Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP)
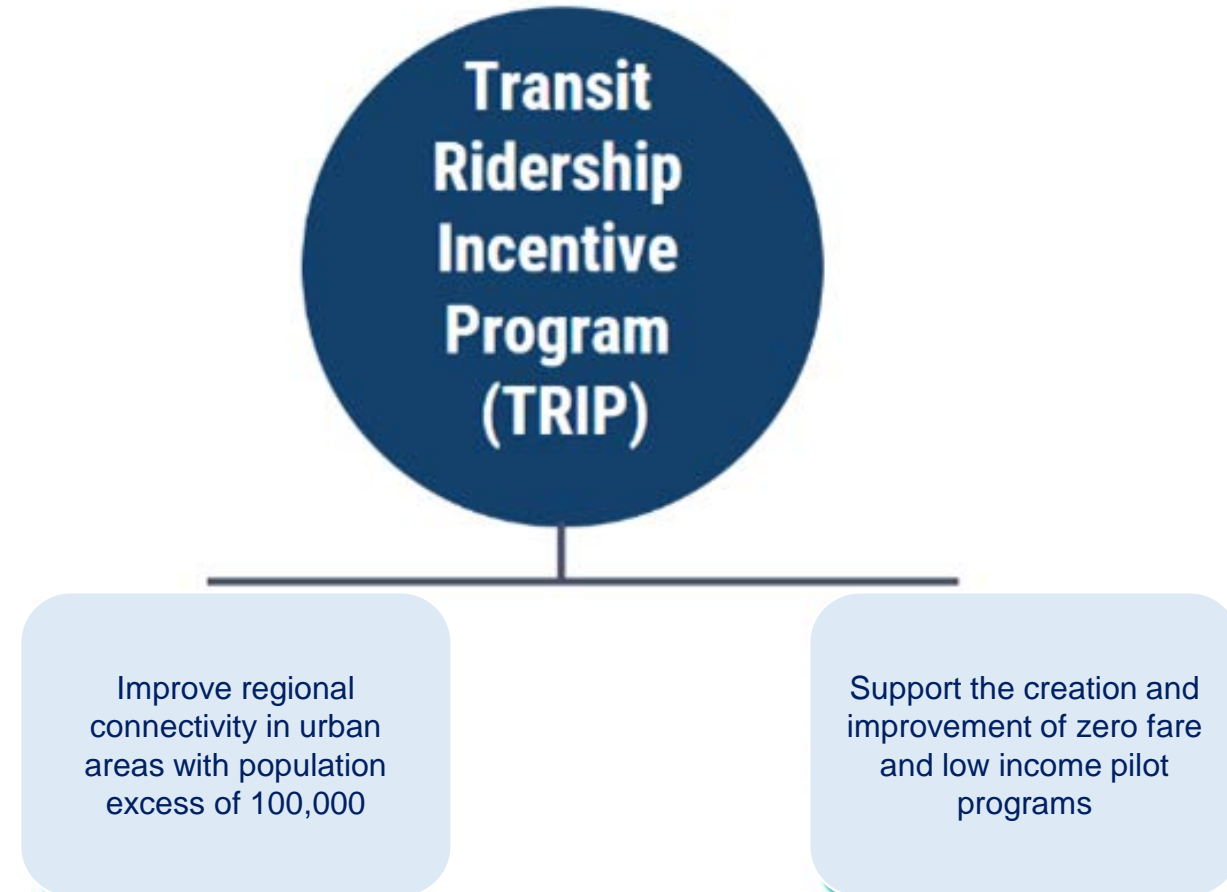
Commonwealth Transportation Board – May 18, 2021

Jennifer DeBruhl, Chief of Public Transportation
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

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General Program Overview

- Established in the 2020 General Assembly Session, [HB1414 and SB890/Code of Virginia §33.2-1526.3](#)

- Promote increased ridership of large urban transit systems

- Reduce the barriers to transit use for low-income individuals

- Implementation delayed due to COVID-19

Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP)

