

## **General Assembly Approves Revisions to Biennium Budget in September 6 Special Session**



A lengthy process of revising the 2022-2024 biennium budget advanced one step closer to completion on September 6 with passage of HB 6001. This legislation, which was released on September 2, contains the full text of the agreement among budget conferees that was announced August 25. The procedural resolution setting out parameters for the special session did not permit amendments to the legislation, so there was minimal debate prior to its passage, and the bill passed overwhelmingly in both chambers. The legislation now heads to the Governor for consideration.

The House Appropriations Committee staff briefing is available at [this link](#), and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee staff briefing is available at [this link](#). Estimated distributions for school divisions are posted at [this link](#); additional detail is expected in a forthcoming Superintendent's memo, which VACo will share when it becomes available. An overview of key provisions of importance to local governments is provided below.

### **Compensation**

- An additional 2 percent salary increase for state employees, effective December 10, 2023 (this is in addition to the 5 percent increase that took effect June 10, 2023).
- An additional 2 percent salary increase for Constitutional officers and state-supported local employees, effective December 1, 2023 (this is in addition to the 5 percent increase that took effect July 1, 2023).
- \$54.6 million for the state share of an additional 2 percent salary increase in FY 2024 for SOQ-recognized positions, effective January 1, 2024. Budget language requires school divisions (i) to have provided at least an average 2.5 percent salary increase in each year of the biennium and (ii) to certify that an equivalent increase of 2 percent will be provided

to instructional and support personnel no later than January 1, 2024. School divisions that previously provided a total average increase greater than the 5 percent increases provided in the first or second year may count those increases toward the required certification for the additional 2 percent.

- \$7.6 million for compression adjustments for deputy sheriffs and regional jail officers, effective December 1, 2023.
- \$4 million to increase salaries for attorneys in Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices, effective December 1, 2023.
- \$593,507 to increase salaries for positions in circuit court clerks' offices, effective December 1, 2023.
- \$18 million to increase compensation for Community Services Board staff; language states that the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services may fund up to 100 percent of the costs of the compensation increase.
- \$3.7 million to the Indigent Defense Commission for attorney compensation and employee salary compression adjustments, effective December 10, 2023.
- \$1 million for salary increases for general district court clerks and juvenile and domestic relations court clerks, effective December 10, 2023.

## **K-12**

- \$152.3 million to recognize additional support positions in the K-12 funding formula. This additional funding will allow 24 support positions per 1000 Average Daily Membership to be recognized (an increase from the current recognition of 21 support positions per 1000 ADM). Language specifies that this ratio will be used for rebenchmarking for the next biennium (FY 2025 and FY 2026). Full elimination of the cap on recognition of support positions has been a long-standing priority for VACo and this additional funding is an important step toward this goal.
- \$418.3 million in additional flexible state funding, which may be used for the implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act, learning loss recovery, and additional operating and infrastructure support. Funding will be disbursed based on the state share of \$1,086.44 per pupil, based on the estimated number of federal free lunch participants, and the state share of \$203.63 per pupil based on average daily membership, with each school division receiving a minimum distribution of \$150,000. A local match is not required.
- Establishes a Joint Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education Funding and directs the Joint Subcommittee, as part of its work, to review the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's July 2023 report on the K-12 funding formula and develop a long-range plan for implementation of its recommendations.
- \$6.7 million from remaining federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds for implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act.
- \$12 million GF and \$8 million from ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for school safety and security grants.
- \$1.7 million from Lottery proceeds in supplemental one-time support for Accomack County and Northampton County school divisions.
- Reflects an additional \$86.2 million in Lottery proceeds.

## **Early Childhood**

- Exempts community-based providers that are recipients of Virginia Preschool Initiative grants from teacher licensure requirements, as long as the provider meets the expectations of the statewide measurement and improvement system.

- Authorizes the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide flexibility in staff-to-child ratios and group sizes for licensed child day centers and child day centers participating in the Child Care Subsidy Program (the number of children per staff may be increased by one child for groups of children from birth to the age of public school eligibility, and by two for groups of children from the age of school eligibility to 12).

