

## Memorandum

**To:** MPO Committee Members  
**From:** Sandy Shackelford, Director of Planning & Transportation  
**Date:** March 5, 2021  
**Reference:** Smart Scale Round 5 Public Engagement Process Update

### Purpose:

The MPO has been working to develop a new process to improve public engagement opportunities in its development of Smart Scale project applications. The framework that the MPO has established is to select up to two projects of regional interest that would benefit from additional public engagement and facilitate a process to refine the projects and prepare applications for Round 5 Smart Scale submissions.

### Background:

Smart Scale is Virginia's process to select transportation projects for funding. Eligible entities are able to submit applications every two years. For a project to be eligible for Smart Scale funding, it must meet a need identified in VTrans, Virginia's statewide mid- and long-range transportation plan. MPOs are eligible to submit projects that meet an identified need along the Corridors of Statewide Significance (US 29, I-64) or for the Regional Network, as established in VTrans. CA-MPO will have the opportunity to submit a total of four Smart Scale applications in the upcoming round.

Pre-applications for Round 5 of Smart Scale will need to be submitted in May of 2022. To be able to complete the public engagement prior to the pre-application submittal deadline, CA-MPO staff is proposing the following schedule to identify prioritized projects:

<b>March 2021</b>	Initial discussions about potential projects with MPO Committees.
<b>April 2021 – May 2021</b>	Receive requests for projects to be considered as Smart Scale applications from localities, CTAC, MPO Tech, and Regional Transit Partnership.
<b>May 2021</b>	Finalized list of projects requested for consideration from MPO committees and local governments will be presented to the MPO committees for initial review.
<b>July 2021</b>	CTAC and MPO Tech will make recommendations for up to two projects that should be selected for additional public engagement; the MPO Policy Board will select up to two projects that will move forward with additional public engagement.
<b>September 2021</b>	The Policy Board will appoint an advisory committee for each project that is selected as needing additional public engagement.

<b>October 2021 – April 2022</b>	MPO staff will facilitate public engagement process for selected projects.
<b>February/March 2022</b>	MPO staff will facilitate public workshops for all potential Smart Scale projects within the MPO region, coordinating with Charlottesville and Albemarle County.
<b>April 2022</b>	MPO staff will finalize project details with advisory committees based on additional public feedback received through the public workshops.
<b>May 2022</b>	Pre-application deadline.
<b>June – July 2022</b>	MPO staff will work with Charlottesville and Albemarle staff to coordinate requests for resolutions of support, economic development data, and any other supporting documentation needed for application submittals. MPO staff will coordinate with VDOT for any technical documentation that is needed for application submissions.
<b>August 2022</b>	Full application deadline.

MPO staff has worked with Albemarle County, Charlottesville City, and VDOT staff to develop an initial list of suggested projects for consideration based on previous studies and plans that have been completed that they consider to be beneficial to both localities (see attached table). Staff believes that working towards implementing projects that have already been identified in previous planning efforts is the most effective use of resources. It also helps to build on existing technical work that has already been completed, providing better assurance that successful applications will be generated from this process.

MPO staff is coordinating with Charlottesville and Albemarle staff to present the potential project options to the governing bodies to either determine priorities within the presented list or to add other projects for consideration by the MPO committees and Policy Board. A full list of requested eligible projects will be prepared prior to the MPO meetings in May where staff will facilitate a more detailed discussion of project options.

At their meetings in July, CTAC and MPO Tech will be asked to make recommendations on up to four projects they would like to see move forward as Smart Scale submissions. They will also be asked to identify which two of those projects they anticipate would require additional engagement to develop into applications. The MPO Policy Board will make a final decision on the project selections at their meeting in July.

**Recommendation:**

Staff is requesting that MPO committee and Policy Board members review the prepared list of potential projects. No formal action is requested at this time.

If there are any questions or comments, please contact Sandy Shackelford at [sshackelford@tjpd.org](mailto:sshackelford@tjpd.org).

Potential Project	Completed Study	Plans	Notes:
Hillsdale Extension/250 Ramp Relocation	Yes	LRTP (Constrained)	Was #21 out of the 20 projects that got funded in Round 4 of Smart Scale. Engineering work completed, application already on file. On the constrained Roadway Project List in the LRTP. This project is too costly for the District Grant Program and the benefit score may not be sufficient to compete for High Priority funding. Localities may want to be considered participating in this project to reduce the cost.
Rivanna River Bike and Pedestrian Crossing	Yes	LRTP, Jefferson Area Bike and Pedestrian Plan	VDOT Feasibility Study completed. Significant public engagement has already occurred.
District Avenue Roundabout	Yes	LRTP (Constrained)	Construct a roundabout at the intersection of Hydraulic Road and District Avenue. On the constrained Roadway Project List in the LRTP. Was part of the Hydraulic 29 application package in Smart Scale Round 3. This Intersection is not an identified "Potential for Safety Intersection" (PSI), however it is part of a corridor that is a PSI segment and is ranked # 8 in the District. In addition, it will complement the improvements at the Rte. 29 - Hydraulic Rd intersection.
Avon Street Multi-Modal Improvements	Yes	LRTP (Vision), Jefferson Area Bike and Pedestrian Plan, Charlottesville Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan	Study completed by Line + Grade for Albemarle County in March of 2020. Has been identified in VTrans as a low priority Transportation Demand Management need and a medium transit access need.
5th Street Multi-Modal Improvements	Yes	LRTP (Vision), Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Jefferson Area Bike and Pedestrian Plan	VDOT completed the 5th Street Corridor Study in January of 2021, recommending a number of multi-modal improvements. The section from Harris Rd. down to I-64 is identified as a safety need (Ranked #16 and 171) and a VTRANS Tier 2 need.
Sunset/Fontaine Connector	Yes, but outdated	LRTP (Vision)	While this is an important regional connection that has been discussed for many years, there is not a proposal that could easily become a project and there is not likely to be planning and research funding available through VDOT to provide the technical analysis needed to develop this project into a full Smart Scale application.