Improve regional connectivity in urban areas with population excess of 100,000

Support the creation and improvement of zero fare and low income pilot programs

Program Funding FY22-27

|	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	Total
Regional Routes	$7.5	$11.3	$16.9	$16.5	$18.0	$18.2	$88.4
Zero Fare/ Low Income	$12.5	$3.7	$5.6	$5.8	$6.0	$6.0	$39.6
Total	**$20.0**	**$15.0**	**$22.5**	**$23.3**	**$24.0**	**$24.2**	**$129M**

- FY22 – Includes $10M in 2021 Transportation Initiative Funding dedicated for Zero-Fare Pilots
- Beyond FY22, up to 25% annually can be utilized for Zero-Fare/Low Income projects on a statewide basis

Regional Routes Funding FY22-27

| Region	Share	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	Total
NOVA	42.4%	$3.2	$4.8	$7.2	$7.0	$7.6	$7.7	$37.5M
Hampton Roads	27.3%	$2.0	$3.0	$4.6	$4.5	$4.9	$5.0	$24.0M
Richmond	18.1%	$1.4	$2.0	$3.0	$3.0	$3.3	$3.3	$16M
Roanoke	4.0%	$0.3	$0.5	$0.7	$0.6	$0.7	$0.7	$3.5M
Fredericksburg	2.7%	$0.2	$0.3	$0.4	$0.4	$0.5	$0.5	$2.3M
Lynchburg	2.2%	$0.2	$0.3	$0.4	$0.4	$0.5	$0.5	$2.3M
Blacksburg	1.7%	$0.1	$0.2	$0.3	$0.3	$0.3	$0.3	$1.5M
Charlottesville	1.7%	$0.1	$0.2	$0.3	$0.3	$0.3	$0.3	$1.5M

- Each region must receive their proportional share on a 5-year rolling average
- Percentages will be revisited with data from the 2020 Census

Stakeholder Engagement

RFI

Open comment period

Working Groups

Recommended Policy
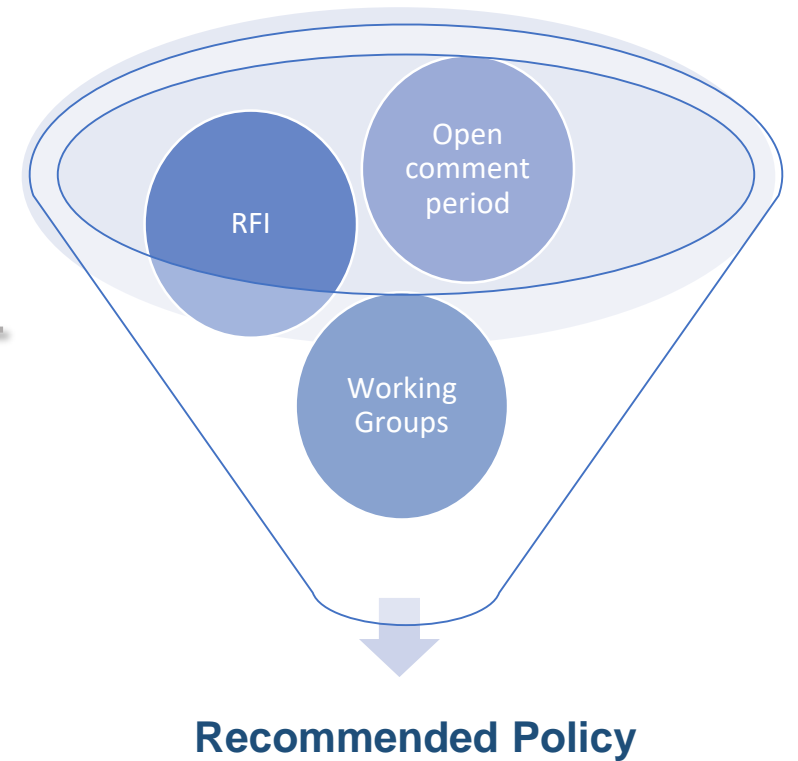
RFI: Request for Ideas

