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Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee, Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Date Tuesday, June 3, 2025
Place Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Virginia
Length 1h 17m (video)

- Official meeting video (Fairfax County): <https://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/player/clip/3820>
- Official Board of Supervisors page (Fairfax County): <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-29. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:10] Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the June 3rd meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee. We will try to keep it moving along here. I know I was long-winded in the last meeting, but when I was cutting into my own meeting, I thought it was okay. The main purpose of this meeting today is to provide lots of information, both to members of

[00:00:47] the board and the public about how we fund transportation projects here in the county and in the Commonwealth. There is a great slide in this presentation that says, so you want to a transportation project, which is really kind of the theme of today's meeting, and it should be useful and provide lots of information. So before we get into the actual presentations, does anybody have any comments on the meeting minutes from April 8th? Shocker, no one does. Let's get into those presentations, and I'll turn it over to Director Greg Stevenson. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:01:26] Good morning, members of the board. I'm Greg Stevenson. I'm the director of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. Here with me today is Noel Dominguez, who is the chief of our Coordination and Funding Division. So as Supervisor Beerman stated, we have two interrelated topics today. The first one is going to be a presentation regarding how we fund transportation projects here in FCDOT. I like to call it, you know, transportation funding 101, as it were.

[00:01:56] Some of you who have been part of the board for a while kind of know some of this or have heard some of this in some small part or major part, but for those who aren't kind of familiar with it, hopefully this will maybe give some insight and some information on that topic and as stated the second presentation is going to also talk about funding but that's going to talk about a specific aspect of funding state funding through the smart scale process and as we'll discuss in the presentation Fairfax County and quite frankly the Northern Virginia region as a whole has not been very successful in scoring funding through smart scale recently and so I want to talk a little bit

[00:02:34] about why we think that might be, discuss some next steps, action items, things we might want to do to help us be more successful in the future. And so with that, I'll get started on the presentation on funding. But for the most part, you're probably going to hear from Noelle because Noelle's the expert. I'm just the person that gets to sit here and smile and pretend to know things. So with that, if we can get this to, oh, wrong button. Let's go with the forward button.

[00:03:02] So, as I said, Funding 101, right, we have a lot of very large-scale transportation projects that we implement here in the county, multi-hundred-million-dollar projects. And you're not going to really be able to fund those projects or projects of that size with just one funding source.

[00:03:19] You're going to have to tap into maybe your own local money. You may have to tap into money from the state, the region. You may have to tap into sources like proffer funds as well as maybe even federal funding. And each of those funding sources could have some requirements attached to them, whether it's the type of project you have to use the funding on, whether it's maybe rules regarding your project needing to be in a specific regional or state transportation plan.

[00:03:48] Some aspects, there's a match that you have to provide of your own funding to match the funding that you receive. In some instances, the funding can only be used in certain years. So you're going to have to look at your project, look at your timeline, look at all the requirements, and try and match up your funding sources to best leverage yourself to be able to complete your project.

[00:04:12] So, yeah, this was my fun sort of salvo into this. So you want to fund a transportation project. Well, you know, we're hiring if you want to come join, any of you. But this is our world of funding in FCDOT. And as I stated, there's a variety of funding sources.

[00:04:29] And this slide outlines most of the ones that we utilize, but even this is an exhaustive list. Just for example, we've applied for a number of federal grants recently. Many of you know about the capital investment grant for Richmond Highway or the LONO grant for hybrid electric buses.

[00:04:48] As I stated, we're going to talk about SmartScale a little bit, but there are a variety of state sources. On the regional side, NVTA, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, has been a very strong regional partner, as has been the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as a part of commuter choice.

[00:05:05] And, of course, we always have the option of using our own local funding sources. But rather than listen to me try and tackle all this, I'm going to let the expert dive into the details so Noel can talk you through the nuances and specifics of each of the funding sources. And then I'll come back at the end to kind of walk us through an example of how we think about things.

[00:05:26] Mr. Chairman, Noel Dominguez, the Department of Transportation. So I'm going to go through each level of funding. I'm going to start with the federal funding sources. So at the federal funding level,

we have several avenues available to us. We have the CIG, capital investment grants or new starts.

[00:05:45] That is what we are looking at to fund the Richmond Highway BRT or portion of it. I will say this comes with a multi-year, multi-step process. It funds light rail, heavy rail, streetcars, BRT projects. Then we have congestion mitigation and air quality. This is an annual program.

[00:06:02] The recommendations are made by NVTa, but the CTB makes the final adoption, and this funds your projects that address air quality. So you'll see a lot of transit projects in here. Our connector stores receive funding for this program, bicycle and pedestrian projects.

[00:06:19] They have to mitigate and address air quality. The Regional Surface Transportation Program is allocated at the same time, also recommended by NVTa, approved by the CTB, but this has a broader category. So some of the projects we've had funded through this include the Richmond Highway widening, as well as the BRT, but also Frontier Drive, Soapstone Connector, roadway projects, as well as some transit and or bike pad projects.

[00:06:47] Transportation alternatives is primarily for your bicycle and pedestrian facilities. It looks at that. It looks at safe routes to schools. So this project's really close to our schools where we're trying to get kids safer as they walk to and from their elementary school. And these are, they're federal funds, but they are allocated by the state.

[00:07:06] So we submit them, and also partially by our regional metropolitan planning organization. But we submit them through the state's process. They look at them. they look at our projects, and this is a biennial application cycle. CIG happens, you kind of go through multi-step process. There's not exactly one year, one off, that sort of thing. CMAQ and RSTP are annual, but here with transportation alternatives, we're looking at a biannual cycle.

[00:07:32] And some of the products we've had funded through the HISS are your Bush Hill and your Shrevewood Safe Routes to Schools, Compton Road Walkway, the Mason Neck Trail, and we're looking at the next applications are coming this fall. So we'll be coming to you all with some recommendations in the upcoming month or two. And then the discretionary grant program, as Mr. Stevenson mentioned, these usually come in on an annual basis, but they each might have their own rules.

[00:07:59] You've heard us come to you all with RAISE or INFRA or MEGA. Some of them are actually the same program, but they keep on changing acronyms. Whereas some of like your RAISE, your MEGA, your infra. They're all similar, but not quite identical. Then you have your Safe Streets and Roads for All program. You have your LONO, which you all were, the county got a grant for that a couple of years ago. The timing varies. You're not going to see an application every January. You might see one in January, another one in December. We just keep an eye on it with our federal

[00:08:34] lobbyists. Each program has its completely different criteria. Again, some of the projects we recently got funded were the hybrid bus replacements, as well as the planning grant for the Safe Streets and Roads for All. Continuing on to state sources, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on the first one because we have a presentation specifically on this next, but SmartScale, it's a biannual application cycle. They evaluate projects based on congestion mitigation, safety, economic development, accessibility, environmental quality, and the

[00:09:11] land use, and I managed to take that out, and I apologize. It wasn't always in for every project, but now it is. And this is some of the projects we've been successful for this before. Route 7 from Tyson's to

Reston, Braddock Road, Phase 1. We have Revenue Sharing, which is a bionil application. It's actually the same time as Transportation Alternatives. This is a one-to-one match. There aren't quite as many requirements on it, but we can only apply for \$5 million per year per locality, \$10 million per project, and we bring in one-to-one. And we've used this a lot.

