

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Monica Backmon, Executive Director

DATE: June 3, 2021

SUBJECT: NVTA Endorsement of Arlington and Prince William Counties, and VRE's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Applications

Purpose: To seek Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) endorsement of Arlington and Prince William Counties, and the Virginia Railway Express' applications for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Applications.

Suggested Motion: *I move Authority Endorsement of Arlington and Prince William Counties and the Virginia Railway Express' Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Applications.*

Background: The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to apply for \$1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 discretionary grant funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants. RAISE, formerly known as BUILD and TIGER.

- The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity, or RAISE Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Previously known as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants, Congress has dedicated nearly \$8.9 billion for twelve rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact.
- The RAISE program enables DOT to examine these projects on their merits to help ensure that taxpayers are getting the highest value for every dollar invested.
- The eligibility requirements of RAISE allow project sponsors at the State and local levels to obtain funding for multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects that are more difficult to support through traditional DOT programs. RAISE can fund port and freight rail projects, for example, which play a critical role in our ability to move freight, but have limited sources of Federal funds. RAISE can provide capital funding directly to any public entity, including municipalities, counties, port authorities, tribal governments, MPOs, or others

in contrast to traditional Federal programs which provide funding to very specific groups of applicants (mostly State DOTs and transit agencies). This flexibility allows RAISE and our traditional partners at the State and local levels to work directly with a host of entities that own, operate, and maintain much of our transportation infrastructure, but otherwise cannot turn to the Federal government for support.

Criteria: Projects for RAISE funding will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, innovation, and partnership. Within these criteria, the Department will prioritize projects that can demonstrate improvements to racial equity, reduce impacts of climate change and create good-paying jobs.

- For this round of RAISE grants, the maximum grant award is \$25 million, and no more than \$100 million can be awarded to a single State, as specified in the appropriations act. Up to \$30 million will be awarded to planning grants, including at least \$10 million to Areas of Persistent Poverty.
- To ensure that the benefits of infrastructure investments benefit communities large and small the Department will award an equitable amount, not to exceed half of funding, to projects located in urban and rural areas respectively.
- The program is highly competitive with 680 projects funded out of over 9700 applications. It is one of the few DOT discretionary programs for which regional and local governments can directly compete for multimodal transportation funding.
- To provide technical assistance to prospective applicants, DOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2021 RAISE grant application process.

Endorsement Requests: Requests for application endorsement was received by the following jurisdictions and agency:

- **Arlington County**--- Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Wall Trail. The ANC Wall Trail will construct a ten-foot-wide pedestrian and bicycle trail on the west side Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Wall Trail.
- **Prince William County**-- Old Bridge Road/Gordon Boulevard Intersection Improvements and Prince William Parkway/Minnieville Intersection Improvements are both local priority projects that provide congestion reduction benefits to the region.
- **Virginia Railway Express**-- Planning grant for the L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track. The L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track Project includes the planning, design, permitting, and construction for an expanded VRE L'Enfant Station and an additional mainline track between Virginia (VA) and L'Enfant (LE) interlockings in Washington, DC.

All projects noted for endorsement are in TransAction.

Application Deadline: The deadline to submit an application is July 12, 2021 at 5pm.

Attachments: Letters Requesting Support from Arlington and Prince William Counties and the Virginia Railway Express.

May 26, 2021

Monica Backmon
Executive Director
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Ms. Backmon:

I am writing to request NVTAs endorsement of Arlington County's project application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Fiscal Year 2021 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program for the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Wall Trail.

The ANC Wall Trail will construct a ten-foot wide pedestrian and bicycle trail on the west side of Virginia Route 110, outside the cemetery wall, connecting Memorial Avenue with Columbia Pike. The project is included the Authority's TransAction long range plan (Project ID: 72) and constructing it will advance the Authority's goal of implementing multimodal transportation improvements across Northern Virginia. North of Memorial Avenue, a trail along Route 110 already exists to connect non-motorized travelers to the National Marine Corps Memorial ("Iwo Jima" Memorial) complex, where further connections can be made to the robust bicycle and pedestrian network of the Rosslyn-Ballston (R-B) Corridor.

