

13.0 Appendix H: Readiness Gates

13.1 READINESS GATE VALIDATION PROCESS

As discussed in Chapter 2, applicants must clear three readiness gates during the application development process to ensure that the required supporting documentation is completed and provided to staff in a timely manner. The readiness gates are designed to clearly communicate document and timeline requirements and formalize the staff review process within the SMART Portal.

The readiness gates govern the timeline and staff review process for required documents, but not the requirements themselves. SMART SCALE document requirements were established and modified throughout the program's history and are based on VDOT policy, scoring needs, and engineering best practices. More information about document requirements, including document details and a list of warnings found in the Portal, can be found in **Section 2.4**. The readiness gates will not replace the pre-application and full application screening and validation processes as described in **Section 2.0**.

Gate 1 (Applicant Responsibility): Pre-Application Submission

While creating the initial pre-application, applicants will be provided with the supporting document requirements for each selected feature as well as a list of VDOT staff required to be engaged to satisfy Gate 2. Applicants must check a box in the Portal to acknowledge the requirements for the pre-application to be submitted.

Gate 2 (State Responsibility): Pre-Application to Full Application Conversion

For certain high-risk documents, VDOT staff must be engaged in the creation or review of the document before the April 1st pre-application submission deadline. The features with Gate 2 requirements are:

- Add New Through Lane(s), if a major widening;
- Managed Lane(s) (HOV/HOT/Shoulder), if a major widening;
- Improve Grade-Separated Interchange;
- Innovative Interchange;
- Ramp Improvement(s), if not limited to acceleration/deceleration lanes; and
- Roadway on New Alignment.

The required staff to be engaged is provided in the Portal at the time of application creation and in **Section 13.2**. During pre-application validation from April 1st to April 30th, staff will confirm for each document that they were engaged by the applicant and that the document is on track to be completed before July 15th. All high-risk documents must have staff concurrence before the pre-application can be converted to a full application.

Gate 3 (State Responsibility): Full Application Submission

As applicants provide final supporting documents in the Full Application editing phase, VDOT or DRPT staff will confirm that they have reviewed each document and agree that it fulfills the requirements of the associated feature. All supporting documents must be uploaded before July 15th to allow time for staff review and confirmation before the August 1st submission deadline. All documents must have Gate 3 confirmation before the full application can be submitted.

Table 13.1 includes the confirmation responsibility, completion date, and confirmation text found in the Portal for each gate. While VDOT staff is responsible for the Gate 2 confirmation, the applicant is responsible for engaging the Gate 2 staff in the creation or review of the required document in a timely manner.

Table 13.1 Readiness Gate Completion Details

Readiness Gate	Confirmation Responsibility	Completion Date	Confirmation Text
Gate 1: Pre-Application Submission	Applicant	April 1 st	Applicant acknowledges the above requirements and confirms that the supporting document for this feature will be completed and provided before July 15 th .
Gate 2: Pre-Application to Full Application Conversion	VDOT staff	April 30 th	Staff confirms that they have been engaged in the creation timelior review of the required supporting document for this feature and believe that the document will be completed before July 15 th .
Gate 3: Full Application Submission	VDOT staff	July 15 th	Staff confirms that the provided document satisfies the above requirements and has no outstanding issues.

13.2 DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS AND STAFF CONFIRMATIONS

This section provides feature-specific details for the readiness gates including the document requirements, a general description of the conditions triggering the requirements, and a list of VDOT staff who will be providing Portal confirmation as described in **Table 13.1**.

Add New Through Lane(s)

Document:	Planning/Safety study with operational analysis.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Traffic Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer (if on CoSS or APN)

Document:	Alternatives analysis considering improvements without widening
Conditions:	Project includes a major widening (2 or more new lanes)
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • District Traffic Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer

Managed Lane(s) (HOV/HOT/Shoulder)

Document:	Planning/Safety study with operational analysis.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Traffic Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer (if on CoSS or APN)

Document:	Alternatives analysis considering improvements without widening
Conditions:	Project includes a major widening (2 or more new lanes)
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • Assistant State Traffic Engineer (if on CoSS or APN)
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • District Traffic Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer • Assistant State Traffic Engineer (if on CoSS or APN)

Construct or Convert Existing General-Purpose or Parking Lane to Bus-Only Lane

Document:	Operational Analysis (HCS, Synchro, etc)
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Traffic Engineer • Assistant State Traffic Engineer (if on CoSS or APN)

Construct or Improve At-Grade Bike/Pedestrian Crossing

Document:	Completed SS02 Uncontrolled Crossing Study form or equivalent study
Conditions:	Project includes a pedestrian crossing at an uncontrolled approach or mid-block location.
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Traffic Engineer

