



# HANOVER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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## TRANSPORTATION POLICY

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MAY 22, 2013

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## **PREFACE**

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This *2013 Transportation Policy* articulates the County's policies for addressing transportation issues affecting the County's road network. Its purpose is to establish a consistent course of action in support of the overall transportation system. This policy works in concert with the Business and Residential Development Road Improvements Transportation Policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors on March 13, 2013. Six policy areas are covered by this the transportation policy.

### **Organization & Update**

The 2013 policy updates and supersedes the previous policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 12, 2005. Each of the six policy areas is supported by a set of strategies geared toward achieving the objectives of each policy. Some of the strategies achieve multiple objectives and as such are repeated in the various policy areas. Supporting information is presented in the appendices and maps. The policies and supporting strategies will be amended as circumstances warrant. Other information presented herein will be kept current through periodic updates.

#### **I. Regional Mobility Policy**

- Support state and federal funding for regional transit services where demand and air quality benefits are sufficient to justify their cost
- Support state and federal funding for regional highway projects that positively affect air quality conformity sufficiently to justify their cost
- Support efforts to implement rail solutions (e.g., high-speed rail, light-rail, and greater freight and passenger rail services) where they are cost effective relative to other transportation alternatives

#### **II. Local Mobility Policy**

- Support viable bus services as a transportation alternative
- Encourage the implementation of park and ride spaces, integrated into commercial and retail parking lots
- Encourage non-motorized travel through the construction and maintenance of sidewalks, bike lanes, trails and greenways where compatible with the community setting

#### **III. Primary/Interstate Policy**

- Prioritize Primary and Interstate projects and seek funding based on this ranking
- Work through the Richmond District Administrator, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), federal and state elected representatives in order to build support and obtain funding for top priority projects

- Phase improvements to address critical intersections ahead of segment widening
- Seek to reserve right-of-way for future roadway improvements
- Fund low-cost improvements as an interim measure when sufficient funding is not available for corridor widening
- Collaborate with VDOT to determine the best approach to expedite the design and construction of critical projects
- Maximize VDOT Local Partnership Initiatives

#### **IV. Secondary Roads Policy**

- Give priority in the Six-Year Plan to those secondary hard surface projects that appear on the County’s “Existing” or “Candidate Project List” and maintain priorities
- Apply road funds (federal, state, general fund, proffers, etc.) in a manner to accomplish prioritized Road Projects and work to minimize static balances
- Collaborate with VDOT to determine the best approach to expedite the design and construction of critical projects
- Maximize VDOT Local Partnership Initiatives
- Negotiate road improvements and cash proffers in accordance with the County’s “Business and Residential Development Road Improvements Transportation Policy”
- Work through the Richmond Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to apply for and fund eligible projects
- Respond to citizen requests related to road maintenance and improvements and serve as a liaison to VDOT where appropriate

#### **V. Economic Development Policy**

- Use State Revenue Sharing Program funds, as first option, to fund projects that support economic development
- Seek to negotiate development agreements to match State Revenue Sharing Program funds; in the absence of a Development Agreement, use General Funds and Road Cash Proffers to certify local match

#### **VI. Funding Policy**

- Develop and maintain a five-year and long range capital plan beginning with the FY 14 budget that estimates annual General Fund contributions to road projects with the FY 14 \$250,000 base in conjunction with other federal, state and local funding sources (developer contributions) to fund transportation needs. Five-Year CIP will forecast proffer collections, state revenues, and developer contributions, and will maximize any state revenue sharing funds
- Support advocacy for increased transportation funding at the state and federal level
- Engage the private sector and business groups to implement significant transportation improvements through public / private partnerships

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## I. REGIONAL MOBILITY POLICY

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The Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the federal and state designated regional transportation planning organization that serves as the forum for cooperative transportation decision-making in the Richmond area. Within this regional framework, of which Hanover County participates, local governments and state and local transportation organizations develop a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the region and a three-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to obligate funding for priority projects. All regionally significant highway and transit projects must appear in the LRTP and TIP in order to be eligible for the use of federal funds.