[00:09:49] This project was enacted about 15, 20 years ago to help with some of the projects up here in our region, and I think we put it to good use. Lincoln Street, Shirley Gate Extension, the Fairfax County Parkway. Merit is transit capital and operating. This is annual. This is how we get our state aid for transit. They essentially compare either all of the capital projects against each other or in the case of operating all of the bus operations projects against each other. They took out Metro and VRE a couple of years ago because it's kind of hard to compare those to the connector or the HRT bus, but the rest of us kind of compete. They looked at metrics and how we're doing

[00:10:27] around each other. And then TRIP. You all received a TRIP grant a couple of years ago. this is also annual. They do look at zero fare and low income programs. We have a low income program that I think you all got a presentation on two meetings back. But also look at regional connectivity and transit access and safety. And actually this year we did receive a regional connectivity grant to help with the BRT project. It's also helping pay for some of those fare box replacements that I think us in the region through Smart Trip are doing right now. The state aid is coming via the trip program.

[00:11:05] I'm continuing on regional sources. Two big ones that I do want to mention, the NVTa six-year program. This is a biannual program based on a bunch of measures. However, they do have to give priority to congestion mitigation. So that is the top one that is in the Code of Virginia.

[00:11:22] But they also look at geographic and modal balance, leveraging sources, project readiness. They do look at local funding, long-term benefit. So over the way the Virginia Code is written over the long term, a jurisdiction will generally benefit from how much revenues were derived from that locality. To put it in a summary, the county provides about 43% of the revenues to NVTa through the various taxes and fees collected. So over the long term, we will benefit from about 43% of those revenues. It's not dollar in, dollar out. I do want to make that a point. We're not

[00:12:00] counting pennies to make sure everybody's the same. It's where the project is located as well is who uses a project. So the project I somewhat use as an example, which NVTa once thought about funding but did not because of other sources, is the I-6628 interchange. They would have looked at that and said, okay, it's in the county, so the county gets the benefit from the location, but then they also would have looked at who goes through the interchange. They would have said, okay, the county is a portion, so is Prince William, so is Loudoun. So they would bring that into the calculation as well. And again, NVTa actually approved that a couple, several years back, but then it funded through the P3 process, so that's why I try to use that as an example,

[00:12:37] because it didn't actually get funding. But we've received, we've been extremely lucky with NVTa funding over the past several years. I think most of our major projects in the county have been, have received funding. Route 7, Seven Corners, Fairfax County Parkway, Richmond Highway, Route 28, I can go on. They've been very helpful with our program. Next is NVTC's Commuter Choice program, and PRTC also does part of that for I-95. This is essentially for projects that benefit the toll road users on 66 or I-95-395. There's an annual application. They do go back

[00:13:15] and forth. So one year it's a 66 program. The next year it's 395-95. So you'll see them go back and forth like that just to manage, and because two years you get a little bit more money in the bank. The projects have to be within the toll facility corridor, so you're not going to see a project on Route 1 for the I-66 program or that sort of thing.

[00:13:35] They are evaluated based on person throughput, travel time savings, connections, and you'll see a lot of the – we've been successful with this program as well. Various bus routes are funded through a commuter choice, the 698, 697, 699, the 396 and the I-95 corridor.

[00:13:56] Capital bike share around Dunlorn received some funding, some access to park and ride lots in the I-95 corridor or 395 around Springfield. Those also received, but again, they're within those corridors.

[00:14:13] Continuing on, so that's it for all the programs I just mentioned require an application. I do want to say that every application is different. When I started with CIG, that's a multi-year process.

[00:14:28] We're submitting hundreds upon hundreds of pages of documentation, narratives. There is a lot that goes into those applications. Smart Scale will go into in a bit on how complex it is, but you're submitting a lot of data, a lot of background information, a lot of information goes into those.

[00:14:45] whereas a CMAQ RSTP might not be as complex. That's a five-page application. It's more about where your project is, what funding does it have so far, that sort of thing. So I do want to note, you know, a RAISE application is going to have a 20, 25-page narrative. CMAQ RSTP is four or five pages, so not everything is comparable as far as complexity for submitting.

[00:15:06] But at the end of the day, these are some of the projects we've essentially been awarded in the past couple of years. As I mentioned, not everything is annual, So that's why you'll see the year's flux. Also, each program, the funding provided comes in different years.

[00:15:24] So for your discretionary grants, you'll see we got applications. We had successful applications in 2023 and 2024. Well, those were for FY23 and 2024 funding. CMAQ and RSTP, the successful applications from last year, so they were approved in calendar year 24, that's for FY2030 funding.

[00:15:44] That's five, six years out. um the transportation alternatives and revenue sharing the ones that we got approved last year were fy um 27 and 25 26 27 28 so they might be within the year or within the next couple of years and bta is essentially five or six yet out they will work with you to advance appropriate if necessary we got that done with the fairfax county parkway the southern segment of the widening um closer to Route 123. That was actually supposed to be 27 money. We got it appropriated, I think, in 25, 26, because we were ready to move forward with that. But you see here, what our team is

[00:16:23] doing is saying, okay, we need this money, so maybe we apply for this for this year, but then we're going to get this money in four years after that, and it's a kind of a puzzle piece we all put together. But you do see the amount of funding ranges. In the past couple of years, as I mentioned, NVTA, we've been extremely successful with that, but we have received funding from a lot of these sources throughout the past couple of years. The scope is different. Your transportation alternatives, the projects can only receive \$2 or \$3 million, so you're not going to get a big

[00:16:56] award. NVTA, we got \$100 million plus for seven corners, so obviously those are very different scale of projects. Okay. So those were all the money we applied to for others, but then we also have the funding that the county itself controls or allocates. So the couple of big sources we have are the NVTA 30%

funds. NVTa allocates 70% of the regional revenue funds that they receive, and then they send 30% back to the localities from where it's derived. And the board through The TPP decides where that goes within criteria.

[00:17:36] The state code does say it has to be used for congestion mitigation, road construction, public transportation purposes. And then, so we use that for WMATA capital funding for Route 7, Frontier Drive, spot improvements.

[00:17:51] You'll see a lot of our projects. The one I do want to mention, this one, the WMATA capital funding. This is in 2018 when the bill to address WMATA capital was passed. Part of that bill said that the localities will annually send the state funding to address those capital needs. So for us, I think the way it was written was \$27.12 million and then our share based on our regional. So we annually send about \$13 million to the state who they then send it to

[00:18:26] WMATA as part of that fix for WMATA capital from 2018. That's the first one. Yes, that's per state law. The rest of them we essentially have some control over. And then you also have the commercial industrial property tax. That you all can implement a rate up to 12.5 cents per \$100 valuation.