Improve Grade-Separated Interchange

Document:	Draft or final IAR or OSAR with a signed LD-459 Framework Document
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • District Environmental Manager • District Traffic Engineer • District Planner • District Project Development Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer

Innovative Interchange

Document:	Draft or final IAR or OSAR with a signed LD-459 Framework Document*
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • Assistant State Traffic Engineer
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District L&D Engineer • District Environmental Manager • District Traffic Engineer • District Planner • District Project Development Engineer • Assistant State L&D Engineer

* For new interchanges, refer to the requirements for the New Interchange feature. For improvements to existing interchanges, refer to the requirements for the Improve Grade-Separated Interchange feature.

Innovative Intersection(s)

Document: **Operational analysis (HCS, Synchro, etc)**

Conditions: All selections

Gate 3 Confirmations:

- District Traffic Engineer

Document: **Completed iCAP assessment or equivalent documentation**

Conditions: If on CoSS or APN

Gate 3 Confirmations:

- District Traffic Engineer

Intersection Improvement(s)

Document: **Completed iCAP assessment or equivalent documentation**

Conditions: If on CoSS or APN and project includes modifying the intersection configuration

Gate 3 Confirmations:

- District Traffic Engineer

ITS Improvement(s) / Advanced Signal Control

Document: **Planning/Safety study with operational analysis**

Conditions: Project includes corridor-level advanced signal control improvements.

Gate 3 Confirmations:

- District Traffic Engineer
- Assistant State Traffic Engineer (if CoSS or APN)

New Interchange, Limited Access Facility OR New Interchange, Non-Limited Access Facility

Document: **Draft or final IAR with a signed LD-459 Framework Document**

Conditions: All selections

Gate 2 Confirmations:

- District L&D Engineer

Gate 3 Confirmations:

- District L&D Engineer
- District Environmental Manager
- District Traffic Engineer
- District Planner
- District Project Development Engineer
- Assistant State L&D Engineer

New Intersection

Document:	Completed iCAP assessment or equivalent documentation
Conditions:	If on CoSS or APN
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Traffic Engineer

New Traffic Signal

Document:	Approved Signal Justification Report (SJR)
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Traffic Engineer• Assistant State Traffic Engineer (if on APN)

Ramp Improvement(s)

Document:	Draft or final OSAR with signed LD-459 Framework Document
Conditions:	Project includes modifications to the interchange configuration
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District L&D Engineer
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District L&D Engineer• District Environmental Manager• District Traffic Engineer• District Planner• District Project Development Engineer• Assistant State L&D Engineer

Roadway Reconfiguration

Document:	Traffic operational analysis (HCS, Synchro, etc.)
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Traffic Engineer

Turn Lane Improvement(s)

Document:	Turning movement counts
Conditions:	Project includes a new turn lane
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Traffic Engineer

Roadway on New Alignment

Document:	Planning/Safety study with alternatives analysis considering improvements not on a new alignment
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 2 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District L&D Engineer
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District L&D Engineer• District Traffic Engineer• District Environmental Manager• Assistant State L&D Engineer

Construct/Expand Bus Facility

Document:	TDP, Comp Plan, LRTP, or equivalent study which documents recommendations consistent with the project scope. Completed SS04 Transit Environmental Review Form.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Statewide Transit Planner

New High-Capacity or Fixed-Guideway Route/Service

Document:	TDP, Comp Plan, LRTP, or equivalent study which documents recommendations consistent with the project scope. Completed SS04 Transit Environmental Review Form.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Statewide Transit Planner

Freight Rail Improvements

Document:	Conceptual (10%) design plans consistent with the project scope. Carload projects and a letter of support from the stakeholder railroad owner or operator.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Director of Rail Planning

Intercity Passenger Rail Service Improvements

Document:	Planning Study/Feasibility Study including ridership projections, route alignment, proposed stops, and draft schedule. Conceptual (10%) design plans consistent with the project scope and a letter of support from the stakeholder railroad owner or operator.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Director of Rail Planning

New Intercity Passenger Rail Station or Station Improvements

Document:	Planning Study/Feasibility Study including ridership projections, route alignment, proposed stops, and draft schedule. Conceptual (10%) design plans consistent with the project scope and a letter of support from the stakeholder railroad owner or operator.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Director of Rail Planning

New Station or Station Improvements

Document:	Planning Study/Feasibility Study documenting a locally preferred alternative consistent with the project scope.
Conditions:	All selections
Gate 3 Confirmations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRPT Director of Rail Planning
