



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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May 3, 2022

The Honorable Barry D. Knight
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room W1312
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Terry L. Austin
Chair, Transportation Committee
Virginia House of Delegates
Pocahontas Building, Room W1304
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Chair, Finance and Appropriations Committee
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E509
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable David W. Marsden
Chair, Transportation Committee
Senate of Virginia
Pocahontas Building, Room E509
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Legislators:

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation is pleased to provide the report on the Transit Ridership Incentive Program's (TRIP) regional connectivity projects to the legislature.

The 2020 General Assembly session established TRIP in Va. Code §33.2-1526.3. TRIP has two goals: improve the regional connectivity of urban areas with population in excess of 100,000 and reduce barriers to transit use for low-income riders. To meet these targets, TRIP programming and funding was divided into sub-programs: zero- and reduced-fare as well as regional connectivity.

Item 430 L of the Chapter 552 of the 2021 Special Session I Acts of Assembly states that the agency shall use \$3,600,000 in the second year from TRIP for regional connectivity programs focused on congestion reduction and mitigation through provision of long-distance commuter routes, and provide the Chairs of House Appropriations, Senate Finance and Appropriations, House Transportation, and Senate Transportation Committees the methodology used and distributions of such funds to transit systems by June 30, 2022. This report focuses on the outreach, policy development, selected projects, and associated performance metrics of the TRIP regional connectivity program to fulfill that requirement.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. DeBruhl".

Jennifer B. DeBruhl

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP INCENTIVE PROGRAM

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY PROJECTS



Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Fiscal Year 2022

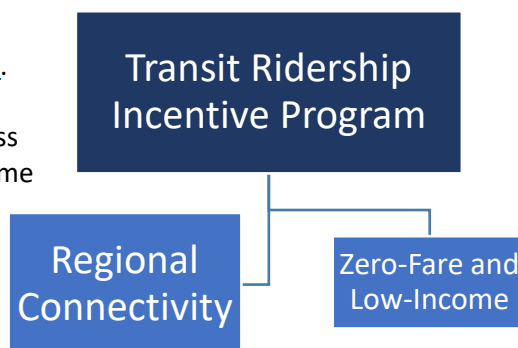


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Introduction

The 2020 General Assembly session established the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) in [Va. Code §33.2-1526.3](#). TRIP was created with two distinct goals: to improve the regional connectivity of urban areas with population in excess of 100,000 and to reduce barriers to transit use for low-income riders. To appropriately meet these two identified targets, TRIP programming and funding was divided into two separate sub-programs: (1) TRIP zero-fare and reduced-fare and (2) TRIP regional connectivity.



Item 430 L of the Chapter 552 of the 2021 Special Session I Acts of Assembly states that “in recognition of the funds provided in subsection B 6 of Item 447.10, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall use \$3,600,000 in the second year from the Transit Ridership Incentive Program for regional connectivity programs focused on congestion reduction and mitigation through provision of long-distance commuter routes. The Secretary shall provide to the Chairs of House Appropriations, Senate Finance and Appropriations, House Transportation and Senate Transportation Committees the methodology used and the distributions of such funds to transit systems by June 30, 2022. This report focuses on the outreach, policy development, selected projects, and the associated performance metrics of the TRIP regional connectivity program to fulfill that requirement.

Commonwealth Transportation Board Approval

Throughout fall 2020 and winter 2021, DRPT conducted an expansive outreach process to inform the program policy, evaluation, and guidance. This outreach process was multi-faceted to guarantee engagement with Virginia transit partners. The two major forms of outreach included: (1) distributing a Request for Ideas (RFI) to gauge interest and information on potential projects for funding and (2) developing a regional connectivity working group to gain understanding on regional congestion and coverage issues.

After concluding the outreach process, DRPT presented the draft policy materials to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Following the presentation, DRPT published the draft materials for public comment. After the 45-day public comment period closed, DRPT reviewed, considered, and responded to the feedback. In July 2021, DRPT sought and received CTB approval on the policy documents. DRPT subsequently hosted a pre-application webinar to review the policy and outline the process to apply for TRIP funding on July 28, 2021. The TRIP application period opened on August 2, 2021, and closed on September 17, 2021.

