



## Memorandum

January 24, 2025

To: Sandy Misiewicz – Executive Director, Capital Region Transportation Council

From: Michael Williams – Director of Planning, Capital District Transportation Authority

Subject: Proposal for Enhanced Transit Infrastructure Set-aside for FY25-29 TIP

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The CRTC Planning Committee and staff have established set-asides as a means to designate funding for future projects with a unique purpose in our regional transportation system. The last 2022-27 TIP included the *Bus Rapid Transit Set-aside* (RG131) to progress the design and construction of the region's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects, in line with key recommendations of *New Visions 2050*, the region's current Metropolitan Transit Plan (MTP).

For the 2025-29 TIP, CDTA proposes that the scope of the Bus Rapid Transit Set-aside be expanded to cover a wider range of special transit projects that improve reliability, safety, comfort, and ease of use for transit users and users of other modes. The program would be redesignated as the Enhanced Transit Infrastructure (ETI) Set-aside. As in previous iterations of the TIP, this set-aside will confer the following benefits upon the region's overall transportation system:

- Reduce the overall amount programmed for transit and CDTA activities.
- Eliminate CDTA's participation in any solicitation for other TIP funding.
- Ensure the money is spent and not left on the table, as much of the funding will be used for projects already in the design phase (ex. Red Line BRT Upgrade).
- Leverage additional transit funding from other federal / state sources.
- Implement key recommendations of *In Motion*, the region's upcoming MTP.

In addition to BRT projects, types of new projects that would also be eligible for funding for planning, design, and construction/implementation under the revised scope would be as follows:

### **Success of BRT Set-aside to date**

The existing BRT Set-aside has established a proven track record of success since its inception. The funds made available to transit projects through this set-aside not only fully fund certain projects, but can also be leveraged to bring other sources of funding into the Capital Region, making significantly larger projects possible.

For example, in the 2016-22 TIP, \$28.4 million in BRT Set-aside funding helped CDTA to secure an additional \$133.5 million from other sources. In addition to direct benefits to transit, these funds also paid for \$53 million worth of roadway and intersection improvements, new or upgraded traffic signals, and new or replaced sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure. Expanding the scope of this program could allow additional projects to benefit from this leveraging effect.

### **Mobility Hubs**

Over the past several years, CDTA has begun constructing and opening Mobility Hubs at high-ridership and strategic locations around the Capital Region. These facilities, identified as a priority in CDTA's Transit Development Plan, consist of infrastructure upgrades intended to improve the quality of transfer connections between CDTA's various mobility options, including (but not necessarily limited to) fixed bus service, the CDPHP



*Cycle!* bikeshare program, the FLEX microtransit program, and the DRIVE carshare program. Investments at mobility hub locations also confer benefits upon the communities in which they are built, by realizing improvements in pedestrian safety, walkability, landscaping, and placemaking.

### **Transit Priority Infrastructure**

A key component of CDTA's BRT system has been the inclusion of priority infrastructure intended to reduce travel times and improve service reliability for transit users. These treatments may include, but are not necessarily limited to, queue jumpers, transit signal priority, traffic signal upgrades/replacements, and bus-only rights of way.

While these treatments are well-established as an essential component of BRT in the Capital Region, recent CDTA/CDTC initiatives, such as the *Bus Lane Feasibility Study* and *BRT/Priority Corridors Expansion Study*, have revealed that the inclusion of transit priority infrastructure would also significantly benefit high-ridership corridors that are best suited to solutions other than BRT.

For example, CDTA currently operates several queue jumpers that predate or remain outside of the BRT system, but which still benefit large volumes of daily commuters as the associated local routes are heavily used.

### **Street Infrastructure at Major Bus Stops**

In certain cases where neither BRT service nor a formal mobility hub is justified, many other bus stops around the region have ridership levels high enough to justify the investment of infrastructure to improve the overall pedestrian and transit-user experience. Such investments may include, but are not necessarily limited to, new sidewalks, crosswalks, signals, loading pads, and traffic calming elements like curb bump-outs and medians.

Routine elements of bus stops, such as the mere installation of stops, benches, and/or shelters without significant accompanying infrastructure, would not be included in the scope of the revised set-aside.

Similarly to Mobility Hubs, the host communities in which these facilities are being constructed would also receive desirable improvements to their streets and intersections, potentially avoiding the need for stand-alone street projects to realize their own goals.

### **Other Technology/Infrastructure**

In addition to the types of projects described above, the Enhanced Transit Infrastructure set-aside could also fund the following initiatives, which are not made "on the street" but still confer significant benefits upon the region's transportation system as a whole:

- Operating facilities
- Security cameras
- Regional traffic signal / TSP coordination / emergency preemption
- Data analysis (safety info for cameras, TSP, video detection, traffic counts, transit performance)

### **Funding Amount**

CDTA understands that the overall funding levels for our regional transportation system are limited. Accordingly, CDTA does not request any increase to the level of funding for the BRT & Enhanced Transit Infrastructure Set-aside over that of the current BRT Setaside. CDTA will determine the most appropriate split of the new Setaside funding between BRT projects and non-BRT projects and identify additional sources of funding as needed. In addition, CDTA will continue to not participate in any solicitation for other TIP funding.