- November 19: Webinar for interested parties to discuss general program overview and the role of the RFI

- November 20: RFI opened for submissions

- 23 ideas submitted from 12 transit agencies
  - 12 Regional Connectivity projects
  - 11 Zero Fare and Low Income projects
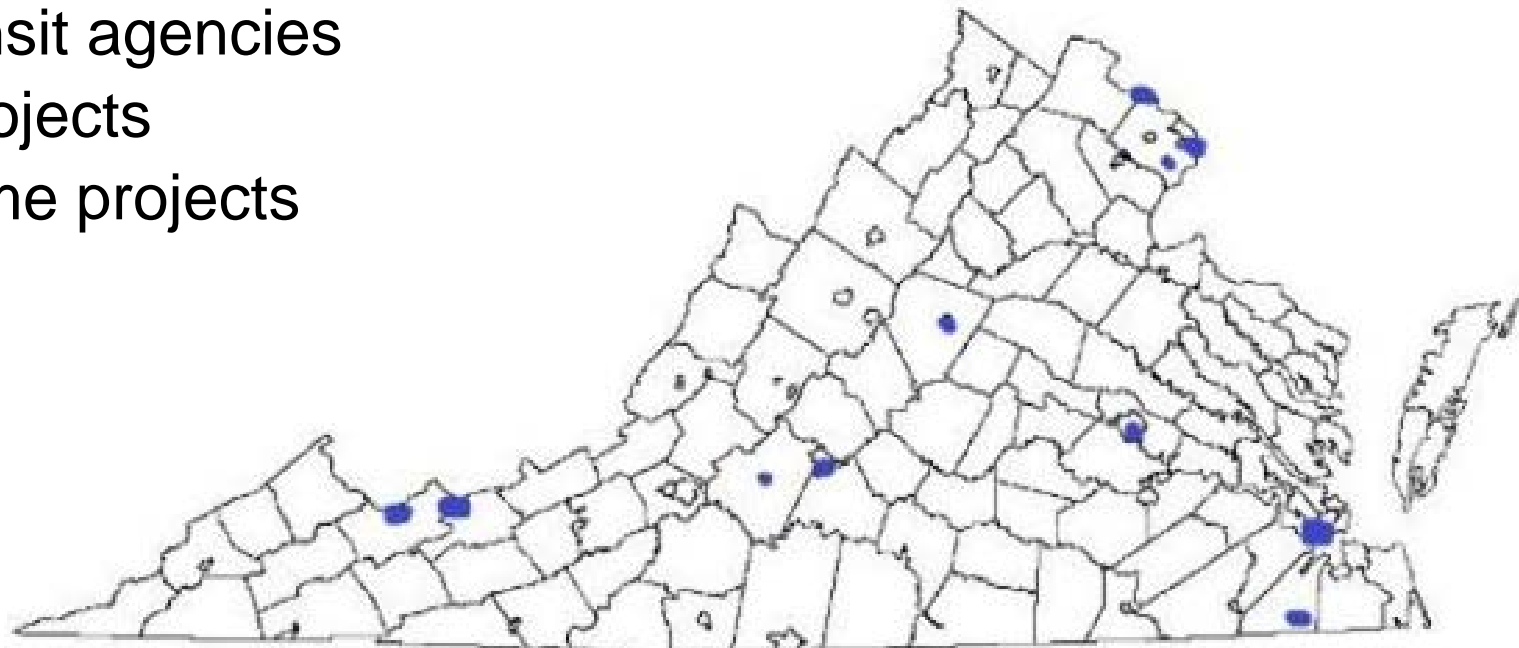
Responding agencies: City of Alexandria/ DASH, Bluefield, Charlottesville (CAT), Fairfax County, Hampton Roads, City of Lynchburg, New River Valley MPO, PRTC/OmniRide, City of Richmond, Roanoke-RIDE solutions, Roanoke-Valley, Suffolk

