



COMMONWEALTH *of* VIRGINIA
Office of the
SECRETARY *of* TRANSPORTATION

SMART SCALE Pre-Application Applicant Training

February 28, 2024



Round 6 (FY 2026) Pre-Application Training Agenda

- **Training Expectations**
- **Resources**
- **Policy and Administrative Updates**
 - CTB Policy Revisions
 - VTrans Needs
 - Readiness
 - Eligibility
 - Rail & Transit
- **Funding and Cost Estimate Validation Guidance**
- **Timeline and Key Dates**
- **SMART Portal**
 - Required Information
 - Demo
- **Final Reminders**

Training Expectations

- **Pre-Application Training Material will be recorded and posted to the SMART SCALE Website in the “Apply/Resources Section”**
 - Video
 - PDF
 - Questions and Answers
- **Please use the chat functionality if you have a question (you will not be able to unmute)**
 - *Time Permitting* – we will respond to questions directly related to the topic being presented (i.e., clarifying questions)
 - All other questions will be responded to in the Q&A Document

Resources

Are you new here?

This presentation primarily focuses on new information ahead of Round 6

- **If you have 30 mins**

- Review the [How it Works](#) page to learn about the process
- Or [Watch](#) (timestamp 11:00 to 41:45) CTB Presentation: History and Purpose of SMART SCALE

- **If you have an afternoon**

- Review the Round 6 Technical Guide (57 pages), the latest posted in [Apply/Resources](#)

- **If you are completely overwhelmed**

- The SMART Portal has *mostly* been built to guide you through the process, based on what features are selected
 - Requirements with warnings
 - Guiding information (example descriptions)
 - Contact information for support
- Use CTRL + F on the Technical Guide for clarifying details

Resources

Apply Now Page

- **Technical Guide *Revised***
- **Technical Guide Changelog**
- Pre-Application SMART Portal User Guide – January 2024
- SMART Portal - Updated Inflation Information - August 2023
- SMART SCALE Project Sketch One-Pager
- Right of Way/Utilities One-Pager
- SS01 Traffic Volume Information Form
- SS02 Uncontrolled Crossing Study Form
- SS03 Transit Environmental Review Summary Form
- SS04 Design Waiver / Design Exception Summary Form
- **Delivery and Funding Guidance**
- **Readiness Gates Appendix**
- **SMART Portal Guide – How To Confirm Readiness Gates**



Covered in email on 1/22/24
Subject: Preparing For Round 6

Policy and Administrative Updates

CTB Policy Revisions

Problem	Staff Recommendation	Improvement
SMART SCALE scoring should be forward-looking.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Calculate Congestion factor 7 years in the future 2. Utilize a forward-looking Economic Development measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better align with project design requirements that are based on future growth volumes and consider future economic growth. • Reflect best-in-class economic impact assessments currently used by VEDP to incorporate key economic priorities of the Commonwealth.
The HPP program is being used to fund both low-scoring and small projects.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Refine High-Priority Projects Program (HPP) Eligibility and Eliminate Step 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify CTB Policy to ensure HPP projects are of statewide or regional significance. • Distribute all HPP program funds based on statewide rankings of SMART SCALE scores, rather than district-wide rankings.
Need to improve application quality and reduce quantity of applications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Create a three-tier application limit Gating Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on applicant priorities to improve overall outcomes and increase application success rate.
There is a one-factor majority driving project benefits. Desire to add greater emphasis on Safety.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Modify Land Use factor to a multiplier and modify factor weightings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize what the project's benefits are versus where the project is located. • Increase factor weightings in Safety and Congestion.

Policy and Administrative Updates

CTB Policy Revisions

Round 6 Board Approved Weightings

Factor	Safety	Congestion	Accessibility	Land Use	Economic Development	Environment
Type A	15% (+10%)	45%	25% (+10%)	Up to 100% Added	5%	10%
Type B	20%	25% (+10%)	25% (+5%)		20%	10%
Type C	30% (+5%)	20% (+5%)	15%		25%	10%
Type D	40% (+10%)	10%	10%		30%	10%

Up to -5 Points

Policy and Administrative Updates

What is VTrans Screening?

Virginia Code § 33.2-214.1 requires that projects submitted for SMART SCALE be screened to ensure they meet needs identified in the state's transportation plan, VTrans.

A transportation need, referred to as a Mid-term Need, is a transportation issue that needs to be addressed over the next 10 years.

During the Pre-App, a project application can receive one of the three determinations:

1. **Meets a Need:** It gets screened in.
2. **Does not meet a Need:** It gets screened out.
3. **Conditionally Screened Out:** It gets screened out if required info is not provided in the full app.

Policy and Administrative Updates

What is VTrans Screening? (cont.)

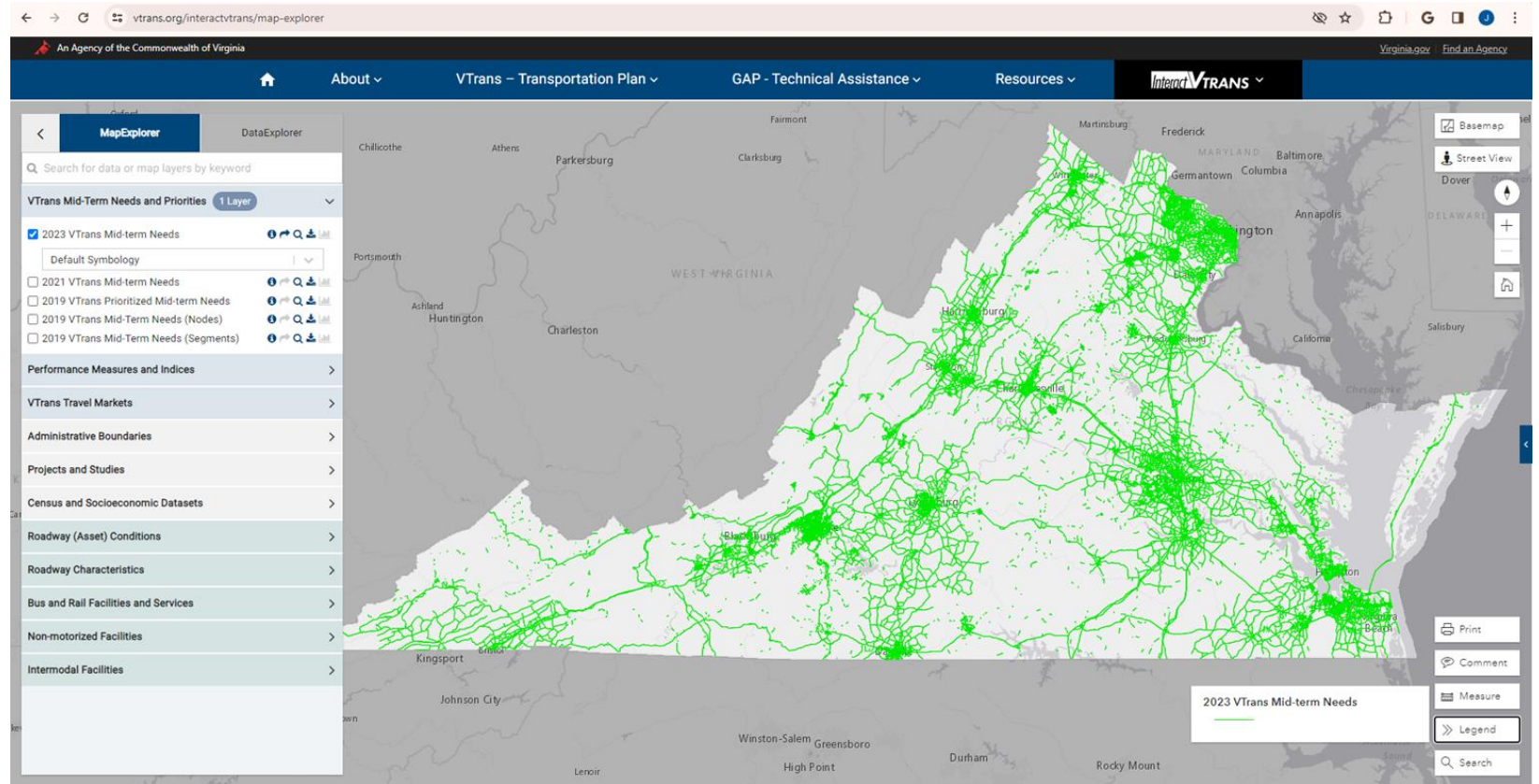
- **VTrans Mid-term Needs are multimodal (highway, transit, rail, transportation demand management) and focus on capacity and safety issues by the following travel markets:**
- Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS) – Supports inter-regional trips
- Regional Networks (RN) – Supports intra-regional trips
- Urban Development Areas (UDA) – Supports local trips
- Safety

Policy and Administrative Updates

Where can I see the VTrans needs?