[00:18:47] It is currently, that is the maximum allowed. That is also what the current rate is. I will say that when 2313 was passed it did require the localities to have what they call skin in the game so they said you need to either enact your cni at its maximum or allocate using other sources the same amount so you all could have enacted the cni or you could have i think some jurisdictions took whatever that 12 and a half would have gotten them and just put this much of their gf towards it and that's how they counted it but you all have enacted the cni at the maximum amount

[00:19:24] This also, allowances allowed in the code, road construction and the associated planning, right-of-way, et cetera, public transit construction and associated planning, right-of-way, new capacity and service, and other capital costs, debt service, that sort of thing.

[00:19:41] And we've used that for connector capital and operations. We've used it for projects such as a soapstone connector. And a big one is our loan repayment for Dulles Rail Phase 2. And then the last group of sources I'm going to go over are also other ones that you all essentially have control in some way over.

[00:20:01] General obligation bonds, you know, you let the bond, it is backed by the county, the projects associated in the referendum, and we use that a lot for WMATA, roads, pedestrian improvements. Developer contributions and proffers, that's essentially what it is written to.

[00:20:18] So we have to keep an eye on that proffer language and what it is allowable for based on what the language says. Special tax districts, Dulles Rail Phase 1 and Phase 2, as well as Route 28, they help pay down those areas where the revenues are collected.

[00:20:34] And this was petitioned by landowners, so the landowners asked to be taxed more. I will say Route 28 initially was supposed to be going for, I think, another 10 years, but their recent revenues have done very well. So it's probably going to end sooner, much more than expected.

[00:20:53] And then other service districts, like the Tyson's Road Fund, Reston Road Fund, we look at, you know, they are projects found in the geographic area. They're approved by the board. And we've had various projects like the Fairfax County Parkway, Sunrise Valley Drive, the interim improvements there, Route 7 Idlewood Road down in Tyson's.

[00:21:14] And, again, it's within a geographic border of where the board approves. And I will hand it back to Greg. So you still want to fund a transportation project? A lot that goes into that, a lot of information, a lot of data, a lot of numbers.

[00:21:35] And I really appreciate the team for tackling those things. So I want to just go through a generic example. All names have been removed to protect the innocent. But let's say, for example, we've got \$100 million road widening project that we want to do.

[00:21:52] And let's say we've got, you know, \$45 million right now on it in local funding. And that's sort of our main funding source that we've got. And then let's say we've got \$10 million in hand in regional money. We've got \$10 million in state money. Let's say there's some proffers that came in for \$5 million.

[00:22:09] Well, if you do the math, all right, that leaves us about \$30 million short. So let's say in this example we realize, okay, we've already got some federal aspects of this project, so we don't have a problem having this project be sort of federally mandated and dealing with all the rules that come with a federal project. So we're going to apply for some federal funding. All right, we get \$20 million in federal funding. Great. And let's say we're able to work with our regional partners to get an additional \$30 million in regional money. All right, we're up to \$40 million. Well, if you do the math and add it up, not only could we fully fund the project,

[00:22:45] but theoretically we would have had \$20 million more in terms of local money than what we needed or expected, which allows us to take that initial number, which was \$45 million in local money, and now we can reduce it down to \$25 million. The reason we do that is because the local money has less restrictions, so we can use it on other things. So if we're going to attach money to something that has a very hard restriction to that project, we're going to try and do that first and foremost if we can. Find a way to do that so that when the time comes to fund the project, we can take the local money that has generally less restrictions and move it to something else or

[00:23:22] move it to a different project. So that's sort of the mentality that we use in the process that we utilize. Again, attach the most restrictive funding to the project as best you can, pay that and get that to the point where you funded the project as best you can and then leave the local money and try and make it as small as possible so that we can have the flexibility to move that elsewhere.

[00:23:43] But that's an example of sort of how we tackle funding for projects. And with that, I'll ask from you all, with our Funding 101, are there other topics or other aspects related to project funding or funding sources that you'd like for us to either come back at future meetings to talk about or that you'd like to learn about. I know there's a lot that goes into this, and there's a lot of information, and, you know, I'm not going to pretend like I know it all. And so in that aspect, feel free to ask questions, and if we want to come back and talk a little bit about more or

[00:24:20] talk more specifically about one of these funding sources outside of SmartScale that we're getting ready to talk about, then we can absolutely do that as well. So that, I'll end it. Thank you. I thought that was a really good rundown on everything. And, yes, the next presentation is on smart scale, but I'll open it up to the board if there are any specific questions and start with Mr. Chairman.

[00:24:40] Yeah, first, thank you for the presentation and for people watching or people who are new to this. I mean, this is what the county has been doing for a long time, and I don't know anyone who does it

better than our Department of Transportation. I mean, it is a massive undertaking to plug as much of this funding in every project as possible.

[00:24:58] And every time we do a new project, we talk about all the partners at that project. We're never going it alone. And to keep that most flexible source of revenue as kind of the last piece we plug in to actually make a project happen becomes really important.

[00:25:15] Obviously, this is a very risky time. I mean, we're going to talk about smart scale and the problems that our region has with what we think is a very unfair, potentially very already outdated formula that's used at the state level. But my question is really about the federal piece, because we have long relied upon a very active, reliable federal partner for many of our projects, including our biggest ones across the county.

[00:25:44] And it would be foolish for us to sit here today and think nothing's changed. The chaos that's happening at the federal level, the unpredictable amount of funding we've seen, and I've talked to some of our rural communities through VACO, who have already had massive federal funding cut out entirely out of their community with absolutely no explanation for it other than you're not getting the money.

[00:26:09] And so I guess my question is, how closely are we monitoring that? You know, how is the board going to become informed as we move forward on changes that are happening at the federal level? We have some really important projects already in the hopper. I mean, obviously, Richmond Highway is one that jumps out without the federal piece to support the BRT.

[00:26:30] There isn't a BRT project. And so can you can you help us understand it's hard asking you to predict what's going on up there is crazy because not a person in this room. But worse, not a person in Washington, D.C. can answer that question. But I think we need to understand how we can be spry and responsive as quick as we possibly can be to any threats we see to federal funding that would prevent a project that we have already invested a lot of money in.

[00:26:59] And I'm not talking only about the Route 1 one, but any project that we were looking for federal funding in, that we have already had investments made in, are we being able to quickly and responsibly react to that? And what, if anything else, can or should the board be doing on that front?

[00:27:18] Yeah, and that's a great question. It's something that I'm not going to say completely freaks us out, but it worries us on a daily basis. And we do continue to talk to our federal partners. We have a meeting this week, I believe, with FTA. And we continue to sort of, without being those people, try and kind of poke and say, hey, how are things going?

[00:27:39] Are you hearing anything? And in that vein, obviously, if we hear anything or if anything even seems like it's changing, we will definitively let you know. At this time, really, it's been sort of business as usual with the understanding that obviously there are a lot of things going on.

[00:27:57] And you're right. No one can predict anything. And, you know, as things change, we just try and stay on top of it and see what we think that means for us. And then we try and have as many contingencies in place as we possibly can, understanding that there's a lot that goes into that.

[00:28:16] Mr. Chairman, I was going to add that, you know, we have our federal contract lobbyists and they send us regular updates that we take an eye on, as well as we're getting information from other

partners. I think the proposed budget, a proposed budget came out a couple of days ago that we're taking a look at.