Mobile emission sources are a contributor to poor air quality. Based on a 3-year average (2002 - 2004), the Richmond region was classified as a marginal non-attainment area for ozone pollution under standards set by the Clean Air Act. In April 2012, after progress in improving regional air quality, the region was removed from non-attainment status by EPA. This status is tenuous and efforts to maintain air quality remain important. Poor air quality is a regional issue that cannot be solved by any single measure. However vehicle emissions being a significant contributor, it is imperative that local jurisdictions work cooperatively to arrive at transportation solutions that are able to meet the growing stresses on the region's transportation system, while at the same time are sensitive to environmental concerns. Aside from the health risks associated with poor air quality, failure to conform to air quality requirements can result in the loss of federal funding.

### *Regional Mobility Strategies:*

- ***Support state and federal funding for regional transit services where demand and air quality benefits are sufficient to justify their cost***  
To support the diverse transportation demands of the region calls for a multimodal approach. Expansion of alternative modes, including bus transit, higher occupancy passenger vehicles and rail alternatives should be considered in regional plans. The County will support regional transit initiatives where demand for their service and air quality benefits are sufficient to justify their cost.
- ***Support state and federal funding for regional highway projects that positively affect air quality conformity sufficiently to justify their cost***  
Congested roadways resulting in stop-and-go traffic is a significant contributor to poor air quality in the region. Projects that alleviate congestion and reduce travel times may actually benefit the region's air quality. Each project should be examined on a case-by-case basis to determine what effect it will have on air quality along with other necessary considerations. The County will support state and federal funding of regional projects that positively affect air quality in balance with their cost and other project objectives.

- *Support efforts to implement rail solutions (e.g., high-speed rail, light-rail, and greater freight and passenger rail services) where they are cost effective relative to other transportation alternatives.*

The interstate highways in the region and the airports along the eastern seaboard are operating at or near capacity during peak travel times. As demand increases, other options need to be employed. High-speed rail (maximum 110 mph) holds the potential to provide an affordable, modern, timely alternative to driving crowded interstates or flying short distances. Light-rail lines typically run along city streets, sharing the right-of-way with cars, while being kept separate by gates and signal lights. Additional investments for improvements to freight and passenger rail lines operating in the region will divert passenger and freight traffic from the highways to the railroads, reduce the need for highway maintenance and construction, reduce congestion, and in so doing, minimize air pollution. These various rail solutions remain important consideration in regional traffic flow and congestion mitigation. The County will support state and federal funding of regional projects that positively affect air quality in balance with their cost and other project objectives.

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## II. LOCAL MOBILITY POLICY

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The roadway network is clearly the backbone of the County's transportation system, however there is a small but growing demand for other transportation options for both recreation and commuting. Providing an array of transportation options enhances the quality of life for County residents and reduce the reliance on the automobile.

### *Local Mobility Strategies:*

- ***Support viable bus services as a transportation alternative***  
Over time, viability of bus service has been considered along several corridors in the County. A pilot Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) express bus service was established in May 2010 to provide service between the VDOT park and ride location in Mechanicsville and downtown Richmond; however the route has not met ridership goals and is being phased out in July 2013. Targeted bus and business relationships for larger employers, such as Kings Dominion, have shown promise in some instances. As the County continues to develop, new opportunities may arise to serve commercial areas and major employment centers. Where sufficient demand exists such that bus service in Hanover is viable, the County will assess costs and other factors as a basis for determining support for a particular service route.
- ***Encourage the implementation of park and ride spaces, integrated into commercial and retail parking lots***  
Locating park and ride facilities at commercial and retail centers provides a safe, convenient and economical solution for commuters. Using existing parking areas minimizes implementation costs. Commercial and retail merchants benefit from increased patronage by commuters utilizing these lots.
- ***Encourage non-motorized travel through the construction and maintenance of sidewalks, bike lanes, trails and greenways***  
Biking and walking are affordable, clean and healthy means to get around. Projects that would implement facilities and services oriented toward bicycling and walking will encourage greater travel by these modes. VDOT policy requires that bicycle and pedestrian facilities be given consideration as part of every road project and only be allowed to be excluded by exception. The County will encourage by others and pursue on its own initiative the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new subdivisions and other residential developments and to connect these facilities to destination points including schools, parks and commercial areas.

