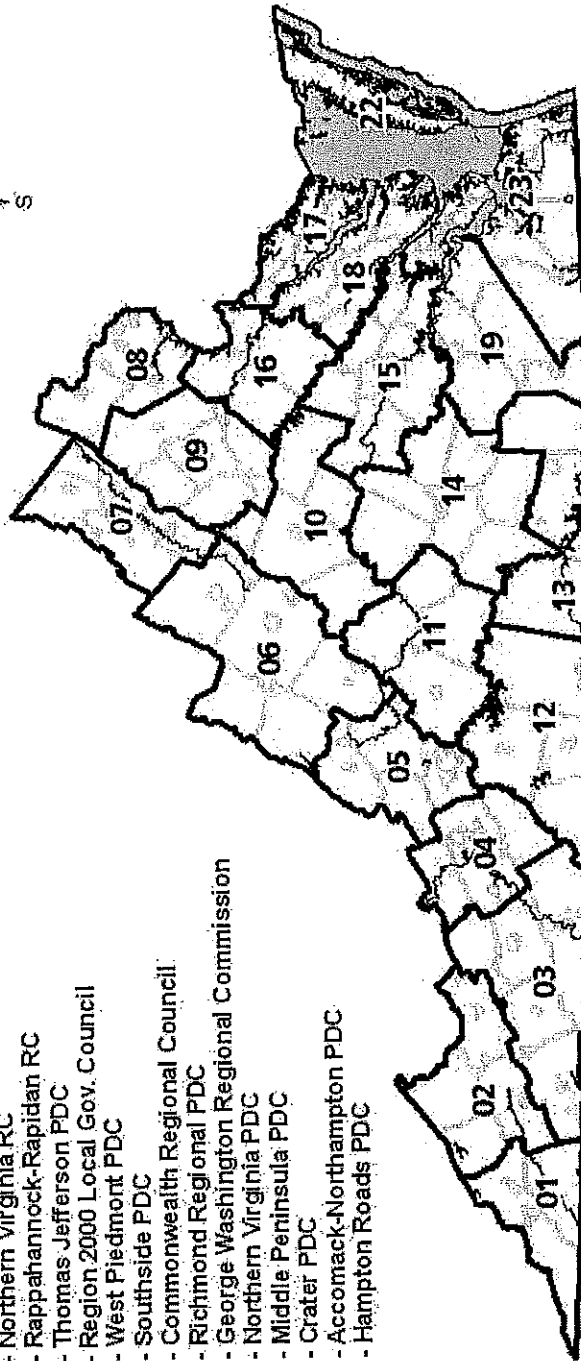
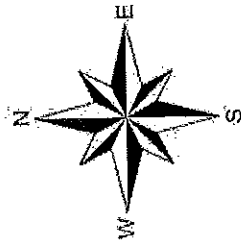
Construction Districts



