FY2028
Transit and Special Programs Workshop

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November 17, 2026

Fall Workshops at DRPT

- **November 16th at 10AM: 5310/Human Service Transportation (New Applicants)**
- **November 17th at 10AM: Transit Programs**
- **November 18th at 10AM: Commuter Assistance Programs**
  - Register Here!
- **November 19th at 10AM: 5310/Human Service Transportation (Returning Applicants)**
  - Register Here!



Workshop Agenda

1. FY28 Overview / Look Ahead
2. Grant Application And Management Update
3. MERIT – Capital Assistance Program
4. MERIT – Operating Assistance Program
5. MERIT – Special Programs
6. TRIP
7. Training and Scholarship Programs
8. FTA Section 5303
9. Other Ongoing Initiatives
10. Calendar and Important Dates

Overview and Look Ahead

Major Changes for FY2028

- New Guidelines for MERIT Operating
- New Program Type for MERIT Capital
  - Major SGR
  - Updated vehicle ESL categories
- TRIP
  - Expanded eligibility
  - New Program areas
  - Greater geographic eligibility
- Training and Scholarship Programs



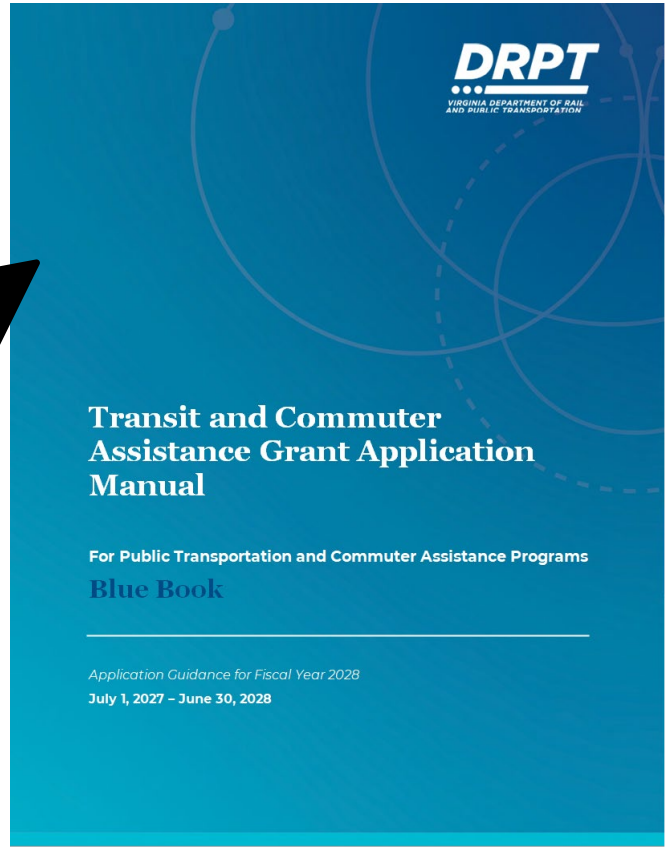
Questions?

- Attendee mics are muted
- Question/Answer breaks will be offered at key points in the webinar.
- There will also be a Q/A session at the end of the presentation.
- To ask questions:
  - Submit questions via the question or chat function
  - Request to unmute by raising your virtual hand
- DRPT will post webinar recording under “Application Resources” on our MERIT webpage at: https://drpt.virginia.gov/ongoing-grant-programs/merit/

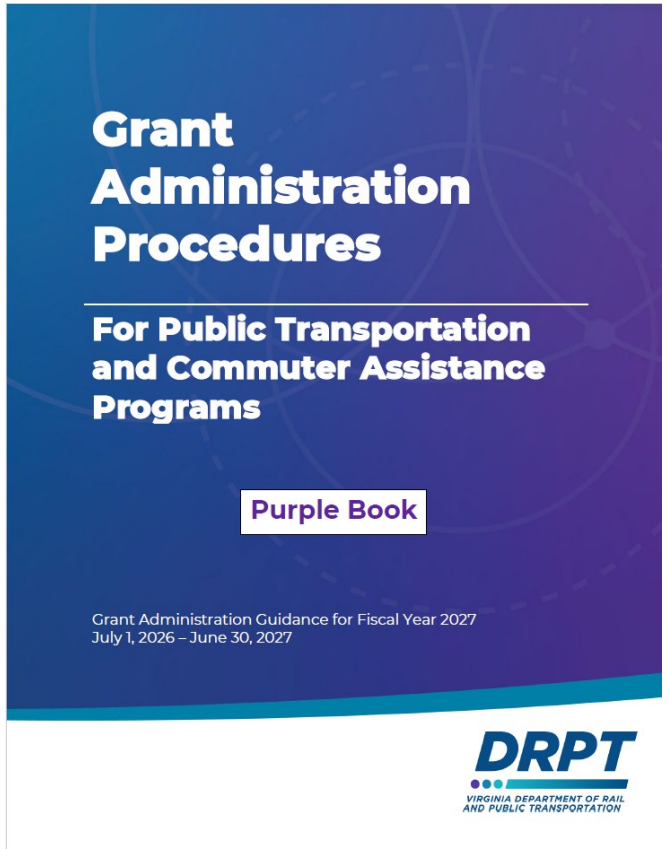


Guidance Documents

Click to access full PDF



FY28 Grant Application Guidance
Published Fall 2026



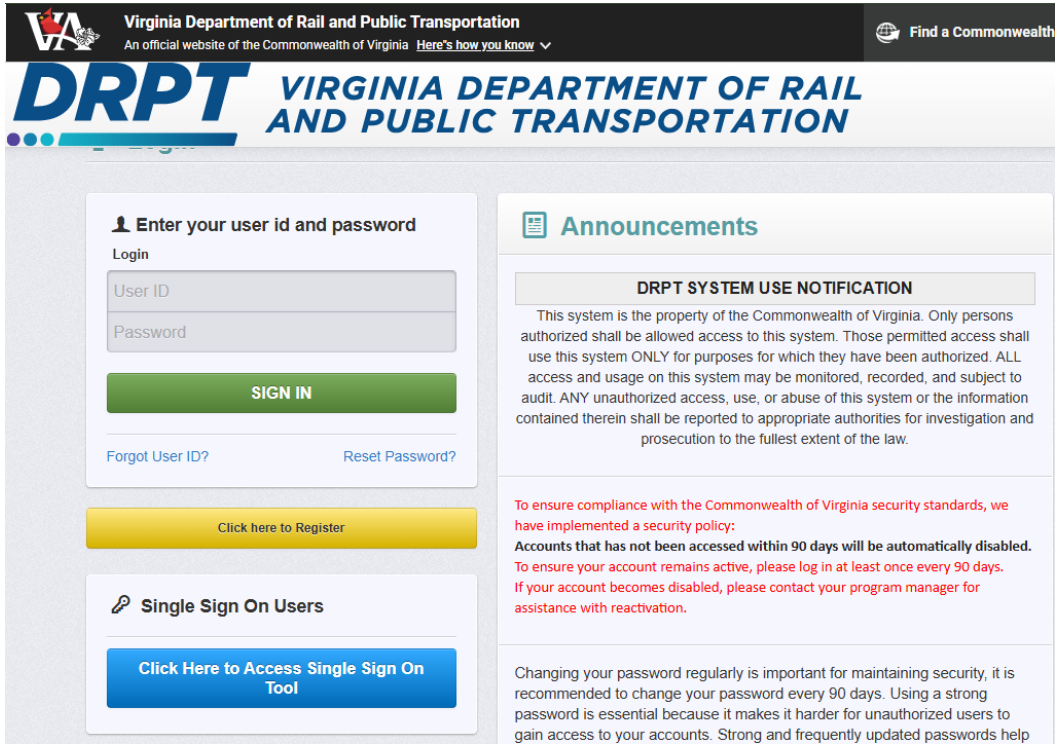
FY27 Grant Administration Guidance
Published Spring 2026