Regional Connectivity Funding

Table 1 summarizes the anticipated six-year total TRIP regional connectivity funding noted in the Fiscal Years 2022-2027 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). There are seven regions that are eligible for TRIP regional connectivity funding: Blacksburg, Charlottesville, Hampton Roads, Lynchburg, Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Roanoke. It is important to note that funding is required to be distributed to each eligible region proportionally within a five-year period, based on their regional population.

Table 1: Fiscal Years 22-27 TRIP Regional Connectivity Funding (\$ in Millions)

	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	Total
Total Regional Connectivity Funding	\$8.8	\$12.6	\$18.2	\$17.8	\$19.3	\$19.5	\$95.9

Fiscal Year 2022 Selected Projects

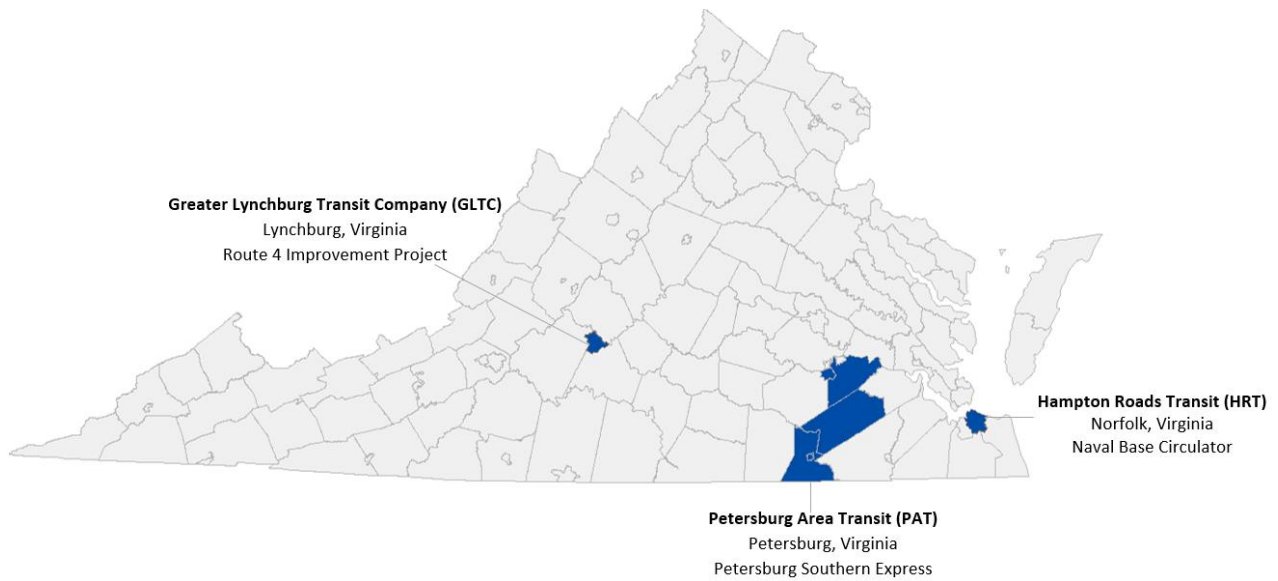
In total, DRPT received 14 TRIP applications in the FY 22 application cycle. Eleven applications were zero- and reduced-fare projects and three were regional connectivity projects. The regional connectivity projects totaled \$5.2 million in state funding over the multi-year duration of their projects. Following evaluation in accordance with CTB policy, DRPT recommended funding for all three regional connectivity applications in addition to six zero-fare projects as shown in Table 2. FY 22 TRIP funding was distributed to three out of the seven eligible regions. CTB approved this program of projects in December 2021.