APPENDIX C- MAP OF THE PDC REGIONS

Virginia Planning Districts

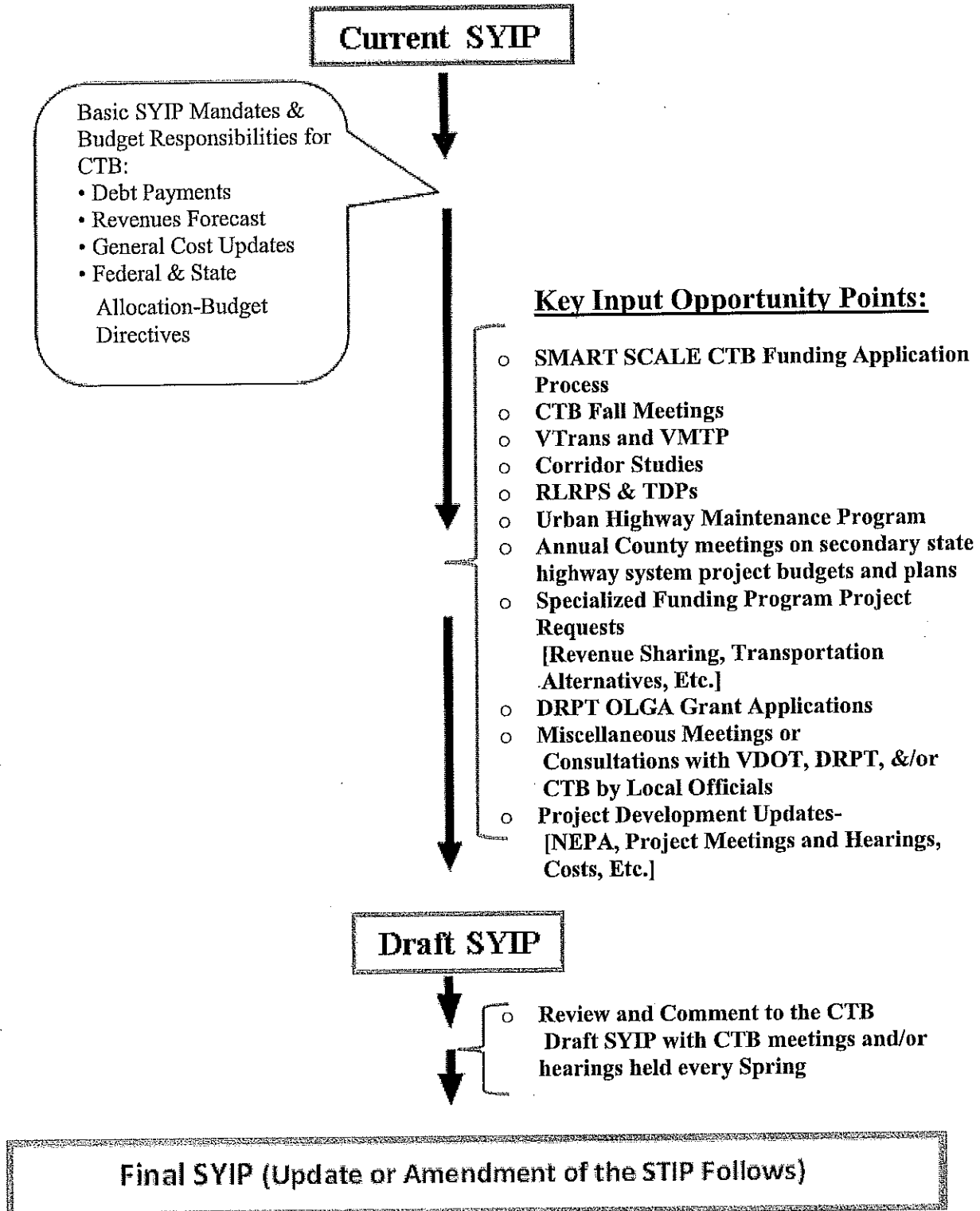
- 01 - Lenowisco PDC
- 02 - Cumberland Plateau PDC
- 03 - Mount Rogers PDC
- 04 - New River Valley PDC
- 05 - Roanoke Valley-Alleghany RC
- 06 - Central Shenandoah PDC
- 07 - Northern Shenandoah Valley PDC
- 08 - Northern Virginia RC
- 09 - Rappahannock-Rapidan RC
- 10 - Thomas Jefferson PDC
- 11 - Region 2000 Local Gov. Council
- 12 - West Piedmont PDC
- 13 - Southside PDC
- 14 - Commonwealth Regional Council
- 15 - Richmond Regional PDC
- 16 - George Washington Regional Commission
- 17 - Northern Virginia PDC
- 18 - Middle Peninsula PDC
- 19 - Crater PDC
- 22 - Accomack-Norhampton PDC
- 23 - Hampton Roads PDC



Virginia Department of Transportation - Transportation and Mobility Planning Division 2010

Appendix D

Graphic on Key Input Opportunities with SYIP Development



Barbara Schwenk

From: U.S. Maritime Administration <marad@service.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2016 12:58 PM
To: bschwenk@a-npdc.org
Subject: USDOT Requests Applications for \$850 Million in FASTLANE Transportation Infrastructure Grants

USDOT Requests Applications for \$850 Million in FASTLANE Transportation Infrastructure Grants

Second Call for Submissions Follows High-Demand for Inaugural FASTLANE Grants

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Build America Bureau is now soliciting applications for up to \$850 million in Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grants.

The FASTLANE program was established in the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act to fund critical freight and highway projects across the country. The FAST Act authorized the program at \$4.5 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020, including \$850 million for FY 2017 to be awarded by the Secretary of Transportation.

“Across the country, there are sidelined projects that are essential to America’s cities and our transportation network, and leveraging a FASTLANE grant from the Build America Bureau can move many of these projects forward,” said Secretary Foxx. “FASTLANE grants give us an opportunity to identify and invest strategically in those projects that are critical to keeping our nation’s economic engine running.”

In September, the Department announced the selection of eighteen projects to receive \$759 million in FASTLANE funding, leveraging \$3.6 billion in funding from other federal, state, local, and private sources. The FASTLANE program provides dedicated, discretionary funding for projects that address critical freight issues facing our nation’s highways and bridges. It is also in line with the Department’s draft National Freight Strategic Plan released in October 2015, which looks at challenges and identifies strategies to address impediments to the efficient flow of goods throughout the nation.