Grant Application & Management Update

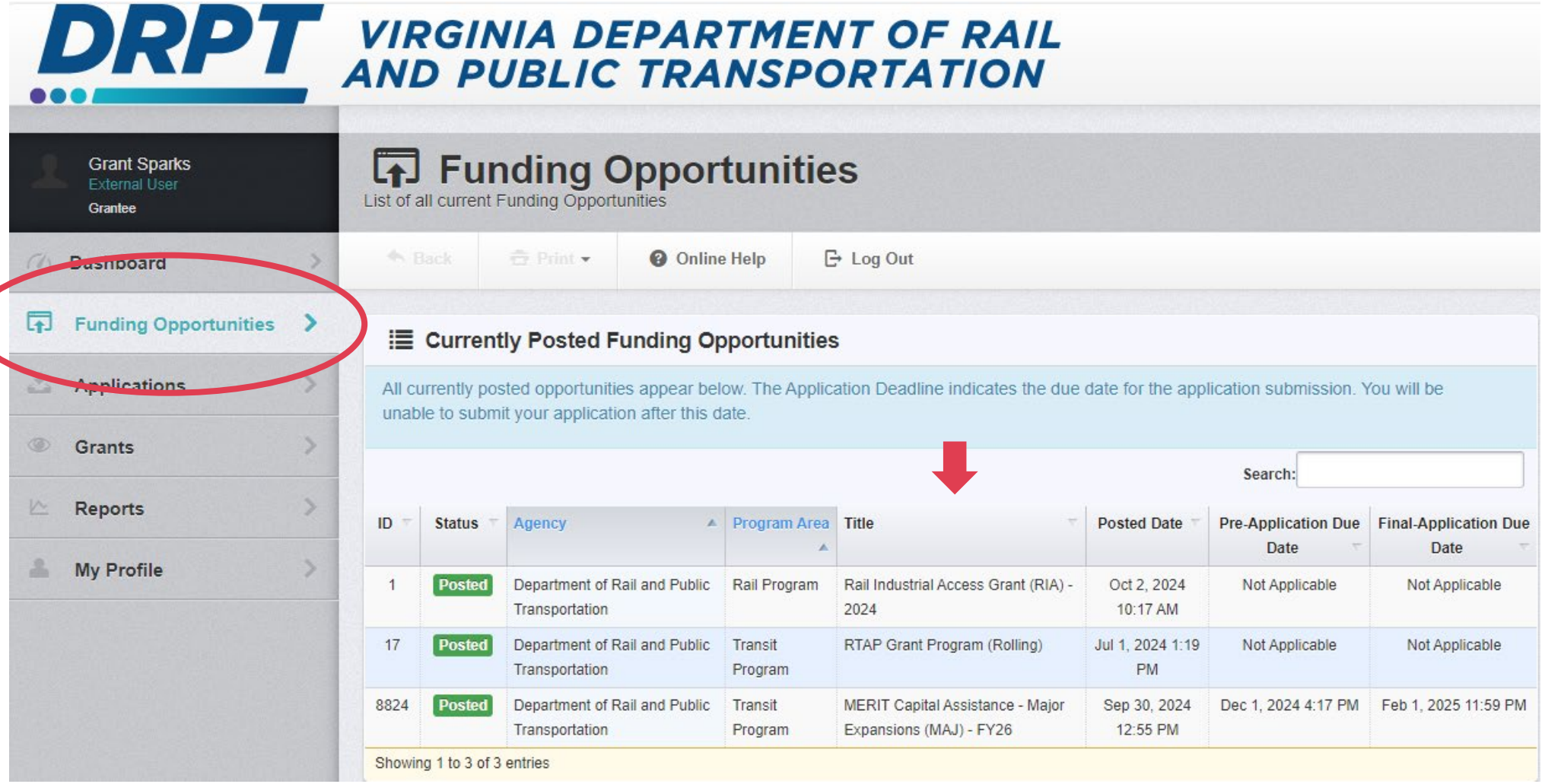
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WebGrants – Grants Management Platform

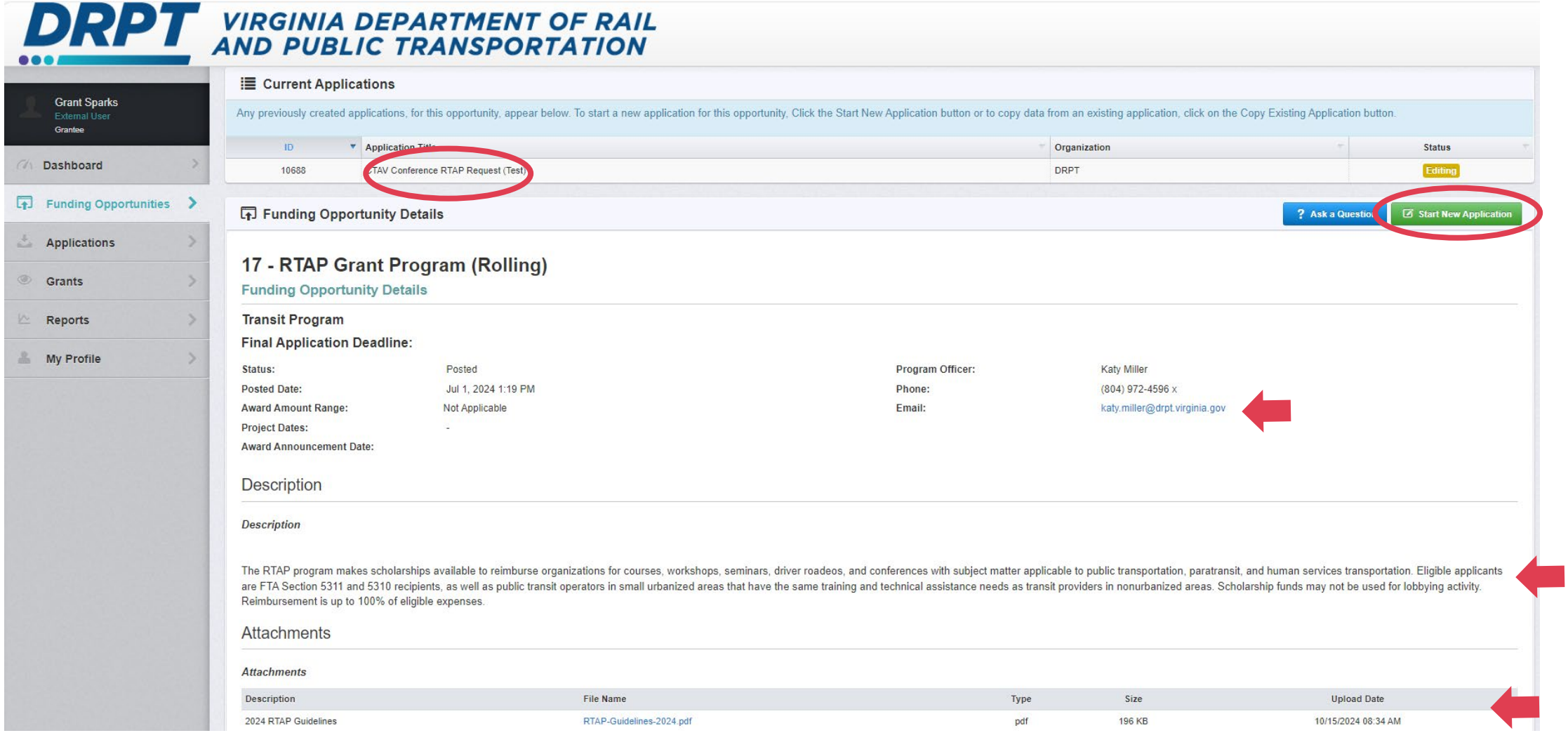
- Verify your account information is up to date.
- Ensure users have been registered in the system.
- **Reminder:** you can add all staff that will be involved in grants management and tracking as "Additional Grantee Contacts" to the application when it is being developed.
  - You can also add additional staff once awarded.
  - Contacts added to applications will automatically be added to the grant if awarded.
- Per VITA policy, WebGrants will log you out after 10-minutes of inactivity
  - **Reminder:** log in to WebGrants at least once every 90 days
  - If you get locked out, please reach out to your PM to unlock your account



WebGrants – How to Find Funding Opportunities



WebGrants – How to See Program Details

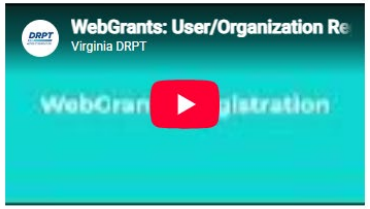


WebGrants – Resources and Guides

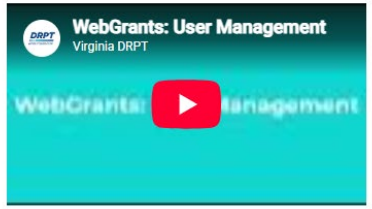
How-To Guides

- NEW! WebGrants Asset Inventory User Guide – External
- NEW! Asset Inventory Checklist
- Getting Started in WebGrants – Registration, Log In, Edit User/Organization, Add Users
- Manage Users
- Submit Claims
- Apply for Funding (updated 1/11/24)
- Sign a Grant Contract
- Submit a Contract Amendment
- And more!

