



# DRPT 2024 Legislative Update

Prepared by DRPT for the Charlottesville-  
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Partnership

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# The Department of Rail and Public Transportation

## Who are we?



The catalyst to connect and improve the quality of life for all Virginians through innovative transportation solutions



Our vision is a connected Commonwealth with an integrated multimodal network that serves every person, every business, and every need



The agency works with rail and public transportation stakeholders to provide service to people throughout Virginia



Promotes transportation options to the general public, businesses, and community decision-makers

## What do we do?



Allocates state and federal funding through capital and operating grants, as well as grants to support specific enhancements or improvements



Conducts statewide rail and transit studies, including improving service or identifying new opportunities



Plans and programs new services and capital improvement projects, from public transportation to freight and passenger rail



Provides leadership, advocacy, technical assistance, and funding oversight

# The Commonwealth Transportation Board



Virginia's top decision-making body for Transportation projects across the Commonwealth



Oversees transportation projects and initiatives, approves funding and grant-scoring methodologies, and prioritizes investments



Turns laws passed by the General Assembly into actions, by adopting resolutions and policies for the design, funding, planning, and more of Virginia's transportation network



Consists of 17 members appointed by the Governor, including the Secretary of Transportation who serves as chair, and the Director of DRPT and the Commissioner of VDOT who serve ex-officio

# 2024 Session summary:

Democrats controlled both chambers, but a significant number of officeholders are first-time members of the General Assembly

Funding for K-12 education, creating a stadium/entertainment district authority, support for WMATA, as well as bills on gun control and civil rights took center stage

2024 was not the busiest year for rail or public transportation legislation, yet important changes still did happen

The new 2024-2026 biennial budget passed\* on time

Funding for transit priorities has been tied to political priorities, ie: WMATA funding has been tied to the passage of the Sports and Entertainment Authority

\*Disclaimer: The budget was passed by the General Assembly, the budget still awaits the Governor's actions

# Major rail and public transit bills



HB 201 – Requires, rather than permits, House of Delegates membership in NVTC, NVTA, and PRTC



HB 285 – Exempts bus shelters from the Uniform Statewide Building Code under the DGS' oversight



HB 385 – Railroad safety, requires a two-person crew



HB 510 – Surplus line broker tax, exempts VRE's insurers from certain taxes



HB 780 & 1001 – Collective bargaining by employees of public transportation providers permitted



HB 802 – Establishes the Virginia Museum of Transportation



HB 1201 – Incorporates certain expenditures into WMATA's operating budget growth cap



HB 1425 – Exempts VPRA's railroad bridges and tunnels from the Uniform Statewide Building Code



SB 143 – Railroad safety, requires a two-person crew



SB 158 – NVTA, changes the appointment process for NVTA's technical advisory committee



SB 374 – Collective bargaining by public employees, including public transportation providers



SB 418 – Establishes the Virginia Museum of Transportation

















SB 617 – Incorporates certain expenditures into WMATA's operating budget growth cap



SB 670 – Surplus line broker tax, exempts VRE's insurers from certain taxes

# Major rail and public transit bills... and their fate

 HB 201 – Requires, rather than permits, House of Delegates membership in NVTC, NVTA, and PRTC	Passed	 SB 143 – Railroad safety, requires a two-person crew	Veto!
 HB 285 – Exempts bus shelters from the Uniform Statewide Building Code under the DGS' oversight	Passed	 SB 158 – NVTA, changes the appointment process for NVTA's technical advisory committee	Passed
 HB 385 – Railroad safety, requires a two-person crew	Veto!	 SB 374 – Collective bargaining by public employees including public transportation providers	Died in Sen.
 HB 510 – Surplus line broker tax, exempts VRE's from certain taxes	Cont. to 2025	 SB 418 – Establishes the Virginia Museum of Transportation	Cont. to 2025
 HB 780 & 1001 – Collective bargaining by employees of transportation providers permitted	Died in House	 SB 617 – Incorporates certain expenditures into WMATA's operating budget growth cap	Cont. to 2025
 HB 802 – Establishes the Virginia Museum of Transportation	Died in House	 SB 670 – Surplus line broker tax, exempts insurers from certain taxes	Now a study
 HB 1201 – Incorporates certain expenditures into WMATA's operating budget growth cap	Died in House		
 HB 1425 – Exempts VPRA's railroad bridges and structures from the Uniform Statewide Building Code	Signed by Gov.		

# HB 285 – “The bus shelter bill”

## The problem:

- Bus shelters on state right-of-ways have an extremely long permitting process, are held to higher standards than a bus shelter should be, and have been known to be removed from state property shortly after being constructed.

