

ITEM 8 – Action
January 22, 2025

**FY 2025 and FY 2026 Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program
for the District of Columbia**

Action: Adopt Resolution R6-2025 to approve projects for funding under the Federal Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program for the District of Columbia for FY 2025 and FY 2026.

Background: A portion of the federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) is sub-allocated to the TPB for project selection in the District of Columbia. The board will be briefed on the recommended projects and asked to approve them.

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM (TAP)
FUNDING UNDER THE SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FOR FY 2025-2026**

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorized November 15, 2021 when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the FAST Act's Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) Program, which is part of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), provides a portion of funding based on the relative share of the total State population sub-allocated to large urbanized areas, and the MPO is required "to develop a competitive process to allow eligible entities to submit projects for funding ... in consultation with the relevant State"; and

WHEREAS, the TA Set-Aside Program provides funding for transportation programs and projects defined as eligible per Section 1109 of the FAST Act; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) are responsible for determining the total federal funding amount allocated to the TPB, determining project eligibility, project implementation, and project oversight; and

WHEREAS, the TA Set-Aside Program provides an opportunity to fund projects that implement regional policies reflected in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, in the Equity Emphasis Areas, and related to the seven initiatives endorsed by the TPB in December 2017 and January 2018, which include promoting Regional Activity Centers, improving pedestrian and bicycle access to transit, and completing the National Capital Trail Network; and

WHEREAS, a solicitation for TA Set-Aside applications for FY 2025 and FY 2026 was conducted by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) between September 16 and November 22, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the TPB's TA Set-Aside Selection Panel for D.C. met on January 8 2025, and recommended projects for funding based on project readiness and eligibility and alignment with regional selection criteria; and

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2025, the TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the recommended projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board approves the projects for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for FY 2025-2026 in the District of Columbia, as described in the attached materials and as listed below:

• Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation	\$2,139,574
• Repaving the Anacostia Trail East Bank (Design) (funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)	\$58,443
• Green Infrastructure Pilot Project Part 2 (Construction) (funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)	\$90,183
• Joyce Road and Beach Drive (Design) (funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)	\$663,000
Total	\$2,951,200



National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Project recommended for funding in FY 2025-2026 in the District of Columbia under the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP)
DATE: January 16, 2025

SUMMARY

Under the federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP), the TPB is responsible for selecting projects using sub-allocated funding for the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia.

For FY 2025 and FY 2026 in the District of Columbia, a total of \$2,951,200 was made available for TPB project selection. The TPB's selection panel has recommended funding for the projects listed below. The TPB will be asked to approve these recommendations at its meeting on January 22, 2025.

DC TAP Panel Recommendations - FY 2025-2026	
Project	Panel Funding Recommendations
Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation	\$2,139,574
Repaving the Anacostia Trail East Bank (Design) <i>(funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)</i>	\$58,443
Green Infrastructure Pilot Project Part 2 (Construction) <i>(funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)</i>	90,183
Joyce Road and Beach Drive (Design) <i>(funding to be added to FY 2023-24 grant award)</i>	663,000
Total	\$2,951,200

BACKGROUND

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) was established by federal law to fund a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails, safe routes to school (SRTS), community improvements, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. MAP 21, the surface transportation legislation enacted in 2012, established the program as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The FAST Act of 2015 renamed the program the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)/Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted in 2021, reaffirmed the federal commitment to the

program and increased funding for it. Information on the TA Set-Aside is available from FHWA at: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/.

The program provides sub-allocated funding for large metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like the TPB (those MPOs classified as "Transportation Management Areas") to fund local projects. In addition to these sub-allocated funds, a portion of the TA Set-Aside funding is reserved for statewide project selection, which is conducted by the state departments of transportation.

For the National Capital Region, the program offers an opportunity to support and enhance regional planning activities. At the direction of the TPB, our region's TAP is framed as a complementary component of the TPB's Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program, which provides technical assistance funding for small planning studies to TPB member jurisdictions.

TAP offers the region the ability to fund projects that support regional priorities and goals based on Visualize 2045 and the TPB's other policy documents. Applicants from the National Capital Region are asked to show how their projects will serve these priorities when they seek TAP funds. The priorities also provide the basis for the selection criteria that the TPB's selection panel uses when it reviews TAP applications and recommends projects for funding.