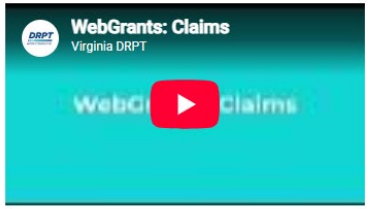
Training Videos



WebGrants: User/Organization Registration



WebGrants: User Management



WebGrants: Claims



WebGrants: Contract Amendments



WebGrants: Applications



WebGrants: Compliance

Click **here** to access our library of WebGrants how-to guides and training videos

MERIT – Capital Assistance

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Capital Assistance Prioritization Process

1. **Projects are screened for eligibility:**
   - Review of application to ensure project includes eligible capital expenses
   - Review of open grants for the same assets that have not been spent
   - Check for “Readiness” to implement (i.e. completion of study, E&D)
2. **Eligible projects are filtered into categories, by project type:**
   - State of Good Repair, Minor Enhancements, Major Expansions, and Major State of Good Repair (New)
3. **Projects are scored according to the methodology outlined in the FY28 Transit Capital Assistance Technical Documentation posted on the DRPT website.**
4. **Projects are ranked according to scoring.**
5. **Funding is allocated to those that meet or exceed the scoring threshold for each category.**
   - NOTE: The scoring threshold is dynamic and will be based on the pool of applications received and funds available.

Capital Assistance Project Types

State of Good Repair (SGR)
[up to 68% match]

Capital projects or programs to replace or rehabilitate an existing asset, excluding major capital construction projects with a total cost over $3 million:

- Replacement/rehabilitation of a specific existing asset

Minor Enhancements (MIN)
[up to 68% match]

Capital projects or programs that add capacity or include the purchase of new assets meeting the following criteria:

- Total project cost is $3 million or less; or
- All expansion vehicles projects
- All projects for engineering and design of infrastructure or facilities
- Purchase of assets to replace unspecified assets "as-needed," grouped programs of projects, or "special asset categories"

Major Expansions (MAJ)
[up to 50% match]

Capital projects or programs to add, expand, or improve transit services or facilities, with:

- Total project cost exceeding $3 million;

Major State of Good Repair (MAJ-SGR)
[up to 50% match]

All projects that include the replacement of an entire existing facility with:

- Total project cost exceeding $3 million

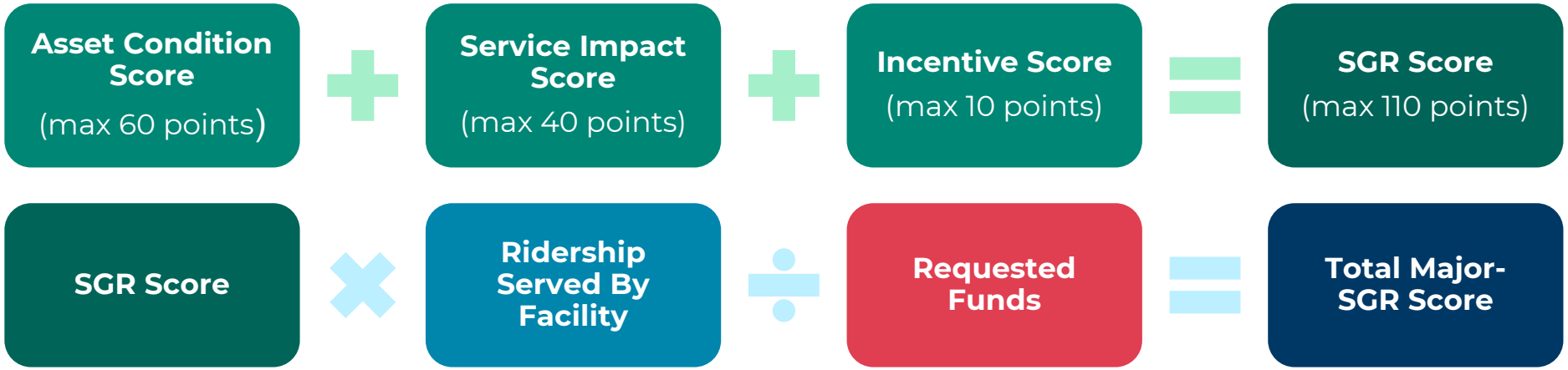
Capital Assistance Project Types (cont'd)

- **Special Asset Categories (Minor Enhancement Applications):**
  - **Tools:** all tools needed to provide maintenance services
  - **Maintenance Equipment:** all equipment needed to maintain vehicles, infrastructure, and/ or other assets
  - **Spare Vehicle/Rail Parts:** all spare vehicle and rail parts that will be used to maintain assets in working order that are not part of a larger rehabilitation project
  - **Building/Facility Items and Fixtures:** all individual, small facility parts and fixture that are being replaced outside of a larger rehabilitation project
  - **Grouped Assets/Programs of Projects** (less than $3 million): includes large groups of assets that cannot be broken down into subcomponents
    - DOES NOT INCLUDE: Grouped or Program of Project for vehicle rehab or replacement
  - **Other Capital Finance Strategies:** includes funds for needed capital investments that cannot be scored as a replacement/rehabilitation (i.e. capital cost of contracting, debt service on previously approved projects)

FY28 – New Scoring Considerations

NEW: Major State of Good Repair (MAJ-SGR) Scoring

- **Previously:** All facility and infrastructure replacement projects over $3 million were scored as Major Expansion Projects, even though the intent of the project was to replace and not expand.
- **In FY28**: The scoring for MAJ-SGR project type is scored like State of Good Repair category with:
  - Cost factored into score to incentivize cost efficient projects
  - Ridership factored into score to normalize for size (and cost) of facility



MAJ/MAJ-SGR Projects – Pre-Application



- Major Expansion and Major State of Good Repair – Pre-Application Requirement:
  - Applicants for all MAJ projects must submit a pre-application by **December 1** each year.
  - If you are planning on applying for MAJ project and you have not started the pre-application, please do so in the next two weeks.

FY28 – Updated Vehicle Estimated Service Life

- **FY28:** DRPT is increasing the Estimated Service Life (ESL) Standard for two vehicle types.

Vehicle Sub-Type	Previous ESL	New ESL	Example Makes and Models
Light Duty, Small BOC	4 years or 100,000 miles	**5 years or 150,000 miles**	*Starcraft Allstar (on E-350 Chassis, 20' and older models), Startrans Ford Supreme, Startrans Chevy Supreme, Starcraft Starline E-350, Chevy Express (with cutaway), Arboc Spirit of Independence*
Light Duty, Medium BOC	4 years or 100,000 miles	**5 years or 150,000 miles**	*Starcraft Allstar (E450 and GM4500), Starcraft Starlite E450, Starcraft Starlite Transit, Arboc Spirit of Freedom, Chevy Senator II, Ford Challenge*



Bus Shelter and Passenger Amenity Projects

- In FY28, DRPT will not assign state-controlled federal funds to shelter projects (i.e. 5339/5311/ADTAP).
- All applications for bus stop shelters should come through the **MERIT – Capital Assistance** program.
- While passenger shelter and amenity projects are eligible for both MERIT – Capital and TRIP funding, DRPT will determine how to fund them.



"Arlington Heights bus stop on Glebe Rd at Columbia Pike", by Beyond DC. CC BY-NC 2.0.

Alternative Fuel Vehicles



- DRPT will consider requests for alternative propulsion vehicles (i.e. electric, hydrogen, natural gas, hybrid), based on several factors, including:
  - Inclusion of alternative fuel vehicles in the Transit Development Plan (TDP), Transit Strategic Plan (TSP) or other plans
  - Approved funding for necessary infrastructure alterations
  - The clear intention of migrating a significant portion of the fleet to alternative fuels
- Availability of other resources – i.e. Dominion rebates
- Projects for charging infrastructure – eligible for capital assistance funding

Federal Discretionary Funding Incentives

- Lower Local Match Requirement:
  - For capital projects that will be supported with federal discretionary funds, DRPT will now allow for a lower local match.
    - **Previously:** DRPT required a minimum of 4% in local match for all capital projects supported with state capital funds.
    - **Since FY24:** The minimum local match may be lowered on a case-by-case basis if approved for a federal discretionary grant.