In the first call for FASTLANE grants, USDOT received 212 applications totaling nearly \$9.8 billion for grants – with states and localities requesting over 13 times more funding than was available through FASTLANE – underscoring the continuing need for infrastructure investment across the country. Of the 212 applications received, 136 represented projects in urban areas, while the remaining 76 supported rural projects. The need to support projects improving the Nation’s freight system is also highlighted in the Department’s report, *Beyond Traffic 2045: Trends and Choices*, where freight volume is expected to grow to 29 billion tons—an increase by 45 percent by the year 2040.

The deadline for submitting applications is 8:00PM on December 15, 2016. The Department of Transportation will review all eligible applications submitted at <http://www.grants.gov>.

For more information about FASTLANE grants, please visit www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/FASTLANEgrants.

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Barbara Schwenk

From: U.S. Maritime Administration <marad@service.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Monday, October 24, 2016 1:59 PM
To: bschwenk@a-npdc.org
Subject: Maritime Administration Releases Report on Zero Emission High-speed Passenger Ferry

MARAD 08-16
Monday, October 24, 2016

News Digest

Maritime Administration Releases Report on Zero Emission High-speed Passenger Ferry. The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has released a feasibility study that examines the technical, regulatory, and economic feasibility of a high-speed passenger ferry powered solely by hydrogen fuel cells and its associated hydrogen fueling infrastructure in the San Francisco Bay. The study determined that it is possible technologically to build and to operate a 150 passenger, high speed, zero emission hydrogen-powered ferry and its associated hydrogen station in the current regulatory environment; however the current ferry design has a cost premium compared to a conventional diesel ferry. Cost reduction strategies specific to the vessel design and strategies for leveraging developments in the fuel cell technology are now being explored. The study, which was funded through MARAD's Maritime Environmental and Technical Assistance (META) Program and conducted by Sandia National Laboratories, can be found at <https://www.marad.dot.gov/wp-content/uploads/pdf/SF-BREEZE-Ferry-Feasibility-Study-Report-by-Sandia-National-Laboratory-2.pdf>. Contact: Kim Strong 202.366.5067

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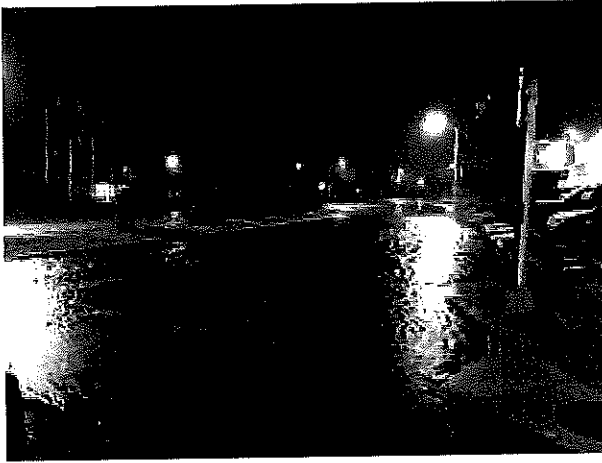
Update your subscriptions, modify your password or e-mail address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please visit subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.

This service is provided to you at no charge by the [Maritime Administration](#).

This email was sent to bschwenk@a-npdc.org using GovDelivery, on behalf of: U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration · 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE · Washington, DC 20590 · 800-99-MARAD



Transportation Infrastructure Flooding: Sensing Water Levels and Rerouting Traffic Out of Danger



Flooding in the Oceanview area of Norfolk during Tropical Storm Hermine. Credit: WAVY-TV, Aaron/Kurtz

Many coastal urban areas are prone to flooding due to inadequate stormwater management infrastructure, rising sea levels, tidal effects, and intense precipitation. These events can have significant impacts on a region's transportation systems and economic vitality. In heavily populated areas, such as Virginia Beach and Norfolk, there is a critical need to forecast the magnitude of floods and high tide events within a short time frame to plan proper protective measures and to mitigate the danger to drivers and vehicle-related property damage.

