

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chair Phyllis J. Randall and Members  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

**FROM:** Monica Backmon, Executive Director

**DATE:** July 1, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Adoption of the FY2020-2025 Six Year Program

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1. **Purpose.** To seek Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) adoption of the FY2020-2025 Six Year Program (SYP).
2. **Suggested Motion:** *I move Northern Virginia Transportation Authority adoption of the FY2020-2025 Six Year Program.*
3. **Background.** The FY2020-2025 Six Year Program is the Authority's fifth funding program and the most competitive to date. The imbalance between funding requested and funding availability, while not a direct factor in project evaluation, is an overarching constraint on the number of recommended projects, and associated funding.

The Authority's schedule for the SYP Update included the following:

- a. **July 2019**---Announced a Call for Regional Transportation Projects (CfRTP) for the SYP.
  - b. **September 27, 2019**---Project applications due.
  - c. **March 13, 2020**--the Authority released the SYP candidate project list and related information for public comment. This list comprised 41 eligible candidate regional transportation projects with an associated funding request of \$1.445 billion.
  - d. **May 14, 2020**---Public Hearing held.
  - e. **May 14, 2020**---the Authority approved \$522,151,962 in regional revenues for the FY2020-2025 SYP.
  - f. **May 24, 2020**---Public Comment period ended.
4. **Summary of Public Comments.** During the SYP public comment period, which lasted from March 13 to May 24, 2020, more than 1,000 comments were submitted. Approximately 85 percent of these comments focused on four projects:
- a. 257 supported and 67 opposed NOV-002 (Arlington W&OD Trail Enhancements), submitted by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority;

- b. 132 supported and 125 opposed PWC-025 (Van Buren Road North Extension: Route 234 to Cardinal Drive), submitted by Prince William County;
- c. 240 supported and 3 opposed CFC-006 (West Falls Church Access to Transit and Multimodal Connectivity), submitted by the City of Falls Church; and
- d. 68 supported and zero opposed CFC-005 (Downtown Falls Church Multimodal Improvements), submitted by the City of Falls Church.

NVTA staff has posted a summary report of public comments, together with the actual comments, on NVTA's website.

- 5. Development of NVTA Staff Recommendations.** NVTA staff developed project/funding recommendations that used a project selection process comprised of four components (eligibility, quantitative analysis, qualitative considerations, and public comment). Among these components, one of the three quantitative evaluation analyses – Congestion Reduction Relative to Cost (CRRC) ratios – was the most important, as the Authority is required to give priority to projects with the strongest performance on this scale. Consequently, 14 of the top 18 projects on the CRRC scale were included in the NVTA staff recommendations. In addition, two of the three projects that received the bulk of public support were included in the NVTA staff recommendations.

The NVTA staff recommendations, posted on June 9, 2020, comprised full funding allocations for 15 projects and partial funding allocations for four projects.

NVTA staff did not recommend some higher-ranked projects due to factors such as funding gaps, project readiness, local/regional priorities, and geographic balance. Consequently, NVTA staff was able to recommend a few additional projects among the lower-ranked projects on the CRRC scale, taking account of factors such as modal balance, geographic balance, and synergies with other NVTA-funded projects. Generally, projects for which partial funding was recommended were among the lower-ranked projects.

For the first time, NVTA staff assessed the status of Long Term Benefit for each of the nine member jurisdictions. Long Term Benefit is a Virginia Code requirement to ensure that, over the long term, member jurisdictions receive a share of the benefit (from NVTA's regional revenues) that is approximately equal to the share of the revenues attributable to each jurisdiction. While ultimately Long-Term Benefit was a minor factor in the NVTA staff recommendations for the FY2020-2025 SYP, this part of the evaluation did highlight some potential 'headwinds' for several member jurisdictions (Prince William County, Loudoun County, and their respective Towns) in future funding cycles.

- 6. Committee Reviews.** The NVTA staff project/funding recommendations were presented to the Planning Coordination Advisory Committee (PCAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on June 17, 2020. Both committees endorsed the NVTA staff recommendations.

The Finance Committee met on June 18, 2020 to discuss the withdrawal/cancellation of two existing Virginia Railway Expressway (VRE) projects that can no longer use \$17 million in previously approved NVTA funds due to changes in project schedule. Subject to Authority action at its meeting on July 9, 2020, these funds will be available to the FY2020-2025 SYP.

The Planning and Programming Committee (PPC) met on June 19, 2020. The PPC considered the NVTA staff recommendations, taking account of the recent related actions of the PCAC, TAC, and Finance Committee. The PPC endorsed the NVTA staff recommendations. The PPC also recommended full funding allocations to two additional projects as well as increased partial funding of one of the four partially funded projects, assuming confirmation of the \$17 million currently allocated to two VRE projects. Because of the deliberations of these committees, the resulting recommendations are referred to as the PPC recommendations.

NVTA staff posted the PPC recommendations on June 22, 2020, meeting a requirement to post final recommendations at least 15 days prior to the meeting at which the Authority will adopt the Six Year Program.

- 7. Next steps.** Following adoption of the SYP, NVTA staff will coordinate with successful project applicants over the summer to finalize a detailed funding plan that optimizes funding needs, project scheduling, and resource management. At this time, July 1, 2023, is the earliest that FY2020-2025 SYP revenues will be available, necessitating appropriation activity during the normal budget cycle in spring 2023.

Full documentation of the adopted Six Year Program will be finalized over the summer, with a view to publication in Fall 2020.

Looking further ahead, and subject to future Authority action (likely during spring 2021), the Authority's next Call for Regional Transportation Projects (CfRTP) is anticipated in July 2021. This next CfRTP will drive the development of the Authority's FY 2022-2027 SYP.

Attachment: PPC Recommendations for FY2020-2025 SYP