TRIP funded diverse, multi-year regional connectivity projects throughout the Commonwealth, as noted below in Figure 1. These projects were selected for funding because they serve a regional interest, increase the viability of transit during peak periods of travel, and promote increased access to key destinations. The following table outlines the FY 22 TRIP regional connectivity projects:

Table 2: Fiscal Year 2022 TRIP Projects

Regional Connectivity Projects	Project Description	Duration of Project	Region
Lynchburg Route 4 Improvements	Increase frequencies on Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC) Route 4, which operates on a major commercial corridor in the City of Lynchburg.	5 years	Lynchburg
Petersburg Southern Express Route	Deploy an express route that connects the City of Petersburg and Emporia, Virginia. This project will also serve Prince George County, Sussex County, and Greensville County.	5 years	Richmond
Hampton Roads Naval Intercirculator	Provide last-mile accessibility to Naval Station Norfolk employees. This project will incentivize employees to arrive at the base on foot, bicycle, or transit, and then the circulator will provide them with mobility options within the base.	3 years	Hampton Roads

Figure 1: FY 22 TRIP Regional Connectivity Projects by Geographic Location



Congestion Mitigation and Other Evaluation Criteria

All recommended projects serve different goals and provide different benefits to the transportation system. DRPT prioritized applications through the lens of congestion mitigation. A project's ability to mitigate congestion was a large portion of the evaluation score, thus directly impacting if projects were recommended for funding. Table 3 shows the evaluation criteria, their weights, and the components that contributed to their project scores.

Table 3: Regional Connectivity Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria	Components	Weight
Congestion Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projected Ridership Projected Peak Period Ridership Rationale for projection and quality of received data 	60
Regional Connectivity and Regional Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connections to existing transit and other modes of transportation Route's access to major activity centers and large employers Letters of support from involved localities and appropriate Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 	30
Cost per Passenger	$\frac{\text{Total Project Cost}}{\text{Anticipated 2025 Project Ridership}} = \text{Cost per passenger}$	10
Total Possible Points		100

Lynchburg, Route 4 Improvement Project

Project Funding

The Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC) applied for FY 22 TRIP regional connectivity funding for the Route 4 Improvement project. In accordance with CTB policy, Lynchburg committed to a 5-year funding agreement where the state share decreases and the local share increases over the five year project. Table 4 outlines the funding agreement and the state funding stepdown.

Table 4: Funding Composition of GLTC Route 4 Improvement Project

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Local Funding:	\$ 163,040 (20%)	\$ 326,080 (40%)	\$ 570,640 (70%)	\$ 652,160 (80%)	\$ 733,680 (90%)
State Funding:	\$ 652,160 (80%)	\$ 489,120 (60%)	\$ 244,560 (30%)	\$ 163,040 (20%)	\$ 81,520 (10%)
Total Funding:	\$ 815,200 (100%)	\$ 815,200 (100%)	\$ 815,200 (100%)	\$ 815,200 (100%)	\$ 815,200 (100%)

Project Summary

Wards Road is a major commercial corridor and economic driver for the Lynchburg region. This corridor accesses key destinations, including retail, doctor's offices, Liberty University, Lynchburg Regional Airport, and the Amtrak Station, which also serves as the Greyhound Station and the Virginia Breeze pick-up location. It is a heavily concentrated area of commerce and experiences congestion during peak travel times.



Figure 2: Route 4 linkages with key travel destinations

This TRIP project will mitigate congestion by increasing the presence and reliability of transit along the corridor. This project will allow the Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC) to add an additional bus to route 4, which operates along the corridor. The additional vehicle will allow for 30-minute service, opposed to the current 45-minute headways. Increasing the frequency of transit will make the system function more efficiently of transit, making it a more desirable mode of transportation and mitigation congestion.

Hampton Roads, Naval Base Circulator

Project Funding

Hampton Roads Transit applied for three years of TRIP regional connectivity funding in FY 22. They applied for funding to support the Norfolk Naval Base Circulator. Throughout the project duration, the state funding decreases and the local funding increases, creating heightened local commitment towards the longevity of the service. Table 5 depicts the funding agreement and notes the changes in local and state funding.

