



DRPT has been busy this fall. This newsletter outlines all of the ways that rail and transit services are being improved for you and your community through our recent and upcoming work. Please [reach out to us](#) if you have any questions or want further information.

Thank you for reading our Director's Update!

## Governor Youngkin's Visit

Governor Glenn Youngkin visited DRPT's office on October 3<sup>rd</sup> for the agency's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. During the visit, he and Secretary of Transportation W. Sheppard Miller III gave remarks, congratulated DRPT on our value to the Commonwealth, and met with our leadership team.

A Governor's [Proclamation](#) was issued to recognize October 3, 2022 as Rail and Public Transportation Day in Virginia.

“

*WHEREAS, DRPT has worked with its rail and public transportation partners to connect communities and businesses throughout the Commonwealth; and...*

*WHEREAS, DRPT will continue to serve the Commonwealth with success in the future*

GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION



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## Rail Projects in the Works

## **DC2RVA and Transforming Rail in Virginia**

DRPT and the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority are working together on a number of efforts, including tasks that are funded through federal grants from the DC2RVA project, which advances the Transforming Rail in Virginia Initiative.

One of these tasks is the Alexandria to Spotsylvania Fourth Track project. The NEPA Re-Evaluation and Pre-Permitting work kicked-off for the fourth track earlier this month. A prior DC2RVA task cleared the area between Alexandria and Spotsylvania for three tracks. Now, through the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative, there is an opportunity to build a fourth track and separate passenger and freight rail in this area. This will help reduce delays and lessen competition for track use in Virginia.

## **Rail Grant Applications**

DRPT is working to improve state rail crossings by applying for federal grants. As of early October, we have submitted one grouped application for four rural crossing improvement projects through FRA's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Applications.

DRPT is also supporting VPRA's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program applications for 1) the Franconia-Springfield Bypass in Northern Virginia where Virginia Railway Express, Amtrak, and CSX share tracks, 2) 60% design for the S-line between Petersburg and North Carolina (joint application with NCDOT), and 3) the Southeast Rail Corridor's Freight Network Analysis.

## **DRPT Grant Programs**

DRPT's freight rail grant cycle for FY24 projects runs from December 1, 2022 to February 1, 2023. DRPT is working with our partners, including railroads and the Port of Virginia, to develop projects that align with our rail plan goals and meet the requirements to be candidates for Virginia's Freight Program and fulfill the mission of our [Transforming Freight in Virginia initiative](#).

Another one of DRPT's grant programs, the [rail industrial access development program](#), is more popular than ever. We've approved five grants so far this fiscal year. Last year, there were only six projects total.

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# **Transit Projects in the Works**

## **Virginia's Options for Low-no Transitions (VOLT): A Roadmap for Public Transit Agencies**

This winter DRPT will launch a new initiative aimed at helping Virginia's transit agencies convert their bus fleets to low and no emissions vehicles. This roadmap will help transit agencies of all sizes navigate the complexities of transitioning bus fleets to cleaner, more efficient vehicles through the development of financial planning tools, readiness checklists, transition plan templates, and workforce development best practices.

## **Statewide Transit Technology Procurements**

One of the needs identified as part of the [HJ 542 Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study](#) was for DRPT to take a more active role in developing statewide procurements for various transit technologies. To address this, DRPT is in the

process of exploring options for procuring various transit technologies, including microtransit technology, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and transit planning software.

### **Virginia Transportation and Mobility Directory**

DRPT is developing and implementing a stage two one-click system for public, human service, and specialized transportation; mobility management; travel training; and transportation-supportive programs and services. This project will cover the entire state's geography and all population demographics, including individuals with disabilities, seniors, veterans, and individuals with opioid use disorder.

The new system will upgrade the award-winning Virginia Transportation Finder tool by incorporating a map-based search service, smartphone app integration, and customized user accounts. The new platform will also align transit resources more closely with other modes including biking, ride-sharing, and carpooling.

### **Coordinated Human Services Mobility (CHSM) Plan Update**

DRPT is currently in the process of completing an update to the 2019 [CHSM](#) plan, which looks at opportunities for enhancing transportation access for individuals with disabilities, older adults, low-income populations, and veterans. DRPT and a team of master's-eligible students from the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University conducted a literature review of best practices in CHSM planning and needs around human services transportation, and evaluated the 2019 CHSM plan to make recommendations for updates. The team also developed and conducted a provider survey, analyzed the results of the survey, and utilized that information to make recommendations to DRPT about additional updates. Lastly, the team developed a [rider survey](#) that DRPT will conduct and analyze to further update the plan.

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## **Statewide Rail Plan**

DRPT completed and presented our Statewide Rail Plan draft for stakeholder and public review in September. The plan provides long-term guidance for Virginia's transportation leadership to ensure that the Commonwealth's rail needs for people, communities, and commerce are addressed, policies for future rail investments are consistent, the public is educated on current rail issues, and that rail transportation continues to be a safe, economical, and environmentally friendly mode choice.

The total planned investment in the 2022 Statewide Rail Plan is \$5.8 billion, which is nearly \$2 billion more than the planned investment from the previous Rail Plan. The total number of recommended projects is 174, 93 on freight and 81 on passenger rail.

Learn more:

[Draft Rail Plan](#)  
[Presentation](#)

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## HJ 542

In August, DRPT completed a two-year study and final report as directed by the General Assembly. [House Joint Resolution 542](#), passed in 2021, called for a needs assessment focusing on the equitable delivery of transportation services and modernization of transit in the Commonwealth. After identifying challenges and opportunities, creating interim reports, hosting focus groups, engaging the public, and more — DRPT has identified 29 recommendations that serve as a roadmap to direct subsequent efforts — by both DRPT and local transit agencies.

The Action Plan recommendations were developed through consultation with local transit agencies, evaluated by technical experts and industry partners, and refined during a robust public process. Final recommendations are organized by their anticipated timeline for implementation: near-, mid-, and long-term.

Learn more:

[Final Report](#)  
[Website](#)



## 30th Anniversary

This year is DRPT's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Our six former agency directors recorded messages to celebrate 30 years of connecting the Commonwealth.

[Watch now!](#)



*30 years of connecting  
the Commonwealth*

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## Awards

DRPT's Virginia Transportation Navigator won two awards, the [Innovative Transportation Solution Award from WTS Central Virginia](#) and the [Technology Innovation in Public Sector Award from RVATech](#)!

Check out the award-winning directory of public transit, human service, and specialized transportation providers, programs, and services on our [homepage](#).

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## Transit Unplugged

Director DeBruhl is the guest on this week's episode of the [Transit Unplugged](#) podcast. Please tune in today to hear about the amazing work our agency and partners are doing throughout the Commonwealth!

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## Annual Report

Learn more about the work DRPT has done throughout Fiscal Year 2022, including a special message from Director DeBruhl.

Click on the image below to see the entire report!



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