[00:28:34] And yet some things do change. I think, case in point, one of the discretionary grant programs, a couple of days, about a week before it was due this January, they changed the name on it, and we came in and worked with you all to quickly change the name on the board item and updated our grant applications as much as possible.

[00:28:54] So we are keeping an eye on those, and we will let you all know what we hear as things move forward. Jennifer Miller, Deputy County Executive. I think one thing that I don't think we've done, at least in my little note to Greg, that maybe we can do, obviously the predictability is a very difficult challenge, but at least for looking at these three type of funds, we can look at what would be the impact if we lost any particular fund, and is there a plan B or not?

[00:29:21] And then what would that mean in terms of stoppage? So if we lost any of these a year from now, does the project stop wholesale? Do we have to fill that gap with county funds? would we have to go to the state to at least put together those potential COAs? We can do that. Yeah, I think that's important. And, you know, I asked that question because obviously having a secondary game plan is going to be really important.

[00:29:41] We can't stop the progress on some of these projects, but we've got to be realistic about what's happening. The second thing I wanted to get across, which I think is really important, is given the sophistication level, the size and expertise of our DOT, we're expecting, you know, us to be able to respond to, pivot, like the example you just gave, and modify things quickly to maximize every federal dollar we can possibly get.

[00:30:05] And this is one of those times where having a staff that's focused on that and good at it becomes really important in terms of getting as much federal money as we can in the county for the benefit of our residents. And so thank you for that update. And obviously, this is something we're all going to be paying very close attention to in the years ahead because it's critical.

[00:30:29] Thank you. I saw Supervisor Jimenez, Supervisor Lusk, and then Supervisor Herity, and Supervisor Alcorn, and Supervisor Stork. You're making it easy on me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the presentation. Extremely informative, so thank you on that.

[00:30:45] My question is kind of piggybacking on what Chairman McKay was talking about and the kind of unknown moving forward with federal funding. How far out, when you look at projections, are you looking at potential zero funding on the federal front?

[00:31:02] And are we currently impacted if money is pulled out right now with any projects? So are we kind of left hanging on any projects currently if that were to happen? So from the perspective of are there projects that if federal funding was pulled out, we would have an issue?

[00:31:20] Absolutely. If federal funding came out, we would have issues. And that's to the chairman's point and to Deputy County Executive Miller's point. Having the contingencies is the important aspect. The second part, you asked how far out? Right. So just thinking through, you know, doing it three, five, ten years, we don't know if and when that might happen with the federal funding, but what happens if five years down the line we still have no federal funding?

[00:31:48] What are we projecting? Are we making some kind of backup plans on what that would look like for the county if that were to happen? Mr. Chairman, Supervisor Jimenez, So the transportation priorities plan goes out five years.

[00:32:03] I will say we've been fairly conservative with the federal funding that was expected. Just because even before now, the discretionary programs are extremely oversubscribed and difficult to get.

[00:32:19] So we weren't expecting we'd get every single or any raise or infra we ever applied for. So we've been a little bit concerned. We have been conservative on those discretionary items. CMAQ and RSTP, that is more regular. We're hoping that stays. I think what's good about CMAQ and RSTP is those touch a lot of jurisdictions across the country, and I think they're both very popular.

[00:32:41] So, fingers crossed, those stay fairly stable. But we are keeping an eye on them. I appreciate you all. Thank you. Supervisor Lasz. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of quick questions. First, looking at the local funding sources, just wanted to see, to the question that you've asked, would it be possible to get a listing of the revenues associated with each of these different local funding options and then also to get some sense of how that's possibly changed over, and you can define a period of time,

[00:33:19] if it's five years, ten years, just to kind of see what's happened over time with that local funding. And then connected to the local funding, do we also have the data on the carryover commitment that the board has made to transportation?

[00:33:37] Because it might be helpful to have that as a follow-on listing as well. So that is probably something we can look at. It might take a little bit because I think there's a lot that goes into that. But let me take a look at that and get that for you.

[00:33:55] It'll be kind of interesting to see. And then the last thing I wanted to maybe focus on a little bit too is I know one of the elephants in the room is that our costs for these projects have been increasing. So we've got costs due to delays, but we also have costs that are factored in because of additional labor costs and other measures.

[00:34:17] Would it be possible for us to maybe get something in a future presentation on kind of how those costs have been adjusted based on those factors and for us to maybe understand what are some of the common things that are causing these cost delay, these extended delays and the increasing costs as well?

[00:34:41] Yeah, I think that's actually a good potential conversation to have at BTC. I know it's something that I'm looking to work on, sort of an idea of example project. And example is very difficult because all projects are just so different.

[00:34:57] But the concept of an example project schedule and an example project cost and then an aspect that goes into that of here's why costs go up because we delayed it for this reason or because we decided to go back and do something different than what we initially decided to do.

[00:35:14] Or we expanded the scope of the project because somebody wanted this intersection in addition to that intersection because I do think that piece sometimes is missing when we have conversations with you all so I think that's a good topic to come back and speak on. I know we've tackled this one with the BRT so I was thinking it's probably has some applicability in other projects as well.

[00:35:37] And then last, just thinking about VDOT2, is there any, maybe in a future discussion, any information we could share as it relates to VDOT's funding strategies for our projects? Is there anything that's changing there possibly as well that we should be aware of or thinking about?

[00:35:57] Are you referring in terms of their funding or more in terms of their costs that? Well, first funding, and I guess if there's some cost issues too, we could maybe have a conversation about those at some future point. I'm not asking you to necessarily do that here, but I'm thinking as a two-year question that you asked for a future discussion here, it might be helpful to kind of understand what's happening at the VDOT level for funding for these projects and then if there's any cost issues additionally as well.

[00:36:27] Gotcha. Okay. Okay. Supervisor Herity. So I think I'm going to start with having a little bit of fun with slides 10 and 11.

[00:36:43] And I think Greg covered himself when he mentioned there were some federal aspects already. But when we add federal money to a project, that typically increases the costs, correct? Do we have a – Mr. Chairman, Supervisor Herity, it may increase the costs.

[00:37:01] It likely will increase – cause some new requirements where that comes in. So there are some projects we intentionally do not federalize. Are we still using the strategy we try to keep federal funds out of projects where we can to hold costs?

[00:37:19] I would argue we keep federal funding out of projects if we are concerned about complexity and the complexity that comes with federal requirements. But in many instances, if a project has a federal aspect to it or it touches federal land or we're already sort of in that mindset, then we'll absolutely provide federal funding.

[00:37:41] Then you've got to go for it anyway. Second, I know you're working on mode mix. A question I asked when we did plan forward, you know, the mode mix 5, 10 years ago today and what it's projected to be. So I'm looking forward to getting that.

[00:37:59] When was our last road bond? I think I know, but I'm not 100% sure. 2014? I think it was 2014. It's \$16 million and the \$100 million was road. I believe it was \$100 million road, but I don't remember the exact breakdown.