Table 5: Funding Composition of the Norfolk Naval Base Circulator

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Local Funding	\$ 250,468 (20%)	\$ 615,755 (40%)	\$ 1,079,615 (70%)
State Funding	\$ 1,001,873 (80%)	\$ 923,633 (60%)	\$ 462,692 (30%)
Total Funding	\$ 1,252,341 (100%)	\$ 1,539,388 (100%)	\$ 1,542,307 (100%)

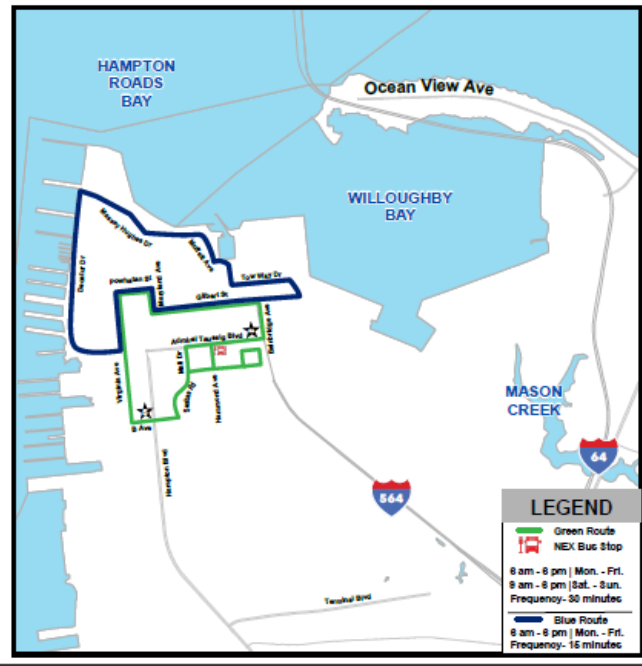
Project Summary

In the Hampton Roads region, the Norfolk Naval Base Circulator mitigates congestion by creating more mobility options for employees of the Norfolk Naval Base. Naval Station Norfolk is the largest U.S. naval base in the world, employing over 60,000 military personnel, contractors, and civilians.

Currently, there is no public transportation that operates within the base. Therefore, employees must travel via their personal vehicle to the base if they need to access multiple locations or navigate throughout the base. Employees driving to the base in their personal vehicles create congestion near the entrance and on the surrounding roadway network.

Currently, Hampton Roads Transit provides service to the entrance of the base but minimal service within the base. The circulator service will connect to existing transit and will improve regional accessibility, congestion, and air quality. The service will provide last-mile accessibility for employees who wish to arrive at the base on foot, bicycle, scooter, or transit, or by parking in the exchange area outside the gate. This improvement in accessibility via the circulator will reduce congestion around the base.

Naval Station Norfolk Circulators



Petersburg, Southern Express

Project Funding

Petersburg Area Transit applied for 5 years of TRIP regional connectivity funding in FY 22. Petersburg applied for funding to support the development of the long distance commuter route, the Petersburg Southern Express. Petersburg agreed to a multi-year funding agreement where the state funding decreases throughout the project duration. Table 8 notes the agreed upon funding breakdown, noting the state funding stepdown.

Table 6: Funding Composition of the Petersburg Southern Express

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Local Funding	\$ 132,573 (20%)	\$ 201,265 (40%)	\$ 352,215 (70%)	\$ 402,530 (80%)	\$452,847 (90%)
State Funding	\$ 530,294 (80%)	\$ 301,898 (60%)	\$ 150,949 (30%)	\$100,633 (20%)	\$ 50,316 (10%)
Total Funding	\$ 662,867 (100%)	\$ 503,164 (100%)	\$ 503,164 (100%)	\$503,163 (100%)	\$ 503,163 (100%)

Project Summary

There is no public transportation link between the City of Petersburg and surrounding communities, including the City Emporia, Prince George County, and Greenville County. The TRIP-funded Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) Southern Express will be the first public transportation opportunity to connect the Tri-Cities and the Southern Virginia Region.