## The goal:

- Cut through red tape and shorten the process of building a bus stop or shelter, allowing for people to have the minimum shelter they need while waiting for transit

## The bill:

- Exempt bus shelters under a certain size from going under state review – cutting through red tape and instead passing the review process onto the locality

## What's next?

- Governor yet to take action on the bill - his deadline for action is April 8th



# Northern Virginia Transit Study

- SJR 28 establishes a Joint Subcommittee on Northern Virginia Public Transportation Systems
  - *“To study long-term, sustainable, dedicated funding and cost-containment controls and strategies to ensure the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the Virginia Railway Express, and the public transit systems that serve the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission transportation districts meet the growing needs of public transit in the region.”*
- The subcommittee shall:
  - Examine revenue sources for dedicated operating or capital funding
  - Identify industry-wide cost-saving and cost-containment tools
  - Evaluate future land use plans for high-capacity transit corridors in Northern Virginia
  - Receive technical assistance from NVTC, PRTC, WMATA, VRE and DRPT

# The 2024-2026 Biennial Budget\*

# Funding for Transportation



The majority of State funds for transportation are from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund



The CTF distributes funds through formulas to certain program areas, while the CTB approves appropriations for projects



Regional transportation authorities receive funding through transfer payments from VDOT

## Virginia Transportation Secretariat Budget FY 24 - FY 26

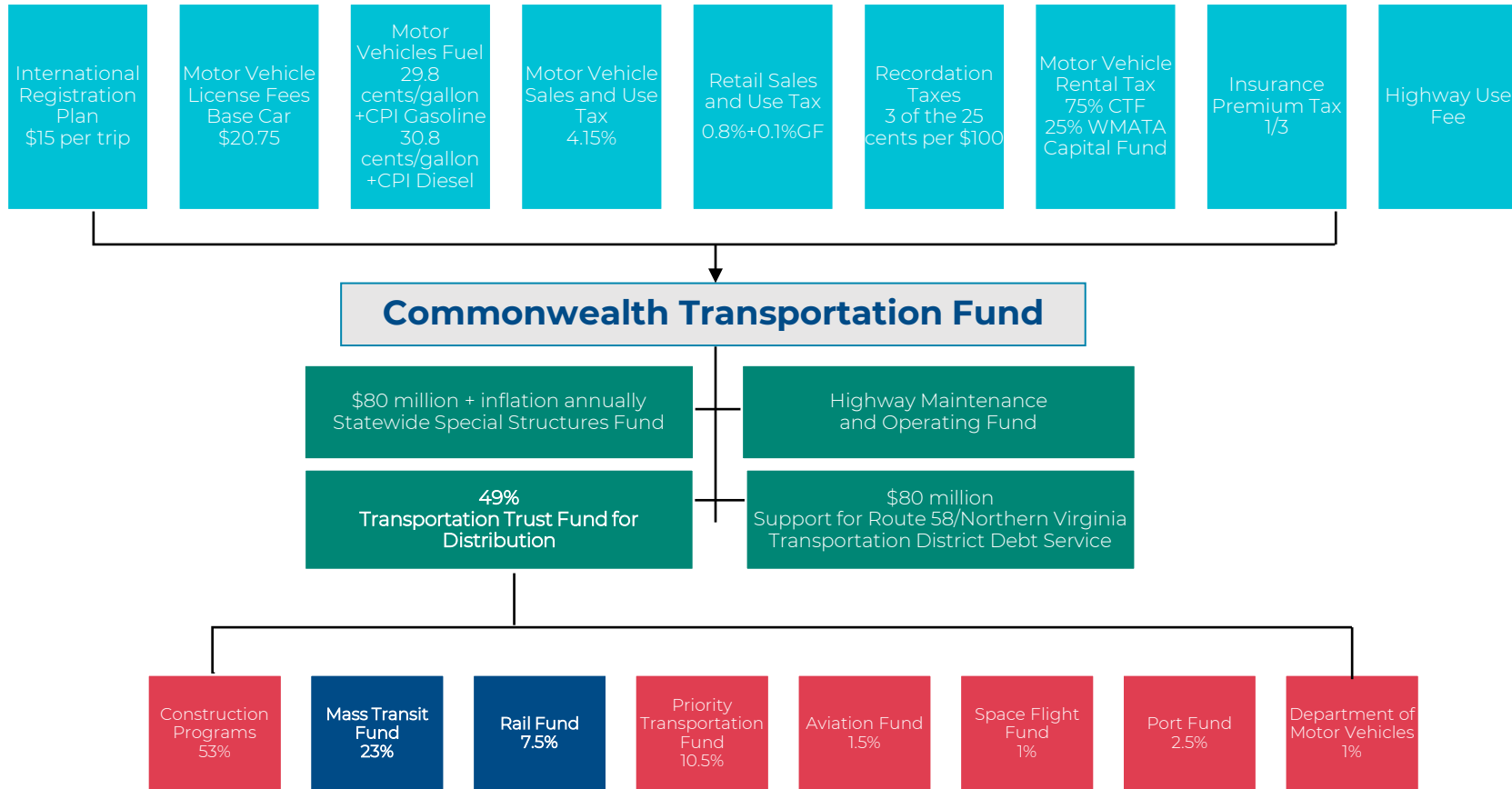
Agency	FY 25	FY 26
Department of Aviation	\$ 43.2	\$ 43.2
Department of Motor Vehicles*	\$ 475.6	\$ 475.6
<b>Department of Rail and Public Transportation</b>	<b>\$ 963.1</b>	<b>\$ 975.3</b>
Department of Transportation*	\$8,979.6	\$8,523.5
Motor Vehicle Dealer Board	\$ 3.6	\$ 3.6
Secretary of Transportation	\$ 1.1	\$ 1.1
Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority	\$ 23.2	\$ 23.7
Virginia Passenger Rail Authority	\$ 318.3	\$ 368.7
Virginia Port Authority	\$ 282.4	\$ 289.2