[00:38:19] My mind isn't quite that good, but I can check in with our team. I think it was 16. I know Prince William did a \$355 million in 2019, and Loudon just did \$151 million. And they're at different stages in their development as a county, obviously.

[00:38:36] But do we have any plans? I mean, I'd be interested to see if we've got any plans to do any road bonds coming up. I don't know that I would say specific plans. I know we've had discussions, obviously, but I don't know that I'd go as far as to say, oh, we have a plan to specifically do that.

[00:38:54] But we have had discussions with management and budget just about what that entails, but I wouldn't go as far as say that that's a plan. Mr. Chairman, on that point, I brought this up at a previous meeting, a budget meeting, and we had budget guidance in our language that specifically asked staff to look at this.

[00:39:11] I think it's absolutely critical that we understand if a funding solution for Metro is developed that frees up county dollars, it frees up our ability to be more aggressive in that space. And so one of the challenges, of course, Prince William County is not in the compact, so they don't pay anything for Metro,

even though a lot of their residents ride Metro through Fairfax County, which is a subject for a different day.

[00:39:35] but I think we have to be really cognizant of the fact that not only are we in a different place in terms of development in those jurisdictions, but this is one of the reasons why the county executive, myself, Supervisor Alcorn, others are trying to come up with a solution to the metro capital funding challenges that they face in the future so that we have more flexibility here locally and less dollars going out of what otherwise could be used for bonding other projects into the capital construction requirements of Metro.

[00:40:08] And so we know how critical Metro is to Fairfax County and to its economy. That's where most of the growth is right now in Fairfax. And so there's no doubt that pays back, but it ultimately also causes us some challenges on the road bond front, and that's one of the reasons why it was in the budget guidance so that we look at that and the relationship of those two as we move forward.

[00:40:31] And lastly, just encourage you to continue to look at using the proffers that are out there. I know we're getting a report on that at our audit committee meeting, but those are funds we need to put to use. Supervisor Alcorn.

[00:40:47] Thank you. If you could go to the last slide, maybe some feedback on the last slide. Yeah, that one. So one of the things I think might be helpful for us as a board to have a conversation about is the relationship between our land use planning and project funding, transportation project funding.

[00:41:10] And I think there are a couple of areas that would be useful. The last committee meeting, Supervisor Smith brought up the Centerville planning effort. That's potentially a good example of, you know, what transportation projects might need to be funded at some point associated with any, you know, significant change in land use in the Centerville area.

[00:41:32] And then, so there are those sorts of things. The other relates to how we spend our transportation dollars. So certainly as many of our growing parts of the county, the active transportation needs are significant.

[00:41:50] So I think that's another area I think would be useful for us to take a look at how are we integrating our land use planning and really the execution side, which is usually market-driven, but with our transportation project funding.

[00:42:09] Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Alcorn. Supervisor Stork. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two questions. One, our use of consultants, how critical and is it strictly federal, really federally related, and what's your confidence level?

[00:42:28] And I say that from, in my mind, being burned on Richmond Highway by the expectations that we would get FTA funding at 49% versus the 37%, 39%. I'm not sure of the final number, but so how much of that is tied to how we look at funding and how we try to move things forward?

[00:42:51] And how much do we rely on them and their knowledge? I don't know if no one wants to chime in, but what I'll say is for a lot of these grants, realistically speaking, it's staff. It's staff taking the time to sort of look through the grants, understand the requirements, put together the documentation, and put it out there.

[00:43:12] Sometimes what happens if we're working on a project and the project has a consultant that's part of it that requires sort of an aspect, in the instance of Richmond Highway to go after federal funding as part of the consultant team that's something that we quite frankly were looking for assistance on because our background was not in federal transit funding. Now I will argue that from that from now on we probably have a much better knowledge of how to tackle federal transit funding but I you know I would argue that at any point when we're sort of tackling something new if we have either a gap in the skill set

[00:43:50] or something that we're looking to try and, you know, help ourselves with, we'll absolutely take advantage of consultants who have theoretically done it in, you know, in previous labs or whatever. Mr. Chairman, I would just add, so I think we have our federal contract lobbyist who keeps us in the loop on what's going on and sends us regular updates, and they come to the legislative committee and have updated you all before.

[00:44:14] So we keep in relationship, close contact with them. And then, as Greg mentioned, for individual grants, such as our BRT project, we have specific consultants, or sometimes we will see if we can hire a consultant on a short-time basis to help us fill out discretionary grant B.

[00:44:31] So we have them that we can utilize as necessary. We haven't utilized them much in the past, but it is something we may be doing for these discretionary grants. It is something we are looking into how we can fully utilize those services. So it's mostly federal and discretionary grants that you may not have specific expertise in.

[00:44:49] So typically state, that's not part of what you do or use? Mr. Chairman, Supervisor Stork, at the state grants, revenue sharing, smart scale, we haven't really utilized a federal contract for that. I mean using consultants too.

[00:45:06] Consultants, sorry. No, we haven't really used consultants for those applications. As I mentioned earlier, as far as the applications we submit to the state, revenue sharing, transportation alternatives, and even the state annual transit, that's something we've done in-house the entire time, and those are fairly straightforward.

[00:45:29] I will say SmartScale continues to get more and more complex, and we'll go into that in the next program. We haven't used consultant support for those except for if there is a project that they're working on we may ask for the data on that project so we can submit the materials because there is a lot of attachment required that we will use them for but not to actually prepare the application.

[00:45:52] You know I'll say I think fortunately we've been pretty successful one or two grants notwithstanding smart scale that we'll talk about notwithstanding you know federal funding for the low no grant 50 ish million dollars something like that you know the The NVTa funding that we received in the past few years has been substantial.

[00:46:13] And so, you know, the Richmond Highway BRT notwithstanding and SmartScale notwithstanding, I think we've done, you know, a pretty good job of tackling funding without really needing consultant help. But as we said, from the perspective of if it's something that we're not necessarily in the mix on or that's not been our bailiwick, we'll reach out and sort of ask for assistance where we can or need to.

[00:46:37] Second question had to do with, we talked about transportation. I know a key part, at least for some of us, is transportation as defined by the broad sense of moving person A to place B. Person A from

place A to place B.

[00:46:55] And we have active transportation. We've talked, and the only mention I really heard of any kind of active transportation as part of this is the Mason Neck Trail and using some federal money to help fund that trail and make that connection. How is that being integrated into how we seek and secure funding for different transportation projects?

[00:47:18] So I think, realistically speaking, a lot of the larger projects are the projects that we go and try and get federal money, regional money, and those sorts of things for because it allows us to free up the local money to do some of those other things. We try and look at what bike and ped projects might be successful in some of these grants and applications.

[00:47:40] We'll talk a little bit about this in SmartScale as to whether we want to maybe shift and try something different in SmartScale. But generally speaking, in a lot of these instances, the larger projects are the ones that get funded by a lot of these grants that we go after. But that allows us, if we can do it the right way, to take the local money and then use the local money to do some of the smaller projects.

[00:48:02] Mr. Chairman, Supervisor Struck, I will add, when there are programs out there that seem like a good fit, because a lot of this is kind of putting a puzzle together, we will apply. So, for instance, the, what was at the time, RAISE, but now may be called BUILD, that we submitted a couple of times, the Sunrise Valley cycle track.