#### **Aid to Local Public Libraries**

- \$3.6 million for additional state aid to local public libraries.

#### **Administration - Elections**

- \$7.3 million to cover costs associated with the 2024 Presidential Primary, of which \$7.1 million may be used to reimburse localities for their expenditures and \$147,308 may be used to cover costs incurred directly by the Department of Elections; this funding level reflects requests made by VACo and advocacy partners to more accurately reflect the costs of administering elections, relative to the amount proposed in the December 2022 budget.

#### **Administration - Constitutional officers and jails:**

- \$931,301 to restore positions in offices of the Commissioners of the Revenue that are allocated through staffing standards but unfunded due to prior budget reductions.
- \$2 million to restore positions in Treasurers' offices that are allocated through staffing standards, but have been unfunded due to prior budget reductions.
- An increase of \$1 for the local-responsible jail per diem rate (from \$4 to \$5).
- \$41,850 for participation in career development programs, effective December 1, 2023.

#### **Agriculture and Forestry**

- \$700,000 for the Dairy Producer Margin Coverage Premium Assistance Fund.
- \$250,000 for the Blue Catfish Processing, Flash Freezing, and Infrastructure Grant Program created during the 2023 General Assembly session.
- \$1.1 million and 15 positions for the registration and inspection of facilities selling certain hemp products.

#### **Commerce and Trade - Broadband**

- Authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development to use federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

#### **Economic Development/Workforce**

- \$125 million GF in FY 2024 for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Fund (which includes \$50 million in excess FY 2022 revenues previously designated for deposit to the Fund). Creates the Site Replacement Fund as a sub-fund within the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Fund; certain sales proceeds from the sale of specified property within Henrico County are to be deposited in the sub-fund and made available to the Economic Development Authority of Henrico County.
- Language clarifies eligibility for grant payments from the Cloud Computing Cluster Infrastructure Grant Fund.
- \$10 million for the development of an inland port in the Mount Rogers Planning District. Language directs the Virginia Port Authority to acquire, design, and develop the site, and directs

the Port Authority and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority to develop a business recruitment strategy for the inland port and the surrounding area, to include making recommendations for any additional infrastructure improvements needed to maximize the economic benefit of the inland port.

- \$8.5 million to support a cruise ship port-of-call location and related visitor support and tourism on the York River (which includes \$1 million for transit system improvements); language requires coordination with state and local agencies on permitting and maximization of the economic impact of the pier location.
- \$6 million for an incentive payment for purchase of the Central Virginia Training Center property.
- \$75 million for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Acquisition Fund, which was created in 2023 legislation.
- \$1.5 million for the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.
- \$4 million for the Virginia Power Innovation Fund.
- \$5 million for the New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program.
- Language directs the Secretary of Education, Secretary of Finance, and President of Richard Bland College, among others, to evaluate the creation of a regional partnership and other strategies to improve educational attainment, alternative delivery methods, and economic and community development for the region and the state. Other regional entities, including Virginia State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Brightpoint Community College, may participate.
- \$7.75 million to the Virginia Community College System to support workforce programs in regions with high labor demand and low supply; an employer match is required. An additional \$250,000 is designated for Northern Virginia Community College for an automotive apprenticeship program and an additional \$350,000 is designated for early childhood programs at Virginia Peninsula Community College.
- \$500,000 to establish the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement in the Secretary of Labor's office.

### **Flood Relief**

- Directs the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to use up to \$18 million in balances in the Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program Fund for flood relief for certain specified disasters that occurred in July and August 2022, and sets out parameters for the program, as well as reporting requirements.
- \$200,000 for the Buchanan County and Tazewell County Departments of Social Services for administrative costs associated with providing flood relief to the residents of Buchanan County and Tazewell County.

### **Housing**

- \$200,000 for DHCD's comprehensive statewide housing assessment, as required by legislation passed in 2023.

### **Human Services – Aging/Adults with Disabilities**

- \$700,000 to hold Area Agencies on Aging harmless from changes to the distribution formula for federal Older Americans Act funding resulting from the 2020 census.
- Increases the Auxiliary Grant rate from \$1609 per month to \$2055 per month, effective January 1, 2024.