In addition, at the southern end of the ANC Wall Trail, not only will cyclists and pedestrians be able to connect to Columbia Pike, they will also be able to connect to Pentagon City via South Joyce Street following the reconstruction of the Columbia Pike / VA 27 / Joyce Street interchange, which is proceeding as part of the Defense Access Roads (DAR) project associated with the ANC Southern Expansion. Accordingly, the ANC Wall Trail is providing a missing link in the regional non-motorized network that will complete a bicycle and pedestrian connection between all three of the County's major development corridors.

Finally, the project also provides a safe, direct bicycle and pedestrian connection between Arlington and the District of Columbia via Memorial Bridge. Currently, direct connections from the south are either nonexistent or include unsafe desire line footpaths for bicycle / pedestrian connections across uncontrolled traffic on the high-speed George Washington Memorial Parkway.

A RAISE funding award on the ANC Wall Trail would accelerate the construction of the project. Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Rich Roisman, Regional Transportation Planning Program Coordinator, at (571) 302-0234 or roisman@arlingtonva.us.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Leach

Dennis M. Leach, AICP
Director of Transportation



May 25, 2021

Monica Backmon
Executive Director
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)
3040 Williams Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031

RE: Request for NVTA Endorsement of Prince William County's RAISE Grant Applications for the Old Bridge Road/Gordon Boulevard Intersection Improvements and Prince William Parkway/Minnieville Road Intersection Improvements

Ms. Backmon,

I am writing to request NVTA's endorsement of Prince William County's applications for two projects under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program. The Old Bridge Road/Gordon Boulevard Intersection Improvements and Prince William Parkway/Minnieville Intersection Improvements are both local priority projects that provide congestion reduction benefits to the region.

The Old Bridge Road/Gordon Boulevard project consists of constructing a grade-separated innovative intersection to reduce congestion and delay and improve operations at this critical intersection near I-95, and eliminate dangerous weaving movements to improve safety. This project is part of an active VDOT Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) study as one of three intersections being evaluated to improve operations of the Route 123 corridor at I-95. This project has been recommended for FY 2027 Roadway Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds by the Authority and previously endorsed by the Authority for application for federal funding through the USDOT INFRA program. The Prince William Pkwy/Minnieville Rd project is included in TransAction (ID 279) and consists of constructing a grade-separated interchange to relieve congestion, improve safety and enhance access to major destinations. These multimodal projects are regionally significant as they reduce congestion and improve mobility on TransAction Corridor 4-1 Prince William Parkway (I-66 to I-95) in accordance with NVTA objectives.

Federal funding through the RAISE program would greatly facilitate construction of these projects and we thank you for your time and assistance with this request. If you have any questions or comments regarding this request, please contact me at (703) 792-6825.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ricardo Canizales".

Ricardo Canizales
Director of Transportation



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

May 27, 2021

Ms. Monica Backmon
Executive Director
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
3040 Williams Dr., Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22031
Sent via email

RE: RAISE Planning Grant Endorsement for VRE L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track Project

Dear Ms. Backmon:

I am writing to request the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) endorsement of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) application for a planning grant for the L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track under the U.S. Department of Transportation Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. The L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track Project includes the planning, design, permitting, and construction for an expanded VRE L'Enfant Station and an additional mainline track between Virginia (VA) and L'Enfant (LE) interlockings in Washington, DC. The expanded station will support simultaneous boarding of two full-length trains. The project will aim to improve station access and customer convenience at the station while also improving service reliability through the provision of additional track capacity in the LE to VA rail corridor.

The requested RAISE planning grant funding will be used to complete the final design for the project and will supplement Commonwealth of Virginia Rail Enhancement Fund and VRE capital funds currently committed for project planning, development and final design. The L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track project is included in the NVTA TransAction Plan, TransAction Project ID 298, VRE Alexandria-DC Rail Capacity Improvements.

Please let me know if additional information is needed. Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Christine Hoeffner
VRE Manager of Project Development

CC: Rich Dalton
Mark Schofield
Joe Swartz