Building on MATS UTC previously funded work on infrastructure resilience and adaptation for hurricanes in coastal areas and the impact of climate change and sea level rise on stormwater design and reoccurring flooding problems in the Hampton Roads region, a team of Virginia Tech and University of Virginia researchers is focusing on the resilience of critical transportation operations to respond to coastal flooding. The current research project seeks to protect drivers who are on the road as flooding occurs and those who have not yet entered a particular road and must be re-routed. Adopting a multi-disciplinary approach (hydrology, regional climate and precipitation forecasting, and transportation engineering), the project is using modeling and simulation to identify patterns of tidal levels and rainfall intensities and durations that cause flooding, using the data to forecast periods when roadways may be flooded.

The research team will use simulations of weather conditions, seasons (including tourism and tidal effects), times of day and other effects to provide clearance times of the soon-to-be flooded areas. Their analysis will also include an evaluation of trade-offs associated with providing a warning and closing roads unnecessarily versus failing to issue a warning/road closure when one is needed.

The team is working closely with the City of Virginia Beach, aligning the project with the City's longer-term goals to improve methods for road closures due to flooding. The plan is important not just to protect drivers, but also to ensure that emergency services, such as fire, police and ambulances, have safe, alternative routes during times of flooding. Having predictive capabilities could allow emergency personnel to relocate if flooding is projected to occur due to a forecasted rainfall event.

Ultimately, the predictive capabilities of the models will allow better allocation of limited resources during critical periods. The team plans to develop a protocol for communicating predicted flooding events and a decision support tool for use in the local traffic management center so that advisories can be provided to the public through variable message signs and 511 systems, thereby reducing traffic delays and improving driver safety.

"This project is an exciting way to combine our research fields to address a relatively frequent issue that delays and frustrates drivers. Our approach should lead to increased safety during flooding and shorter delays for the public and emergency responders," said Pamela Murray-Tuite, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Virginia Tech.

In addition to Dr. Murray-Tuite, principal investigators include Virginia Tech researchers, Dr. Kevin Heaslip and Dr. Venkataramana Sridhar, and UVA researcher, Dr. Jon Goodall.

For more information, contact Dr. Murray-Tuite at murraytu@vt.edu. Read more about the project [here](#).

This entry was posted in Uncategorized on September 16, 2016

[<http://www.matsutc.org/2016/09/transportation-infrastructure-flooding-sensing-water-levels-and-rerouting-traffic-out-of-danger/>] by Lillian Tan.

Safe Routes to School in Small Rural Communities: Challenges and Strategies to Accessing Funding

Under the last two Federal transportation bills, States have been required to set aside a portion of their funding for active transportation and Safe Routes to School to support rural communities with 5,000 or less residents. However, the set-aside does not guarantee that these communities are able to access this funding or support students in safely walking and bicycling to school, and a variety of challenges can affect a community's ability to benefit from the funds.

Communities, whether rural, urban or suburban, often have a mix of reasons for needing increased attention on walking and bicycling. Rural communities have a special need for the benefits of Safe Routes to School and active transportation. Rural communities have higher

levels of physical inactivity than urban areas,^{1,2} high injury and fatality rates from collisions,⁴ and poorer infrastructure for safe and convenient walking and bicycling.⁵ Accessing funding for Safe Routes to School and walking and bicycling can be a real opportunity to address these needs. This informational brief provides an overview of the challenges that small rural communities face in accessing Federal funding for and implementing active transportation projects, describes State outreach, technical assistance, and partnership approaches that support these communities, and highlights places that have successfully used Federal funds to improve safety and accessibility for walking and bicycling.



Jackson, Wyoming

Overview

Starting in 2012, the Federal transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), required States to set aside a portion of their Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds, funds for walking, bicycling, and Safe Routes to School projects, to nonurban communities with 5,000 or fewer residents. This requirement continues today as part of the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside under the current Federal transportation bill, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). After deducting Recreational Trails Program funding, States can use half of the TA Set-Aside anywhere in the State through a statewide competitive process. For the other 50 percent, each State must divide the funding among geographic areas based on their relative share of the total State population. There are three categories for these divisions: urbanized areas with populations over 200,000, small urban areas with populations of 5,001 to 200,000, and nonurban areas with 5,000 or fewer people.⁴ This informational brief focuses on small rural communities, nonurban areas with 5,000 or fewer people. These include small cities and towns, tribal communities, and unincorporated communities. However, small communities located within urbanized areas represented by a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) are not eligible for this funding category, even if they have a population of 5,000 or fewer people.

Each State is responsible for selecting projects in small rural communities through a competitive process. Most States combine the application process for small rural communities with either the small urban areas (with populations over 5,000) or the statewide competitive process in order to streamline administration. However, how States handle project selection varies widely. Some consider the projects for the small rural set-aside separately, while others select projects across all areas and then only distinguish the areas during reporting.