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### III. PRIMARY/INTERSTATE POLICY

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The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) allocates funding for improvements to the Primary and Interstate systems following public hearings held annually in each VDOT construction district. There is no annual construction allocation from the CTB to the County for Primary and Interstate roads as there is with the Secondary system allocation. Funding for many Interstate and Primary projects is supplemented with federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) allocations as determined by the MPO through a regionally competitive process.

*Primary/Interstate Strategies:*

- ***Prioritize Primary and Interstate projects and seek funding based on this ranking***  
The Board of Supervisors shall adopt a resolution annually identifying its top Primary and Interstate system priorities and present these priorities to the CTB at the annual pre-allocation hearing. To eliminate any ambiguity regarding its top funding priorities, the list should be limited to only the highest priority projects.
- ***Work through the Richmond District Administrator, Commonwealth Transportation Board(CTB), federal and state elected representatives to build support and obtain funding for top priority projects***  
Transportation funding appropriated at the discretion of federal and state representatives provides an additional funding opportunity. The County shall continue to work through representatives to seek funding for its highest priority projects.
- ***Phase improvements to address critical intersections ahead of segment widening***  
Within major corridors, intersections often represent choke points and experience more crashes when compared with the connecting roadway segments. Phasing corridor improvements to address intersections ahead of segment widening will provide interim safety and capacity improvements allow more expensive corridor widening projects to be deferred.
- ***Seek to reserve right-of-way for future roadway improvements***  
Advance reservation/acquisition of right-of-way will serve to preserve corridors for future road construction. The County will seek to fund preliminary engineering in corridors with high-development potential to identify future right-of-way requirements. This will facilitate the negotiation for the reservation or dedication of right-of-way during the zoning process.

- *Fund low-cost improvements as an interim measure when sufficient funding is not available for corridor widening*

Widening projects are expensive and can take many years to finance, design and construct; other improvements, such as shoulder wedging, pavement overlay, reflective pavement markers, and turn-lanes, can be accomplished in a much shorter timeframe and at a much lower cost while providing significant safety and congestion benefits. The County shall seek to fund low-cost improvements when insufficient funding exists for major corridor widening.

- *Collaborate with VDOT to determine the best approach to expedite the design and construction of critical projects*

Through local project administration agreements, the County has been able to expedite the development and construction of critical projects. The County will continue to administer project development and construction when its determined that this is the most expeditious and cost effective approach.

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## IV. SECONDARY ROADS POLICY

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Funding provided by the state to improve secondary roads has decreased steadily over the last several years from \$2.5 million per year in 2007 to a few hundred thousand dollars currently. This leaves the Board of Supervisors very little opportunity to influence local road projects with this funding source. Each year the Board conducts a workshop and public hearing in conjunction with VDOT to update the Secondary System Construction Program (Six-Year Plan) to apply the small amount of funds in support of adopted priorities. As with the Interstate and Primary systems, Secondary projects are eligible for federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding which now has become the primary source of road funding. This is augmented by local dollars generated in conjunction with the Board adopted (March 2013) Transportation Policy for Business and Residential Development which includes a cash proffer policy and general fund appropriations. Applications for RSTP and CMAQ funding are made each year based on the regionally competitive principles established by the MPO.

### *Secondary Strategies:*

- ***Give priority in the Six-Year Plan to those secondary hard surface projects that appear on the County’s “Existing” or “Candidate Project List” and maintain priorities.***

With steadily decreasing funding there is little opportunity to initiate design and construction for new projects from the County’s Long-Range Transportation Project List which reflects road project needs over a longer period. The County’s “Existing” projects and “Candidate Project List”, which are reviewed annually, represent transportation priorities for a near term 10-15-year period. Priority will be given to existing active projects or high ranking projects on the Candidate Project List when making recommendation for funding in the Secondary Six Year Plan. If a secondary road project is added that is not reflected in the Candidate Project List, consideration would be given to updating the Candidate Project List accordingly.

