

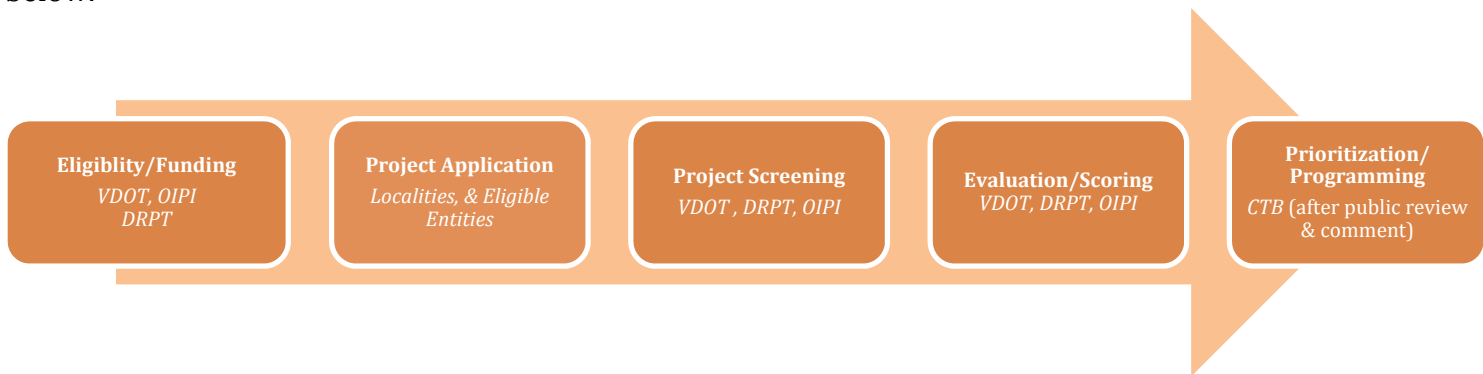
What is SMART SCALE?

Virginia’s SMART SCALE (§33.2-21.4) is about picking the right transportation projects for funding and ensuring the best use of limited tax dollars. It is the method of scoring planned projects included in VTrans that are funded by HB 1887. Transportation projects are scored based on an objective, outcome-based process that is transparent to the public and allows decision-makers to be held accountable to taxpayers. Once projects are scored and prioritized, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has the best information possible to select the right projects for funding.

More information about the SMART SCALE project prioritization process, including a technical guide for applicants, is available at www.vasmartscale.org.

SMART SCALE Process

Virginia’s SMART SCALE Process includes five overarching steps, as identified in the figure below. The preliminary step requires project sponsors to determine their eligibility prior to beginning the SMART SCALE applications process. The final step in the prioritization process includes programming of selected projects. The responsible agency for each process step is identified in italics in the figure below.



Program Funding

Funding for project prioritization comes from two main pathways —the construction District Grants Program (DGP) and the High-Priority Projects Program (HPPP) – both established in 2015 under the Code of Virginia §33.2-358. The DGP is open only to localities. Projects applying for the DGP funds compete with other projects from the same construction district. Projects applying for HPPP funds compete with projects from across the Commonwealth. A project sponsor may request funding under both programs.

	High Priority Projects Program	Construction District Grant Program*
Capacity Need on Corridors of Statewide Significance	Yes	Yes
Capacity Need on Regional Networks	Yes	Yes
Improvement to Support Urban Development Areas	No	Yes
Improvements for Identified Safety Need	No	Yes

*Only projects submitted by localities are eligible.

Certain fund types are not distributed through the project prioritization process, but may be used as a matching fund to the project, reducing the amount of SMART SCALE funds needed, including but not limited to: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding (CMAQ), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Revenue Sharing, Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funds, Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Other Safety Program Funds, Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads Regional Funding, Tele-fees and Unpaved Road related Funds, Dedicated Bridge Program Funds (through FY2020), and State of Good Repair.

Project Eligibility & Eligible Applicants

SMART SCALE projects may be submitted by regional entities, including Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and public transit agencies; counties, cities and towns that maintain their own infrastructure and qualify to receive maintenance payments, pursuant to §33.2-319, may also submit SMART SCALE projects. Though all of these entities may submit projects, there are limitations on the grant program for which they can apply, the types of projects they can submit, and the number of projects they can apply for, detailed in the tables below.

Applications for funding through SMART SCALE must be related to projects located within boundaries of the qualifying entity. However, localities and regional planning bodies may submit joint applications for projects that cross boundaries, or a town that is not eligible to submit may request the county to submit a project.