As of June 2016, over \$335 million in TAP/TA Set-Aside funds are available to States to spend in small rural communities. Overall, the percentage of available funds in this category that have been obligated (committed by the State towards funding a selected project) is slightly lower than the percentage of TAP/TA Set-Aside funds obligated for all communities. However, obligation of the funds for small rural communities varies widely across the States. Many States have obligated a high percentage of their funds and are seeing projects successfully implemented in rural communities. In Florida, for example, almost 96 percent of these funds have been obligated. Conversely, there are seven States that have not obligated any funds for communities in this category.⁶

Barriers to Walking and Bicycling in Rural Communities

In addition to the challenges specific to accessing and using Federal funding, rural communities often face other barriers related to Safe Routes to School and active transportation. While many of these challenges also exist in other areas, they can be more pronounced in rural areas and create barriers for people walking and bicycling.

- Long distances between home and school. Although distance is one of the biggest barriers to children walking and bicycling to school in the United States as a whole, the distances can be much further in rural areas. The closing of small rural schools and school districts has worsened this trend.⁷
- Limited sidewalks and other infrastructure for walking and bicycling. Without sidewalks and bicycle lanes, people are often walking and bicycling along shoulders or on makeshift paths.
- County roads and State highways bisecting towns. These roads and highways are often the major thoroughfares in rural communities and their design accommodates all sizes and types of vehicles including large trucks and freight.
- High speeds. Rural roads and highways often allow for higher speeds than other areas, creating hazards for children and other people walking and bicycling. Particularly when combined with the scarcity of sidewalks or bicycle lanes, these high speeds increase the likelihood of a driver hitting a child who is walking or bicycling, and also increase the severity of injuries if a crash occurs.
- Stray animals and wildlife. Aggressive dogs and other stray animals and wildlife pose a danger to people walking in some rural areas. In addition, in areas where wildlife is abundant, animals can wander onto roadways and trails, and children may feel threatened while on foot or bicycle.

Common Challenges in Small Rural Communities

While the set-aside of funding is available for small rural communities, it does not guarantee that they are able to access funding or successfully implement projects and programs. Challenges communities often face in using the TAP/TA Set-Aside, and other Federal transportation funds include: not having the staff capacity to apply for the funds and implement projects; limited fiscal resources; reduced competitiveness for the very small projects proposed by small rural communities; and low prioritization of walking and bicycling projects.



Limited Staffing Capacity

Small rural communities often have limited agency staff available to seek funding, implement projects, or run programs. In larger urban and suburban communities, cities and towns may have dozens of staff in their planning and transportation departments, with staff dedicated to transportation engineering, bicycle and pedestrian programs, and grant writing. But in many rural areas, staff assume many different roles. They may find it very challenging to add new responsibilities or find extra time to seek funding for new programs or infrastructure. In addition, staff in these areas may be less able to stay current on new trends in active transportation and Safe Routes to School. The many steps necessary to follow a funding idea through to implementation—preparing an application, overseeing grant administration, and adhering to Federal funding requirements—can be a large burden when there are only one or two staff who can dedicate time to planning and transportation. In some instances, States require the community to designate a full-time employee to be responsible for implementation of the funds, a challenging requirement to meet for a very small town with no staff or only a few full-time staff.

Limited Fiscal Resources

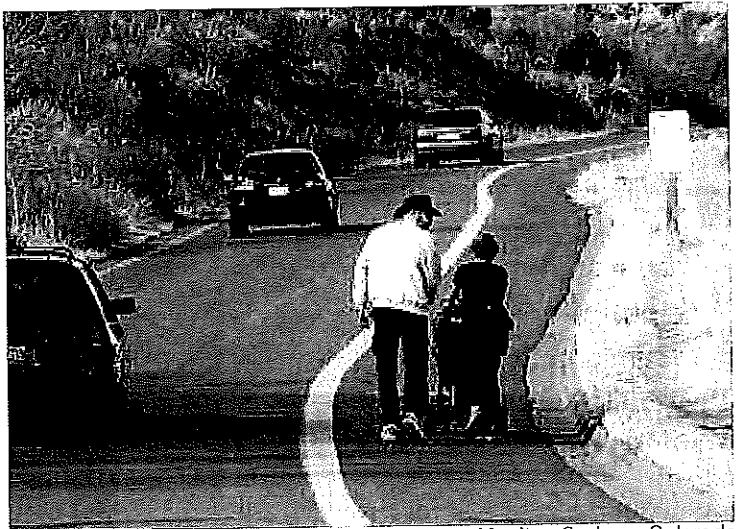
When a community receives TAP/TA Set-Aside funding for a project or program, it is responsible for providing matching funds of up to 20 percent of the project cost. Some States provide the match with State funding, or allow in-kind contributions of staff time and donations toward the match, but most require the local project sponsor to pay the match. Twenty percent of the cost of an infrastructure project can be a large burden on rural communities that often have limited fiscal resources. Compounding this, limited staffing reduces the ability of a rural community to provide an in-kind match even when it is allowed.