Working Groups

Working Group Recommendations

1. *Regional Connectivity-* imperative that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is engaged to provide insight on regional priorities and travel patterns
2. *Funding Duration-* short intermediate funding will not ensure a meaningful and sustainable increase in ridership
3. *Ridership as a metric of success-* while ridership is an important metric of project success, other objectives should also be considered

DRPT Recommended Policy Components

1. TRIP projects developed through regional collaboration, or through partnership with the MPO will receive additional consideration

2. Agencies can apply for up to three (zero fare and low income) or five years (regional connectivity) of funding

3. Includes additional objectives for regional connectivity projects including accessibility, congestion mitigation, and emissions reduction.

TRIP: Regional Connectivity

The improvement and expansion of routes with regional significance

- Increasing frequencies
- Creating new routes of regional significance
- Expanding routes to provide cross-jurisdictional service

The development and implementation of regional subsidy financing models

- Building partnerships between localities
- Increasing community investment in regional transit

The creation of bus-only lanes on routes of regional significance

- Partial or full bus lanes
- Connecting existing bus lanes to ensure heightened connectivity
- Prioritizing regional bus lanes with priority lighting and/or improved design efforts

The implementation of integrated fare collection

- Contactless payment options for regional routes
- practices to decrease human bottlenecks at ticketing locations
- Accessible payment structures- cash, card, week passes

TRIP: Regional Connectivity Scoring Criteria

Scoring Category	Measure	Measure Weight
Congestion Mitigation	• Change in system-wide ridership and peak period transit ridership attributed to the project	60%
Regional Connectivity and Regional Collaboration	• Increase in regional connectivity to community (education and health care) and employment centers • Improved connections to other travel modes • Local and regional commitment to the project	30%
Cost Per Passenger	• Cost of the project relative to project benefits	10%
	Total Score:	*100%*

TRIP: Zero Fare and Low Income

The provision of subsidized or fully free passes to low-income populations

- Individual based
- define metrics of need
- ensure proper deployment of passes
- accessible use of passes (digital, paper, etc.)

The elimination of fares on high-capacity corridors

- Zero fare zones
- Zero fare routes that serve low income populations and vital services

The deployment of an entirely fare-free system

- Ensure financial and technical capacity for an efficient deployment
- Define need and perform appropriate research

TRIP, Zero Fare and Low Income Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria	Measure	Measure Weight
Impact on Ridership	• Predicted change in system wide transit ridership attributed to the project	40%
Applicant Commitment	• Defined goals and objectives for pilot • Identification of community partnerships and local government support • Options for continued funding upon completion of the pilot	20%
Implications for Equity and Accessibility	• Defined impact of pilot on low-income or marginalized communities • Description of benefits to marginalized communities and areas of high need	20%
Project Schedule and Readiness	• Applicant's readiness to be advance implementation in the near term	20%
Total Score:		*100%*

Key Themes for Project Evaluation

Well Planned

- Project included in statewide or local transportation plans (I.E TSP, TDP, etc.)
- Well defined and quantifiable measures of success - clear rationale behind target performance measures

