

Date of Meeting: November 18, 2008

#9b

**LOUDOUN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ACTION ITEM**

SUBJECT: Transportation and Land Use Committee Report: Alternative Funding and Criteria for Sidewalk Construction

ELECTION DISTRICT: Countywide

CRITICAL ACTION DATE: At the Pleasure of the Board of Supervisors

Committee: At its October 27 meeting, the Transportation and Land Use Committee voted 4-0 to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the criteria for sidewalk and trail construction as contained in the staff report.

Staff: Staff concurs with the Committee's recommendation.

BACKGROUND:

On June 17, 2008, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to identify alternative funding sources for the construction of sidewalks and trails in situations where there are no private sector development - related commitments for the construction of such facilities. This board initiative was sponsored by Supervisor Buckley and the direction came forward as part of discussions regarding the absence of sidewalk segments in the Cascades area. In addition, Supervisor McGimsey has expressed the need for criteria for evaluating pedestrian projects and provided draft criteria for the Board's consideration. At the September 22, 2008 Transportation & Land Use Committee meeting staff outlined proposed criteria and a structure for determining the priority for funding sidewalk requests. As part of that meeting staff also presented background information on alternative funding sources other than gas tax funds, recognizing that these funds have been the primary source for sidewalk projects in the past. The September 22, 2008 staff item is attached for additional background.

The September 22, 2008 staff item contained reference to funding recommendations within the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (BPMMP) which was adopted in 2003, and which in addition to other sources, included reference to the possible use of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenues. The Committee inquired if that recommendation included any further specifics regarding the use of the restricted or unrestricted portion of TOT revenues. Staff researched the development of the recommendations that occurred during the 2002 and 2003 timeframe and reported findings at the October 27 Transportation and Land Use Committee meeting that there is no clear distinction between recommended use of unrestricted and restricted portions of the 5% TOT. The Committee

voted 4-0 to forward this item to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation that the Board adopt the criteria for sidewalk and trail construction as contained in the staff report.

CRITERIA

Staff has developed criteria that can be considered as part of the review and approval of requests for sidewalk construction. Revisions to the criteria, based on Committee input raised at the September 22, 2008 meeting were discussed and recommended for approval at the October 27 Committee meeting.

I. Priority One

Concerns relative to public safety related improvements would be given the highest priority evaluation when considering a sidewalk improvement. Bicycle, pedestrian, and motor vehicle accident locations would be considered. The chart below provides an example of an evaluation tool that might be used in determining priority one projects:

	Evaluation
1. Have accidents related to pedestrian travel occurred in the immediate vicinity and would they have been minimized or avoided by construction of this particular sidewalk or trail segment?	
2. Is there currently a hazardous situation that could be avoided if this particular sidewalk or trail segment were constructed ?	
3. Identify the specific public safety benefits associated with this sidewalk or trail.	
4. Availability of Funding	

II. Priority Two

Priority Two projects would include projects that do not necessarily require urgent attention due to public safety issues but are critical to ensuring connectivity to important activity centers within the County. It is anticipated that the following criteria be considered when evaluating Priority Two projects:

	Evaluation
1. Will the potential sidewalk or trail segment provide a connection to and between any of the following activity centers ?	
• Transit destinations/pick-up and drop-off points	
• Schools	
• Parks/ Active & Passive	
• Libraries	
• Pools	
• Senior Centers/Senior Housing Areas	
• Community Centers/Teen Centers	
	Evaluation (continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping Centers/Entertainment Venues 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Government Buildings 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Centers and Business Areas 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other community assets 	
2. Is the potential sidewalk or trail segment proximate to the following ?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit destinations/pick-up and drop-off points 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population centers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job centers and Business Areas 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other community assets 	
3. Does the potential sidewalk or trail segment provide a needed connection between residential areas and any of the above activity centers ?	
4. Include an evaluation of BPMMP recommendations (note: potential projects that were not specifically identified in the plan would not be excluded from consideration)	
5. Does this project provide for any regional connectivity in terms of location or connection to other modes of transportation that provide regional connections ?	
6. Availability of Funding	

Based on committee input requests for sidewalk construction where sidewalks already exist on one side of the street would not necessarily be precluded from further consideration. The committee also noted that an indication of community or homeowners association support for the proposed project should also be taken into consideration.

It is important to note that in determining the ease/difficulty of constructing either Priority One or Priority Two projects the following physical factors would be considered:

- Site Factors
 - Roadway widths
 - Sensitive areas & constraints, such as wetlands, floodplains, historic buildings, forest, slopes, etc.
 - Development constraints, such as buildings, drainage ways, etc.
 - The presence or absence of adequate crossing facilities
 - Crosswalks
 - Crossing signals
 - The presence of desire-line trails (sometimes referred to as “goat trails”), worn in the soil

Cost consideration would also need to be evaluated on a project basis due to factors such as land or easement availability, engineering issues and the length of segment needed, etc.

FISCAL IMPACT:

It is important that clear criteria be developed in order to evaluate requests for sidewalk construction and to ensure that limited resources are expended for the most effective sidewalk and trail segments which are those that provide the greatest utility in terms of safety, connectivity, and general

improvement to pedestrian circulation. Given fiscal constraints, Board direction is needed to establish the intended magnitude and frequency of future sidewalk and trail construction projects.

DRAFT MOTIONS:

1. I move that the Board of Supervisors adopt the criteria for sidewalk and trail construction, as contained in the staff report.
Or,
2. I move an alternate motion.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Charles Yudd, County Administration
Terrie Laycock, Office of Transportation Services

ATTACHMENT

1. September 22, 2008 Transportation and Land Use Committee item # 7B: Alternative Funding and Sidewalk Construction
<ftp://inter4.loudoun.gov/bos/Board%20Standing%20Committees/Transportation-Land%20Use/2008/09-22-08/>