Since the establishment of this program in 2012, the TPB has combined its solicitations with the state departments of transportation in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. As part of this process, TPB staff work with the DOTs to conduct the selection processes.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FY 2025-2026 SOLICITATION

Since 2022, the District of Columbia has solicited applications for TAP on a two-year cycle. The round currently under consideration is for FY 2025 and FY 2026. The solicitation period opened in mid-September and closed on November 22, 2024.

DDOT only received one eligible application this round, which is for the Capital Crescent Trail Rehabilitation. This application was forwarded to the TPB's selection panel for review on December 20.

DDOT has also requested that the TPB designate a portion of its suballocation to provide supplemental funding for three projects that the TPB funded through TAP in FY 2023-2024. This additional funding would ensure completion of these projects:

- Repaving the Anacostia Trail East Bank (Design), \$58,443
- Green Infrastructure Pilot Project Part 2 (Construction), \$90,183
- Joyce Road and Beach Drive (Design), \$ 663,000

PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

Consistent with past practice, the TPB convened a selection panel to determine funding recommendations for the District's TAP funds. TPB staff invited representatives from state DOTs in our region, along with representatives from COG/TPB staff, to participate on this panel.

This year's selection panel participants included:

- David Schlie, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Michael Farrell, COG/TPB Staff
- Brittany Voll, Virginia Department of Transportation
- Janie Nham, COG/TPB Staff

DDOT staff members Yvonne Jones, Kelsey Bridges, and Carolos Pazmino participated in the panel meetings and served as a technical resource for the discussion.

Prior to the panel meetings, individual panelists reviewed and scored applications for a maximum of 160 points. The total score for each project combined each reviewer's professional assessment (80 points) and regional selection criteria (80 points). The professional assessment is based on each panel member's transportation planning expertise, knowledge of transportation planning in the region, evaluation of the project budget, and project management experience. The regional criteria are rooted in TPB policies and programs, with the understanding that some projects would not meet all criteria.

The regional selection criteria are listed below:

- Improve roadway safety (Max 10 points)
- Expand transportation options (Max 10 points)
- Support for Regional Activity Centers (Max 10 points)
- Access to high-capacity transit and, in particular, in Transit Access Focus Areas (TAFAs) (Max 10 points)
- Access for low-income communities and people of color (Max 10 points)
- Support the National Capital Trail Network (Max 10 pts)
- Safe access to schools (10 points)
- Increased access for people with disabilities (10 points):

The selection panel met on January 8. To provide a basis for discussion, each panel member provided their scores and comments in advance of the first meeting.

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

As requested by DDOT (and as noted above), the panel is recommending adding funding for three projects that were approved by the TPB two years ago but have since been found to be underfunded. These additional awards will ensure the completion of those projects. The total for this additional funding is \$811,626. The panel is recommending that the remainder of the TPB's suballocation, \$2,139,574, be awarded to the one new application received this year, which is the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) Rehabilitation project.

Project Descriptions:

- **Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) Rehabilitation Phase II (Construction), \$2,139,574**

The Capital Crescent Trail is one of the most heavily used trails in the nation, attracting a wide range of visitors from across the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia region. The trail has not undergone any significant repairs or construction since it was first built in 1994. Since that time, the trail has deteriorated. The National Park Service (NPS) is now looking to rehabilitate the 3.7-mile DC portion of the trail that begins in Georgetown and extends to the Montgomery County border. The rehabilitation will ensure that the structural integrity of key access points, enhance user safety, increase environmental sustainability, and encourage future use.

The project will include a 10-foot wide asphalt resurfacing throughout the 3.7 mile region, replace and upgrade wayfinding signage at key entry points, rehabilitate Arizona Avenue Bridge, reconstruct timber retaining walls and railings, re-establish gravel shoulders and drainage channels, and the improve pedestrian connection at the Norton Street crosswalk.