This 45-mile long express route will provide needed transportation for residents accessing health care, employment, and educational opportunities in the City of Petersburg and beyond. Figure 4 shows that

these communities have a clear need in accessing Petersburg for employment opportunities. Additionally, in Petersburg, riders can access the Richmond Express which connects Petersburg to the City of Richmond, further strengthening regional connections in this community. While this community may not experience a lot of congestion currently, community members are still forced to rely on personal vehicles for accessing key destinations located in the City of Petersburg. Figure 4 shows that a large sum of residents must travel to Petersburg or the City of Richmond for work. This route provides access to these jobs and promotes heightened mobility for a rural community while also having the potential to reduce emissions associated with long distance SOV trips.

The Petersburg Southern Express project scored well due to its support of for long distance commuting needs. The Petersburg Southern Express route also fills a regional gap in transit coverage, connecting southern Virginia to central locations including the cities of Petersburg and Richmond.

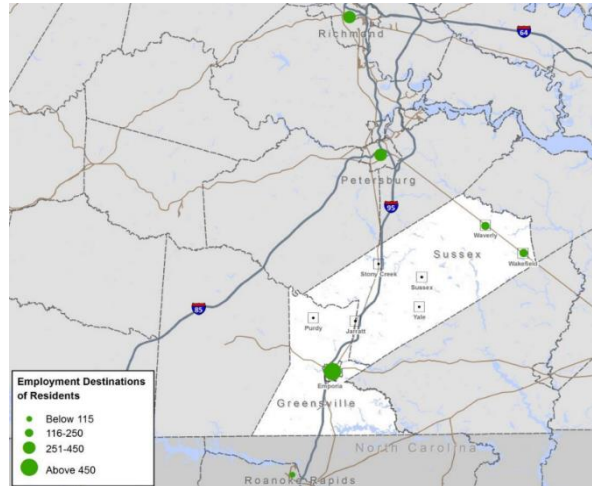


Figure 4: Employee Destinations of Greenville

Reporting Requirements

Figure 5 provides detail on the DRPT quarterly reporting requirements and their associated metrics of performance. DRPT and its transit partners are in the process of implementing these projects and beginning operations. Funding recipients are required to meet quarterly reporting requirements to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project towards meeting the goals of the TRIP program.

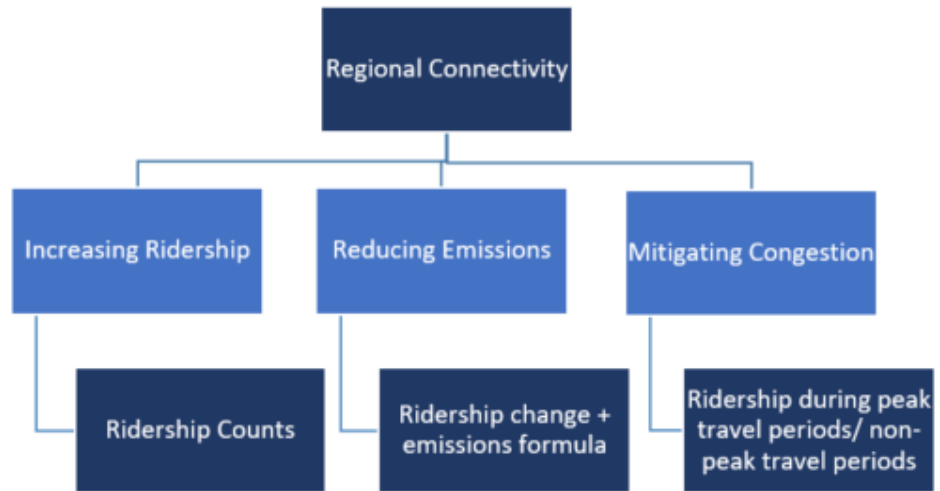


Figure 5: Reporting Requirements and Associated Performance Measures

As required by the *Code of Virginia*, DRPT will continue to report on these projects as well as the zero-fare and low-income projects in its annual TRIP report that is released annually in the fall.