

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Monica Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: April 6, 2023

SUBJECT: Update on the Transportation Planning Board's Facilitated Listening Session on Proposed Visualize 2050 Projects

- 1. Purpose:** To inform the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) of the Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) facilitated listening session with Virginia TPB members, on proposed Visualize 2050 projects.

- 2. Background:** The TPB has started the process of updating its long-range transportation plan, Visualize 2050. The current version, Visualize 2045, was adopted by the TPB in June 2022. As per TPB Resolution [R19-2021](#) (June 2021), the TPB resolved to initiate the full update of the Plan that consider multiple build scenarios and analysis of each scenario's impact on the region's adopted goals and targets, including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It further resolved that "the development of such plan will be based on the concept of "Zero-Based Budgeting" where all projects, including those currently included in the Plan, must be resubmitted for consideration in such Plan, provided that projects currently under construction or currently funded with federal, state, regional, local or private funds shall be exempt from such requirement." Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB) is commonly used in financial world as a budgeting approach that involves developing a new budget from scratch every time versus starting with the previous period's budget and adjusting it as needed ([Deloitte, 2023](#)).
At the TPB Board meeting on February 15, 2023, the Board approved a [Technical Inputs Solicitation Policy Guide](#). This guide noted that "the TPB member agencies will re-examine all projects, programs, and policies in the current Plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and resubmit them for the Plan and TIP update. Specifically, the intent is to enable the submissions to better reflect TPB planning priorities, be more aligned with the TPB's policy framework, be more reflective of TPB scenario findings, and be more responsive to other findings from related TPB analysis." Accordingly, TPB staff provided two lists: exempt projects (green list) that has projects in the current Financially Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) and are under construction or have funding identified; and non-exempt projects (orange list) that are in the current CLRP but do not have funding identified. The accompanying [staff memo](#) noted "There are also projects for which funding based budgeting approach will help focus efforts on projects that are in a developmental stage where the TPB goals and priorities can be used to influence the scope of such projects, including dropping them from further consideration if they do not meet TPB goals and objectives."

3. Discussion: In March, the TPB scheduled three separate virtual Listening Sessions between Maryland, D.C. and Virginia TPB members and their local and regional project sponsor agencies respectively. Per the posted agenda for the Listening Sessions, the purpose was to “provide an opportunity for members to share project ideas with project sponsor agencies”. The format of the Listening Sessions was for the transportation agencies to first present their process for project selection and then limited time was given for TPB members to provide input on the projects proposed for inclusion in Visualize 2050. The Listening Sessions were not livestreamed or open to the public, but summary minutes on the meeting will be made available.

On March 21st, Virginia TPB members and alternates received an email invitation from the TPB staff stating “The session is to assist the Virginia transportation agencies hear directly from you, as a member of the TPB, your expectations for the types of projects you would like to see proposed to be included in Visualize 2050, including which of the TPB goals and priorities you favor most. The listening sessions will provide an opportunity for the Virginia transportation agencies to outline the process they are using to re-examine the projects in the current long range transportation plan and to develop new projects to be proposed for inclusion.”

NVTA staff coordinated with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) staff to develop a presentation on each agency’s respective processes. NVTA staff focused on providing TPB members with information on the legislative mandates of NVTA, including regional planning and project prioritization processes that take into consideration several key factors including congestion reduction, accessibility, and emergency mobility. TPB members were also briefed on NVTA’s TransAction vision, goals, core values, performance measures and public comment process along with the Six Year Program’s eligibility criteria, quantitative analysis, qualitative considerations, and public comment process. Together, VDOT and NVTA also presented the below chart on how VTrans, SMART SCALE, Revenue Sharing, TransAction, and the Six Year Program align with TPB’s Framework Document Goals.