Federal Transit Administration

Vehicle Rehabilitations



- Vehicle Rebuilds, Overhauls, and Repowers are all eligible for MERIT – Capital funding
- **Vehicle Rebuilds:**
  - Timing: toward the end of a vehicle's estimated service life (ESL)
  - Require extension of ESL with DRPT and FTA (4yr/100k mi)
  - Repowers that are part of a rebuild require extension of ESL
  - Documentation of Planned modifications must be provided
  - Once modifications are complete, WebGrants must be updated to reflect new ESL
- **Vehicle Overhauls:**
  - Timing: earlier in a vehicle's useful life
  - Do not require extension of ESL with DRPT and FTA
  - Repowers that are part of an overhaul do not require ESL extension

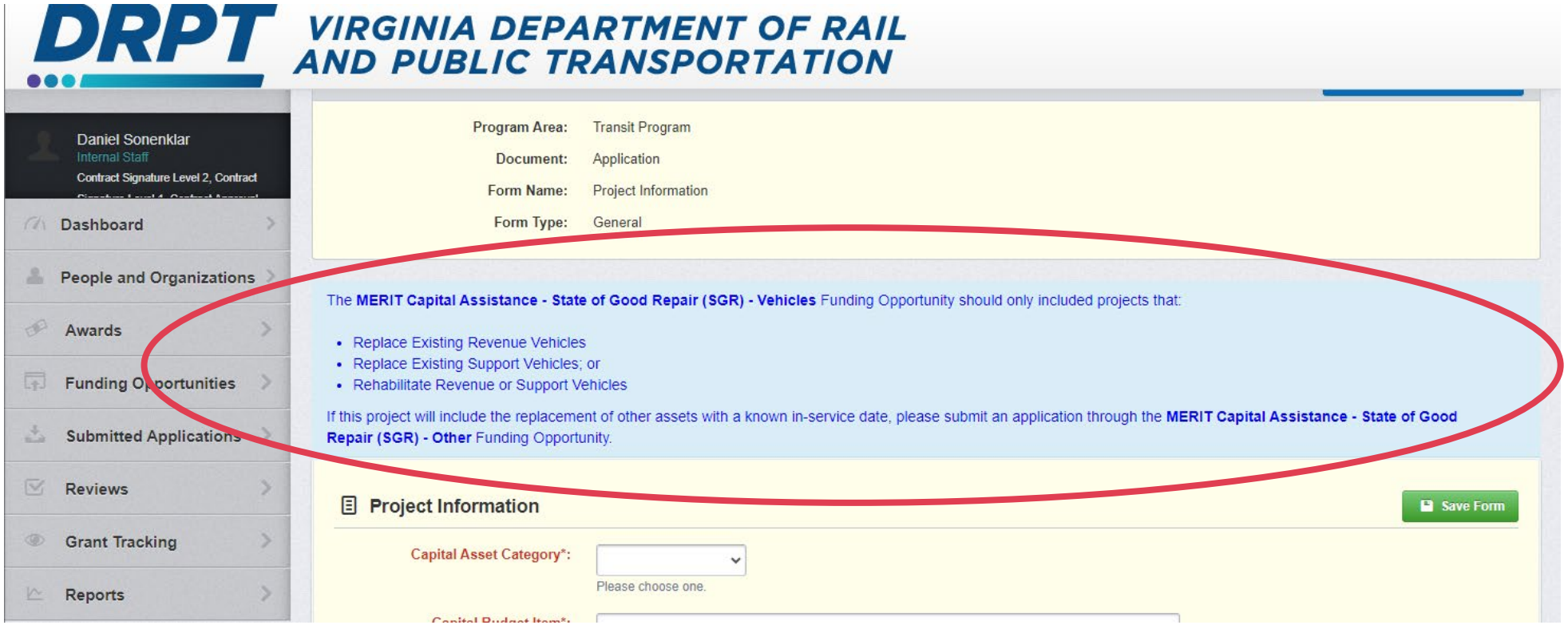
MERIT – Capital Assistance in WebGrants

- In WebGrants, the MERIT – Capital Assistance program has 4 “Funding Opportunities”:

95627	Editing	MERIT Capital Assistance - State of Good Repair (SGR) - Vehicles - FY28	TP-Transit Program	Feb 1, 2027 12:00 PM	0	✓
95628	Editing	MERIT Capital Assistance - State of Good Repair (SGR) - Other - FY28	TP-Transit Program	Feb 1, 2027 11:59 PM	0	✓
95629	Editing	MERIT Capital Assistance - Minor Enhancement (MIN) - FY28	TP-Transit Program	Feb 1, 2027 11:59 PM	0	✓
95630	Posted	MERIT Capital Assistance - Major Expansions (MAJ) + Major State of Good Repair (MAJ-SGR) - FY28	TP-Transit Program	Feb 1, 2027 11:59 PM	0	✓

MERIT – Capital Assistance in WebGrants

- Once you click start a new application, there will be instructions at the top of the screen with a blue background that indicate what should be included:



MERIT – Operating Assistance

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MERIT – Operating Assistance Program

- Provides funding for eligible operating expenses for all modes of public transportation services throughout the state
- The formula that determines funding levels has changed significantly for FY28.
- The Operating Assistance Formula will follow four steps:
  - **Step 1: Cohorting of Revenues –** apportion total revenues by U.S. Census geographic cohort
  - **Step 2: Sizing Allocation –** allocates 95% of funding based on agency size
  - **Step 3: Performance Allocation –** rewards performance against peers
  - **Step 4: Stability Allocation –** provides safety net for data anomalies at Director's discretion

Step 1-2: Cohorting & Sizing Allocation

- **Step 1: Cohorting of Funds**
  - Revenues are apportioned by US Census areas:
    - Large Urban – 81%, Small Urban – 12%, Rural – 7%
- **Step 2: Sizing Allocation**
  - 95% of available revenues will be distributed based on sizing metrics.
  - DRPT will calculate 3-year average sizing metrics using different weights for each cohort.
  - Funding is capped at 30% of an agency's previously audited expenses (FY26 data for FY28).
  - Data years: FY24, FY25, FY26 audited figures for FY28 allocation

Cohort	Operating Cost	Ridership	Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles
Large Urban	40%	30%	15%	15%
Small Urban	45%	25%	15%	15%
Rural	50%	20%	15%	15%

Step 3-4: Performance Allocation & Stability

- **Step 3: Performance Allocation**
  - Performance funding is distributed to agencies that meet or exceed performance targets set in policy.
  - Performance targets are set at the 60th percentile of agencies within each cohort for the last audited fiscal year (FY26 data for FY28 allocation) and agencies are only compared to others in their cohort.
  - Agencies at the 30% cap in the sizing allocation step remain eligible for performance funding.
- **Step 4: Stability Funding**
  - DRPT will run the formula to flag anomalies and will work with agencies to review the data and needs.
  - The Director has discretion to provide stability funding and reports its use to TSDAC and the CTB.

Metric	Large Urban	Small Urban	Rural
Passengers per hour	✅	✅	
Passengers per mile	✅	✅	
Passenger miles traveled per mile	✅	✅	
Passenger miles traveled per hour	✅		
Cost per hour			✅
Cost per mile			✅
Cost per passenger			✅

FY28 Operating Assistance Application Process

- For FY28 – The Operating Assistance application process has changed.
- There are now **two actions** to complete in WebGrants:
  - **Action 1:** Complete the ***Annual Transit Operating Expenses - Entry Form***
    - This will be assigned as a "Site Visit" to all eligible applicants.
  - **Action 2:** Complete the ***Operating Assistance Application with FY28 Budget Information***
    - Urban Transit Providers: MERIT Operating Assistance – Urban FY28
    - Rural Transit Providers: MERIT Operating Assistance – Rural FY28
    - Urban & Rural Transit Providers: One of each

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Annual Transit Operating Expenses Entry Form