Per Governor's Introduced Budget, Dec. 20, 2023

\*Includes transfer payments

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

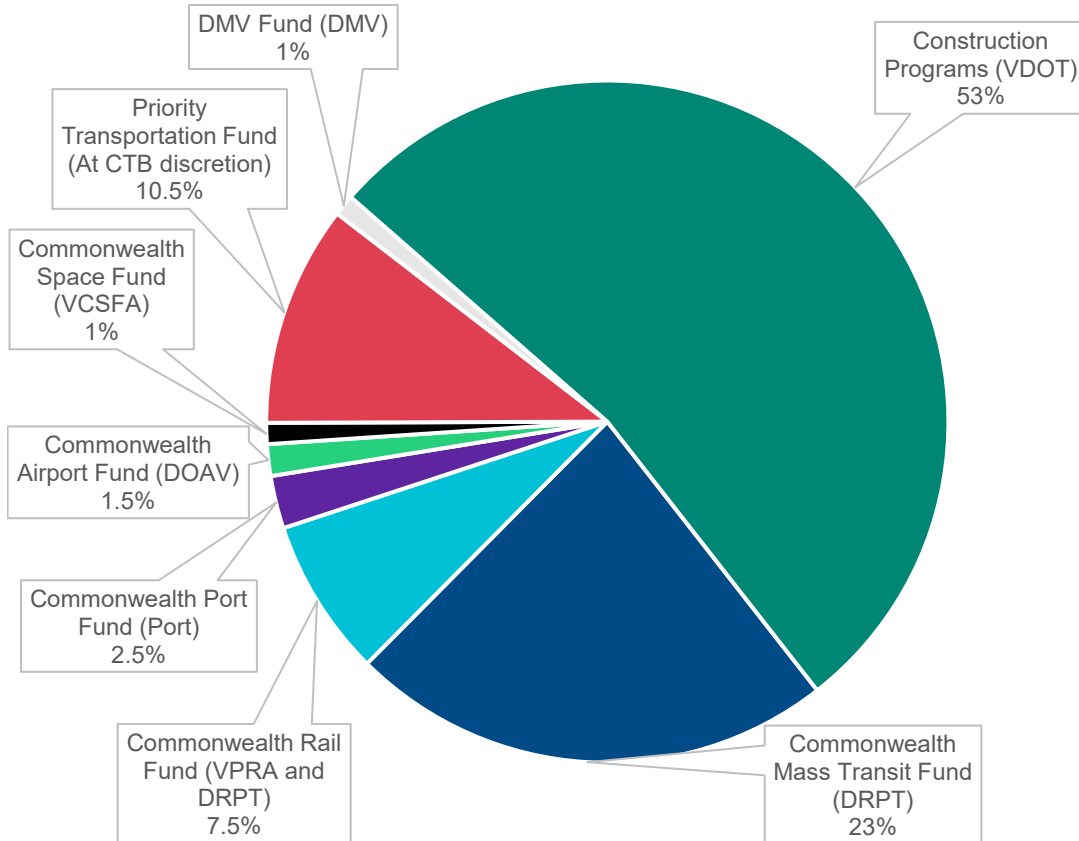
# The Commonwealth Transportation Fund



- After a major legislative change in 2020, all State transportation revenues are pooled into the Commonwealth Transportation Fund.
- ~\$160 million is taken “off the top” from the CTF - the remainder of funds “go through the waterfall”
- State funding for all transit programs is formula-driven and planned six-years out as part of the Six-Year Improvement Program