TPB Framework Document Goals	Virginia DOT			NVTA	
	VTrans	SMART SCALE	Revenue Sharing	TransAction	Six-Year Program
Safety	X	X		X	X
Reliability	X	X	X	X	X
Maintenance	X		X		
Affordable & Convenient	X	X		X	X
Efficient System Operations	X	X	X	X	X
Environmental Protection	X	X	X	X	X
Resilient Region	X	X	X	X	X
Livable & Prosperous Communities	X	X	X	X	X

Transportation staff from Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria, also presented on their comprehensive planning and project selection

processes. A one-page fact sheet on each agency was also provided to the TPB members (attached). Authority members Mayor Jennette Rishell, Councilmember Dave Snyder, and VDOT NoVA District Administrator John Lynch, participated in the session.

To date, NVTA has invested more than \$3.1 billion on multimodal projects across Northern Virginia. Rigorous analytical and public engagement processes primarily based on NVTA's legislative mandates are used for project evaluation. As shown in the above table, NVTA's processes and priorities align well with TPB's priorities and goals. As such, projects evaluated by the Authority and selected for funding, should advance as both NVTA and TPB goals are being met.

Attachment: NVTA's One-Page Summary of Project Prioritization Process



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

Summary of Project Prioritization Process at Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTVA)

NVTVA is the regional transportation planning and funding agency for Northern Virginia as mandated by the Virginia General Assembly via SB576 (2002). The 17-member governing body includes the Chairs and Mayors of the nine member jurisdictions, General Assembly members or appointees, gubernatorial appointees, a town representative and transportation agency representatives. NVTVA is required to follow a rating and project prioritization process taking into consideration several key factors including congestion reduction, accessibility, and emergency mobility. The 70% regional revenues of NVTVA, used for funding under the NVTVA process, can only be used for capital improvements that are included in the long-range transportation plan. The 30% local fund revenues can be used at the discretion of localities consistent with HB2313 (2013).



TransAction is the legally mandated long-range multimodal transportation plan for NoVA. TransAction vision, goals, and core values guide the preparation of the Plan and funding prioritization. TransAction, updated every five years, is a needs-based plan and the update process includes extensive data-driven analyses and public engagement. The collaborative process brings in the NoVA jurisdictions, agencies, TPB, WMATA, and, in the recent update, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and DDOT. The Plan performance is evaluated using a combined TransAction Rating based on the factors below.

Goal	Objective	Performance Measure	Weight	Alignment with Core Values
Mobility: Enhance quality of life of Northern Virginians by improving performance of the multimodal transportation system	A. Reduce congestion and delay*	A1. Total Person-Hours of Delay in autos	10	
		A2. Total Person-Hours of Delay on Transit	10	
	B. Improve travel time reliability*	B1. Duration of Severe Congestion	10	
		B2. Transit person-miles in dedicated/priority ROW	10	
Accessibility: Strengthen the region's economy by increasing access to jobs, employees, markets, and destinations for all communities	C. Improve access to jobs*	C1. Access to jobs by car, transit, and bike	10	
		C2. Access to jobs by car, transit, and bike for EEA populations	10	
	D. Reduce dependence on driving alone by improving conditions for people accessing transit and using other modes	D1. Quality of access to transit and the walk/bike network	15	
		Resiliency: Improve the transportation system's ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions.	E. Improve safety and security of the multimodal transportation system	E1. Potential for safety and security improvements
	F. Reduce transportation related emissions	F1. Vehicle Emissions	10	
	G. Maintain operations of the regional transportation system during extreme conditions*	G1. Transportation System Redundancy	5	

Core Values: Equity Safety Sustainability



Prioritization of projects for funding is carried out during the development of Six Year Program (SYP). This process includes extensive additional data-driven analyses and public engagement. The

selection criteria include:

1. Eligibility (inclusion in TransAction, supporting resolution from jurisdiction governing body)
2. Quantitative analysis (Congestion Reduction Relative to Cost, TransAction Rating, Long Term Benefit)
3. Qualitative considerations (external funds, past performance, geographic and modal balance, etc.)
4. Public comments

Several statutory and standing committees review the analytical results and public comments before recommending projects for funding, which the Authority reviews before making final adoption.

The goals, objectives, and core values NVTVA follows for prioritization overlap well with TPB’s principles and goals.