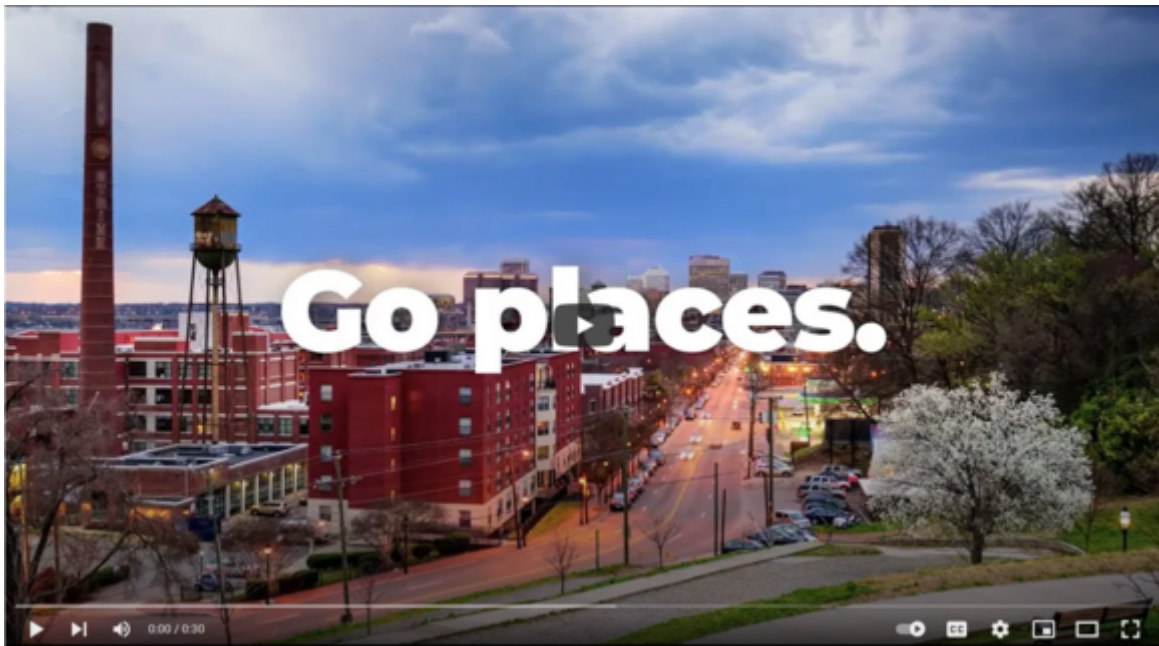


This newsletter outlines all of the ways that rail and transit services are being improved for you and your community through our recent and upcoming work. Please [reach out to us](#) if you have any questions or want further information.

Thank you for reading our Director's Update!

Discover Transit



DRPT is leading a state-wide marketing campaign encouraging Virginians to try transit for the first time or return to using transit. We are partnering with our agencies to spread the word about the many benefits of transit in their region. Be on the lookout for ads (like the video above) online, in the mail, on the road, and more!

Rail Updates

The 2023 Statewide Rail Plan won *first place* recognition at the Virginia Association for Mapping and Land Information Systems GeoCon 2023 Map Showcase. It is the