Needs for project applications can be selected within SMART Portal.

For an overview of all needs, visit:
<https://vtrans.org/interactvtrans/map-explorer>



Screenshot of InteractVTrans

Policy and Administrative Updates

VTrans Needs Selection in SMART Portal

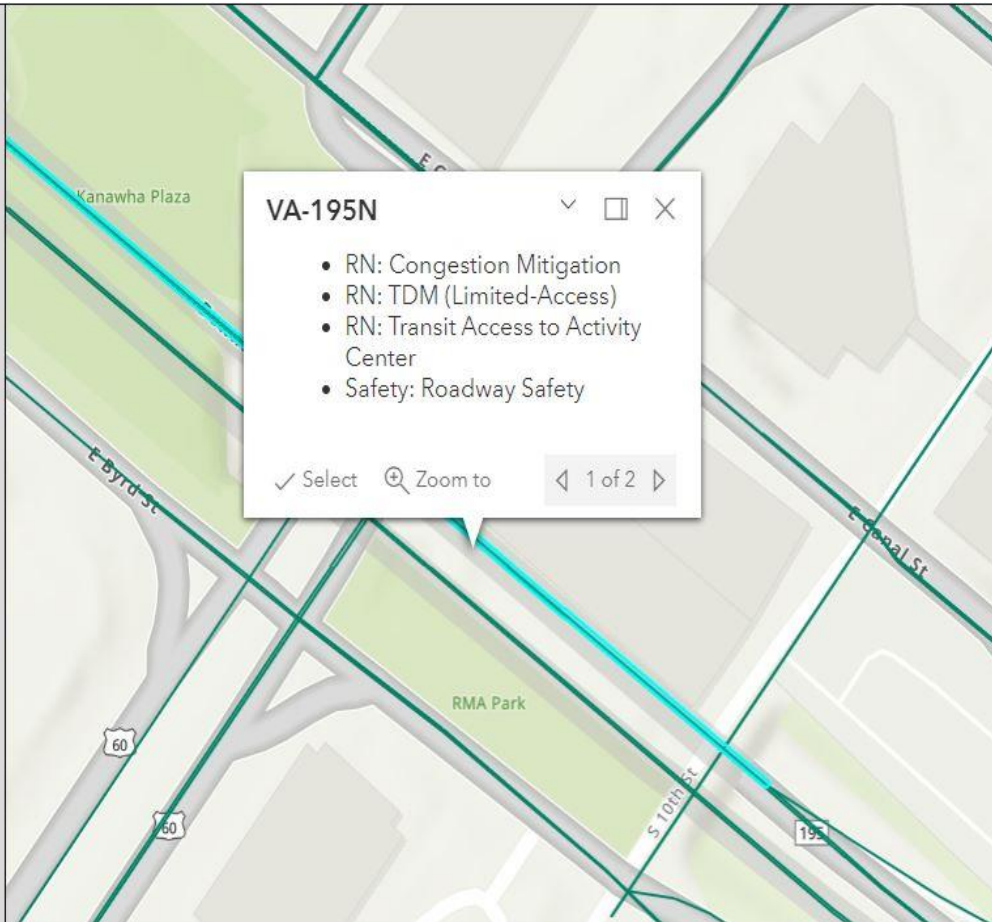
Needs in Location

VTrans Needs will appear here once selected.

Zoom in until layer becomes visible. Click a location to see its needs. Click 'Select' to begin adding needs. Each need requires a justification to add.

[Search](#)

[Project Linework](#) [Econ Dev](#)



VA-195N

- RN: Congestion Mitigation
- RN: TDM (Limited-Access)
- RN: Transit Access to Activity Center
- Safety: Roadway Safety

Select Zoom to 1 of 2

Policy and Administrative Updates

VTrans Needs Selection in SMART Portal (cont.)

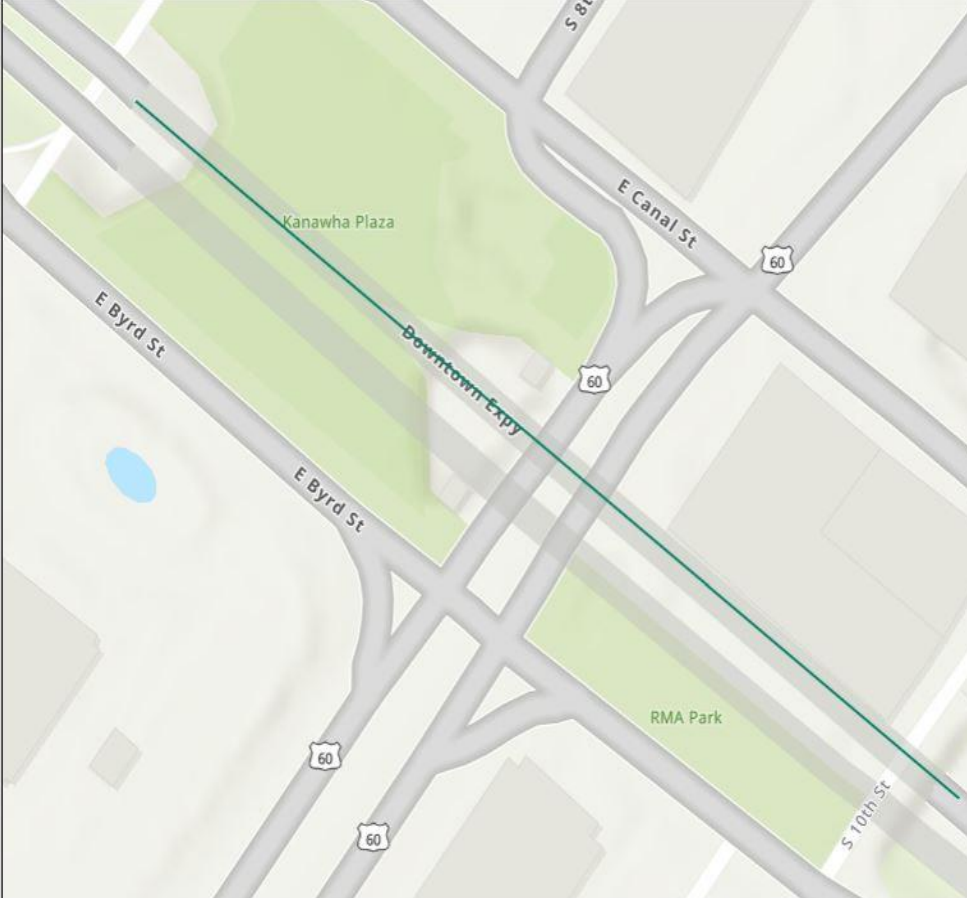
Needs in Location

Location Id: 00050467 **Location Name:** VA-195N

- RN: Congestion Mitigation
- RN: TDM (Limited-Access)
- RN: Transit Access to Activity Center
- Safety: Roadway Safety

Finish **Cancel**







Project Linework **Econ Dev**



Policy and Administrative Updates

VTrans Needs Selection in SMART Portal (cont.)