By majority vote of the CTB, the CTB may choose to submit up to two projects for evaluation each application cycle.

Project Type	Regional Entity (MPOs, PDCs)	Locality** (Counties, Cities, and Towns)	Public Transit Agencies
Corridor of Statewide Significance	Yes	Yes, with a resolution of support from relevant regional entity	Yes, with a resolution of support from relevant regional entity
Regional Network	Yes	Yes, with a resolution of support from the MPO*	Yes, with a resolution of support from relevant regional entity
Urban Development Area	No	Yes, with a resolution of support from the MPO*	No
Safety	No	Yes, with a resolution of support from the MPO*	No

* Projects within established MPO study areas that are not identified in or consistent with the regionally adopted Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) must include a resolution of support from the respective MPO Policy Board.

Project Types Included within SMART SCALE (Capacity and Operational Improvements only)	Project Types Excluded from SMART SCALE
Highway Improvements (Widening, Operational Improvements, Access Management, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Technology Operational Improvements)	Asset Management (Bridge repair/replacement, Pavement repair/replacement, Guardrail replacement)*
Transit And Rail Capacity Expansion	
Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	
Transportation Demand Management (Park & Ride facilities)	

* Asset Management projects excluded from SMART SCALE may be eligible for funding under the state of good repair program as required by the Code of Virginia §33.2-369.

Applicants are limited in the number of applications they may submit for evaluation and scoring, based on population thresholds as defined in the table below.

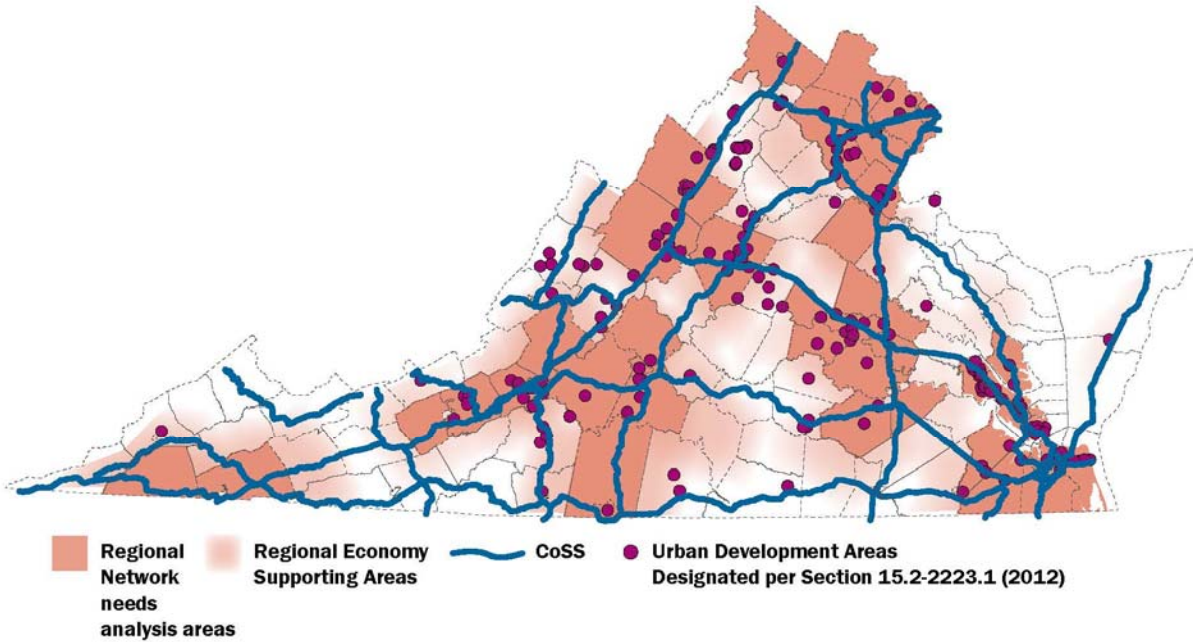
Tier	Localities	MPOs/PDCs/Transit Agencies	Maximum Number of Applications
1	Less than 200K	Less than 500K	4
2	Greater than 200K	Greater than 500K	10

The listing of eligible entities, population data and tier/maximum number of applications is located on line at http://vasmartscale.org/documents/smart_scale_application_limitations.xlsx.