[00:48:25] We weren't successful, but we did submit that for funding. Transportation alternatives, that is focused a lot on your active transportation. So we have done Mesa and Neck, but also your Safe Routes to Schools, your Compton Roads, Sidewalk, those sort of projects. So I do want, and then the Safe Street and Roads for All is another federal discretionary grant program.

[00:48:43] We've applied for both implementation and planning grants on that. We have been successful in receiving the planning money. So I think we're looking, and I think our team is looking at applying for another grant in that program. So we are looking for the programs and the grant availabilities that are out there to match what projects we have in the TPP to what programs are available to fund those.

[00:49:06] Thank you. Great. Let's move on to the second presentation, which is about the smart scale process and policy questions. Thank you. All right.

[00:49:23] So as we discussed, smart scale state program that provides funding for projects. But as we talked about a little bit earlier, in the most recent few application processes, not only Fairfax County, but Northern Virginia region as a whole, has really not been successful at all at receiving funding for projects.

[00:49:43] And this is something that I'm very much interested in changing. I've only been in this role for a little while, but just in the time that I've been here, we've just not been successful. But in looking at some of the data that you'll see later in the slides, some other areas have been very successful.

[00:49:59] So trying to figure out, in some instances, I think maybe we know, but trying to sort of talk through why we think that is, how we can potentially change that, and also some thoughts on maybe some ideas for the future to attempt to get us to be more successful.

[00:50:16] So Noelle is going to go through this presentation, and we'll be back at the end to ask a couple questions again. So, Noelle. There we go. Mr. Chairman, so I'm going to go through some background on SmartScale, and I know some of you have heard parts of this before. I apologize, but I will say SmartScale

is an extremely complicated process. I tell people I'm continually amazed that the state found a way to turn a two-page bill into a 150-page guidance, but essentially what SmartScale does is it evaluates projects

[00:50:52] using that the state then funds using both the state derived funds but they can also allocate some federal funds the ones that they themselves control utilizing the smart scale process smart scale is essentially broken down into two programs the district grant program and the high priority projects program so first of all just overview district grant program each district is allocated a certain amount of funding and then we all compete against each other in a way for those funds and then high priority is across the state, so we versus Hampton Roads versus Richmond versus

[00:51:27] Wise County compete for those revenues. They have different requirements, so the district grant program addresses a need in the statewide transportation plan, and only localities can apply, whereas the high priority projects, they look at quarters of statewide significance and or the regional network, and that both localities can apply, or actually not just localities, but also regional agencies. So your MPOs and regional transit agencies can also apply to those. So if you can see through this chart, it kind of shows the corridor of statewide

[00:52:01] significance. They can go to both capacity and regional needs. Yes, for both. But urban development areas, if we have those, we do have one specific UDA in the county. That's Tyson's, but we also have some of our neighbors have them. Those needs can be addressed through the district grant program, but not the HPP. Also safety projects. Those can go to the district grant program, but not the HPP program. Continuing on, then we also have who can apply. As I mentioned, it matters and the requirements are different, but you can, going back to the other, the two charts kind of go hand

[00:52:41] in hand, but you can see the regional entities can apply for your regional networks and your corridor statewide significance, because those are through HPP, they can't do UDA or safety projects. Localities can apply for all types, but they will need a resolution from the regional entity. So essentially, whenever applications come, COG sends a list. We essentially, if something is in the CLRP or Visualize 2045, I think now, if it's in there, it's fine. But if it's something additional, COG just sends a list of projects that says, okay, these are eligible to, and that's how we deal with that. And COG has been great. And then public transit agencies,

[00:53:18] they can also apply for corridor statewide programs and regional networks. They also need that resolution from the MPO. They cannot apply to UDA or safety projects because those are only district grant, only localities can apply for those. So this is a schedule. This is for the current round, but it goes back and forth. So you'll see it's essentially a two-year program where we start applying for projects we start thinking of projects in year one in the spring of year one we then do some submitting pre-applications are submitted in the summer

[00:53:56] then full applications then they take several months to evaluate recommendations come out in January then discussions are happening with the communal transportation board as well as public meetings. And then a program is adopted in June, usually, with the adoption of the six-year program, the state six-year program. And then there's kind of a lessons learned time period for the next couple of months, and they gear up for the next round. And if you remember what I was talking about, some are on biannual cycles. As I mentioned, this is extremely complicated

[00:54:33] process. So what the state has done is, so for this, the applications were due in 24. So in 25 is the year where they're receiving the recommendations making the decisions and doing the lessons

learned but in 25 is when they actually we submit applications for transportation alternatives and revenue sharing so you go back and forth between the two i'd also add that nvta goes back and forth because i think you use them in our region to kind of decide what to apply to the other four we know we're getting this much from the state so we apply to nvta for the remainder or we know we got this much from NVTa, we applied to the state for the balance. So we use those to

[00:55:10] inform each other throughout the process. As I mentioned earlier, there are a lot of measures that SmartScale looks at. Congestion mitigation, safety, accessibility, environmental quality, economic development, and land use. Within those, every single, there are sub factors in each of the criteria. So I'm not going to go through all of these, but you can tell a lot of things are being scored. And it can get very, very complicated. But I'm not going to focus too much on that. I am

[00:55:44] going to go into the next thing that even, well, so briefly, if you can see, for example, congestion mitigation is 50% person throughput and 50% hours a person delay. But even once we get to the next section, not all of the factors are weighted equally across the state. And that was done by design. So if you look here, there are four factor weightings throughout the Commonwealth.

[00:56:09] Category A are your urbans. That is us and Hampton Roads. And per state law, we have to have our highest percentage go to congestion mitigation. That is in the Code of Virginia. And then no one else has that specificity on them, just us and Hampton Roads. But they've essentially put us and Hampton Roads in Category A. I think others had thought about being in Category A with us, but they decided. No, we're good. So category B, you have your other smaller urbans, I guess what we would call it, your Richmond, Fredericksburg area. You can see those in purple. Then more rural are the light greens, and then the rural rural are the blues. And why that matters is because each of

[00:56:48] these categories has a percentage for the factor weightings laid out to it. So you can see we're category A, we're up top. Most of our percentage points go to congestion mitigation, but then accessibility at 25%, safety at 15%, environmental quality at 10%, economic development at 5%, and then land use is a factor that I'm not going to get too much into, but every project can get up to their scores multiplied based on the land use factor. But you can see ours, the most is congestion mitigation in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia versus a Category D. 40% of

[00:57:27] theirs goes to safety, 30% to economic development. So each area has their different criteria. So they've mixed it up. Continuing on to the recent outcomes, and this is what Greg was talking about. So once all of the projects, all of the data is provided, everything is scored. And that takes some time. We usually submit, I think, August 1, September 1. And then over the next couple of months. The state goes and they score. And our applications, we have to show how it does XYZ. We submit a lot of documentation to go along with this. For instance, the land use criteria. They

[00:58:06] look at how many site plans in an area or how many developments. So our team will go and look through the LDS database and pull as many of those and attach them to the application as possible. So there's a lot of data that gets sent to the state. And then we go back and forth with them.