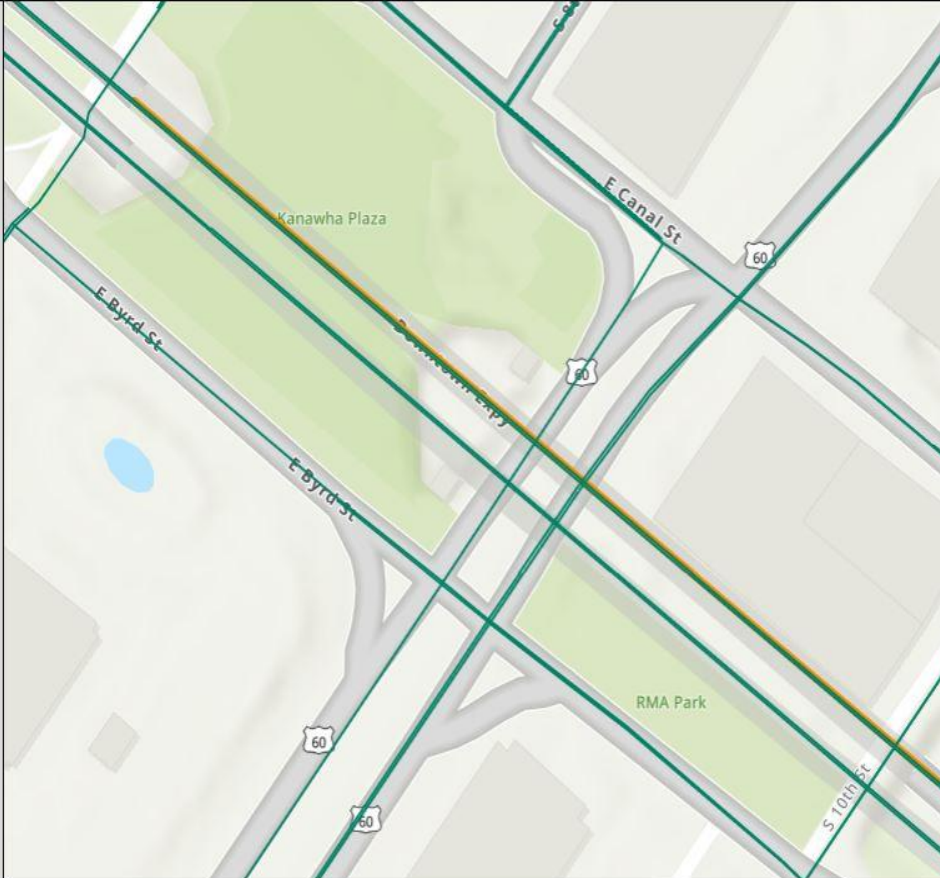
Needs in Location

Segment	Location Name	Travel Market	Need Category	Actions
▼ 0005046 7	VA-195N			 
		RN	Congestion Mitigation	
		RN	TDM (Limited-Access)	
		RN	Transit Access to Activity Center	
		Safety	Roadway Safety	

Zoom in until layer becomes visible. Click a location to see its needs. Click 'Select' to begin adding needs. Each need requires a justification to add.

[Search](#)

[Project Linework](#) [Econ Dev](#)



Policy and Administrative Updates

VTrans Needs Selection in SMART Portal (cont.)

Need Justifications

Location ID	Location Name	Travel Market	Need Category	Justification
00050467	VA-195N	RN	Congestion Mitigation	Justification
00050467	VA-195N	RN	TDM (Limited-Access)	Justification
00050467	VA-195N	RN	Transit Access to Activity Center	Justification
00050467	VA-195N	Safety	Roadway Safety	Justification

Describe how project addresses the congestion need.

Describe how project addresses the transit access need.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: Which Set of VTrans Needs?

1. Both 2023 and 2021 VTrans Mid-term Needs are eligible.

Note that both are available in the SMART Portal, without requiring any additional step.

On InteractVTrans, they are available as separate layers.

Utilize the following to cross-reference VTrans Mid-term Needs between SMART Portal and [InteractVTrans MapExplorer](#)

- 2021 Mid-term Needs: Eight-digit code
- 2023 Mid-term Needs: 18-digit code. Example: “1081 8787 0594 6190 24”

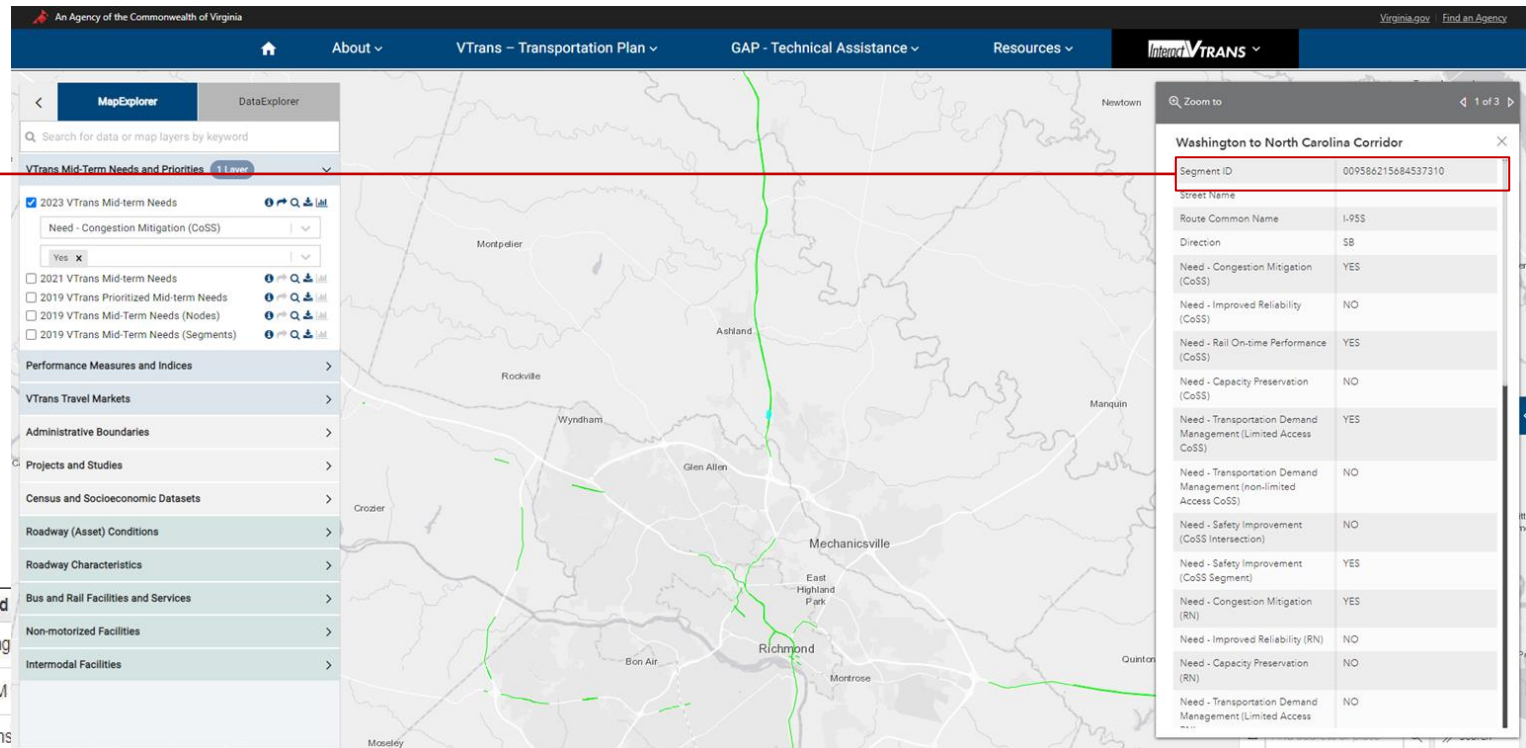
Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: Which Set of VTrans Needs?(cont.)