Photo Credit  
[Virginia is for Lovers](#)



## Visit Greenville County and the Greenville County Historic Courthouse

**Location:** 315 South Main Street / Hicksford Avenue

**Built:** 1831 – 1834

**Style:** Beaux Arts

**Architect:** Daniel Lynch

**Contractor:** Daniel Lynch

**Description:** The building faces west and is a two story white colored Flemish bond brick structure. The building is located on the landscaped grounds of the Courthouse Square consisting of the courthouse (1831), Clerk's Office (1894) on the south side and County Administrator's Office (1900 and 1907) on the north side. The west front has a large Tuscan portico with six fluted Ionic columns rising to a pediment at the roof line. The roof is hipped with a small octagonal cupola. The north and south wings are lower and have balustrades running along the roof line. In the interior, there are twin stairs in each of the wings which ascend to the second story where the courtroom is located at the center. The building houses the County General District Court and County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of the 6th Judicial Circuit. In 1907, the portico was added and the wings raised to two story wings. In 1934, the rear wing was added giving the building an "H" shape. The building was renovated in 1961 and 1997.

**Note:** The Courthouse Square Complex consist of the courthouse, the Clerk's Office on the south side and the Administrator's Office on the north side, which is two former commercial buildings; the Greenville Bank (1900) and the Virginia Public Service Building (1907).

**SOURCE:** [American Courthouses](#) | [Courthouses.co](#)



**Check out our 89th Annual Conference logo!  
See you on November 12-14 in beautiful Bath County!**

**VACo 89th Annual Conference  
November 12 – 14, 2023  
The Omni Homestead | Bath County  
[VACo Annual Conference Website](#)**



Before ESG



After ESG



Bradley County, TN

## PARTNERS LIKE YOU

ESG put our solutions to work in Licking County, OH through multiple phases of infrastructure upgrades totaling over \$8 million. This phased approach allowed the county to take a strategic view of needs and improvements over time.

We also delivered an Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) for Bradley County, TN, through which we upgraded 4 buildings, which resulted in \$7.1 million in guaranteed savings over the life of the contract.

Licking County, OH



Bradley County, TN



Energy Systems Group (ESG) is excited to be rejoining membership with the Virginia Association of Counties. With expertise serving county governments across the nation, ESG is poised to assist Virginia counties in overcoming pressing infrastructure and facility needs through creative energy solutions.

At our core, ESG focuses on energy efficiency, resiliency, and sustainability within communities. Our experts are viewed as trusted partners, working hand-in-hand with county leaders to holistically assess needs and engineer customized solutions. We tap into grants, incentives, and federal programs to ease budget pressures. From aging building systems to deferred maintenance, we address challenges head-on through a combination of cutting-edge technology and financing options like ESPCs.

What truly sets ESG apart is our commitment to guaranteed results, backed by our dedicated team of measurement and verification experts. We stand behind every project, verifying energy and operational savings through ongoing tracking to ensure we meet key performance indicators. Additionally, ESG maintains vendor-agnostic relationships across the industry. This allows us to objectively evaluate and select equipment and technology for each project based on performance needs and the ability to support the local community when possible. Our approach provides tailored solutions to solve problems sustainably and effectively on a budget.

As Virginia counties strive to balance tight budgets with community needs, ESG is here to collaborate. We ease the process, aligning improvements with your goals so progress and savings become continuous. To discuss overcoming your specific challenges, contact us today. **The future starts now.**



**Cheryl Midkiff**

Account Executive

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CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO

# FY2024 Virginia Local Government INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

[\*\*CLICK HERE  
TO RSVP\*\*](#)

**Your RSVP  
is requested  
by Tuesday,  
September 12.**

## *Out of the Woods?*

*Paradigm Shifts in Interest Rates, Inflation & Markets*

**Friday, September 22, 2023  
10:00 am - 3:30 pm**

### **Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center**

Henrico Ballroom A | 1000 Virginia Center Parkway | Glen Allen, VA 23059

In an ever-changing economic landscape where inflation and interest rates are up from historically low levels, risks must be assessed and managed closer than ever across equities, fixed income, and real estate. Hear from industry insiders how they navigate the risks and opportunities presented by this changing paradigm at an event exclusively for Virginia local government officials.