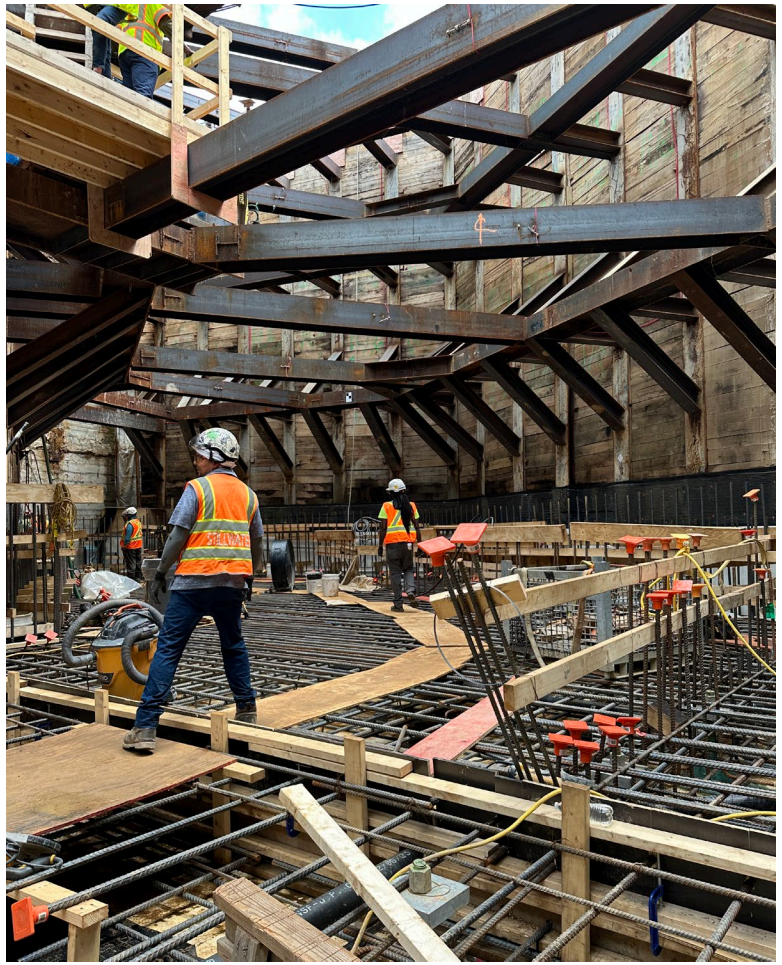
- New process for submitting Audited Transit Operating Expense information in FY28:
  - **Previously:** Agencies submitted in the Operating Assistance Application in WebGrants
  - **FY28:** Agencies will submit using the "Site Visit" Module in WebGrants – **Due January 15, 2027**
- Please note the change in process:
  - Eligible transit providers will automatically receive WebGrants notification to enter information in the "site visit" form in December.
    - **Note:** This will go to individuals with WebGrants access – please ensure correct staff are registered
  - Agencies will provide operating expense information as recorded in annual financial statements.
  - Non-reimbursable and other reimbursable expenses should be entered (as needed) to arrive at Total Reimbursable Expenses.
- **DRPT will host virtual office hours on this new process:**
  - Thursday, December 10th at 9:30AM – Register Here!
  - Tuesday, January 12th at 2:30PM – Register Here!

Questions?



Special Programs

Workforce Development Grant Program

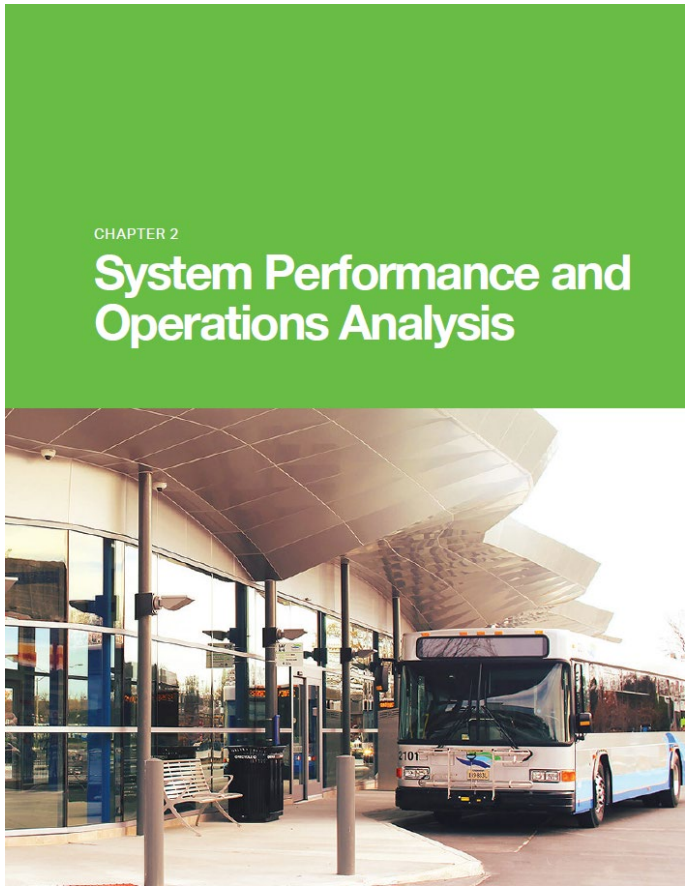


- Supports the development of internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and professional development programs centered on careers in public transportation
- Agencies should focus on apprenticeships that support long-term talent pipelines.
- Match Rates: 80% State and 20% Local Match
- Eligible applicants:
  - Transit agencies, local governments, public service corporations, PDCs, MPOs, human service agencies involved in rural transit, & commuter assistance program operators
- Eligible expenses: Wages, fringe benefits, training (may include CDL or other appropriate certifications), and associated travel
- Can be used to match other eligible non-DRPT grants

Upcoming

- Special Workforce Support Program
  - Create a rolling funding opportunity starting **July 1, 2027**, to meet acute costs associated with workforce recruitment and retention efforts
- What it is
  - Covering costs to advertise, recruit, support, train, or other expenses that apply to wraparound support of your workforce
  - *New* Pre-hire programs, training/testing expenses, reskilling programs, emergency employee support, childcare, elder care, etc.
  - *Accepting feedback!*
- What it isn't
  - Full-time wage supplementation, contractor costs coverage, conferences/professional development (apply to the current WFD grant)

Technical Assistance



- Supports a variety of planning-related activities
  - Studies, plans, technical evaluations
  - Feasibility studies for major capital projects and innovation
  - Support of federal requirements (i.e. TAM and PTASP)
  - CAPSP and TDM plans, and TSP/TDP plans
- Match Rates: 50% State and 50% Local Match
- Eligible applicants:
  - Transit agencies, local governments, public service corporations, PDCs, MPOs, human service agencies involved in rural transit, & commuter assistance program operators
- Applications must clearly demonstrate how resources will benefit transit.
- Grantees are limited to no more than three applications.

Demonstration Project Assistance



- Support and incentivize implementation of new transit services and test innovative and non-traditional public transportation solutions
- Reduce financial risk and fill funding gaps for projects and activities not directly suited for other State and Federal funding programs
- 12-18 month timeframe for projects
- Match Rates: 80% State and 20% Local Match
- Eligible applicants:
  - Transit agencies, local governments, PDCs, MPOs
- If applying for multiple Demonstration grants, please email a list of applications ranked by priority to Wood Hudson.

Demonstration Project Assistance

- **Type 1: New Service**
  - Areas or markets not currently served by public transportation or additional connections to areas currently served
  - Feasibility or another suitable document
  - Not for replacing discontinued routes
  - Not for traditional public transit services eligible for funding through other state and federal programs
- **Type 2: Innovation and Technology**
  - Test “proof of concept” for new technologies used in public transportation services
  - Not for technological solutions that have been deployed for years and have proven effectiveness
  - Projects in both areas currently served and not served by public transportation

Marketing Transit Service

- Transit providers can apply for funding under the Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) Grant Program to market, advertise, and promote transit service.
- Apply through the CAP Project Assistance Application in WebGrants
  - Purpose: Increase ridership
  - Performance Measurement: Track ridership
  - Match Rates: 80% State and 20% Local Match

Eligible Projects and Expenses:

- Marketing of new service or specific routes
- Develop marketing materials and advertisements
- Paid advertising
- Promotional events to get new riders
- Try Transit Week (or similar promotion)
- Free rides for new riders

Ineligible Expenses:

- Bus schedules and schedule changes
- Public notices
- Fare changes
- Policy announcements

TRIP – Transit Ridership Incentive Program

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TRIP Overview

Regional Connectivity

Identify, establish, or improve routes of regional significance

- Rural services now eligible
- New definition of regional significance is adaptable to differing operating conditions

Zero and Reduced Fare

Establish programs to reduce the impact of fares on low-income *or other transit dependent* individuals

- Addition of other transit-dependent individuals expands program impact

Passenger Amenities and Safety

Improving the accessibility and safety of transit bus passenger facilities

- Consolidates passenger amenities and public safety into a single program area
- Streamlined application process

Enhanced Mobility Innovation

Encourage innovative approaches to micromobility, paratransit, and specialized transportation

- New program area
- Supports projects to improve coordination between transportation providers and other innovative approaches to service delivery