2. If Needed, Please utilize segment IDs to switch between SMART Portal and InteractVTrans:

When you click on a roadway Segment, the screen shows Segment ID.

This Segment ID is same as that on SMART Portal.



Need Justifications

Location ID	Location Name	Travel Market	Need		
00050467	VA-195N	RN	Cong		
00050467	VA-195N	RN	TDM		
00050467	VA-195N	RN	Trans		
00050467	VA-195N	Safety	Roadway Safety	Justification	

Policy and Administrative Updates

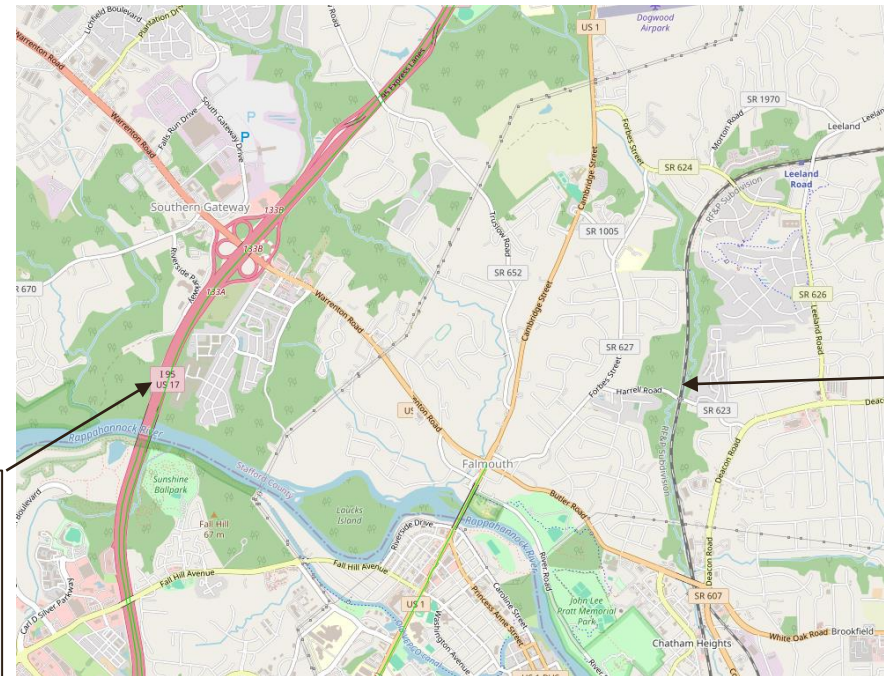
Noteworthy Items: Mode or Location Determination

- Needs **DO NOT** prescribe travel mode (e.g. auto, transit, TDM) or location of the solution.

However, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed solution is addressing the selected need.

Need:
Congestion Mitigation (CoSS)

Location: I-95



Solution:
VRE
Capacity
Imp.

Location:
CSX/VRE/V
PRA
railtracks

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: VTrans Need Selection in Portal

4. **Select all (or as many as you can) applicable needs.**

A project can meet multiple needs. For example, a project may address Congestion Needs (RN) AND Transit Facilities (UDA).

For screening, a proposed improvement has to meet just one Need.

However, it helps to have all applicable needs selected as it provides options to screeners.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: VTrans Need Selection in Portal (cont.)

5. What do we mean by certain terms, for example, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) or Capacity Preservation?

Please utilize the descriptions (i.e. metadata) on InteractVTrans.

The screenshot shows the InteractVTrans portal interface. At the top, there is a header for 'VTrans Mid-Term Needs and Priorities' with '1 Layer' selected. Below this, a layer is checked for '2023 VTrans Mid-term Needs'. A search bar contains 'Need - Capacity Preservation (CoSS)'. A red circle highlights an information icon (i) next to the search bar. A red line connects this icon to a metadata popup window. The popup window displays a table of metadata for the selected layer. The table has three columns: 'UDA', 'UDA Name', and 'Description'. The row for 'CoSS_Capacity_Preservation' is highlighted with a red box. The description for this row is: 'Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need to preserve and enhance capacity by improving access management, reducing signals or signal phases, and implementing innovative intersection configurations."'.

UDA	UDA Name	Description
In Urban Development Area	UDA Name	Indicates if the segment is within an Urban Development Area
UDA_Name	UDA Name	The name of the Urban Development Area
CoSS_Congestion	Need - Congestion Mitigation (CoSS)	Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need for Congestion Mitigation"
CoSS_Reliability	Need - Improved Reliability (CoSS)	Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need for improved Travel Time Reliability"
CoSS_Rail_Reliability	Need - Rail On-time Performance (CoSS)	Indicates a segment associated with a rail station with a "Need for Intercity and Passenger Rail on-time performance improvement." Only applies to stations within Virginia
CoSS_Capacity_Preservation	Need - Capacity Preservation (CoSS)	Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need to preserve and enhance capacity by improving access management, reducing signals or signal phases, and implementing innovative intersection configurations."
CoSS_LA_TDM	Need - Transportation Demand Management (Limited Access CoSS)	Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need for new or improved park and ride facilities, rail and public transportation services and passenger facilities, bicycle and pedestrian facilities where permitted, and expansion and coordination of commuter assistance programs services"

Indicates a CoSS segment with a "Need to preserve and enhance capacity by improving access management, reducing signals or signal phases, and implementing innovative intersection configurations."

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: VTrans Need Selection in Portal (cont.)

6. Please describe how the project meets the need and avoid describing its benefits.

The VTrans screening team wants to know that the project meets the given need. It is not focused on benefits, many of which are calculated as part of the project scoring.

Please avoid a generic description for all selected needs and, instead, briefly describe each selected need (e.g. congestion, transit, pedestrian access).

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: Consistency Within Application

7. Please ensure that the following items are aligned and consistent:

- Selected Need**
- Selected Project Components**
- Project Sketch**

For example, Please avoid instances where a Need for Pedestrian Improvement is selected, but a sidewalk is not shown in the project sketch or selected as a project component.

If information is under development, please indicate that in the VTrans write-up. In the absence of that, we will not have the justification to screen in the given application.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: VTrans Safety Need based on Studies

8. **SMART SCALE** allows applicants to submit safety improvement projects where a VTrans needs is not identified.

In such instances, please ensure that the location meets the thresholds specified in the SMART SCALE Technical Guide.

meets the following Need identification criteria adopted by the CTB as part of the VTrans policy: At least 3+ Fatal or Injury crashes at the intersection or segment over the last five years.

Source: Page 18, SMART SCALE Technical Guide. https://smartscale.org/documents/r6_technical_guide_draft.pdf

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: Pending VTrans UDA Designations

9. If a project is addressing a need in the yet-to-be-designated Urban Development Area (UDA), please indicate that in your pre-app.

Urban Development Areas designated by April 1st will be eligible for this round.

Program achieve Tier 3 or higher. The applicants should contact OIPI's Statewide Transportation Planning (STP) Section and note potential UDA or IEDA status changes in their application. April 1st, 2024 is the deadline for establishing a new UDAs or conveying an updated readiness tier for an IEDA to OIPI to be considered for the Smart Scale application intake in 2024.

Source: Page 17, SMART SCALE Technical Guide. https://smartscale.org/documents/r6_technical_guide_draft.pdf

Policy and Administrative Updates

Noteworthy Items: Steps for Conditionally Screened Out

10. Pre-apps are Conditionally Screened Out, if they do not contain all the required information and information is under development.