In addition, some States do not allow the project award funds to pay for preliminary engineering for infrastructure projects. Agency staff or a consultant paid through other funds completes preliminary engineering in large cities and towns. Small rural communities often do not have the staff with the technical expertise or time available to do preliminary engineering.

Challenges can also arise when the actual cost for engineering and construction exceeds the cost estimate in the application and funding award. At such times, the community might struggle to find the extra funding to cover what the grant does not.

Reduced Competitiveness of Very Small Projects

Improving routes to school often involves smaller projects, such as closing sidewalk gaps, installing crosswalks, or improving school zone signing and pavement marking. A variety of considerations that pertain to small rural communities can result in a community proposing very small projects. Limited staffing to manage projects, limited fiscal resources to provide required matching dollars, concerns about the viability of expensive proposals for the benefit of small populations, and the small physical scale of these communities can all lead to very small project proposals. But Federal funding usually comes with a high administrative burden, and while not unique to communities with a population under 5,000, States are often hesitant to award TAP, TA Set-Aside, and other Federal funds for infrastructure improvements that are small scale or have relatively low costs. Small projects proposed by rural communities may be crucial locally, but lack State support over larger projects.

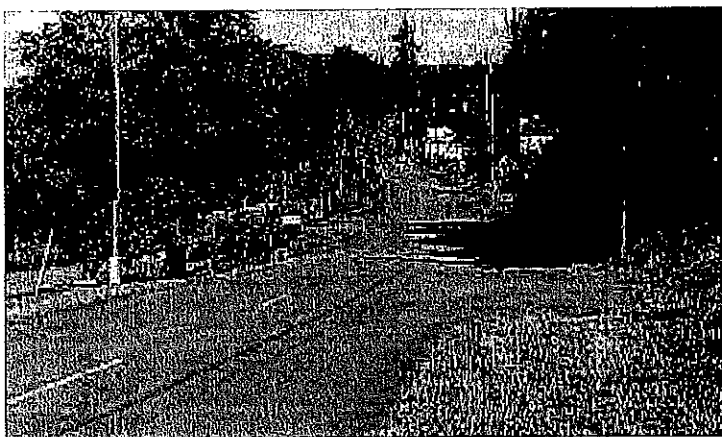


Manitou Springs, Colorado



Competing Priorities and Lack of Awareness

Some States have difficulty obligating the TAP/TA Set-Aside funds and seeing projects implemented due to low prioritization of walking and bicycling initiatives in rural communities. Rural communities often have many needs for new and upgraded infrastructure, not just in the areas of roads and transportation, but also water, sanitation, communications, and others. When it comes to roads, some rural communities prioritize infrastructure to support local agriculture and commerce. Projects and programs to support walking and bicycling are often less of a priority and, with limited staffing, pursuing funding for these projects may not occur. In addition, rural communities can be isolated from larger active transportation movements in urban and suburban areas and may be disconnected from the State department of transportation (DOT), leading to a lack of understanding of the benefits of active transportation or awareness of funding opportunities and types of improvements that could be made locally.



Elkton, Oregon — Before and After

Successful Strategies Used By States

State departments of transportation are doing a variety of things to support small rural communities in successfully obtaining Federal funding and implementing walking and bicycling projects. While small rural communities often face challenges with staffing capacity, fiscal resources, appropriate funding to meet local needs, and competing interests that overshadow Safe Routes to School and active transportation, many State departments of transportation have helped communities overcome these challenges. State implementation practices such as regional level outreach, pre-application and post-award assistance and education, encouraging partnerships, and bundling projects and funding, are building success for active transportation and Safe Routes to School projects in rural communities.

Regional Level Outreach

Rural communities may be more engaged and more likely to respond to calls for projects if they are supported by local or regional organizations,

agencies, or other partners, rather than those far away at the State capitol. State departments of transportation use a variety of strategies to achieve regional level outreach to small communities.

In some States, the regional offices of the State department of transportation have developed relationships directly with the local communities. In other States, regional organizations and agencies are tasked with outreach to and support of the communities in their areas. For example, the New Mexico Department of Transportation tasks the regional transportation planning organizations and councils of government with administering the call for projects and assisting with preliminary project application review before the DOT conducts the application scoring process.