Project Screening

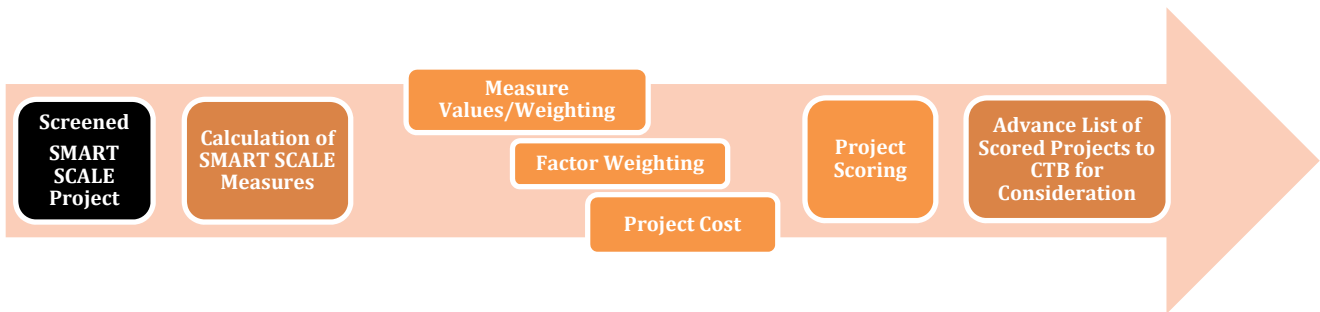
A project application for funds from the HPPP or the DGP must meet an identified need in the Commonwealth’s long-range transportation plan – VTrans2040. This plan evaluates the Commonwealth’s needs at four scales focused on key travel markets and safety needs. Submitted projects must meet a need identified under one or more of the following categories:

1. Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS) – Key multimodal travel corridors that move people and goods within and through Virginia, serving primarily long-distance /inter-regional travel markets
2. Regional Networks (RN) – Multimodal networks that facilitate travel within urbanized areas/intra-regional travel markets
3. Urban Development Areas (UDA) – Areas where jurisdictions intend to concentrate future population growth and development consistent with the UDA section within the Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2223.1); local activity center markets
4. Transportation Safety Needs – Statewide safety needs identified in VTrans2040



Project Evaluation and Scoring

Once it has been determined that a project meets an identified need, the project is evaluated and scored. A scoring evaluation team takes the project and begins collecting additional data required for evaluating each of the five factors required by (§33.1-23.5:5) Chapter 726 of 2014 Virginia Acts of Assembly, and a sixth factor in areas greater than 200,000 in population. After the data has been collected for each project sufficient to evaluate each factor, measure values are calculated and weighted according to the area type where the project is located. After factor totals have been weighted and summed, the Final Score is determined by dividing the total factor score by the SMART SCALE cost. Projects are then ranked and provided to the CTB for funding consideration.

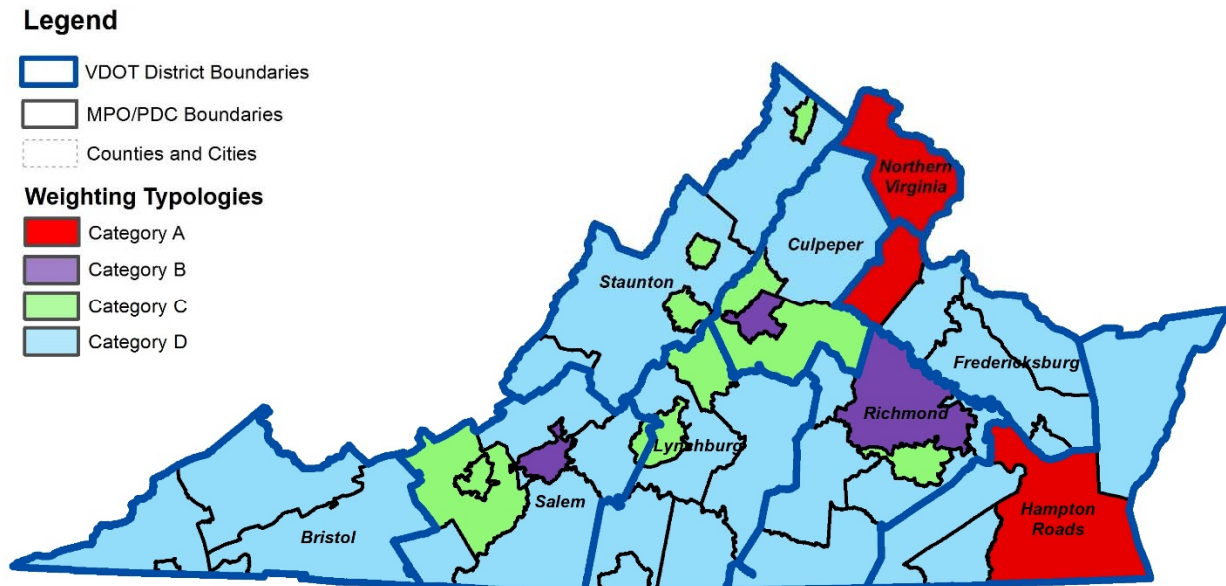


SMART SCALE utilizes evaluation measures that quantify the benefits of each project for six factor areas, detailed in the table below.

