TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES
SET-ASIDE
Applicant Workshop
Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program Overview

- Federal funding available to localities
- Non-traditional transportation projects
- Reimbursement program (80 / 20)
- Projects locally administered; oversight provided by VDOT
- Four years to reach construction
- Small localities can request that VDOT administer the project on their behalf
Pre-Application Process
Smart Portal

Portal Access

• Organizational Administrator
• Need “permission” for TA Program

Pre-application submission **MANDATORY**

• Portal opens May 15, 2019 at 8am
• From May 15 – July 1 will be a “rolling submission” period
• Locality is “owner” of the pre-application and can make changes until it is SUBMITTED
• Portal closes to pre-applications July 1, 2019 at 5pm
Pre-Application Process
Validation Period

Submission of Pre-Application – by July 1, 2019

• After submission by locality, pre-application fields are “locked”
• To make changes after this point, the locality will need to notify District PC and request changes be made

VDOT Validation – completed no later than August 15, 2019

• LAD and VDOT District will begin reviewing pre-applications as they are submitted; validations will occur on a “rolling” basis
• Two levels of validation: District and CO LAD (can be done concurrently)
• All pre-applications will be validated by August 15
• Locality will be notified via email of validation and authorized to proceed with the full application
Pre-Application

What does it look like?

Virginia Department of Transportation
Pre-Application
What do I need to provide?

Basic project information:

• Project applicant and contact information
• Project title and accurate description
• Eligibility category – what activity does it qualify under
• Project termini
• Will you use third-party donations as part / all of your match?
• Has design started and status of right of way?
• Attachment Required: detailed project cost estimate
• Attachment Required: map / sketch of proposed project
Final Application Process
Smart Portal

Final Application **MANDATORY** - no later than October 1, 2019

• **Cannot** submit final application if no pre-application was submitted
• Locality has from date of validation to October 1 to work on and complete full application
• Pre-application fields are “locked” after validation; most importantly, the project scope / description
• Attachments (estimate and sketch) **can be updated** after validation
• Important to incorporate District and LAD comments / suggestions
• Clarifications / details should be conveyed via Smart Portal “Alerts”
• **DEADLINE:** Portal closes October 1, 2019 at 5pm
Final Application
Documented Pre-requisites

The final application submission must include:

- Current local resolution
- Current MPO endorsement (if applicable) except NOVA / COG
- Evidence of public meeting

With the pre-application requirement, any exception to including these documents in the final application will be addressed on a case-by-case basis; there will be no “blanket” grace period.
What Makes a Good Application? 
Scoring Criteria

All applications scored on five (5) criteria:

- Project Resources
- Project Concept
- Improvement to Transportation Network
- Sponsor’s Experience Administering Federal-aid Projects
- Project’s Readiness to Proceed

Existing projects are also evaluated on progress:
- What has been achieved in project development?
What funding resources are available?

- Does locality have a detailed / accurate cost estimate?
- Have all developmental phases – PE, RW, CN – been adequately addressed?
- Does estimate include costs for 5’ wide sidewalk, 10’ wide shared-use path, 14’ wide pedestrian bridge? Firm, stable and slip resistant surface? ADA standards…
- Are additional funding sources / contributions identified? Have they been secured?
- Will match be in the form of cash or third-party donations (in-kind)? Are proposed donations eligible?
- Does the locality have a strategy for fully funding the project?
Third-Party Donations
Formerly Referred to as “In-Kind” Match

• In accordance with federal guidance, donations must come from entity other than VDOT (pass-thru agency) or the Locality (sub-recipient)
• Must otherwise be eligible for reimbursement
• With the exception of RW, the value must be used in the same developmental phase (i.e. value of PE donations can only be applied as match to PE expenditures)
• With the exception of RW, the costs being donated cannot be incurred prior to the project agreement and federal phase authorization
• The estimated value for donations should be included in the phase estimate used to secure federal authorization (must plan ahead!) so costs are included in authorization and 2) so costs are not incurred too early)
Project Concept

Have you done your homework? Do you have a viable project and an accurate cost estimate?

- Does project have a well defined, finite scope?
- Has locality performed a site visit – who attended?
- What was identified and have any mitigating factors been included in the cost estimate and/or design plan?
- Have ADA design standards been specified and prepared (estimated) for?
- Does the proposed improvement meet a transportation need?
- Does the locality have a maintenance plan/budget for upkeep?
Improvement to the Transportation Network

What and who does the project benefit?

• Does it provide connectivity to existing transportation facilities? Does it provide facilities where none existed?
• Will it serve multiple neighborhoods, schools, or places of work?
• Will it get riders to public transportation?
• For non-drivers, what services will the proposed improvements provide access to? Will it improve safety?
• Will it enhance the driving experience – scenic viewing areas, improvements to historic districts or transportation structures?
Ability to Administer Federal Aid Funding

What demonstrated experience does the locality have in managing federal funds?