# Transportation Trust Fund

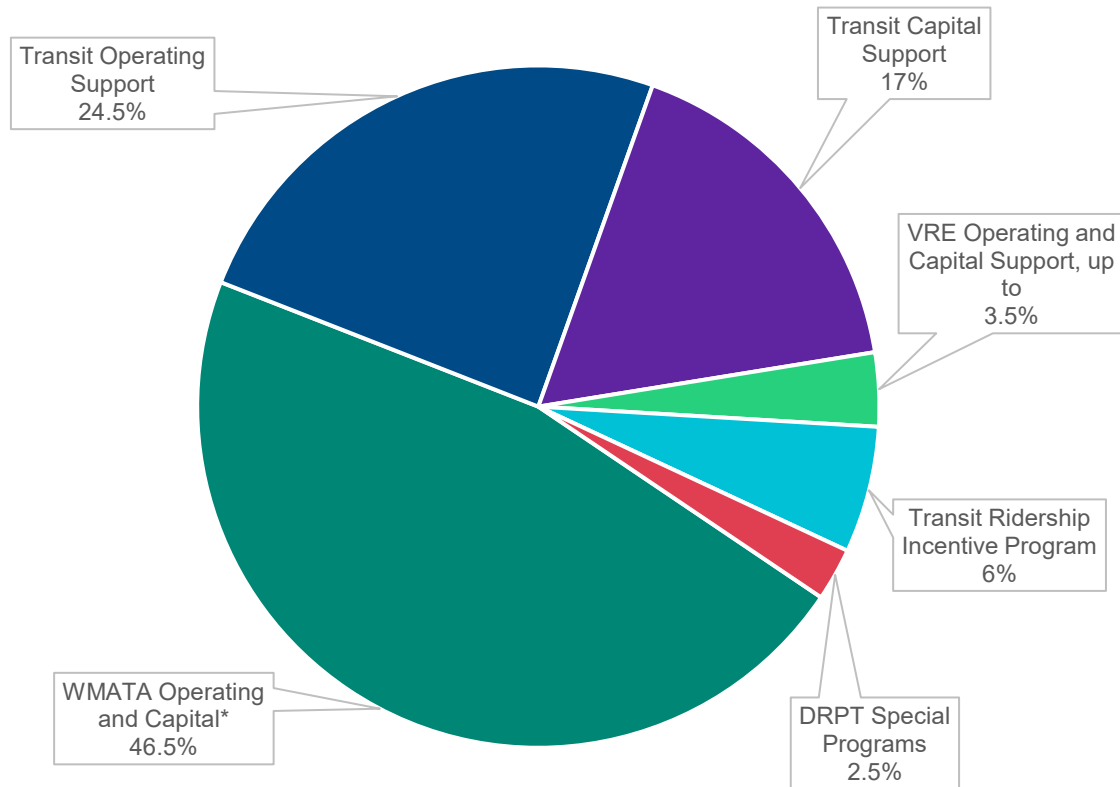
Distribution of the Transportation Trust Fund



- 49% of the remaining CTF funding is distributed to the Transportation Trust Fund
- 53% of the TTF are construction funds - primarily for VDOT
- 23% of the TTF funds the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund - DRPT's main source of funds
- 7.5% of the TTF funds the Commonwealth Rail Fund – 7% of which goes to DRPT for rail programs, and the rest is for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

# Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund

Distribution of the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund



\*The CTB can withhold up to 20% of WMATA funding and operating support if certain conditions are not met

- 23% of TTF funding goes to the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund
- Before going through the CMTF formula, several items are taken “off the top”:
  - \$50 million for WMATA PRIIA match
  - \$2 million for DRPT State Safety and Oversight Program
  - \$1.5 million for paratransit
- DRPT may use up to 5% of funds for administration

# Upcoming

April 8

- Deadline for the Governor to act on most legislation, including the Budget

April 17

- Reconvened session – General Assembly acts on all amended or vetoed items from the Governor

July 1

- A new fiscal year begins, and the budget cycle begins anew

And repeat

- Prefiling for new legislation for the 2025 session begins July 15th

Questions?