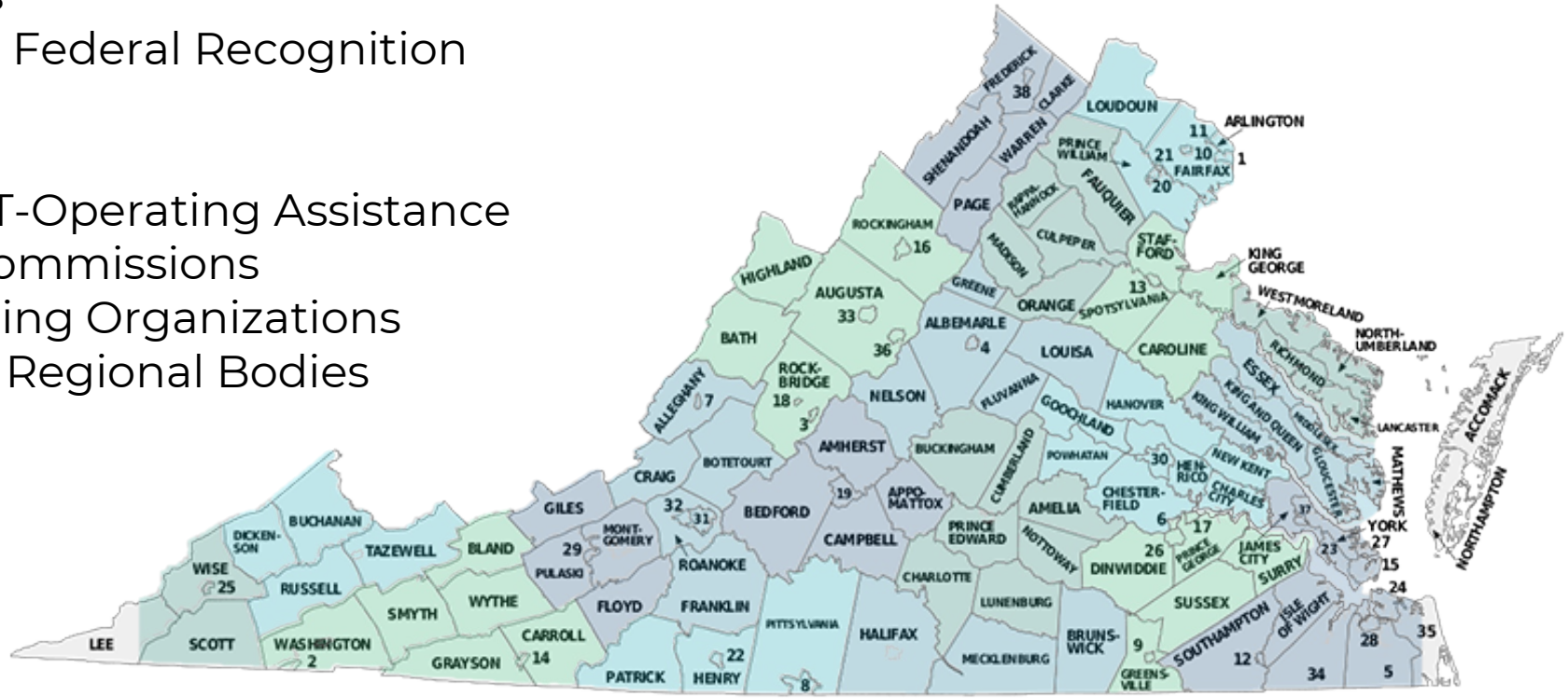
Updates to Eligible Applicants

Newly Eligible

+ Local Governments
+ Tribes with State or Federal Recognition

Still Eligible

- Recipients of MERIT-Operating Assistance
- Planning District Commissions
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Other Statewide or Regional Bodies



Updates to Application Process

- All applications submitted through the MERIT Capital and Technical Assistance programs will be evaluated for TRIP.

- The four TRIP Funding Opportunities are for project types eligible only for TRIP. TRIP FOs include a section to upload a resolution, letter, or other documentation from your local transit agency to ensure your project aligns with agency strategic plans and objectives.

TRIP Regional Connectivity

Identifying, establishing, and improving transit services with regional significance.

New for FY28

- Urban restriction removed, rural services now eligible

Important to Know

- Regionally-significant transit services are those that are documented in a regional plan or study as a solution to addressing a regional travel need.
- TRIP RC funding opportunity is for operating projects only.
- Capital and Planning projects should be submitted through MERIT Capital or Technical Assistance

Maximum State Contribution

- Capital <$3M: 50%, >$3M: 68%
- Operating**:** 80%, 60%, 30%, 20%, 10% (5-year stepdown)
- **Planning:** 50%

Eligible Projects

Capital
(apply through MERIT)

- Constructing bus-only lanes
- Installing transit signal priority
- Regional fare integration
- Regionally-significant amenities

Operating

- New regionally significant transit
- Improving significant transit

Planning
(apply through TA)

- Plans or studies to identify, establish, or improve a regionally significant transit service

TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare

Reduce the impact of fares on low-income and other transit-dependent individuals.

New for FY28

- Includes other transit-dependent individuals

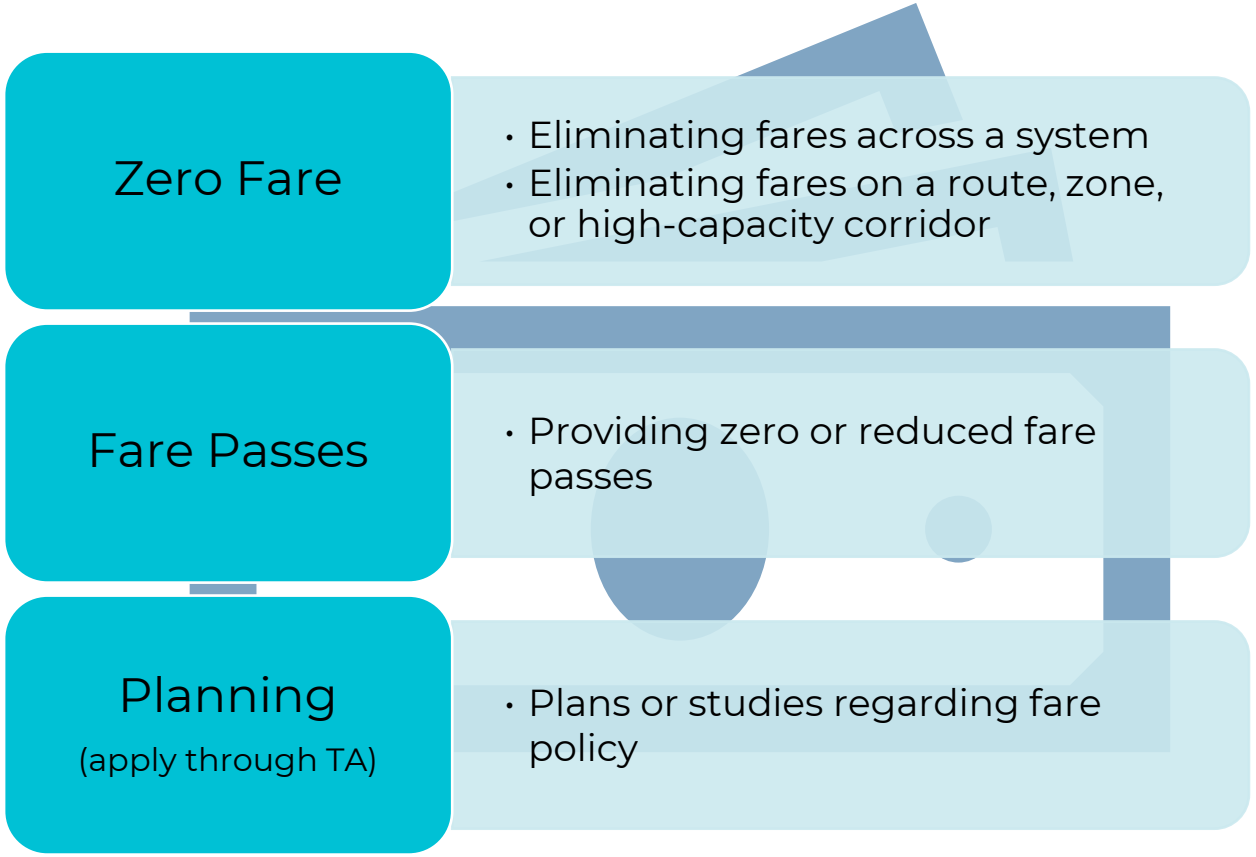
Important to Know

- Other transit-dependent individuals can include low-income individuals, older adults, young adults, people with a disability, or people without a driver's license.