Collaborative

- Supported by appropriate MPO (regional connectivity projects),serviced localities, and VDOT if project has infrastructure needs
- Built through partnerships with local organizations or municipalities
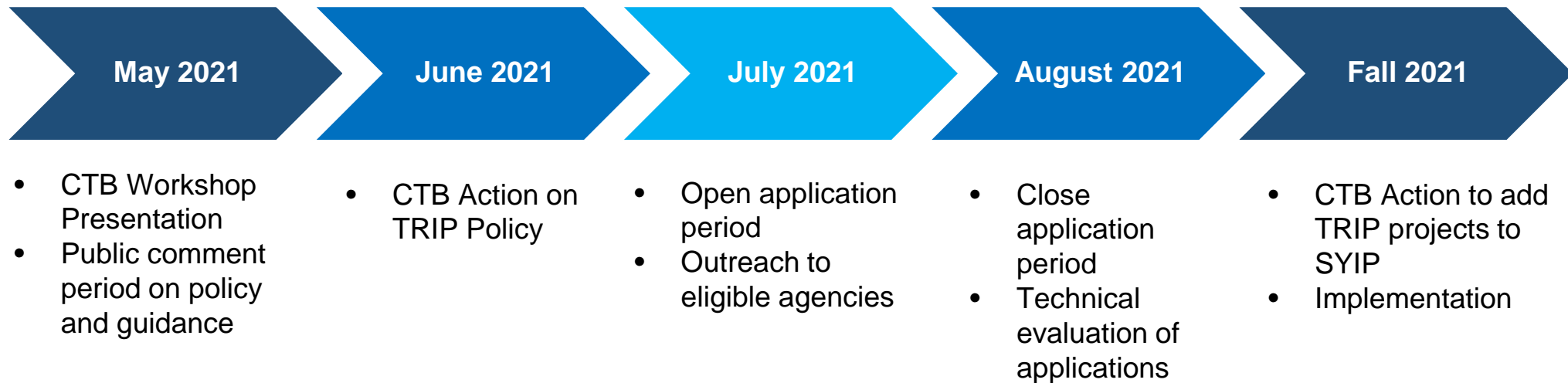
Quickly Implementable

- A strong rationale for funding duration request and financial capacity to continue after pilot
- Existing technical capacity and experienced project management
- Low start up costs and a quick implementation timeline