The applicant must indicate when such information will become available as part of the need justification.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Feature Gates

Gate 2 Features

Add New Through Lanes • If a major widening	Alternatives analysis
Managed Lanes (HOV/HOT/Shoulder) • If a major widening	Alternatives analysis
Roadway on New Alignment	Alternatives analysis
Innovative Interchange	Draft or final IAR
Ramp Improvements • If NOT limited to accel/decel lanes	Draft or final OSAR
Improve Grade-Separated Interchange	Draft or final IAR/OSAR
New Interchange	Draft or final IAR

Gate 3 Features

Add New Through Lanes	Ramp Improvements*
Managed Lanes (HOV/HOT/Shoulder)	Improve Grade-Separated Interchange
Turn Lane Improvements*	New Interchange
Roadway Reconfiguration	Construct or Improve At-Grade Bike/Ped Crossing*
Roadway on New Alignment	Construct or Convert Existing GP or Parking Lane to Bus-Only Lane
Intersection Improvements*	Construct/Expand Bus Facility
Innovative Intersection	New High-Capacity or Fixed-Guideway Route/Service
New Intersection*	Freight Rail Improvements
New Traffic Signal	Intercity Passenger Rail Service Improvements
ITS Improvements / Advanced Signal Control*	New Intercity Passenger Rail Station or Station Improvements
Innovative Interchange	New Station or Station Improvements

* Conditional; not all will require documents

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Gate 1

Roadway on New Alignment

Readiness Gate 1

Provide a Planning Study/Safety Study, which includes an operational analysis and documents a preferred alternative that is consistent with the scope described in the application to support this feature. The study must include an alternatives analysis that considers improvements not on a new alignment.

The following VDOT staff must be engaged in the creation or review of this document before April 30th:

- District L&D Engineer

The document supporting this feature must have confirmation from the following VDOT staff by July 15th:

- District Traffic Engineer
- District L&D Engineer
- District Environmental Manager
- Assistant State L&D Engineer

Contact your SMART SCALE representative for more information. A list of contacts can be found on the SMART SCALE website: <http://www.smartscale.org/apply/default.asp>

Applicant acknowledges the above requirements and confirms that the indicated staff will be engaged before April 30th and that the supporting document for this feature will be completed and provided before July 15th.

Reviewer	Confirms
Applicant:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confirms

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Gate 1

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Applicant acknowledges the above requirements and confirms that the indicated staff will be engaged before April 30th and that the supporting document for this feature will be completed and provided before July 15th.

Reviewer	Name	Date
Applicant	Brooke Jackson	2/28/2024 @ 6:05AM

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Feature Gates FAQs

- **Who is the relevant District L&D Engineer (insert any role here)?**
 - Reach out to your SMART SCALE POC if you don't know who is designated in a role
- **Can features be added and removed at anytime in application development?**
 - Gate 2 features cannot be added after Pre-Application
- **Is there flexibility in the timeline?**
 - No, All documents to be submitted by July 15th (hard deadline), if they are ready before upload please upload them earlier.
- **What will the status be if my application doesn't pass a Gate?**
 - Gate 1 (Self-certifying) – Cannot submit pre-application
 - Gate 2 (State confirms engaged in process and it will be ready) – Pre-screen out (DE/Chief Response)
 - Gate 3 (State confirms document present and issues addressed) – Cannot submit application; will receive an email from the state

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Feature Gates Interchange FAQs

- All interchange features now require a signed LD-459 framework document.
- If an interchange alternative was proposed in R5 and was screened in not funded, that alternative may be submitted with the previous study for R6.
- “Draft” means up until FHWA approval

Feature	Previous Requirement	Round 6 Requirement
Ramp Improvement(s)	Draft or final OSAR or similar planning study. No requirement if accel/decel lanes ONLY.	Draft or final OSAR. No requirement if accel/decel lanes ONLY.
Improve Grade-Separated Interchange	Draft or final IAR, OSAR, or similar planning study.	Draft or final IAR or OSAR.
Innovative Interchange	[new feature, did not exist in R5]	Draft or final IAR if NEW . Draft or final IAR or OSAR if CONVERSION .
New Grade-Separated Interchange (Limited Access & Non-Limited Access)	Draft or final IAR or similar planning study.	Draft or final IAR.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Feature Gates Pedestrian Crossings FAQs

- **When improving an ~~unsignalized~~ uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, provide a completed SS02 Unsignalized Crossing Study Form**
- **This form satisfies IIM-384.1, including an engineering study if required.**
 - NOT required for new or improved crossings at signalized intersections or on stop-controlled approaches
 - Stop-controlled approaches, applicants should evaluate the intersection geometry to ensure that the existing STOP bar can be set back far enough to accommodate the crossing while maintaining the minimum safe sight distance.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: Feature Gates Intersection Modifications FAQs

- **Some intersection features now require a completed iCAP assessment (spreadsheet tool) to satisfy IIM-TOD-397.**
 - STARS and Pipeline studies are acceptable
 - SJR is acceptable
- **Applies ONLY when modifying an intersection configuration on a CoSS or APN**
- **Includes features “Innovative Intersection,” “Intersection Improvement(s),” and “New Intersection”**

Policy and Administrative Updates

Readiness: General

- The project location and major scope items should not be changed after pre-application submission.
- Study Age Limit is 10 years
- Cost estimates shall adhere to the procedures outlined in the latest version of the VDOT Cost Estimating Manual. **All cost estimates shall be prepared with the assumption that the projects will be administered by VDOT.**
 - Applies to Utilities (franchise agreements) and Right of Way Documentation
 - Guidance on DWs and DEs can be found on the SMART SCALE Apply page

Policy and Administrative Updates

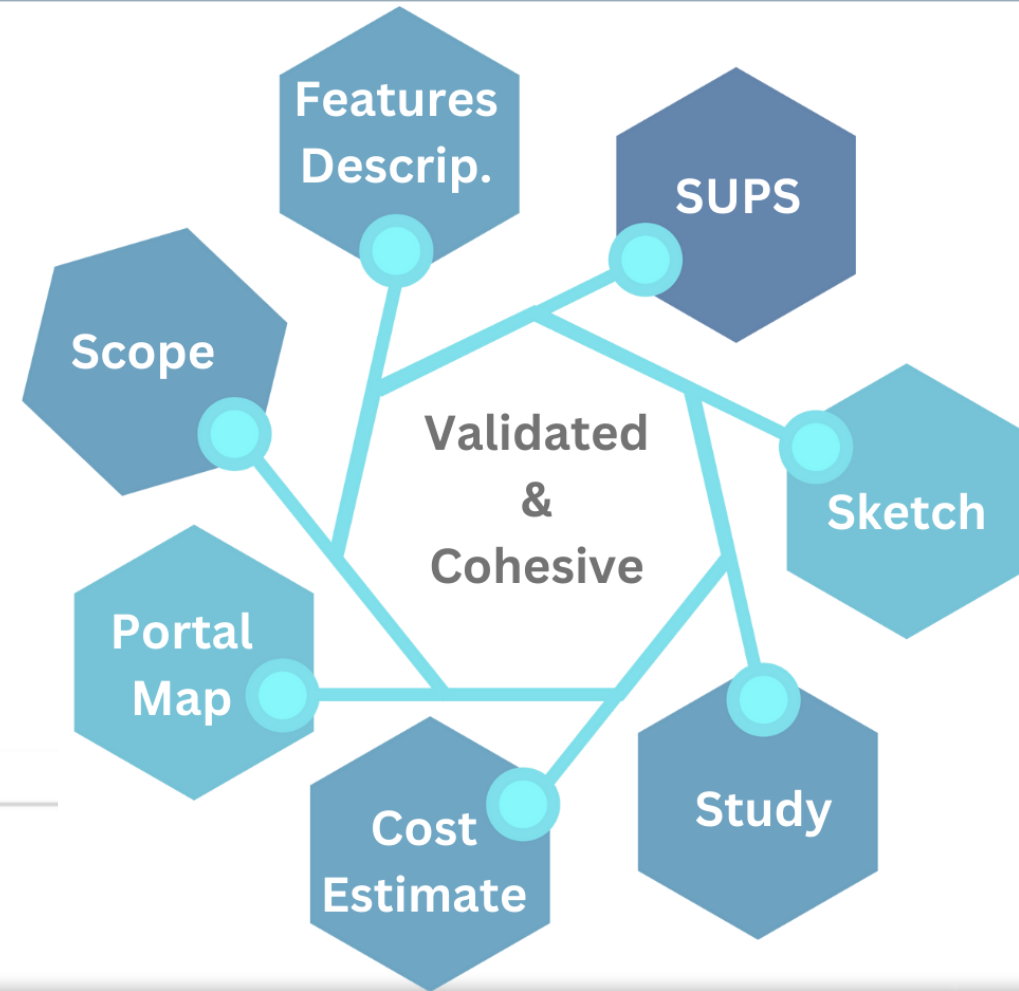
Readiness: Application Consistency

- **Ability to evaluate and score a project is dependent on clear and concise scope of work**
 - Include what/where of each proposed improvement and how much (i.e. length/width)
 - Portal enhancements to help guide applicants on feature readiness requirements
- **A “good” sketch**
- **Changes to one means changes to all**

