



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

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AGENDA DATE: 4/6/2016

TITLE:

Transportation Priorities Information Session

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Transportation Priorities Information Session

ITEM TYPE: Regular Information Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Foley, Walker, Davis, Graham, Benish, Gatobu

PRESENTER (S): David Benish, Gerald Gatobu

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Thomas C. Foley

BACKGROUND:

Staff is presenting information on previous County transportation priorities, transportation funding mechanisms, and prioritization strategies in advance of asking the Board to provide direction on transportation priorities. This is the first month of a planned series of transportation discussions following the schedule below:

- April: Provide overview/refresher and lessons learned from first application cycle under Virginia's new prioritization process. Determine if any projects should be added to or removed from the County Transportation Priorities List for the next cycle.
- May: Review prioritization strategies and review project recommendations for the Secondary Six Year Plan (SSYP).
- June: Hold a public hearing and set priorities on secondary roads.
- July - August: Obtain approval of projects for HB2 application and approval of County Transportation Priorities List

In following this schedule, on April 6, staff will seek Board input on:

- 1) Proposed project additions/removals to the County Transportation Priorities List, and
- 2) County and VDOT staff recommended projects for which to request funding in the upcoming Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) review.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

2.Critical Infrastructure: Prioritize, plan and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs

DISCUSSION:

The focus of today's discussion will be on transportation funding obtained through the Virginia's Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP). This is how Virginia allocates the majority of state transportation funding for *primary* roads. Virginia House Bill 2(HB2) requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop

and use a scoring process for Virginia transportation project funding selection as part of the annual review of the SYIP. While the first year's experience will be discussed as part of the presentation, the prioritization process evaluates projects using the following criteria: 1. Congestion mitigation 2. Economic development 3. Accessibility 4. Safety 5. Environmental quality and 6. Land use coordination.

In April of 2015, the Board approved the attached County Transportation Priorities List (Attachment A) for use with this process. This list is used to prioritize projects for funding requests from various funding sources. The list of priorities was derived from the following sources:

- The Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP);
- The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission's (TJPDC) 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRP), which includes the non-MPO area of Albemarle County;
- The County's Comprehensive Plan, associated Master Plans and other allied transportation documents;
- Other projects and services identified by the public, VDOT, and/or County staff and other public agencies

The HB2 implementation process began in August 2015 and initial project scores were announced in January 2016. The CTB will use this evaluation for funding in its development of the draft Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) to be completed by April 2016. Staff will provide additional information at the April 6 work session, but in summary, staff's assessment of the initial HB2 process is this -- many of the highest scores belonged to projects focused on transit and carpooling (park and ride lots), low cost projects with significant local investment, and projects with high cost/benefit ratios, including roundabouts.

Project funding applications for the second cycle are due in September 2016. The new HB2 process requires a significant amount of staff work for each project requested for funding, including accurate project cost estimates and preliminary/conceptual design. In an effort to get an early start on the HB2 application process for 2016, staff has consulted with VDOT, and identified and evaluated the best candidate projects from the 2015 County Transportation Priorities List and a VDOT Safety Audit that should score well when screened, reviewed, and assessed using the HB2 process. Staff recommends that up to seven (7) County projects be advanced for funding or further study. The seven (7) projects are listed in Attachment B (not listed in any priority order)

Under the new HB2 process, applications for funding of projects in the Metropolitan Planning Organization area (MPO) area can be submitted by either the MPO or the locality, but not by both entities. Some of the projects identified in Attachment B will be submitted by the MPO. Two projects listed in Attachment B need to be added to the 2016 County Transportation Priorities list. The projects are:

2. Barracks Road right turn lane improvement at Route 29/250 Bypass ramp
5. Route 649 (Profit Road) and Route 20 intersection improvements

After the presentation covering the HB2 process, if the Board concurs with the seven recommended primary road projects, staff will proceed with the necessary staff work for the 2016 SYIP submittals under HB2. If the Board desires additional information on the SYIP projects, staff will continue this discussion in May following the SSYP discussion. The focus of the May presentation is on the Secondary Six Year Plan (SSYP).

BUDGET IMPACT: HB2 is a State-funded program, so there are no direct impacts to the County's budget from these project requests. For future years, staff notes the HB2 process may provide better scores for projects where the locality has invested in preliminary engineering and can demonstrate high return on investment projects that are "shovel ready". This can be discussed with the Board during the presentation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board direct staff to begin work on the applications for the seven projects

recommended for submitting in the 2016 SYIP process (Attachment B). If the Board desires additional information on the projects or the HB2 process, staff will provide that information at the May work session scheduled for the SSYP.

ATTACHMENTS:

A - County Transportation Priorities List

B - Candidate Projects List