



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

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Agenda item # 10

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

MOTION

Made By: Ms. Sellers, **Seconded By:** Ms. Hynes

Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously

Title: Policy for the Implementation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program

WHEREAS, Section §33.2-1526.3 of the *Code of Virginia* was passed by the Virginia General Assembly in the 2020 legislative session to establish the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) as part of the Omnibus Transportation Bill; and

WHEREAS, TRIP was created to promote improved regional transit service in urbanized areas of the Commonwealth (with an urban population in excess of 100,000) and to reduce barriers to transit use for low-income individuals; and

WHEREAS, HB 2338/ SB 1326 was passed in the 2023 General Assembly to expand funding eligibility to include two additional project types: improvements to the accessibility of transit bus passenger facilities and efforts to improve crime prevention and public safety for transit passengers, operators, and employees; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has developed guidelines for the additional eligible project types and recommended improvements to the existing policy; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (Board) hereby adopts the following policy to govern the structure and prioritization of projects for TRIP Regional Connectivity funding pursuant to §33.2-1526.3 of the *Code of Virginia*:

1. For the purposes of review and prioritization, TRIP Regional Connectivity projects will be classified into the following four eligible project types: i) the improvement and expansion of routes with regional significance; ii) the implementation of integrated fare collection; iii) the development and implementation of regional subsidy allocation models; and iv) the establishment of bus-only lanes on routes of regional significance.

2. The following entities are eligible for TRIP Regional Connectivity funding: i) public transit providers that serve a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) exceeding a population of 100,000 and receive state operating assistance pursuant to 33.2-1526.1 D 1 or; ii) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and other statewide or regional bodies that serve a MSA exceeding a population of 100,000.
3. The Commonwealth recognizes the need for both state and local funding commitments to establish transit services. Therefore, TRIP regional connectivity funding can be applied to a project for a *maximum of five years* with the state share decreasing over time. Projects may be eligible for funding beyond the initial five-year commitment based on performance and availability of funding.
4. Candidate TRIP projects should be supported by planning, either at the regional or corridor level, that documents the regional travel demand and establishes an operational approach to serve regional travel needs, including congestion mitigation.
5. Per subdivision C of §33.2-1526.3 of the *Code of Virginia*, TRIP Regional Connectivity funds will be distributed based on a five-year rolling average, ensuring that each region receives their proportionate share over the five-year period.
6. Agencies awarded TRIP Regional Connectivity funding will report quarterly on project progress toward attaining established project goals and performance metrics.
7. A project that has been selected for TRIP funding must be rescored and the funding decision reevaluated if there are significant changes to either the scope or cost of the project.
8. Projects that are interregional or have statewide significance may be eligible for TRIP funding if they demonstrate fulfillment of unmet regional, interregional, or statewide travel needs as determined by the DRPT Director.
9. Selected projects may be eligible for continuation upon expiration of the initial pilot. Decisions to extend funding will be based on availability of funding and project performance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commonwealth Transportation Board hereby adopts the following policy to govern the structure, scoring, and prioritization of projects for TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare funding pursuant to §33.2-1526.3 of the *Code of Virginia*.

1. For the purposes of review and prioritization, TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare projects will be classified into the following four eligible types: i) the provision of subsidized or fully free passes to low-income populations; ii) the elimination of fares on high-capacity corridors, establishing 'zero fare zones' (net fares, less the cost of fare collection); iii) the deployment of an entirely zero fare system (net fare, less the cost of fare collection); and iv) fare policy planning.