Maximum State Contribution

- Zero Fare System: 80%, 60%, 30%, 0% (4-year stepdown)
- **Zero Fare Service:** 80%, 60%, 30% (3-year stepdown)
- **Fare Passes:** 80%, 60%, 30% (3-year stepdown)
- **Planning:** 50%

Eligible Projects



TRIP Enhanced Mobility Innovation

Supporting innovative approaches to micromobility, paratransit, and specialized transportation

New for FY28

- New program area

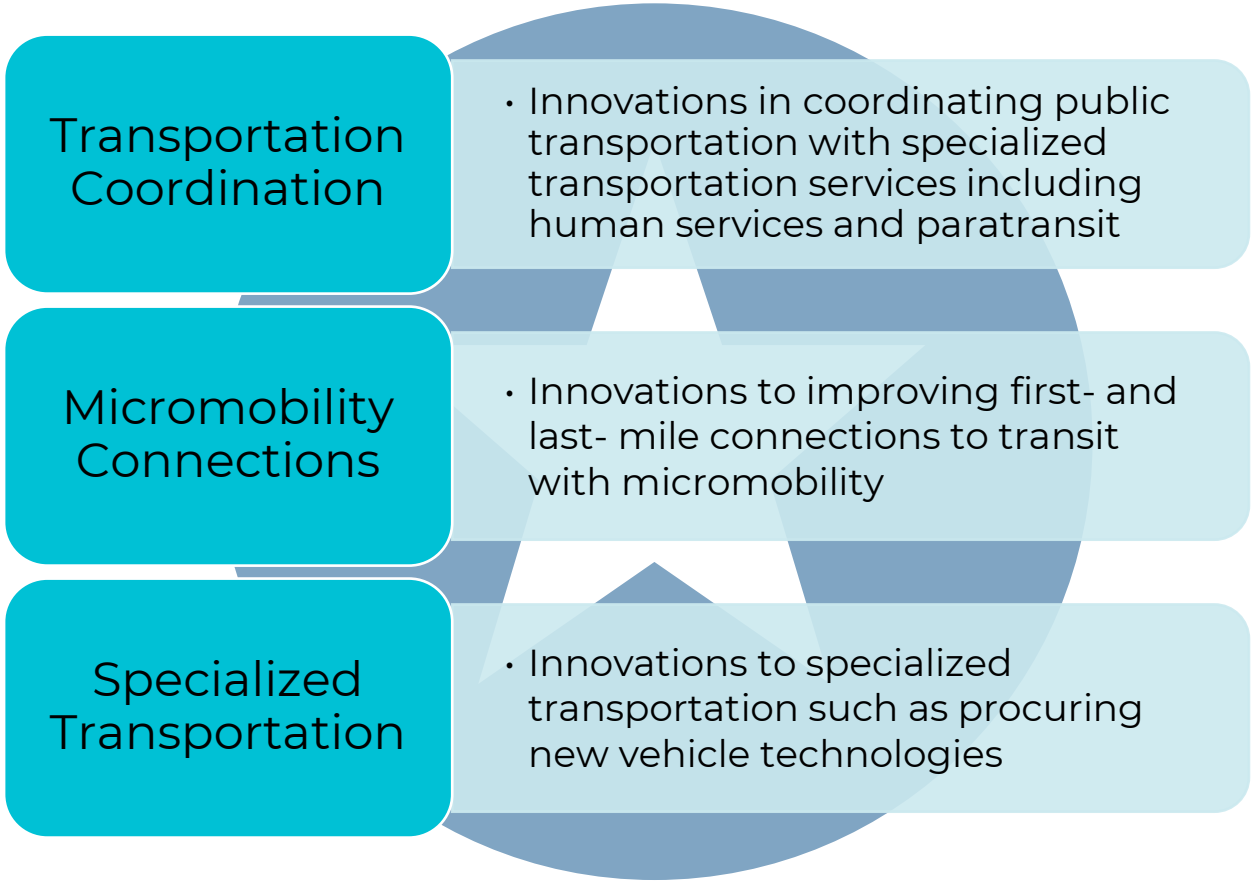
Important to Know

- Innovation is testing a proof of concept or new technology
- Micromobility is small, light human or electric-powered vehicles operated at low speeds
- Specialized Transportation is a restricted-eligibility service for targeted populations including older adults and people with disabilities.

Maximum State Contribution

- Up to 80% for up to 2 years

Eligible Projects



TRIP Passenger Amenities and Safety

Improving the accessibility and safety of transit bus passenger facilities

New for Fiscal Year 2028

- Combined passenger amenities and public safety areas

Important to Know

- TRIP PAS funding opportunity is for safety programs only. Capital and Planning projects should be submitted through MERIT Capital or Technical Assistance
- SGR and in-kind replacement projects are ineligible.

Maximum State Contribution

- Capital <$3M: 50%, >$3M: 68%
- **Planning:** 50%
- Public Safety Programming: 80%

Eligible Projects

Passenger Amenities (apply through MERIT)	• Bus stop or station amenities including street furniture, accessibility improvements, bike racks, or real-time signage
Public Safety	• Equipment including lighting, cameras, and emergency buttons. • Public safety programs
Planning (apply through TA)	• Bus stop or bus passenger facility planning or studies • Public safety planning

Applying for TRIP

I have a project I want considered for state assistance through the Transit Ridership Incentive Program.

My project is a new or improved transit service.
- yes → TRIP Regional Connectivity
- no → My project provides fare passes or establishes fare-free transit.
  - yes → TRIP Zero and Reduced Fare
  - no → My project is an innovative approach to specialized transportation, micromobility, or coordinating transportation.
    - yes → TRIP Enhanced Mobility Innovation
    - no → My project is a public safety program.
      - yes → TRIP Passenger Amenities and Safety
      - no → My project involves capital costs or construction
        - yes → MERIT Capital
          - *Bus priority infrastructure*
          - *Regional fare integration*
          - *Bus stop or station amenities*
          - *Accessibility improvements*
          - *Safety equipment*
        - no → My project involves planning or a study
          - yes → Technical Assistance
            - *Regional significant transit*
            - *Fare policy planning or studies*
            - *Bus passenger facility or safety plans*
          - no → Project is not eligible.

Contact evan.tuten@drpt.virginia.gov for any questions.

Questions?



Training Scholarship Programs

DRPT
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Training Scholarship Programs

- DRPT offers two scholarships programs in order to expand access to training and professional development opportunities for transportation providers in Virginia.
  - Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)
  - Urban Training (UT) Program
- Scholarships are available to reimburse organizations for courses, workshops, seminars, driver roadeos, and conferences with subject matter applicable to public and specialized transportation and appropriate to the level of expertise of the person(s) attending.
- These funds are intended to further the development of management skills and encourage the development of professional networks.

Program Eligibility

- **Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)**
  - Public and non-profit organizations that provide transportation or mobility management services in non-urbanized areas of Virginia are eligible to apply.
  - This includes but is not limited to agencies that receive FTA Section 5311 and 5310 funds.
  - These are 100% funds that do not require a local match.
- **Urban Training (UT) Program**
  - All urban transit agencies are eligible to apply.
  - Public and non-profit organizations that provide transportation services in urbanized areas of Virginia are eligible for UT funding.
  - All approved UT scholarships are funded at 80% state funding and 20% local funding.

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program



Key Program Changes

- Starting in FY28, RTAP and UT scholarships **will no longer** be accepted on a rolling basis.
- Eligible applicants may apply for a $5,000 award during the regular FY28 application cycle.
  - If the full $5,000 award is expended, agencies can come in for a budget amendment up to a total award of $10,000, as funds are available.
- In the annual application, agencies should identify key conferences, workshops, and trainings they plan to attend as a tentative outline.
  - The contracts will not be tied to specific trainings to allow for continued flexibility.
- Grantees will work with their DRPT Program Manager throughout the year to do a **pre-travel cost check** in order to ensure eligibility.
- **Note:** For all training opportunities occurring before July 1, 2027, please continue to submit rolling applications.