- ***Apply road funds (federal, state, general fund, proffers, etc.) in a manner to accomplish prioritized Road Projects and work to minimize static balances.***

Use of federal and state funds on projects will be a priority over use of local dollars (e.g., general fund and cash proffers) for cash flow purposes when possible. For competitive grant purposes it may be advantageous to mix funding sources on priority projects. In instances in which a developer has negotiated a cash contribution in accordance with the Transportation Policy for Business and Residential Development or for another project where improvements to the road network are warranted due to impacts from development, cash flow and management considerations shall be taken into consideration. The value of the contribution will be allocated towards a specific project on the project candidate list or for another identified project, and cash contributions totaling the calculated allocation will be spent on the identified project. However, due to project timing, the timing of the receipt of revenues attributable to the negotiated contributions, and availability of funding from other sources, the actual funds received from a

specific development project may be spent on another candidate project as priorities and available funding necessitate.

- ***Collaborate with VDOT to determine the best approach to expedite the design and construction of critical projects***

Through local project administration agreements, the County has been able to expedite the development and construction of critical projects. The County will continue to administer project development and construction when it's determined that this is the most expeditious and cost effective approach.

- ***Negotiate road proffers in accordance with the County's Business and Residential Development Road Improvement Transportation Policy***

Proffers are an important factor in the County roadway improvement program. Though developer constructed roadway improvements are generally preferred over cash proffers, when meaningful improvements cannot be achieved, cash payments should be negotiated in accordance with policy.

- ***Respond to citizen requests for road related inquiries and serve as a liaison to VDOT where appropriate.***

Often citizens have difficulty connecting appropriately with VDOT programs elements ranging from traffic calming to general road maintenance needs. The County has adopted policies to assist in providing direction on: *Traffic Calming, \$200 Fine Sign, and Watch for Children (Recommend deleting due to VDOT policy changes) Appendix F,G,H.*

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## V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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A viable transportation system is a critical component of the County's economic development strategy. Economic Development success is co-dependent with providing infrastructure in anticipation of development at target locations. Maximize funding for road improvement projects to expand the road network, and increase road capacity for economic development is an important long term goal.

### *Economic Development Strategies:*

- ***Use State Revenue Sharing Program funds, as first option, to fund projects that support economic development***

State Revenue Sharing Program funds are the primary funding source for road projects supporting economic development. For example, the County has partnered with the private sector to build almost three miles of N. Lakeridge Parkway through the Revenue Sharing Program. This road segment has not only resulted in several major new business locations, but has completed an important section of the Major Thoroughfare Plan. Revenue Sharing funds should be used to supplement funding for priority projects with local match being general fund and cash proffers, when no viable economic development use for these funds is available. Current maximum application is \$10 million on a 50/50 match basis.

- ***Seek to negotiate development agreements to match State Revenue Sharing Program funds; in the absence of a Development Agreement, use General Fund and Road Cash Proffers to certify local match***

State Revenue Sharing Program funds represent a tremendous incentive to obtain developer participation. The County has been successful in partnering with the private sector to build critical parts of the Major Thoroughfare Plan using Revenue Sharing funds. N. Lakeridge Parkway and the Bell Creek Road / Pole Green Road intersection projects are examples where State Revenue Sharing Program funds were matched with developer contributions providing the local match.

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## VI. FUNDING POLICY

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The Long Range Transportation Project List represents transportation needs over the build-out of the comprehensive plan. Projects appearing on the “Candidate Project” list are constrained by the financial resources expected to be available for design and construction. The need for the projects is driven by the near term 10-15 year traffic demand for capacity, operation, and safety. Funding from all sources will be utilized and prioritized to accomplish the identified needs.

The “Candidate Project” list will be updated annually with the assistance of the Roads Committee based on an assessment of the County road network and expected revenues from identified sources. Projects appearing on the list are constrained by the financial resources expected to be available for implementation. Expanded funding for transportation will allow the identified needs to be addressed sooner.

### *Funding Strategies:*

*Develop and maintain a five-year and long range capital plan beginning with the FY 14 budget that estimates annual General Fund contributions to road projects with the FY 14 \$250,000 base in conjunction with other federal, state and local funding sources (developer contributions) to fund transportation needs.*

- *Five-Year CIP will forecast general fund, proffer collections, state revenues, and developer contributions and will maximize any state revenue sharing funds*
- *Support advocacy for increased transportation funding at the state and federal level*
- *Engage the private sector and business groups to implement significant transportation improvements through public / private partnerships*