2. The following entities are eligible for TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare funding: i) public transit providers who receive state operating assistance pursuant to 33.2-1526.1 D 1 or; ii) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and other statewide or regional bodies.
3. Applications focused on the provision of zero fare corridors, or zero fare systems should be submitted by the organization providing the service.
4. The Commonwealth recognizes the need for both state and local funding commitments to establish transit services. Therefore, TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare funding can be applied to a project for *a maximum of three years*. For multi-year projects, the state's contribution would decrease, and the local share would increase over the funding period.
5. Successfully enacting system-wide zero fare operations rely on a strong financial commitment from the service provider and its community. To ensure the success of these projects, all system-wide zero fare applicants must commit to an additional year of operation beyond the project agreement with DRPT where the funding recipient provides one hundred percent (100%) of project expenses.
6. Projects prioritized for funding should be supported by planning, either at the regional or corridor level that documents an evaluation of fare policies and establishes an approach to meet community needs through the implementation of new fare policies.
7. In order to appropriately measure the performance of selected projects and to ensure proper reporting, funding recipients will report quarterly on project progress to DRPT.
8. A project that has been selected for TRIP funding must be rescored and the funding decision reevaluated if there are significant changes to either the scope or cost of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commonwealth Transportation Board hereby adopts the following policy to govern the structure, scoring, and prioritization of projects for TRIP Passenger Amenities and Facilities funding pursuant to §33.2-1526.3 of the Code of Virginia.

1. For the purpose of review and prioritization, TRIP Passenger Amenities and Facilities projects will be classified into the following four eligible project types: i) improvements to existing bus stops; ii) addition of new bus stops; iii) improvements to other passenger facilities; and iv) bus stop or passenger facility planning.
2. The following entities are eligible for TRIP Passenger Amenities and Facilities funding: i) public transit providers that receive state operating assistance pursuant to 33.2-1526.1 D 1 or; ii) local governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and other statewide or regional bodies.

3. Projects prioritized for funding should be supported by planning, either at the regional or corridor level that documents an evaluation of passenger amenities and establishes an approach to improve the transit experience through the implementation of facility and amenity improvements.
4. In order to appropriately gauge the progress of these projects and to ensure proper reporting, funding recipients will report quarterly on project progress to DRPT.
5. A project that has been selected for TRIP funding must be rescored and the funding decision reevaluated if there are significant changes to either the scope, timeline or the cost of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commonwealth Transportation Board hereby adopts the following policy to govern the structure, scoring, and prioritization of projects for TRIP Crime Prevention and Public Safety funding pursuant to §33.2-1526.3 of the Code of Virginia.

1. For the purpose of review and prioritization, TRIP Crime Prevention and Public Safety projects will be classified into the following three eligible project types: i) public safety equipment; ii) public safety planning; and iii) public safety programming and training.
2. The following entities are eligible for TRIP Crime Prevention and Public Safety funding: i) public transit providers whom receive state operating assistance pursuant to 33.2-1526.1 D 1 or; ii) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and other statewide or regional bodies.
3. In order to appropriately gauge the progress of these projects and to ensure proper reporting, funding recipients will report quarterly on project progress to DRPT.
4. A project that has been selected for TRIP funding must be rescored and the funding decision reevaluated if there are significant changes to either the scope or the cost of the project.

WHEREAS, the table below depicts how the four eligible TRIP project categories; Regional Connectivity, Zero and Reduced Fare, Crime Prevention and Public Safety, and Passenger Amenities and Facilities will be evaluated.

1. Applications will be evaluated using a methodological approach that considers four key criteria that correspond to the previously defined TRIP goals. The criteria are divided into two overall categories: service-related criteria and non-service-related criteria.
2. For service-related criteria, the level of impact (high, medium, low and no impact) is determined based on each project type's predetermined ability to address the defined TRIP goals. The maximum score for this category is 30, 10 points for each criterion; impact on

ridership, impact on accessibility, and impact on customer experience. For these 3 criteria, projects will automatically receive the noted ‘impact level’ in the above table. The points associated with the ‘impact level’ can be found below:

Impact Level (Service-Related Criteria)	Default Score
High Impact	10 Points
Medium Impact	7 Points
Low Impact	3 Points
No Impact	No Points

3. For non-service-related criteria, applications will be evaluated through a review of supporting documentation, as well as an assessment of the quality and the completeness of the application submitted. The maximum score for this category is 10. Projects will receive points in this category based on the presence, and the quality, of the following components:
 - Strong, demonstrated local commitment
 - Appropriate level of planning
 - Quality of supporting documentation
 - Implementation timeline
 - Projected outcome of project
4. Funding decisions will be based on total score from both categories. Recommendations will be made within each project type, relative to the applications received in the given cycle. All funding recommendations will be made in accordance with the funding constraints provided in §33.2-1526.3 of the Code of Virginia.