Factor Areas	Measure ID	Measure Name	Measure Weight
Safety	S.1	Equivalent property damage only (EPDO) of Fatal and Injury Crashes*	50%
	S.2	EPDO Rate of Fatal and Injury Crashes	50%
Congestion Mitigation	C.1	Person Throughput	50%
	C.2	Person Hours of Delay	50%
Accessibility	A.1	Access to Jobs	60%
	A.2	Access to Jobs for Disadvantaged Persons	20%
	A.3	Access to Multimodal Choices	20%
Environmental Quality	E.1	Air Quality and Environmental Effect	50%
	E.2	Impact to Natural and Cultural Resources	50%
Economic Development	ED.1	Project Support for Economic Development	60%
	ED.2	Intermodal Access and Efficiency	20%
	ED.3	Travel Time Reliability	20%
Land Use	L.1	Transportation-Efficient Land Use	70%
	L.2	Increase in Transportation Efficient Land Use	30%

* 100% for Transit and Transportation Demand Management projects

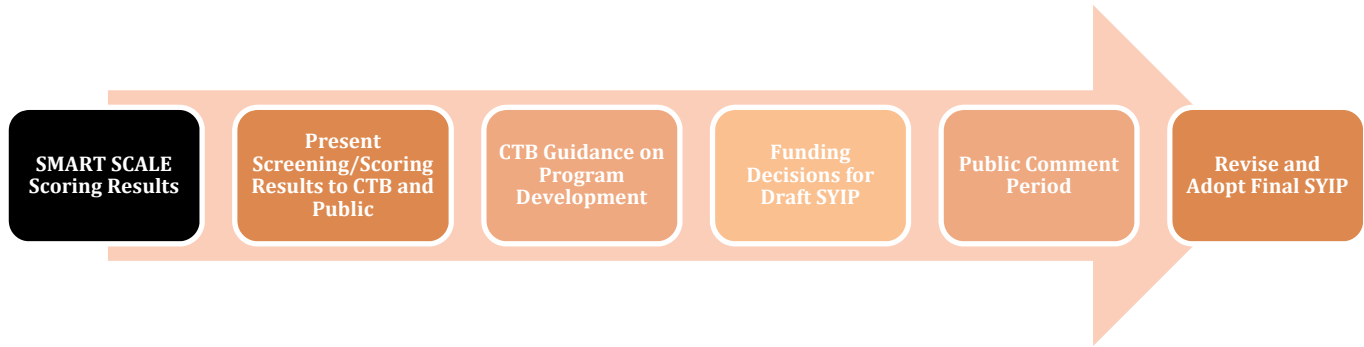
Four area weighting typologies were established based on an analysis of transportation, land use, demographic indicators, and public input to facilitate evaluation of each project’s benefit on a scale relative to the needs of that region as compared across the Commonwealth. The weighting typologies are shown below.



Factor	Congestion Mitigation	Economic Development	Accessibility	Safety	Environmental Quality	Land Use
Category A	45%	5%	15%	5%	10%	20%
Category B	15%	20%	25%	20%	10%	10%
Category C	15%	25%	25%	25%	10%	-
Category D	10%	35%	15%	30%	10%	-

CTB Prioritization and Programming

For each SMART SCALE cycle, the screening and scoring results are presented to the CTB and the public. The CTB provides guidance on program development, and staff develop a draft SYIP based CTB direction and the SMART SCALE scoring results. A public comment period allows the public to comment on the draft SYIP, including the scoring results for individual projects. The CTB takes into account public comments regarding the draft SYIP, ultimately approving the final SYIP for implementation in June.



In general, once a project has been screened, scored, and selected for funding by the CTB, it will remain in the SYIP as a funding priority. Re-evaluation of a project score and funding decision may be needed if there are significant changes in the scope or cost (exceeding a sliding scale, below) to ensure the original intent/benefit of the scored projects and the CTB’s allocation decision. A project may also be re-evaluated if there is a significant reduction in the locally / regionally leveraged funds available for the project. In such cases, CTB action is required to confirm the commitment to funding the project.