Through this grant, the NPS has committed to constructing the first two schedules (segments) of the project, out of a total of four segments, as described below:

- Schedule A: Rehabilitating the trail from Mile post 0.0 in Georgetown to Mile post 2.16 by Fletcher's Cove. This will cover the milling and repaving of the trail surface, installing or replacing twelve signs, repairing or replacing two benches, repair and replacement of timber guardrails, and any related temporary traffic control.
- Schedule B: Repair of the Arizona Ave. Bridge trail surface, repair and reconstruction of the bridge approach retaining walls and stairs to C&O Towpath, and the removal and replacement of chain link fence.

The total for these two segments will be \$3,430,000. The TPB, through its FY 2025-2026 TAP suballocation, will contribute \$2,139,574 to the construction of these two segments. The remainder of the cost, \$1,290,426, will be provided by the NPS. This additional funding from the applicant represents 38% of the project cost, which far exceeds the required match

The project is very supportive of TPB policies. The Capital Crescent Trail is a key facility in the TPB's 1400-mile National Capital Trail Network (NCTN) and this project is a vital link connecting the CCT to the C&O Canal Trail.

The project also builds upon previous TPB awards. In 2021, the TPB awarded TAP funding for design, planning, and environmental compliance for this rehabilitation project which is now moving into construction. The project also complements past TAP awards, through the TPB, for the Capital Crescent and C&O Trailhead Improvements" (FY 2019 and FY 2021), as well as the TLC project "K Street/Water Street Bikeway and Pedestrian Connectivity Enhancements" (FY 2016).

- **Repaving the Anacostia Trail East Bank (Design), \$58,443**
(funding to be added to FY 2024 grant award)

DDOT is requesting additional TAP funds to complete 100% design for a project to rebuild 3.5 miles of the Anacostia River Trail. Located east of the river, the trail is a key link in the National Capital Trail Network that provides transportation and recreation opportunities to historically underserved communities in Equity Emphasis Areas. With the completion of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge, the trail is now linked to a connection over the Anacostia River. The requested TAP funding will improve ramps to the trail and bring them into ADA compliance.

- **Green Infrastructure Pilot Project Part 2 (Construction), \$90,183**
(funding to be added to FY 2024 grant award)

DDOT is seeking additional TAP funding to install green infrastructure facilities that are meant to replicate natural hydrological processes in places with large impervious surface areas. This proposed pilot project will evaluate standards for design complexity, construction costs and performance by designing and installing five facilities in public right of way with new standards identified from the research in 2022 to evaluate the performance and whether these standards should be adopted into DDOT's Green Infrastructure standards. The project will implement the design of GI facilities utilizing initial pilot best practices in assorted scenarios within the public right of way. The selected locations are from current DDOT retrofit projects. (Lee Street NE & 49th Place, Lee Street NE & 49th Place, Lee Street NE & 49th Place NE, Lee Street NE & 49th Place NE, Douglas Street & 17th Street NE) .

- **Joyce Road and Beach Drive (Design), \$ 663,000**
(funding to be added to FY 2024 grant award)

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking additional funding to complete 100% designs for two multi-use trails at Rock Creek Park: (1) 0.25 miles of new construction along Joyce Road from Beach Drive to 17th Street, a key segment of the broader proposed Military Road Trail, and (2) rehabilitation of 0.75 miles of the existing trail along Beach Drive from Joyce Road to Bingham Drive. The project builds upon the Rock Creek Park Military Road Feasibility Study, which was funded by the TPB through the TA Set-Aside Program in FY 2019. Military Road, the primary east-west connector through Rock Creek Park, is currently inhospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists. Both segments of the project are segments of the National Capital Trail Network. In addition, the project will connect Equity Emphasis Areas to the east of Rock Creek Park.

NEXT STEPS

The TPB will be asked to approve the selection panel's recommendations at the board meeting on January 22, 2025. Following the board's action, TPB staff will forward information regarding the approved projects to DDOT. DDOT will be responsible for determining which of the approved projects will receive FY 2025 funding and which will receive FY 2026 funding.

For more information about the projects, please contact Yvonne Jones at DDOT at yvonne.jones2@dc.gov. For information about the TPB's role in the TAP selection processes, please contact John Swanson at jswanson@mwccog.org.