One State DOT employee commented that “Local consulting firms frequently were the instigators of communities applying for funding, because the consulting firms had established relationships with these communities and had the technical expertise to match the funding opportunity with communities’ needs.”



Pre-Application Assistance and Education

States that have seen success in TA Set-Aside projects often provide pre-application technical assistance to communities. The State departments of transportation (DOTs) help rural communities with limited staff to ensure projects are well developed and positioned for funding, as well as set up for successful implementation. The assistance ranges from helping identify the best types of and locations for projects to planning projects and estimating project costs. Some State DOTs and their partners provide extensive online and in person training and guidance on preparing the grant application. In Oregon, the DOT assists local agency staff with project cost estimates, understanding the environmental process requirements, and other aspects of developing a competitive project. Other States provide a tiered review. For example, in Minnesota, the community first submits a simple letter of intent so that the State DOT can work with the community to better define or develop the project before the community submits the grant application.

Post-Award Assistance and Education

Receiving funding is just the beginning for a project or program. DOTs in many of the States with successful programs provide a large range of post-award assistance and education. Basic education may include trainings for local agency staff on reporting requirements. For example, in Iowa, agencies are required to attend a one day training on the Federal aid process to understand project implementation. At the highest level of assistance, the State DOT may do the design and construction administration work in-house, or hire consultants and oversee the projects on behalf of the local community. In New Mexico, the DOT district offices and design centers work with the communities to handle project design and construction. In this case, the local community acts as the project sponsor and is still required to provide the local match. However, the administrative burden falls on the State DOT, and the local agency does not need dedicated staffing time or expertise to oversee implementation. No matter the level of assistance the State DOT provides, many State DOT staff believe that providing a point of contact that can communicate and work directly with the community throughout the project helps prevent project delays.

Encouraging Partnerships

When small rural communities have limited resources or capacity for walking and bicycling initiatives, States can improve communities' chances of success by encouraging or requiring partnerships with other agencies.

How State Departments of Transportation Are Supporting Small Rural Community Applications

Below are strategies that some States have taken when working with small rural communities:

- Engage regional level partners or regional staff in reaching out to small rural communities.
- Establish a consistent point of contact for each community to communicate with during the application process and after the grant award.
- Provide technical assistance through meetings and conference calls.
- Look for ways to pair projects in small rural communities with others, whether it is a State highway project or a project in an adjacent community. Use TA Set-Aside funds to make improvements to sidewalks, crossings, bicycle routes, and other facilities for walking and bicycling in conjunction with a State project like highway repaving.



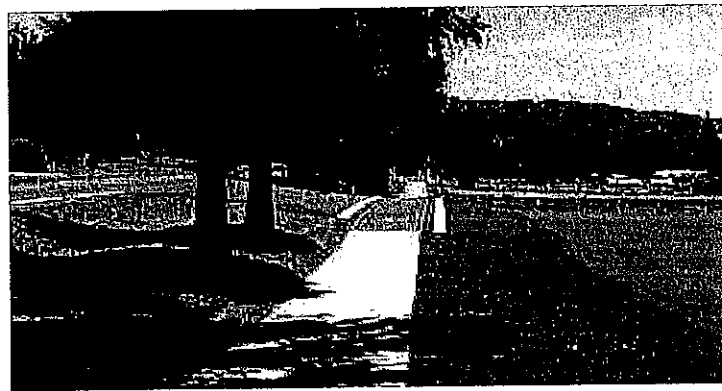
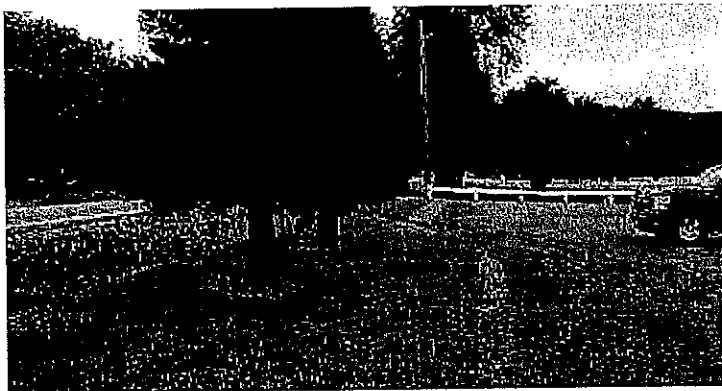
Langley, Virginia

Often these partnerships are with the county or a larger agency with more experience and staffing resources. Some States, such as Minnesota, require communities with less than 5,000 people to have their project sponsored by a larger entity, usually by their county.⁸ In other States, this partnership is not required, but has still proven beneficial, with successful projects resulting from partnerships between small towns and counties in which the counties have provided the required matching funds along with the technical expertise.