Eligible Program Expenses

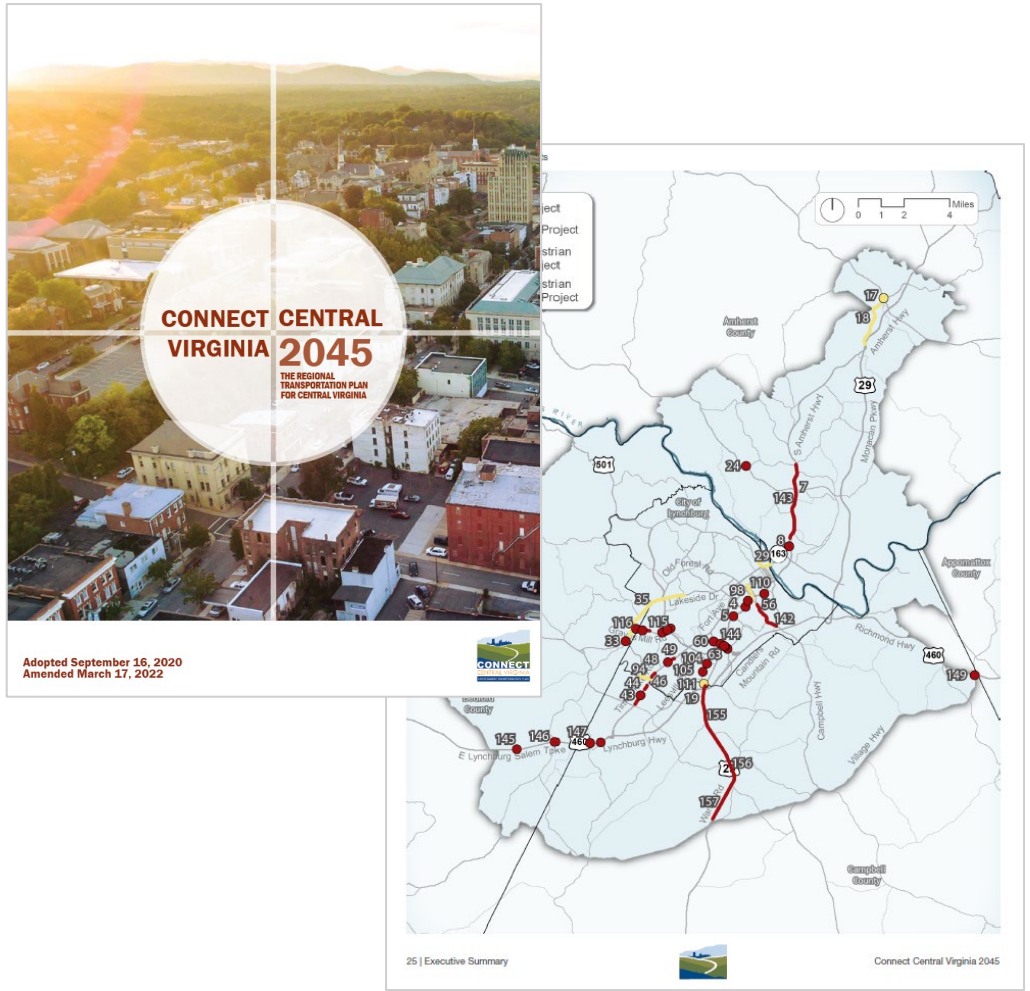
- Registration and necessary travel expenses are eligible for reimbursement through RTAP and UT.
- Travel is an eligible expense, but reimbursement rates for hotel rooms, hotel taxes, and meals are limited to rates in the effective edition of the U.S. General Services Administration per diem rates.
- Meal reimbursement is only valid when there is approved overnight travel. Meal expenses for same-day trips are not eligible for reimbursement. Expenses for alcoholic beverages are not eligible.
- Book air, bus, and train fares at the lowest available coach rates.
- Mileage **is not** reimbursable through RTAP or UT.
- AirBnB, Vrbo, and other rentals booked through home-sharing services are **not eligible** expenses.
- Work with your DRPT Program Manager to complete a pre-travel check to avoid any ineligible expenses.

FTA Section 5303 – Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program

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FTA Section 5303

- FY28 grant applications due May 1, 2027.
- 5303 funds can be carried over for one year and must be outlined in UPWP by fiscal year.
- Application must include ALIs that align with activities described in the UPWP.
  - Usage of “other” is only accepted on a case-by-case basis
- UPWP budgets and narratives must clearly identify carryover funds and activities separately from new funds on the task level.
- Please refer to Blue Book and Purple Book for further information.



Other Ongoing Initiatives

TDP and TSP Updates

- Annual Update Worksheet is no longer being collected.
  - Enhanced Quarterly meetings have replaced the annual update requirement.
- DRPT PMs and Planning staff will meet with each agency before **January 15, 2027** and discuss planning needs.
  - Detailed agenda and discussion questions replace the previous year's Excel worksheet.
- **Reminder:** If a transit agency is seeking funding assistance for their TDP or TSP update, please apply through the Technical Assistance grant program.
- TDP and TSP updates or rewrites are due by the end of the fiscal year in which the plan falls.

Upcoming Transit Plans

			CY2027	CY2028
		Last Update	FY2027	FY2028
Blackstone (BABS)	TDP	Feb 2023		Minor
Bristol Virginia Transit	TDP	Mar 2023		Minor
CSPDC (BRITE)	TDP	Feb 2023		Minor
Danville Mass Transit	TDP	Mar 2023		Minor
Fairfax City (CUE)	TDP	Jul 2017	**Major**	
Farmville Area Bus	TDP	Mar 2023		Minor
Greensville Emporia Transit	TDP	Feb 2023		Minor
Hampton Roads Transit	TSP	Dec 2021	Minor	
JAUNT	TDP	Feb 2023		Minor
Petersburg Transit (PAT)	TSP	Apr 2022	Minor	
PRTC OmniRide	TSP	Jul 2026	Minor	
STAR Transit	TDP	Jan 2018		**Major**
Suffolk Transit	TDP	Feb 2019	**Major**	

GPC Transit Bench & Prompt Pay

- Rebid scheduled for Spring 2027
  - Contract set to expire June 30th
- DRPT GPC Transit Bench Consultants:
  - Michael Baker International
  - RK&K
  - WSP
  - AECOM
  - Kimley Horn & Associates
- The GPC bench is available to all DRPT grantees to help fulfill transit planning needs.
  - Ask your PM or Planner for guidance on how to issue task orders to the bench.
- Independent Cost Estimates
  - Required for projects over $250k
  - Encouraged for all projects
  - Contact DRPT for resources & guidance

- Subcontractor Prompt Pay Requirement
  - Agencies that (1) issue task orders to the GPC bench; (2) use federal funds to offset contractor costs; and (3) include subcontractors on the project are required by FTA to receive Subcontractor Prompt Payment Forms after from the prime.
  - The form is intended to certify that the prime has paid the subcontractor within 30 days of receiving payment from the administering agency.
  - Urban agencies may use their own Subcontractor Prompt Payment Form but rural agencies must use DRPT's form.

Cost Allocation and Indirect Costs

- Costs must be allocated in accordance with an “approved” Cost Allocation Plan.
  - Plan must be included with submitted application
  - DRPT will review your plan

- Indirect costs may be charged to certain DRPT programs via:
  - A 15% de minimis rate, or
  - A rate approved by a cognizant federal or state agency
  - DRPT will review your Indirect Cost Rate Proposal (ICPR).



FY28 Grant Cycle Calendar

Date	Event
Oct. 1, 2026	Major Expansion Pre-Applications open in WebGrants
Dec. 1, 2026	Applications Open in WebGrants
Dec. 1, 2026	Major Expansion Pre-Applications Due
Dec. 15, 2026	FY26 PMT Data Due to DRPT
Jan. 14, 2027	Asset Inventory updates due in WebGrants
Jan. 14, 2027	Enhanced quarterly meetings completed
Feb. 1, 2027	All Transit Grant Applications Due in WebGrants
April 2027	Draft FY28 SYIP Presented to CTB
April 2027	5-Year Capital Budgets Due to Program Managers
April/May 2027	SYIP Public Hearings
May 1, 2027	FTA Section 5303 Applications Due to DRPT
May 2027	Review of 5-Year Capital Budgets with DRPT Staff
June 2027	CTB Approves Final FY28 SYIP
July 1, 2027	FY28 Begins – Grant Awards Become Available
July 15, 2027	Asset Inventory updates due in WebGrants

Conclusion and Final Questions

- DRPT guidance and assistance are always available.
- Your DRPT Program Manager is your best resource for application assistance.
- **Helpful Links**
  - WebGrants Guidance
  - Blue Book Transit and Commuter Assistance Grant Application Manual (FY28 to be posted!)
  - Purple Book Grant Administration Procedures Manual
- **Transit Leadership**
  - Mariia Zimmerman, Director
  - Zach Trogdon, Chief of Public Transportation zach.trogdon@drpt.virginia.gov
  - Chris Arabia, Manager of Statewide Commuter Programs christopher.arabia@drpt.virginia.gov
  - Sarah Husain, Director of Northern Virginia Transit Programs sarah.husain@drpt.virginia.gov
  - Grant Sparks, Director of Statewide Transit Programs grant.sparks@drpt.virginia.gov
  - Tiffany Dubinsky, Director of Transit Planning tiffany.dubinsky@drpt.virginia.gov