- Identify staff that will be working on the project day-to-day
- Provide specific project examples; focus on federal funding
- Provide specific examples of mitigating situations and/or changed conditions; experience meeting budgets and bringing a project back on schedule
- Identify specific education and/or training – FHWA courses, certifications, subject-specific webinars, etc.
- Illustrate knowledge of federal financing and/or reimbursement requirements
Readiness to Proceed

What steps has the locality taken to prepare?

- What conceptual design, master plan or engineering work has been completed?
- Have right of way surveys been completed and / or required RW been identified?
- Has right of way been secured? Any evidence?
- Have prior segments of the project been built? What was learned?
- Will design be done in-house or will procurement be required?
What Makes a Good Application?
Details

Details are critical to scoring. Not all reviewers are familiar with the area or the proposed changes.

Include:

- Map and/or sketches
- Detailed cost estimate
- Clear and logical termini
- Full answers all to questions
- Support documentation for additional funding, RW, donations, etc.
- Pictures
Who Can Apply?

Eligible Sponsors:

• Local governments
• Regional transportation authorities – including PDC’s
• Transit agencies
• Natural resource or public and agencies
• School districts, local education agencies or schools
• Tribal governments
• Other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails

NOT ELIGIBLE – State DOTs, MPOs and Non-Profits
What is Eligible?

Eligible activity must relate to surface transportation **AND** qualify under one of more of the following:

**Eligible Categories:**

- Transportation Alternatives (TA) Activities
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Activities
- Highway to Boulevard Activities **

Recreational Trails Activities – administered separately by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

** These will be evaluated by VDOT on a case-by-case basis
Activity #1

Construction, planning and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation
Activity #1 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Eligible

- New or rehabilitated sidewalks
- Bicycle infrastructure including bike lanes, bike racks, shelters, bikeshare systems
- Off Road trails
- Pedestrian and bicycle overpasses and underpasses
- Pedestrian plazas, wider sidewalks to allow a sense of “space” including street trees and benches

Not Eligible

- Circular trails / sidewalks
- Facilities located on one site or property, that do not provide connections to existing trails or sidewalks outside the site / property
- Maintenance and / or repairs to existing facilities
- Recreational facilities including boat launches, grills, basketball courts, etc.
- Operation and/or maintenance costs for bike programs, trails, etc.
- Wayfinding signage / program as a stand-alone project
- Preliminary work including feasibility / location studies and master plans
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

Activity #2
Construction, planning and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers to access daily needs
Activity #2 – Safe Routes for Non-Drivers

Eligible
- Crosswalks and pedestrian refuge areas / raised medians / bump outs
- ADA Curb ramps
- Pedestrian / Bicycle Signal Heads
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Safe connections to public transportation

Not Eligible
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety / educational programs
- Roadway lighting / street lights
- Traffic signals
- Intersection re-alignment to add turn lanes and / or improve vehicular traffic movement
- Replacing existing lighting fixtures for betterment
- Facilities that are not ADA compliant
- Signage as a stand-alone project
- Bus lanes
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

**Activity #3**

Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized transportation users
Activity #3 – Rails to Trails

Eligible

- Trails built within abandoned railway right-of-way
- Trails built within existing railroad right-of-way (rails-with-trails)

Not Eligible

- Projects / acquisition solely to preserve abandoned railroad right-of-way
- Trail facilities for motorized vehicles (ATVs, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, etc.)
- Maintenance and / or upkeep of trails (including purchase of equipment)
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

**Activity #4**

Construction of turn-outs, overlooks and viewing areas to promote the scenic and historic character of local roads
Activity #4 – Turnouts and Overlooks

Eligible

- Turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas that interpret a scenic or historic site

Not Eligible

- Safety rest areas
- Visitor / welcome centers
- Farmers markets, entertainment pavilions, amphitheaters, etc.
- Staffing, operating or maintenance costs of the turnout
- Marketing and promotional activities
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

Activity #6

Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
Activity #6 – Historic Preservation

Eligible

- Rehabilitation and/or restoration of historic transportation facility including train depots, rail trestles, bridges, lighthouses, bus terminals, tunnels, canals including locks and tow paths
- Property previously owned and operated by the railroad (example: railway offices, station master’s house, railway hotels)
- Historic toll and ferry facilities

Not Eligible

- Historic buildings not part of the historic transportation infrastructure (example: inns, taverns, gas stations and carriage houses)
- Operating costs for historic transportation facilities
- Construction of “replica” transportation facilities
- Construction of new rail/passenger facilities
- Facilities that are not related to “surface” transportation including air and space travel
- Spaces not open to the general public
- Spaces used as for-profit enterprises
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

Activity #5
Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

**Activity #7**
Vegetation management practices in transportation right-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species and provide erosion control

**Activity #8**
Archeological activities related to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title (CFR 23)
Eligible Activities
Transportation Alternatives

**Activity #9**
Environmental mitigation activity including prevention and abatement activities to address storm water management control and water pollution related to highway runoff

**Activity #10**
Wildlife mortality mitigation to reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats
SRTS continues to be a VDOT initiative through the Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD)

SRTS program established two different project types:

- Infrastructure Improvements
- Non-infrastructure Improvements

Currently in Virginia, the infrastructure projects (concrete) are solicited and administered by VDOT’s Local Assistance Division under the TAP umbrella. The non-infrastructure projects (education, training, planning, etc.) however, are solicited and administered by TMPD.
To be eligible for federal Transportation Alternatives funding as a SRTS project, the planned improvements must be located within 2 miles of a K-8 school and related to walking and biking to school

- For SRTS projects, select Activity #2 from the application drop down menu (safe routes for non-drivers)

To ultimately be successful, SRTS projects should include coordination with the school and an active SRTS program

- The coordination efforts will be documented in the SRTS “attachment” in the TA application. You will automatically be prompted for this if you respond “YES” to the question – do you want to pursue this as a SRTS project?
Safe Routes to School
Attachment Information

• Letter of support from school principal
• Title-1 status of school
• Current travel modes (i.e. how many students walk, bike, bus, carpool, etc.)
• Current travel distances (i.e. how many students live within ¼ mile, ½ mile, 1 mile and 2 miles from the school)
• Parent survey – get input from parents regarding issues with walking / biking to school (can be informal or formal)
• Describe current barriers to walking / biking to school
• Describe efforts to promote walking / biking to school
Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Activities

- Sidewalk improvements
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
- On street bicycle facilities
- Off street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Bicycle parking facilities
- Traffic Diversion improvements
- Flashing beacons

Not Eligible

- Bus stop improvements
- Improvements to traffic flow / kiss and ride for motorized vehicles
- Other improvements not related to walking or biking
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside
How Much Funding is Available?

Applications should include the locality’s request for BOTH FY21 and FY22 funds

- Historically approximately $20 million is available annually
- Current FAST ACT legislation expires September 30, 2019
- New legislation, or an extension to the existing federal legislation, will be required before future funds can be awarded by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
- With federal legislation, next CTB award will be made June, 2020
Project Selections

Funding

Current CTB policy requires that if selected, member(s) must award a minimum 50% of the requested federal amount

- This policy does not apply to MPO selections
- This can be spread over the two-year cycle or may be allocated from just one fiscal year
- Prepare a funding “strategy” if the project does not receive full funding; there is no guarantee
- FHWA expects a completed project
- Keep in mind the 4 year time limit to reach construction on TA projects
Funding Distribution
Sub-allocation of Funds

Example
FY16 – approx. $22.3M
Rec Trails – $1.5M – off the top to DCR
50/50 distribution – $20.8M

$10.4M
• Allocated based on population
• $6.3M to 4 Transportation Management Areas (TMAs)
• $4.1M to other areas of the state based on population

$10.4M
• Allocated to any area of the state
• These are funds CTB Policy will govern distribution of
• State DOT can transfer these funds to other Highway Programs
Population Areas

Less than 5,000 population
5,000 to 200,000 population
Greater than 200,000 population (TMAs)

Four (4) Transportation Management Areas (TMA)
Northern Virginia
Hampton Roads
Richmond and Roanoke

Four TMAs include all or part of six (6) MPOs:
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)
Hampton Roads
Richmond and Tri-Cities
Fredericksburg (North Stafford County)
Roanoke
Award Priorities – Year 1 versus Year 2

The amount included in application for “This Application Amount” must include sufficient funding request for the next two (2) years; no applications will be accepted in 2020. Note that applications may or may not receive an award for both years.

Maximum request is $1M per year = $2M per application cycle

The following “priorities” will be considered when determining projects to receive funding in the first year:

• Existing projects that are close to construction (Priority score of 1 or 2)
• Existing projects that need additional funding to complete the current developmental phase (PE, RW, CN)
• Existing projects that are progressing and have an established advertisement date for construction within the next 12 months
• New projects that provide a well defined scope of work and a schedule indicating advertisement for construction within the next 12 months
Important Points to Remember

When preparing a project application:

- Develop **finite** scope capable of starting construction within 4 years
- Project cost estimate must address ALL developmental phases – PE, RW and CN even if other funding is anticipated
- No carry-over or “banking” of funds for future project segments; the application and costs must address **specified** termini
- Separate applications are required for multiple project segments; each must have independent utility
- The more details / engineering provided early; the better the project

**AN ACCURATE COST ESTIMATE IS KEY**
Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program Resources

Local Assistance Division website:
http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local-assistance.asp

Virginia’s Transportation Alternatives Set-aside website:
http://www.virginiadot.org/business/prenhancegrants.asp

VDOT Smart Portal website:
http://smartscale.org

Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange website:
http://trade.railstotrails.org/index

Safe Routes to Schools website:
http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes
Transportation Alternatives Set-aside
Central Office Contacts

Pam Liston, Transportation Alternatives Program Manager
Pamela.Liston@VDOT.Virginia.gov or (804) 786-2734

Kelly Waldrop, Federal Programs Manager
Kelly.Waldrop@VDOT.Virginia.gov (804) 371-6180

Virginia’s TAP contact address
EnhancementProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov

Rob Williams, Safe Routes to School Coordinator
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Local Programs Workshop 2019

Colonial Williamsburg

September 9 – 11

Williamsburg Lodge