### **AGENDA**

**10 am - 12 pm** | Emerging Investment Opportunities & OPEB Annual Meeting

**12 pm - 1:30 pm** | Luncheon with Keynote Speaker

**1:30 pm - 3:30 pm** | Fixed Income Investing & VIP Annual Meeting

### **Who Should Attend**

City/Town Managers, & County Administrators, Treasurers, Investment Officers, Finance Directors, Other Local Officials

For more information, contact **George Moore** at 804.648.0635 or at [gmoore@valocalfinance.org](mailto:gmoore@valocalfinance.org)

**[CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)**



# Laurel Hill: From Prison to Park



**By Benjamin T. Boxer**

**Public Information Officer | Fairfax County Park Authority**



For the better part of a century, the grounds of the District of Columbia Correctional Facility in Lorton Virginia, one of the most beautiful parcels of land in Fairfax County, were restricted and, to an extent, hidden from public view. The 2,400-acre site was an oasis of open space – and some of the most beautiful parcels of land in Fairfax County – three times larger than New York City Central Park.

Since the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Fairfax County Park Authority has been executing a communitywide vision for the transformation of the former prison into a jewel among the Fairfax County Park Authority's 420 parks. Today, Laurel Hill Park, renamed after the historic home of a Revolutionary War patriot William Lindsay in 1766, is beloved for its world-class golf course, disc golf course, 10 miles of trails, an equestrian center, central green, community gardens, and forth-coming athletic fields. But like any great transformation story, it's best to start at the beginning.

## **Prelude to a Park**

The beginnings of Laurel Hill Park stretch back to 1908 when President Theodore Roosevelt appointed a penal commission to investigate the deplorable conditions of the District of Columbia's jail and workhouse in Washington. The commission recommended wholesale changes which included a new prison where inmates could be rehabilitated through work. Congress authorized the purchase of land just north of the Occoquan River that would allow access to nature, natural light and clean air, and house prisoners in dormitories rather than cell blocks.

[More on Next Page](#)

Lorton was an agricultural work camp including cultivated fields, pastures, orchards, poultry farm, hog ranch, slaughterhouse, smokehouse, dairy, blacksmith shop, sawmill, and barns for livestock, feed, hay and storage. Prisoners farmed and at a kiln complex located along the river produced bricks for prison buildings and roads. During the 1950s, at the height of the cold war, the missile site was constructed on 30 acres at Lorton, part of the nationwide NIKE anti-aircraft defense system.

In 1998, Representative Tom Davis introduced legislation to close the prison and transfer ownership of the 2,400 acre-site to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for the bargain price of \$4.2 million. The Lorton Technical Correction Act required Fairfax County to develop a reuse plan that would maximize use of land for open space, parkland or recreation as a condition of the transfer of ownership. In February 1999, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors convened a Citizen Advisory Committee to develop a reuse plan. The committee designated approximately 1,200 acres as parkland, which was transferred to the Fairfax County Park Authority, with the remainder of the acreage including sites for three public schools, residential use, and the site of the Workhouse Arts Center. The land was officially transferred in 2002, and thus began the transformation of the once federal prison site to a world-class asset for Fairfax County and its residents.



Source: DCArchives

Figure 8: A 1951 view of work being done on the Reformatory planting beds courtesy of the D.C. Workhouse and Reformatory National Register District nomination application.

### **Laurel Hill Park: The Jewel of Fairfax County's Southern Gateway**

The evolution of Laurel Hill Park didn't happen overnight, but steady progress – accented by significant community engagement – has delivered outstanding amenities that serve residents of all ages, interests and abilities.

**(2005) Laurel Hill Golf Club.** This world-class golf course has challenged the skills of beginners and professionals alike for nearly two decades. The 18-hole, 7,000-plus yard course has the best playing conditions of any public course in Northern Virginia and is perennially rated among the top courses in Virginia. With beautifully maintained rolling hills and scenic vistas the course not only is a treasure for golfers but is a highly sought-after site for hosting weddings and other family and corporate gatherings of significance.