Widen Existing Lane(s) (No New Lanes) **i**

Comment

(Example: "Widen SB I-95 from 10 ft to 12 ft for 1.4 miles from MM 140 to MM 141.4.")



Eligibility

HPP Eligibility

1) On a CoSS or RN

AND

2a) At least one of the below features must be included in the application

Table 2.3 Features Required for HPP Eligibility

Feature Category	Feature Name
Highway	Add New Through Lane(s); Roadway on New Alignment; Managed Lane(s) (HOV/HOT/Shoulder); Improve Grade Separated Interchange; Innovative Interchange; New Interchange, Non-Limited Access Facility; New Interchange, Limited Access Facility; New Bridge
Transit	New High-Capacity or Fixed-Guideway Route/Service; Increase Existing High-Capacity or Fixed-Guideway Route/Service; Construct/Expand Bus Facility
Rail	Rail Service Improvements; New Station or Station Improvements; Intercity Passenger Rail Service Improvements; New Intercity Passenger Rail Station or Station Improvements; Freight Rail Improvements

Eligibility

HPP Eligibility

OR

2b) Alternatively, an application is eligible for HPP funds if the proposed improvements are identified as the preferred alternative of one of the following studies:

- STARS
- Project Pipeline
- Arterial Management Plan
- VDOT/MPO/Transit/Local study with components equivalent to one of the previously listed studies, completed in coordination with VDOT staff, and meeting the definition of “regionally significant” in accordance with 23 CFR 450.104.

Reminder Localities - if you don't meet the HPP Definition still eligible in SMART SCALE through DGP

Eligibility

HPP Definition: Clarifying Preferred Alternative

- **NOT Transportation Alternatives**
 - Alternative transportation is all modes of travel other than the private motor vehicle
- **NOT Preferred Alternative in Environmental Documents**
 - Considers different **alignment** alternatives as it relates to the environment of the roadway
- **NOT Other uses of the word “Alternative”**
 - Identify many locations in a study, but should really be called out as individual study locations
 - A singular intersection would only be considered if the study is dedicated to one location and meets the study criteria
- **It is the Preferred Alternative in Traffic Engineering/Operations**
 - Alternatives that consider multiple design options that are prioritized on congestion, safety, pedestrian accommodation, cost, public input, etc.
 - Ultimately, only one preferred alternative has to be identified in the study

Eligibility

HPP Definition: Clarifying Regionally and Statewide Significant

- **Code of Virginia (§33.2-370) defines the “where”:**
 - “High-priority projects” means those projects of **regional or statewide significance**, such as projects that reduce congestion or increase safety, accessibility, environmental quality, or economic development”
 - “Where” is identified as Corridors of Statewide Significance and Regional Networks
- **CTB Policy Clarifications**
 - *VDOT/MPO/Transit/Local study with components equivalent to one of the previously listed studies, completed in coordination with VDOT staff, and meeting the definition of “regionally significant” in accordance with 23 CFR 450.104.*
 - Typically means
 - Ungrouped in TIP
 - Modeled in the regional transportation model

Eligibility

HPP Definition: Clarifying Regionally and Statewide Significant

- **Most (80%) RD 5 applications with STARS and Pipeline studies had an eligible feature**
- **Examples of HPP Eligible Projects**
 - Single intersection STARS study - eligible for HPP if the preferred alternative is submitted
 - Project Pipeline Example - two mile corridor studied
 - Four preferred “alternatives” identified at various intersections throughout the corridor
 - Three separate applications submitted for SMART SCALE
 - Not HPP eligible unless all four preferred alternatives are submitted as one application
- **When in Doubt** - Locality can submit smaller component (DGP eligible); Regional Entity can submit the larger (HPP eligible)
- **Discouraged, but we will allow the corridor to be logically phased if the entire corridor is submitted**

Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: DRPT's Role in SMART SCALE Review

- DRPT leads the review of VTrans needs, eligibility & readiness, and calculates the congestion score for projects where bus/rail transit is the primary improvement type
 - Example: light rail extension
- DRPT calculates the *transit related* congestion score for projects where bus/rail transit is the secondary improvement type
 - Example: roadway widening with bus stop improvements

Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: Revised Transit Eligibility

Round 5		Round 6
<p>Rolling stock and necessary infrastructure for new or expanded transit or intercity passenger rail service.</p>	<p>vs.</p>	<p>Rolling stock and necessary infrastructure for new, enhanced, or expanded <u>fixed guideway transit</u> such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), and Heavy Rail systems, as well as other new or expanded <u>High-Capacity</u> transit services.</p>

Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: Revised Transit Eligibility Cont.

- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** refers to bus systems or routes that include, at a minimum, dedicated lanes and enhanced stops or stations, but may also include traffic signal priority, off-board fare collection, and elevated platforms. Projects that support purchase of BRT system rolling stock that will be utilized both on and off of dedicated BRT lanes are eligible.
- **High-Capacity Transit Service** projects refer to new or expanded trunk routes that provide high frequency service, with headways of 20 minutes or less during peak service hours and serve as the foundation of a fixed-route bus transit system.
- The assets or vehicles purchased to provide service must be used along routes included in the application for a minimum of three years from launch and eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: *New Transit Environmental Review Summary Form*

- **Readiness Gate requirement**
- **Form is for major transit features and intended to:**
 - Capture status of all pending environmental review processes
 - Outline a timeline for satisfying environmental requirements

Environmental Review Information

What is the status of the applicable environmental review process for this project?