Maximum State Matching Levels

Zero Fare and Low Income Funding Model

Regional Connectivity Funding Model
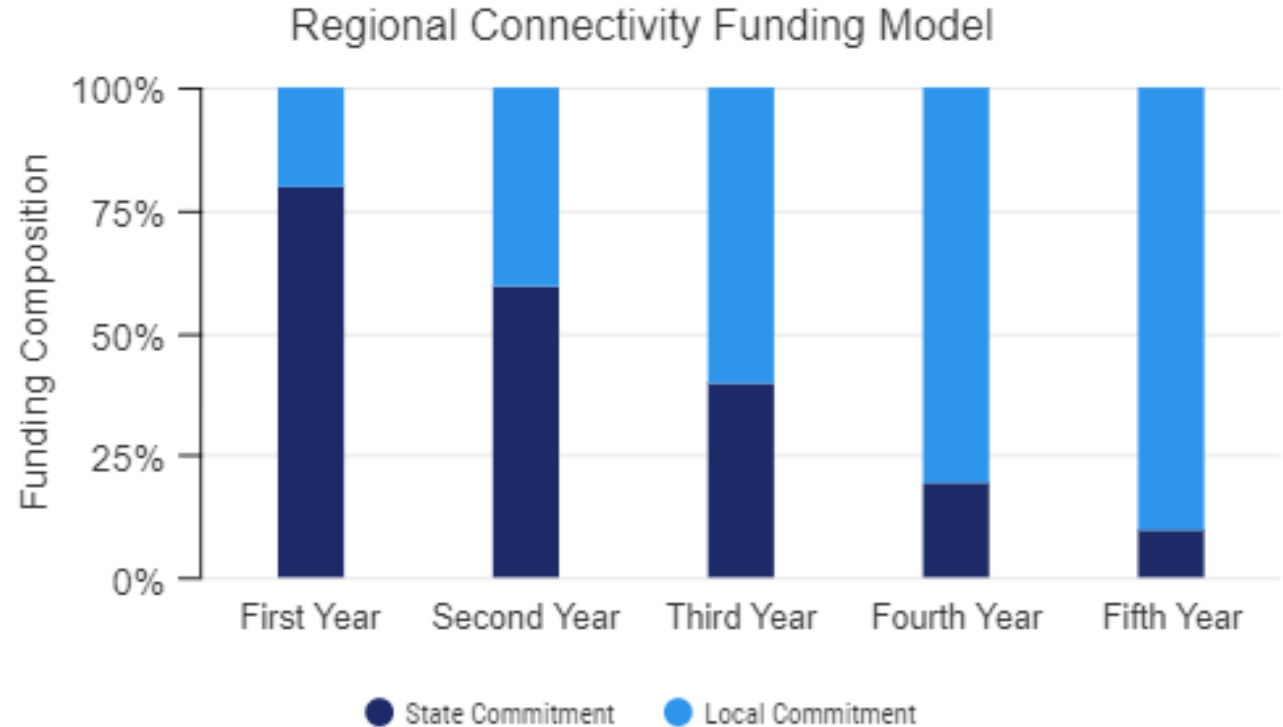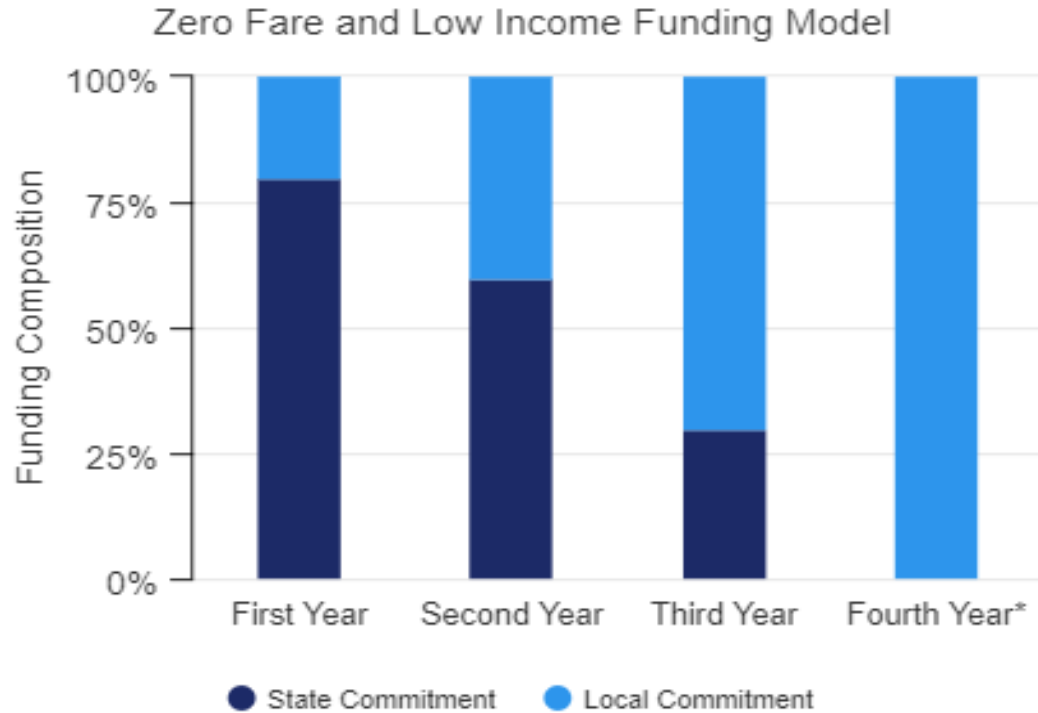
- Maximum state funding participation is 80% of eligible costs in any given year, with anticipation that the state share will reduce as ridership increases.
- Funding shares would be established in multi-year project agreements.
- Selected regional routes projects may be eligible for continuation upon expiration of the initial pilot. Decisions to extend funding will be based on availability of funding and project performance.

Next Steps

May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	Fall 2021
• CTB Workshop Presentation • Public comment period on policy and guidance	• CTB Action on TRIP Policy	• Open application period • Outreach to eligible agencies	• Close application period • Technical evaluation of applications	• CTB Action to add TRIP projects to SYIP • Implementation

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