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		Service Related Criteria				Non-Service Related Criteria	
TRIP Project Category	Eligible Project Type	Impact on Ridership	Impact on Accessibility	Impact on Customer Experience	Total Service Related Points	Project Readiness and Scope	Total Potential Points (max)
Regional Connectivity	New regional route	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	30	0 – 10 points	40
	Improvements to existing regional route	High Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	27	0 – 10 points	37
	Integrated Fare Collection	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	20	0 – 10 points	30
	Financing Subsidy Model	Low Impact	No Impact	Medium Impact	10	0 – 10 points	20
Zero and Reduced Fare	Systemwide Zero Fare Project	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	30	0 – 10 points	40
	Development or Improvement of Zero Fare Zone	Medium Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	24	0 – 10 points	34
	Zero Fare Passes	Medium Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	20	0 – 10 points	30
	Reduced Fare Passes	Medium Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	20	0 – 10 points	30
	Fare Evaluation and Transition Planning	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	17	0 – 10 points	27
Crime Prevention and Public Safety	Safety Equipment	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	24	0 – 10 points	34
	Safety Programming and Training	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	20	0 – 10 points	30
	Safety Planning	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	13	0 – 10 points	23
Passenger Amenities and Facilities	Improvements to existing bus stops	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	27	0 – 10 points	37
	Improvements to other passenger facilities	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	27	0 – 10 points	37
	Addition of new bus stops	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	21	0 – 10 points	31
	Passenger Facility Planning	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	13	0 - 10 points	23

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the methodology may continue to evolve and improve based upon advances in technology, data collection, and reporting tools, and to the extent that any such improvements modify or affect the policy set forth herein they shall be brought to the Board for review and approval in addition to the five-year requirement for the Board to review the guidelines.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board hereby directs the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to take all actions necessary to implement and administer this policy, including, but not limited to preparation of program guidance and outreach consistent with this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board hereby directs the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to analyze the outcomes of this process on an annual basis and to revisit the process at least every five years, in consultation with transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and local governments prior to making recommendations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all versions of the Policy for the Implementation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program approved by the Board prior to this action are superseded by this revised policy and are hereby rescinded.

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CTB Decision Brief
Policy for the Implementation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program

Issue: HB 1414 was passed during the 2020 General Assembly Session. This legislation provided dedicated funding to the creation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program. Originally, this program funded two project types: regional connectivity and zero and reduced fare. HB 2338/ SB 1326 was passed in the 2023 General Assembly Session. This bill dedicated TRIP funding to two additional project types: improvements to bus amenities and passenger facilities and efforts to increase crime prevention and public safety. This policy provides the framework for the implementation of the additional project types, including eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria. Further, this policy proposes improvements to the existing TRIP policy to strengthen project evaluation and improve program administration.

Facts: Section 33.2-1526.1 *of the Code of Virginia* establishes that six percent of the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund must be allocated to the Transit Ridership Incentive Program. Section 33.2-1526.3 of the Code stipulates that the Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall develop guidelines for the program, pursuant to the regulations provided in the legislation and subject to the approval of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Section 33.2-1526.3 also establishes that a maximum of 30% of TRIP funding can go towards improving the accessibility of transit bus passenger facilities and efforts to improve crime prevention and public safety for transit passengers, operators, and employees.

The CTB was briefed on this effort and the policy was made available for public comment for 30 days. DRPT received no public comments.

Recommendation: DRPT recommends that the CTB approve the Policy for the Implementation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP)

Action Required by CTB: Approve the Policy for the Implementation of the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP).

Options: Approve, Deny, or Defer