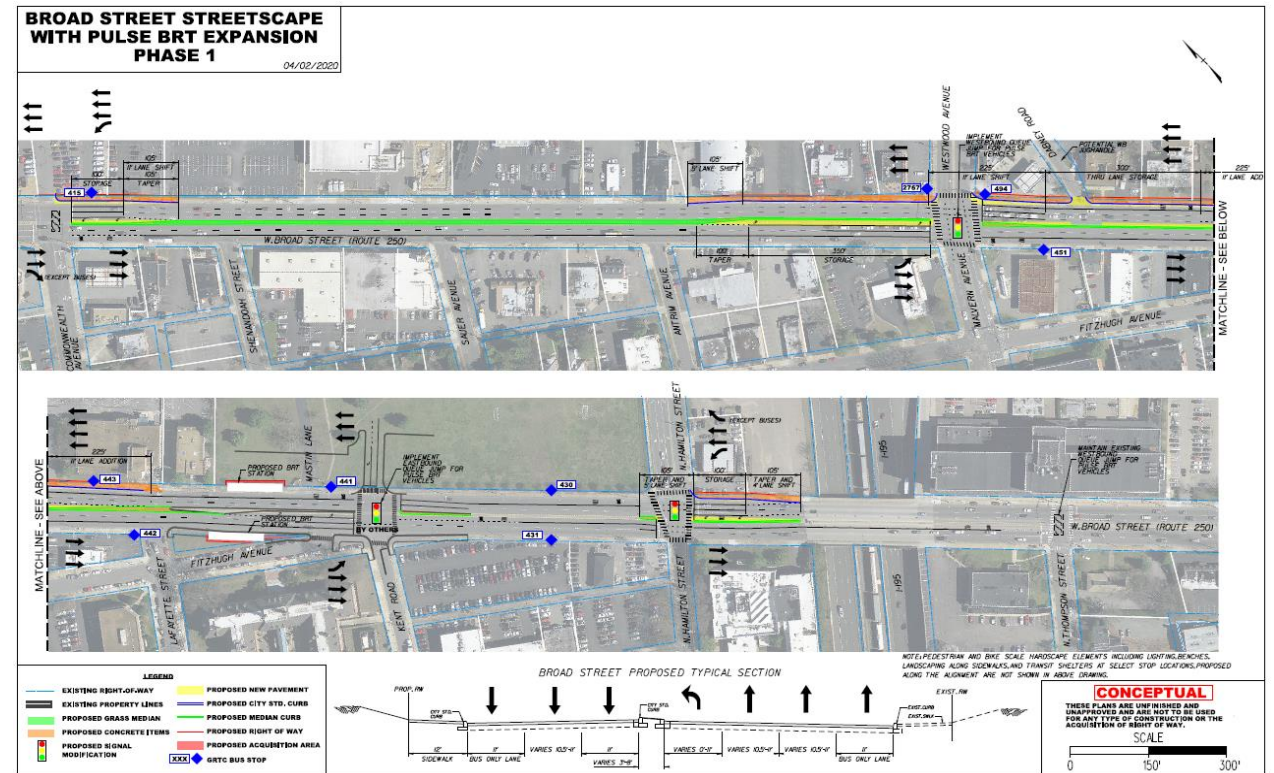
Complete Underway Not started

Please describe the environmental review process for this project. Include applicable state or federal review requirements, activities already completed, and the plans and timeline for completing any remaining activities.

Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: General Application Reminders

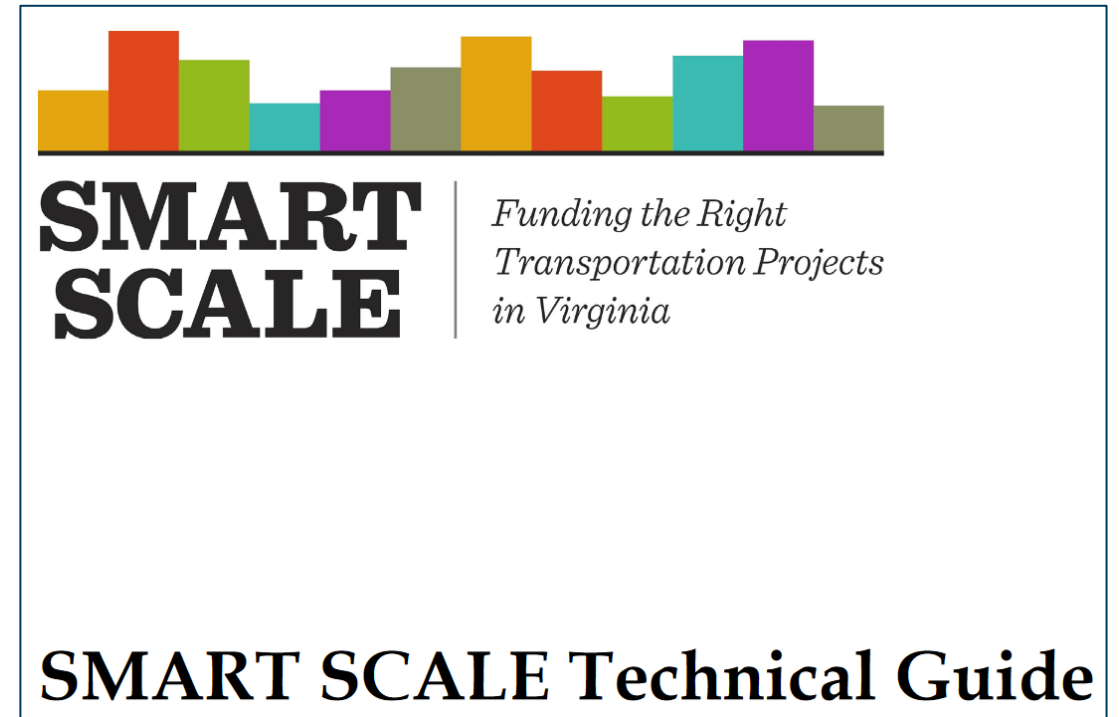
- Transit/rail features must be included on the project sketch
- Transit/rail features must be included in the detailed cost estimate
- Applicants must provide existing transit/rail ridership
- Applicants are encouraged to provide projected transit/rail ridership (if applicable)



Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: Technical Guide Clarifications

- Proposed improvements must directly impact a transit stop/rail station to receive a transit score
- Proposed transit signal priority projects must include a corridor study or operational analysis
- Bus-only lanes must include a multimodal plan with a bus-only lane identified as the preferred alternative



Policy and Administrative Updates

Rail & Transit: Contact Information

Bus Transit

Paige Lazar, Transit Planner / SMART SCALE POC

Paige.Lazar@drpt.virginia.gov

Tiffany Dubinsky, Director of Transit Planning

Tiffany.Dubinsky@drpt.virginia.gov

Rail Transit

Randy Selleck, Director of Rail Planning

Randy.Selleck@drpt.virginia.gov

Northern Virginia POC

Amy Garbarini, NOVA Transit Planning Manager

Amy.Garbarini@drpt.virginia.gov



Delivery and Funding Guidance



This guidance is intended as a general reference for Delivery and Funding content, including estimate validation, during SMART SCALE Round 6; it is not intended to be an exhaustive resource applicable to every situation.

Estimates

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>DO's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm FY2025 is base year of estimate for Full Application Estimate Validation• Assume VDOT Administration in estimate development• Include a Cost Estimate Workbook (CEWB) with each submitted application (REQUIRED)• Ensure supporting documentation is available and/or provided to support CEWB review | <p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit an old estimate with additional inflation / escalation applied• Submit (<i>in the Portal or to staff</i>) erroneous supporting documentation or <i>multiple</i> versions of an estimate |
|---|---|

Schedules

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>DO's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use FY2028 as the first year of available funding (Year 3 of the FY2026-2031 SYIP)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• August 2027 Start Date• Reference VDOT Administered PWA Templates to set durations | <p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a start date ahead of the recommended start year, if there is no leveraged funding |
|---|--|

Funding

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>DO's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide the funding information from the most recently approved SYIP when leveraging funding on existing projects;<ul style="list-style-type: none">• January 2024 SYIP (Pre-App)• June 2024 (Full-App)• Ensure the leveraged funding is sufficient to justify any early project start date and/or phase durations• Provide leveraged funding commitment in writing | <p>DON'T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify leveraged funding not yet APPROVED or APPLIED FOR• Provide leveraged funding for earlier start dates that does not reasonably cover expected cash flow until SMART SCALE funding is available |
|---|---|

Delivery and Funding Guidance



Information continued

Validation Thresholds

When does Central Office Location and Design engage?

If CN Phase Est is \$10M or more	If CN Phase Est is \$50M or more	10% Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires CO L&D reviewDetailed review performedCO L&D will provide estimate review comments to DistrictDistrict must respond to comments and resolve coordinating with Assistant State L&D Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires CO L&D concurrenceIndependent estimate performedCO L&D will provide estimate review comments to DistrictDistrict responsible for addressing comments internally, unless there is a major discrepancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10% of all applications will be randomly selected for validation which includes estimate review

Validation Requirements

- Ensure the following information items are consistent: Application Features, Project Sketch, States Understanding of Project Scope, and Estimate.
- Ensure there are no inconsistencies that prevent independent estimate validation.
- Ensure that the sketch and description provide adequate, consistent information for independent estimate validation.
- Ensure that the Cost Estimate Workbook (CEWB) has been provided.