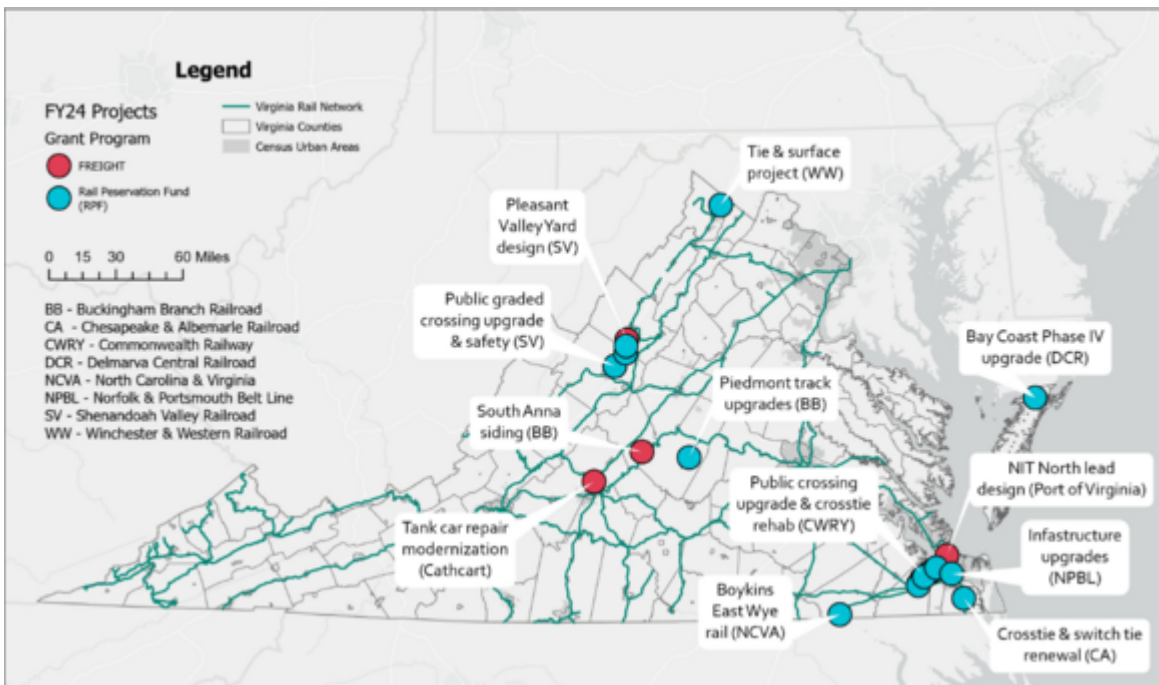
first of its kind and allows for easier navigation and periodic updates. Check it out [here!](#)

The Statewide Rail Map is being updated with DRPT's new agency logo and color scheme. It includes the most current information about passenger and freight rail in the Commonwealth. New folded maps are expected to be available to the public this summer.



DRPT's [Freight Program](#) and [Rail Preservation Program](#) received 20 applications for project funding during this year's annual grant application period. DRPT recommends approval for 12 of those projects totaling approximately \$20M.

See DRPT's Fiscal Year 2024 recommended projects on the map below:



Transit Updates

DRPT's Fiscal Year 2024 Grant Funding Recommendations

- [MERIT](#) Capital: 398 projects, state capital cost of \$94M.
- [MERIT](#) Operating: \$133M distributed to all 39 agencies using the performance based formula
- [MERIT](#) Special Programs:
 - Technical Assistance: 25 projects, state cost of \$2.4M
 - Demonstration Assistance: 9 projects, state cost of \$2.6M
 - Workforce Development: 10 projects, state cost of \$409k
- [TRIP](#): 4 projects, state cost of \$19.9M
- [5310](#): 24 capital grants for paratransit vehicles and 26 operating grants for mobility management programs.
- [CAP](#) Operating: 15 projects, state cost of \$2.5M
- [CAP](#) Project Assistance: 12 projects, state cost of \$1.3M

Microtransit

DRPT completed its 18-month [microtransit demonstration project](#) with Bay Transit and Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC) in March 2023. The report evaluates the successes and challenges of microtransit services in the two rural areas chosen for the demonstration project. The final report includes a summary of the project findings, an operational sustainability strategy, and an implementation toolkit for other rural transit agencies to use if they are interested in developing microtransit services in their area.



Modernizing Transit Fleets: A Guide to Low- and Zero-Emission Buses

DRPT has officially kicked off a year-long project to create a resource guide for Virginia's transit agencies to plan for transitioning their fleets to low- and zero-emission vehicles. The guide will provide technical guidance for fleet and facilities transition planning; while also assisting agencies in taking advantage of new federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) & Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and tackling challenges in workforce recruitment, retention and training.

HJ542 Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study

Kimley Horn and DRPT will receive the 2023 National Recognition Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) for the development of the [HJ542 Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study](#). The National Recognition Award is a prestigious award given to projects that demonstrate exceptional engineering excellence at a national level.

Partnership for Petersburg

DRPT is pursuing federal discretionary funding through the FTA to assist [Petersburg Area Transit \(PAT\)](#) with the development of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of PAT's paratransit service; an accessibility gap assessment of fixed route, paratransit, and specialized transportation services in the Petersburg region; and a Zero Emission Fleet Transition Plan.

Transit Bus Orders

On behalf of 11 rural transit agencies, DRPT submitted a discretionary grant application to FTA's Buses and Bus Facilities program to replace 39 transit buses that have surpassed their useful lives.