**(2008) Laurel Hill Greenway and Giles Run Meadow Disc Golf.** The Laurel Hill Greenway is the primary north-south corridor through the site following the bed of the prison railroad and extending under the historic barrel bridge constructed in the 1920s most likely by prisoners with the bricks they made at the kiln. The are approximately 10 miles of multi-use trails. Part paved and part stone dust, the Laurel Hill Greenway also serves as the southern terminus of the 42-Mile Gerry



Connolly Cross County Trail. In direct response to a community outpouring of support, an 18-hole disc golf course was installed in 2008.

**(2014) Laurel Hill Equestrian Center.** Constructed near the old dairy barn at the Lorton Prison, the Equestrian Center includes a 200' x 250' multi-use, outdoor riding ring with all-weather footing, stadium jumps and dressage markers. Ring equipment is maintained by Fairfax4Horses and the Park Authority. It is open for public use from dawn until dusk except for regularly scheduled maintenance, private rentals, horse shows or inclement weather conditions. The Equestrian Center is connected to the 10-mile Laurel Hill Greenway trail system. The trails are open to horses, bicycles and pedestrians.



**(2021) Laurel Hill Central Green.** If you're looking for a beautiful open space with room to gather, visit the Laurel Hill Central Green. Complete with four large picnic shelters, each with a capacity for up to 213 people, it's the perfect spot for reunions, corporate parties, community gatherings and other special occasions. The Central Green has a large open field and playground, and the Park Authority is in the process of constructing a public restroom at the location. Located within an easy walk to the Giles Run Meadow Disc

Golf and connected to the Laurel Hill Greenway, the Central Green offers a wide range of options to stay and play or set off on an adventure of your own making along the trail.

**(2023) Laurel Hill Community Gardens.** Using a portion of the former NIKE missile site, the Park Authority constructed 19 community garden plots. Administered as part of the Community Garden Plot rental program, the gardens allow residents who may not have access to gardening space at their residences to enjoy growing fresh fruits and vegetables. These gardens provide several accessibility conveniences that open the activity to all residents – regardless of mobility concerns. Features include a hard-packed stone dust surface, wide doorways and aisles, and raised garden beds to eliminate the need to bend and stoop to ground-level. Some of the produce raised in these community gardens will be distributed through the local food pantry to individuals and families facing food insecurity.



Laurel Hill Park is an extraordinary example of adaptive reuse of public lands. Transformed from an enclosed, separated property with mysterious and even undesirable characteristics, Laurel Hill is now a jewel to behold, serving millions of residents each year.



## Mary Romanello Named Inaugural Stegmaier Public Service Fellow in Chesterfield County

Christopher Newport University alumna Mary Romanello has been selected as Chesterfield County's inaugural Stegmaier Public Service Fellow.

Romanello was formerly introduced to the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors during its August board meeting.

The Stegmaier Public Service Fellowship was created in memory of the late James J.L. "Jay" Stegmaier, whose 37-year career with Chesterfield began as a budget analyst and ended as county administrator. It offers a two-year rotation in departments within a division for exposure, hands-on experience, and individualized learning – with a goal that the fellow applies for a position to establish a career with Chesterfield.

Romanello graduated last year with a degree in Political Science from CNU, then completed a year-long residential fellowship at her alma mater. She was contemplating her next move when she noticed Chesterfield was seeking applications for the new Stegmaier Public Service Fellowship.

"I thought, 'This is the opportunity of a lifetime,'" she recalled.

Read more about [Romanello and Chesterfield's Stegmaier Public Service Fellowship Program](#) in the county's "Chesterfield On Point" blog.



# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards  
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



## Congratulations Alleghany County!

The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) has awarded Alleghany County with a plaque of “Best Achievement” (its highest award) for a successfully completed school consolidation with the city of Covington. At the last Alleghany County Board of Supervisors session, **Jeremy Bennett** (2nd from left) was joined by Supervisors **James Griffith** (left) and **Matt Garten** with Alleghany Highlands School Board vice chairman **Jonathan Arritt** at right. It was an achievement that took a couple of years to accomplish and was fully implemented as the two area high schools joined student bodies a couple of weeks ago.

