

Memorandum

To: MPO Technical Committee
From: Sandy Shackelford, Director of Planning & Transportation
Date: August 15, 2023
Reference: Charlottesville-Albemarle FY24-27 TIP Update for VPRA

Purpose:

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) is requesting the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO to add Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for Virginia State-Supported Amtrak Operations to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program.

Background:

The Commonwealth has programmed \$111 million of CMAQ funds to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority to be used on the four state-supported Amtrak routes. FHWA has confirmed that CMAQ funding can be used for the new Amtrak state-supported service in the Commonwealth, to be applied to gross operational and capital equipment expenses. This includes operating expenses for service that began in July 2022 for three trains on the Norfolk route (Route 50) and two trains on the Roanoke route (Route 46). The Virginia State-Supported Amtrak Operations project also includes planned new service in FY26 for two trains on the Newport News route (Route 47) and one train on the Richmond route (Route 51). Because the routes cross through multiple MPOs, the cost included for Policy Board's adoption is only for the portion of the routes and train costs estimated within their jurisdiction. The Roanoke route run through the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO area.

FHWA has confirmed that the CMAQ-funded Amtrak projects are exempt from air quality conformity requirements as the funding is going towards "operating assistance," specifically listed as exempt in Table 2 of Environmental Protection Agency's Transportation conformity rule.

The CMAQ funding must be captured in the TIPs of all MPOs within the four state-supported routes before it can be administered to VPRA.

NEW TABLE

UPC NO	20299/25137	SCOPE	Operational expenses related to two trains.				
SYSTEM	Primary	JURISDICTION	Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO	OVERSIGHT	NFO		
PROJECT	Virginia State-Supported Amtrak Operations			ADMIN BY	VPRA		
DESCRIPTION	Operating expenses for two trains on the Roanoke route (Route 46). The cost included is only for a portion of the route and a portion of the train costs estimated for the jurisdiction.						
PROGRAM NOTE	TIP AMD - FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Virginia State-Support Amtrak Operations						
ROUTE/STREET	Roanoke Operations (Route 46)			TOTAL COST	\$22,170,853*		
	FUNDING SOURCE	Previous Funding	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	Total FY24-27
PE	Federal CMAQ	\$0	\$1,701,699	\$1,771,225	\$1,904,175	\$1,982,655	\$7,359,754
PE	State CMAQ	\$0	\$425,425	\$442,806	\$476,044	\$495,664	\$1,839,938
PE	VPRA	\$3,771,469	\$2,127,123	\$2,214,031	\$2,380,219	\$2,478,318	\$9,199,692
MPO Notes	<p>FHWA considers the CMAQ-funded Amtrak projects to be exempt from air quality conformity requirements as the funding is going towards “operating assistance,” which is specifically listed as being exempt in Table 2 of EPA’s Transportation conformity rule.</p> <p>* Total cost includes operating expenses from previous funding and estimated expenses through FY27 as these are operating expenses without an end date.</p>						

Recommendation:

That the Technical Committee makes a recommendation to the Policy Board to approve the proposed amendment to the CA-MPO FY24-27 Transportation Improvement Program.

If there are any questions or comments, please contact Sandy Shackelford at sshackelford@tjpd.org.