[00:58:22] sometimes we would prefer more time to go back and forth with them on some things. We're not given a lot of time to respond in some cases. But we submit in late summer, early fall. And then in January, they essentially, the state comes up with their funding scenario. And here, and I can't zoom in further, but you all can see, this was what was recommended this year. And for Northern Virginia, only \$88 million for the entire region was recommended in projects. Four projects totaling

[00:58:58] \$88 million. And all of that came from the district grant program. Whereas, not to call them out, but it's kind of there. The Richmond district received a total of \$338 million recommended for their projects for a total of 14 projects. And that was what was recommended at the beginning of the year. So that came out and then the CTB met with people. There were public meetings and this recently they came up with the final funding scenario. So there were actually changes that happened. And in this instance, the total amount recommended for our region, the total amount went

[00:59:37] up slightly because Loudoun was able to switch a project. However, they removed Alexandria's project that had been recommended. So only three projects in Northern Virginia got funded this round. There were some changes in other districts too. I'm going to be honest. I didn't read through all of them, but I did read our regions. And that's essentially what happened. There were four projects recommended. Loudoun had one switched. Alexandria got there taken out.

[01:00:07] So we did a quick look at these scores and how things went up. And this is some of the stuff we've come to you all before as far as policy decisions. And I think what hits us a lot is the project cost and the size. Our costs are just more up here. And inflation has made things even worse.

[01:00:28] Most of our projects have high benefit scores, but then you factor in the cost and they all drop. I think last round, if I recall correctly, three of our projects, if you ranked every project just based on benefit were in the top 20 factoring costs and they all just fell. This time, I think we had one or two, one scored fairly high in the benefit. One was top quarter, the other one right around the halfway point, but none of them ended up recommended for funding. And a lot of that is cost. The process continues to benefit smaller projects and projects with lower costs.

[01:01:08] And case in point, I'm not going to name the area, but one of the projects that got recommended from another area was an interstate interchange project. The total project cost was \$40 million and they'd requested \$38. I don't know the last time we had any interchange project in the county that was under \$100 million. Like I just, others may, I do not know myself. So that really does hit us. Communications, I will say the cost estimates, we prepare and we coordinate with

[01:01:44] v.nova on those. We use a process and work through them with it. But then the state central office takes a look at those and then they change them. So a lot of cases, we think they already have a high cost. And then the central office takes a look and they go even higher. And we can sometimes argue back and forth and sometimes else we just have to take what they say because that's what the rules say. We don't have a lot of time to review and to agree. So we just have to go along.

[01:02:12] And then there's a full funding policy. We have to have full funding on hand. So either we say we're going to fund the deficit or we apply for the whole thing. And for, again, going to our projects, if one of our projects has, and I'm going back to Greg's sample Project A, it's a \$100 million project, we can either apply for the whole \$100 million or we can apply for \$20 million, but then we have to say we'll come up with the other \$80 million and can't go back to the state for it.

[01:02:40] It's up to us to either commit to the balance or to apply. So we've had to try to address that. And while we have local sources, we don't have all the local sources to, you know, deal with every single project ever. And then going back to project readiness and documentation requirements, these seem to just completely be complicated.

[01:03:00] We're required to submit documentation, and the funding isn't available for five or six years. So, you know, signal justification reports, warrant analyses, those things can change in a couple of years. Things change in a project within two or three years, much less four or five.

[01:03:17] They're required before they might be needed for the timeline. So how does that work with our, you know, what will need to be updated or have to be repeated? And how does that work if we have to have a rescore? So those are some of the concerns we've mentioned to them. And I think we brought some of these up to you all in the past in the letters we sent or recommend sending to the state.

[01:03:38] So we did look at, you know, what solutions and changes. So the first is to utilize regional project submissions more. Going back to, I'm going to go back to the Richmond list back here. If you come here and you see Richmond had, I think, 16, 14, 16 applications submitted.

[01:03:59] The vast majority of those were submitted by their MPO or their TPOs. So it might be something for us to work with our regional partners with NVT, with COG, to see if we can work with them on submitting some on our behalf.

[01:04:17] Because they don't have the DGP, it's only HPP eligible. That seems to have worked for some people. Let's see if it works for us. That's a thought there. And we also looked at, according to our analysis, MPOs received over 70% of the HPP funds available.

[01:04:34] The average MPO award was about \$27 million with a cost of \$30 million, or the DGP average award was about \$15 million with the average cost of about \$16 million. So we still have to look at cost. And that comes into the next bullet of submitting smaller projects.

[01:04:50] I will say we fund a lot of our smaller projects locally just because sometimes it's easier, but it may be something to consider about submitting to others, about submitting for others. And then advocating for legislative changes, how can we normalize project costs to be more comparable statewide?

[01:05:10] Again, things, our land use, our right-of-way costs up here aren't similar to anybody else's. I'll use the Richmond Highway widening as an example. You have that many parcels. You have that many landowners. The right-of-way was a huge part of that, and that can be said for a lot of our projects.

[01:05:28] How can we normalize these across the Commonwealth? And then better communication, if OIP, if they want to make changes, they need to give us more than the couple of weeks we currently receive to talk things over. And with that, I think the final slide we have is, do any of these solutions make sense?

[01:05:50] Do you all agree with them? Do you have others that you might recommend or would like us to investigate further? And if there are any questions, thank you. Yeah, and real quick, I just want to say, this is a challenging thing. This is something that I'm extremely committed to trying to figure out how we tackle it.

[01:06:07] This has been a huge sort of crawl that's kind of bugged me. So I'm open to hearing what you all think, and let's see what might make sense for us. So that was a really helpful presentation. One quick question. On slide five, there's factors and evaluation measures, and slide seven is factor weighting.

[01:06:28] But those slides don't actually mention cost. So how does, you know, if the factors and evaluation measures don't, where does cost come in when they do the project? Mr. Chairman, it comes in at the end. So you factor in all these factors and measures.

[01:06:43] So they've done everything. And based on ours, let's say our project, and everything is between a zero to a hundred at the end of the day. Every project is scored between zero and 100. And our project could get a, and you'll rarely see something at the higher echelon.

[01:06:59] you see your highest projects are usually the 20 to 30 category because of the way they score projects. But you factor in all of these measures and then factors, and a project gets a score of 15.5. I'm just making that up. And then it's a cost benefit. So they do the 15.5, they divide it by the cost, and you see your smart skill score kind of go. So I think the concern, and

[01:07:29] And no matter how high your numerator is, if your numerator goes zero to 100, but your denominator goes zero to whatever, no matter how high your numerator is, your denominator is going to be a problem.

[01:07:45] So it seems like that might be something to ask. Yes, as you said in 11, project costs should be normalized to be more comparable statewide under legislative fixes. Okay, with that, Mr. Chairman? Yeah, I mean, I think that is obviously the biggest elephant in the room, the normalizing the costs.