Bundling Projects and Funding

To address concerns related to the relative administrative burden on small projects, some States encourage bundling projects within one community or between two or more communities. Just as with the strategy of encouraging partnerships, project bundling reduces the burden on small rural communities. In addition, some States have bundled two or more years of funding, allowing for more money to be available to fund these bundled projects or larger projects.

Success Stories



Elkton, Oregon — Before and After

Elkton, Oregon

In Elkton, Oregon, population 193, Federal Safe Routes to School and Transportation Enhancements funds built much needed sidewalks and crosswalks connecting residential neighborhoods with schools and community facilities.⁹ Elkton Charter School is located adjacent to busy Highway 38, a road with a high volume of trucks, buses, and other vehicles, and lacking sidewalks or space to walk. Despite parents raising concerns about dangers to their children walking and bicycling along the route, an average of 35 to 40 students still walked between the grade school and high school daily. With the construction of new sidewalks and crosswalks, students and other community members now have the opportunity to travel between their homes and community destinations on foot. The sidewalk connects the elementary school with the high school, the Elkton Community Education Center, and a campground. A crosswalk also allows students and community members to cross Highway 38 to the residential neighborhood across from the school.

Members of the school and community first identified the project through Elkton's Safe Routes to School Action Plan. The city combined the Safe Routes to School Funding with Federal Transportation Enhancements funds in order to build the project.

Highwood, Montana

In the unincorporated town of Highwood, Montana, population 176, a nonprofit group secured TAP funding after years of tirelessly working to construct a multiuse path.¹⁰ The project, a path that meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessible design, is adjacent to a State highway that has no shoulder. As children travel to and from school, they walk along the roadway ditch slope or in one of the few areas of mailbox turnouts. Students live in close proximity to the K-12 school and athletic fields, yet the streets discourage walking to these facilities. While engineers, planners, or technical professionals typically write grant applications for most infrastructure projects of this nature, in Highwood the project came through the County Commissioners and was spearheaded by the Highwood Pedestrian Committee



and the Highwood Commercial Club, a dedicated nonprofit organization. Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) staff remarked on the thoughtfulness of the project and how well the application was written. Highwood has plans for a pedestrian network throughout the entire community and a Recreational Trails Program Grant to build another phase of their multiuse path project, which includes a pedestrian bridge over Highwood Creek. District staff from MDT assisted the community with preparing the cost estimate and MDT designed the project in-house. Construction engineering will be done in-house by MDT staff as well.



Highwood, Montana

Conclusion

Small rural communities have a variety of challenges and considerations to address improving safety for walking and bicycling for children and adults. Many communities are successful in obtaining funding and implementing projects and programs through the set-aside for nonurban communities. States can support small rural communities through outreach, technical assistance, and developing and encouraging partnerships and joint efforts. By emulating these successful strategies and exploring others, States can assist small rural areas in creating safer, healthier, more active children and communities.

1. Lutfiyya MN, Lipsky MS, Wisdom-Behounek J, Inpanbutr-Martinkus M. Is rural residency a risk factor for overweight and obesity for U.S. children? *Obesity*. 2007;15(9):2348–2356. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1038/oby.2007.278/epdf>.
2. PD Patterson, CG Moore, JC Probst, JA Shinogle. Obesity and Physical Inactivity in Rural America. *The Journal of Rural Health*, Volume 20, Issue 2, pages 151–159, March 2004.
3. FHWA, Highway Safety Information System, Factors Contributing to Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes on Rural Highways, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/10052/10052.pdf> (25% of nationwide pedestrian and bicycle fatal and injury collisions occur on rural highways); see also Rural Health, "Healthcare disparities & barriers to healthcare," (2010), <http://ruralhealth.stanford.edu/health-pros/factsheets/disparities-barriers.html#sthash.BLZ6kjrZ.dpuf> (rural roads see one-third of motor vehicles collisions, but two-thirds of motor vehicles deaths).
4. JB Moore, SB Jilcott, KA Shores, KR Evenson. A qualitative examination of perceived barriers and facilitators of physical activity for urban and rural youth. *Health Educ. Res.* (2010) 25 (2): 355-367.doi: 10.1093/her/cyq004.
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