General Assembly Update

[SB1079](#) (Cosgrove)/ [HB1496](#) (Austin)

This new legislation was passed in the 2023 session. It makes changes to the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund, allocating a separate pot of funding for commuter rail. It also adds reporting requirements to the [Commonwealth Transportation Board](#) (CTB) for [VRE](#), outlines reporting requirements to the CTB for [WMATA](#) and [NVTC](#), and caps the total operating and capital assistance required to be provided by Virginia in the approved WMATA budget at 50%.

ONE DRPT

DRPT has a new strategic plan!

Our goals:

- Create a positive impact on the Commonwealth
- Foster innovative practical solutions
- Convene with partners and stakeholders
- Cultivate a sustainable well-managed organization

NEXT STOP: 2030



DRPT
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Our values:

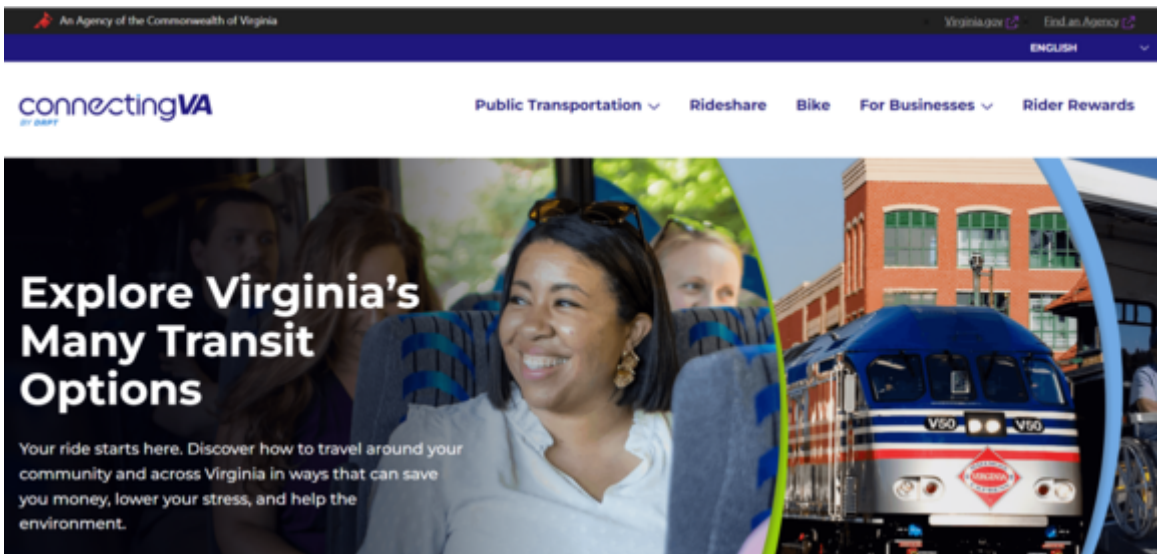
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Stewardship
- Knowledge
- Professionalism

Follow us!



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

ConnectingVA



Check out DRPT's brand new [ConnectingVA](#) website! Find rides and earn rewards with the [rider rewards app](#) in your region. This site is a hub for resources for businesses and people interested in a variety of transportation and transportation demand management options.

In The News

[Community Viewpoint: Virginia Breeze fulfills mission](#)

By: Jennifer DeBruhl, Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

[Bureaucracy blocks Virginia localities from building better bus stops](#)

By: Wyatt Gordon

[CTB Approves Grant to Ashton Creek Industrial Park for Truck-to-rail Diversion](#)

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) announced today that Ashton Creek Industrial Park LLC will receive a \$450,000 grant through the agency's Rail Industrial Access Program to support the construction of a new 1,320-foot rail spur at its facility in Chesterfield County.

[DRPT Receives APTA Award for Virginia Breeze](#)

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) received a first place award from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) for growing ridership of Virginia Breeze intercity bus service through marketing.

[DRPT's Statewide Rail Plan Receives FRA Approval](#)

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) announced today that its Statewide Rail Plan received approval from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The 2022 Statewide Rail 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.

[Commonwealth Transportation Board Invites Public Feedback on Transportation Projects and Initiatives](#)

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will host nine meetings across Virginia and is inviting the public to share feedback on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding, as well as other transportation initiatives. Members of the community may participate by attending public meetings or submitting comments online, by email, or by mail.