[01:08:04] And this is something we've been talking about for a lot of years, really since the advent of SmartScale. And I think what's happened is it's caught up to us to what we were saying at the very beginning when this was put out, is that projects are always going to cost more just simply in areas that have higher land acquisition, among other things.

[01:08:25] Higher labor costs, cost of living is higher. And so, you know, we in Northern Virginia have been saying that for a long time, and that should absolutely be the singular focus of our legislative fix. But let me ask a question operationally about this concept of the MPOs submitting, because obviously, you know, that's not what we have typically been doing.

[01:08:49] And I guess my question is, have we modeled that? I mean, what specifically about that makes that submitter perform better? I think you mentioned it, but I think we need to understand that a little bit better because you can't really both apply for the same project.

[01:09:06] So if it is the MPO that's going to take the lead on a project that's critical to us in Fairfax County, we also then cannot be the applicant. If it's COG, then NBTA can't be the applicant. So have we modeled different scenarios? Is it too early to do that? And what does that show us?

[01:09:23] Mr. Chairman, we have not modeled that. We're kind of looking at anecdotal information. They also, this past year, did change the rules a bit where they were funding the HPP first. And because all of your regional agencies could only apply for HPP, the DGP would come in at the end.

[01:09:41] But because they took all the HPP, there wasn't a lot of DGP to go around. But we can take a look and see what we can do there. And I will say what I remember last time, and again, I don't remember which area it was, but an MPO or a TPO submitted a project that was right-turn lane on X road, and my first thought was, how is a right-turn lane a statewide priority?

[01:10:06] But that's because the MPO, TPO submitted it, and that's what bucket it fell into. But we can definitely see if we can model, see how that would have changed. I'll talk with our team about that. Yeah, I think it would be useful to do, because especially if Hampton Roads is performing well in this area, I think was what was referenced and it's Richmond. Okay. Either one still structurally very different than than our MPOs in Northern Virginia.

[01:10:31] And so I don't know if it helps solve the problem or not. If it does, I think that's a, you know, creative workaround, at least procedurally in the interim while we're trying to achieve what hopefully is a better legislative fix. But I think that is something we should model and look at because clearly, you know, COG and VTA both highly capable to be able to do that might be very helpful to leverage and utilize those regional organizations that, you know, we have a lot of leadership roles in if it's strategically to our advantage.

[01:11:02] So I appreciate staff looking at beyond just the legislative fix. I think the legislative fix is going to be a tall order, obviously, because the aggrieved party is Northern Virginia and Northern Virginia alone, clearly, in these metrics. And so I think that doesn't mean we should shy away from it because I think it's still the elephant in the room, but we do need to be looking operationally at other strategic things we can do to work around because the outcome that we had in this past cycle is a completely unacceptable outcome. And even people in Virginia, outside of Northern Virginia, have even admitted

[01:11:37] that can't be possible. I mean, you have all the needs up there. We should be leading the state in terms of allocation coming back into this. And I know we would be if cost wasn't the factor that we're looking at here so we really need to continue to work on this and I appreciate you Greg your your passion for helping find a solution because it's really critical thank you and and just for the folks watching at home and if you get lost in the acronyms as I do MPO is metropolitan planning organizations um so when you've got a metro area more organizations supervisor Alcorn

[01:12:11] then supervisor Pouchen uh thank you Mr Chairman um just one question well for context on slide nine total allocation to Northern Virginia, \$90 million, and looks like the total is a little over a billion. Thank you. I'm just curious, what percentage of the revenue comes from Northern Virginia? That I do not, Supervisor Elkhorn, I don't have that off the top of my head.

[01:12:42] It's probably a little bigger than 9%. I would argue so, yes. Okay. All right. I think that might be another data point that would be useful when discussing any legislative or other changes. So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Alcorn. I'm just surprised that Chairman McKay didn't make that point. Supervisor Palchek, my apologies. The floor is yours. No, thank you. I think at this point we're so used to saying it, it's kind of implied. Exhausting, too. No, thank you. I mean, it is sort of an overly complicated system in that it allows, I think, things to not feel equitable in the outcomes.

[01:13:22] And so in addition to focusing both on legislative changes, and I'm meeting with one of the vice chairs of the committee soon, see what we can do, especially the whole Northern Virginia area, right? It's not just us. It's not just Rex County. But if all of Northern Virginia is being impacted, but especially those of us whose roads are owned by VDOT. There definitely should be more work on this. So, yeah, but I think in the meantime, looking at potential solutions, I am curious as to how smaller projects would come out because

[01:13:58] while we've used the other strategy for so long, right, I know especially in our more dense areas in the county, there are, I think, a lot of smaller projects, especially in areas that were built in like the 70s 80s 90s with little uh focus on uh pedestrian connections and safety and um so much more on just the cars right and and I think smaller projects might make a big difference uh especially if you know maybe we can find flexibility with more local funds maybe looking at it yeah I think that's that's the strategy right you know when someone says you

[01:14:36] didn't get something for these three or four reasons the first thing i do is figure out okay how do you change those three or four reasons and if the argument is that cost is a problem is there a way to make cost not be a problem the issue though is that what happens on the benefit side we don't know that but the argument is we test it you know um anytime we're working in a strategy or in a space where it feels sort of like a black box and there's a lot of stuff that goes into and you don't really know how things come out the first thing i do is all right i'm

[01:15:13] test a couple things see if this works that didn't work why didn't that work we'll see if this works that didn't work let's try something else and so i i absolutely am on board with the legislative fix but in the interim we're going to try some stuff it just kind of is what it is thank you mr chairman if I may, I will, I did pull up some of their data. And according to what the state put out in the PowerPoint, again, this is theirs, about 10% of the funding was recommended to go to bicycle and pedestrian projects, which was about 10%. So both in the application submitted, about 10% of

[01:15:49] the application submitted were bike ped and about 10% were funded. So that's just anecdotal for as far as project size. About 88% of highway projects, about 88% of the projects submitted were highway, but about 87% of the recommended funding was there. So as far as those two anyways, it was similar to application two approval. Thank you. No, and then the only other thing I would point out is definitely a big comparison with the other ones in our area and our Hampton Roads and understand in that category. And then again, it's a smaller piece of the pie,

[01:16:26] But I know for the 66 commuter choice, sometimes there's more flexibility than we realize. I don't know if your staff has been able to connect with the staff there again. But I think in some of the projects, though it may not seem like it's eligible, it is eligible, especially with the whole Silver Line and improving access to that.

[01:16:47] So I think maybe just, again, pushing, and we'll continue to do that. And I know supporting any statewide who will support fixing some of these changes, but also looking at within the different pockets we have, there might be more flexibility than we've tried to tap into in the past.

[01:17:06] But thank you for your work. And we'll continue on the proffer side as well. Thank you, Supervisor Palachuk. I'm not seeing any other hands, which is wonderful because we're a couple minutes going to end early.

[01:17:24] But thank you, and I'll just end by saying I really like, Greg, that you're talking about creativity, trying to test things, that you're passionate about this. We have to do better next time. We're going to do better next time. And I appreciate the work that both you and Noel have done today to very much inform us and the public.

[01:17:45] Thank you. With that, we are adjourned.



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