Estimate validation may be impacted if above requirements are not met.

Validation Checklist

- Upload the CEWB into the Smart Portal
- Store detailed documentation and estimating tools in a consistent location in SMART Portal, ProjectWise, or other central location
- Use a standard folder and file naming convention
- Include Utility/RW phase backup documentation
- Ensure that backup documentation is consistent with the CEWB

Other Information

- For Utility Betterment, include in cost and provide documentation of Local or Other funds to cover such costs
- For Right of Way Proffers or Donations, certain approvals and documentation are required to exclude from estimate, contact District POC for more information
- For non-standard items, ensure costs are documented and provide documentation of Local or Other funds to cover such costs

Contact

- Jason Robinson, VDOT – Infrastructure Investment jason.robinson@vdot.virginia.gov
- Vernon Heshman, P.E., VDOT – Location & Design vernon.heishman@vdot.virginia.gov

Timeline and Key Dates

Pre-Application

Date	Who	What	Where
March 1st - April 1st	Applicant	100% of Applications - Gate 1 Acknowledgement Boxes No new applications will be allowed after Pre-Application closes.	Readiness Pearl
April 2nd - April 30th	Staff Document Approver	Gate 2 Only - 1. Is the state is engaged and the document will be ready by July 15th?	Readiness Pearl
May 2nd - May 10th	District Engineers / DRPT Chief	1. Gate 2 Only - <i>Does the DE/Director agree with with Staff Confirmation?</i> 2. Has VDOT/DRPT been engaged and will it be ready? 3. Are there any concerns with the application?	DE/Director Pre-Screening Form
April 2nd - May 24th	SMART SCALE POC/OIPI	1. VTrans Need? 2. Will it be Ready by August 1st? 3. Eligible?	Pre-Screening Forms
May 30th - May 31st	OIPI	Reflect Final EWG Screening Determination - Pre-Screened Out, Pre-Screen In, Conditionally Screened Out	Portal - OIPI Pre-Screening Form

Timeline and Key Dates

Full Application to Scoring

Date	Who	What	Where
Early June	Applicant & State	Full Application Training Webinar	Training Meeting
June 1st - August 1st	Applicant	100% of Applications -Finalize Application with the state	Portal All
July 15th	Applicant	Applicant to provide all required Document Deadline Gate 2 & 3	Portal - Supporting Documents
July 15th – July 19th	VDOT/DRPT Document Approving Staff	Confirm Readiness Requirements for Documents Gate 2 & 3? Yes or No	Portal - Readiness Pearl
July 22nd – July 26th	District Engineer / DRPT Chief	<u>One or more No</u> from Gate 2/3 VDOT/DRPT Document Approving Staff: <i>Does the DE/Director agree with Staff Confirmation?</i>	Readiness Pearl
July 29th - Aug 1st	Applicant	Gate 2 & 3 Submit Full Application Applicant's Own Resolutions of Support Due	All Pearls
August 1st – August 31st	SMART SCALE POC/OIPI	100% of Applications - Validate Application, SUPS, VTrans Need, Ready, Eligible?	Screening Hub and Validation Tool
September 1st	Applicant	Resolutions of Support Due from Applicant if Requesting Regional Entity support when deviating from CLRP	Supporting documents
September 6th	SMART SCALE POC	Approve all SUPS	SUPS Portal
September 16th	Applicant	Applicants approve all SUPS	SUPS Portal
August 1st - October 31st	District L&D/CO L&D/DRPT Engineer	Cost Estimate Validation	Screening Hub and Portal (Funding & Delivery)
August 1st - October 15th	CO IID	CO Leverage Funding Validation	Portal Validation Tool
September 1st - November 22nd	Scoring Teams	Scoring	Scoring Tools
October 22nd	OIPI	Present Cohort, Screenouts to CTB	Meeting

SMART Portal

Required Information



- **Selecting Scope Not Finalized is acceptable at this time, however a full readiness review will not be completed**
 - **Location and major scope items should not change**
- **Gate 2 features will NOT be allowed to be added after pre-application submission**
 - **Certain feature selections will require supporting documents**
- **Project Linework and selecting VTrans Needs are required to submit**
- **Project Readiness Pearl required at pre-application IF Gate 2 features are selected**
- **PE, RW, and CN required to Submit**
 - **Funding and Estimate Validation Guidance will give more details**
- **Sketch is required; draft/placeholder studies allowed, but discouraged**

SMART Portal Demo Highlights

SMART SCALE POC Contact Information

Reminders

- CTRL+F5 – hard refresh
- Application consistency matters – if you update one update them all – Study, Description, Features, Estimate, Sketch, SUPS, Portal Map
- Org Admin – please clean out old users
- Hotfixes coming – March 6, TBD (Transit)

Review Submission Readiness

- When review submission readiness is on – an * means that the item needs to be addressed
- Slider has to be off to be a save the application

SMART Portal Demo Highlights

General Pearl

- Has Scope been finalized?
 - If “Yes” – upload the supporting documentation (draft or final) where it is so we can give and full readiness and eligibility review.
 - If No - “As your Scope of work is not finalized, we cannot determine Readiness. This application may pre-screen out conditionally. Please coordinate with your SMART SCALE Point of Contact to ensure adequate Readiness ahead of the full application submission deadline.”

Eligibility

- Does this application include improvements recommended as the preferred alternative in a STARS, Pipeline Study, Arterial Management Plan, or MPO/Transit/Local studies with equivalent study components; in coordination with the Commonwealth and is as defined as Regionally significant, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.104?
 - If “Yes” here – provide supporting documentation (draft or final) for full HPP eligibility review.

SMART Portal

Demo Highlights

Features

- Use the tools built into the Portal!
 - Information buttons, example text, warning boxes
- Do not get “check happy” select a feature only if it is applicable to your application
 - We will be screening for this, so save us all time
- Demo Selecting one of each Principal Type
- When unchecking a feature, remove the text too!

Transit

- Transit Pearl is more related to the full application – Jonathan will cover in more detail

SMART Portal

Demo Highlights

Location

- Demo drawing/cutting
- VTrans – reiterate some of Jitender’s points
- Transit (explain bug)
- VEDP Sites
 - Need to zoom out to see any sites if you don’t have them near you.
 - Contact for VSCAN is Michelle Mende (MMende@vedp.org) if you need support or don’t see your site

Project Readiness

- DW/DE is the only default question
- Gate questions
 - if you have Gate 2 or Gate 3 features
 - Need to be in view mode



Readiness gate approval required in Project Readiness Pearl by submitter in view mode.

SMART Portal

Demo Highlights

Factors

- Nothing New

Delivery & Funding

- Inflation hotfix coming! - March 6
- Can put placeholders in if you work directly with VDOT/DRPT on the estimate like last round - \$1
- Review Delivery and Funding Document for FAQs

Alerts and Communications

- Subscribing
- Bulk assignments

File Uploads

- Limiting document type for file types in Portal

A File with the type Project Sketch already exists for this application

Final Reminders

Pre-Screening Decisions

- Pre-Screen in
- Pre-Screen out
 - If a gating reason the response will be from the appropriate DE or DRPT Chief, otherwise the reported response will come from Central Office
- Pre-Screen out Conditionally
 - Not enough information to decide, screeners will provide a list of items needed to screen in at Full Application

Final Reminders

- **If you treat the pre-application, like the full application – providing as much info as possible, you will optimize your support from State staff**
- **Do not create a Pre-Application if the answer is No to - “Has VDOT/DRPT staff been engaged and will it be ready by August 1st?”**
- **Previous round screened in is not an indicator of screening in this round**
- **OIPI will offer “office hours” like last round the last week before submission**
- **Having Portal Issues? CTRL + F5**