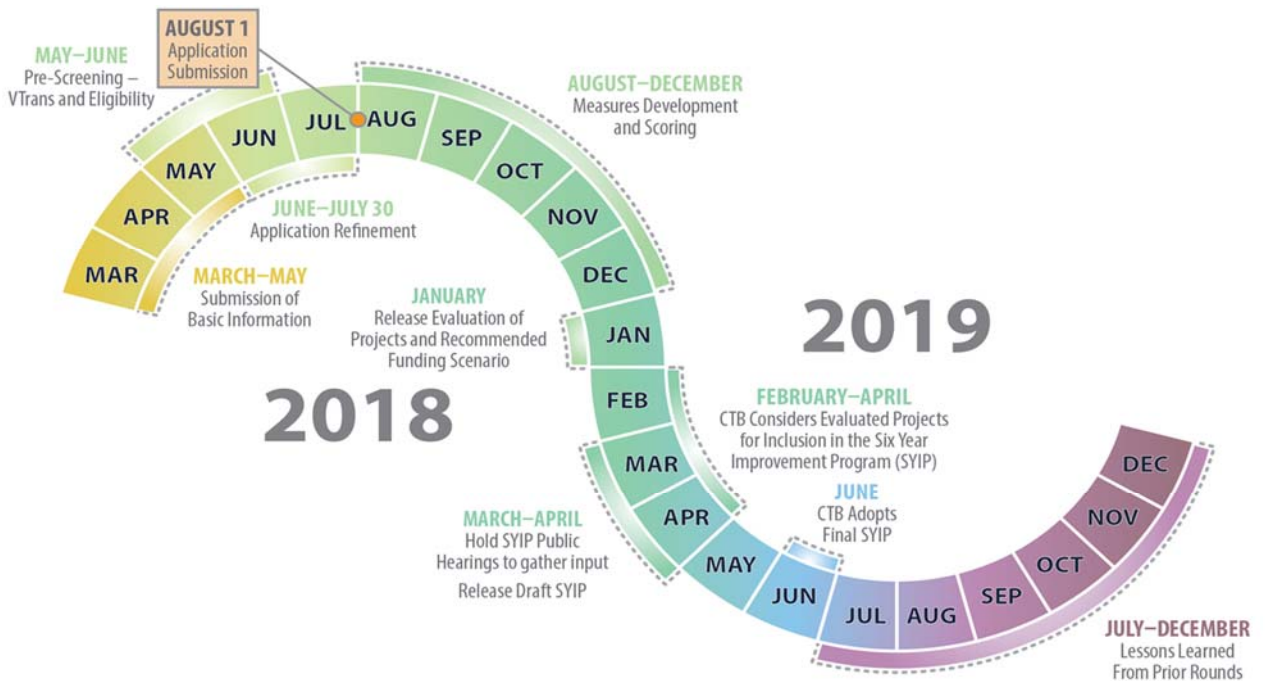
Total Cost Estimate	Threshold
<\$5 million	up to a 20% increase in total allocations
\$5 million to \$10 million	up to a \$1 million increase in total allocations
>\$10 million	up to a 10% increase in total allocations up to a maximum of \$5 million increase in total allocations

If the project scope is increased then the applicant is responsible for the additional cost attributable to the increase in scope, regardless of budget impact. In the cases where a project has been selected for funding which identified other sources of funding, the qualifying entity is committed to pay the difference if other sources of funding are not provided.

If a submitted project is not selected for funding during a cycle, the CTB will allow eligible entities to re-submit the project the next cycle. In the event that revenue reductions decrease the amount of actual funding available for a particular SMART SCALE cohort, projects may be delayed and/or revenues from future rounds of SMART SCALE may be used. Once a project is selected for funding, it cannot be resubmitted to address cost increases or loss of other sources of funding.

SMART SCALE Biennial Schedule

For each SMART SCALE cycle, basic project information must be submitted by June 1st of the calendar year, and final project applications must be submitted by August 1st. Once created, applicants can edit the application up to the submission deadline of August 1. Prior to submittal, all entities are encouraged to coordinate with their local VDOT and DRPT representatives. Once all projects have been submitted, evaluation teams work through December to screen and score all projects and provide project rankings to the CTB in January.



More Questions?

Visit www.vasmartscale.org for more information about the project prioritization process and upcoming important dates.