(Staff photo by Judy Moffitt Clark for the [AlleghanyJournal](#))

# Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards  
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



## Congratulations Amherst County!

The Amherst County Route 29 Business Corridor Beautification Committee receives an award from the Virginia Association of Counties for being the first County to establish this type of committee!

([From Beverly Jones' Facebook Page](#))



# JLARC reviewing Go Virginia – Report Due in December



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR  
**GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY**  
IN EACH REGION

The Virginia Joint Legislative Audit Review Commission (JLARC) is conducting the first comprehensive review of the [GO Virginia program](#) since its establishment. In 2016 the General Assembly adopted the Virginia Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia) Act to provide state grants to incentivize regional collaboration to address economic challenges. The GO Virginia fund has received approximately \$30 million in general fund appropriations per year since FY18 and GO Virginia grant awards have averaged \$15 million per year. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) supports and administers the GO Virginia program.

The [study](#), scheduled to be completed this December, will assess whether the program is effectively and efficiently achieving its goal, both in the short term and long term, to diversify regional economies through regional collaboration. The study will review whether GO Virginia is structured and administered effectively and efficiently to achieve its goal, including whether DHCD is effectively supporting the program. The study will also determine whether any of GO Virginia's functions are unnecessarily duplicative of other state economic development or workforce programs. Finally, based on these findings, the study will review changes that should be made to improve the program.

As part of the study, a survey of local governments and economic development authorities regarding the program was completed earlier this month. VACo members that want to provide additional comments on GO Virginia can submit them to Mark Gribbin, JLARC Chief Legislative Analyst, at [mgribbin@jlarc.virginia.gov](mailto:mgribbin@jlarc.virginia.gov).

**VACo Contact:** [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

# Smart Scale Proposed Changes Brief



## SMART SCALE

*Funding the Right  
Transportation Projects  
in Virginia*

The Virginia Secretary of Transportation directed the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) to conduct a full review of the SMART SCALE process in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). VACo was invited and will participate on the Technical Advisory Committee as part of the program review and is honored to do so. The review has been underway since April of this year and as we head into the fall, almost all the proposed changes to the SMART SCALE program have been unveiled. This article will outline the proposed changes to the SMART SCALE program as the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), VDOT, OIPI, DRPT, the applicant community and stakeholders are discussing and evaluating how these possible changes will impact them.

### Small Project Preference

To address concerns that the High Priority Program (HPP) is being used to implement small projects (< \$10 million) that do not have meaningful impacts on the improvement of Corridors of Statewide Significance or Regional Networks, the Commonwealth Transportation Board is considering changing the process for how HPP funding is allocated as well as redefining what projects are eligible for HPP funding.

The current funding steps are as follows:

- Step 1 allocates each VDOT construction district's grant program funding on a district-wide basis.
- Step 2 allocates HPP funding on a district-wide basis
- Step 3 allocates HPP funding on a statewide basis.

The proposed change would eliminate the current Step 2 and would move straight from Step 1 to Step 3 (sorted by SMART SCALE Score) shown above.

Current projects that are eligible for HPP funding include those that address needs on a Corridor of Statewide Significance or a Regional Network. With the proposed changes, project types would be limited to :

- New Capacity Highway
- Managed Lanes
- New or Improved Interchanges
- New or Improved Passenger Rail Stations or Service
- Freight Rail Improvements
- Fixed Guideway Transit



**Application Quality and Project Readiness**

One of the proposed changes to SMART SCALE is reducing the application caps for all entities; this change responds to a concern expressed regarding application quality. The proposed reduction is as follows:

- Tier 1 entities (localities with less than 200k people and MPOs PDCs or Transit Agencies with less than 500k people) - from 4 applications to 2 applications.
- Tier 2 entities (localities with more than 200k people and MPOs PDCs or Transit Agencies with more than 500k people) from 10 applications to 5 applications

To address project cost overruns and scheduling delays for locally administered projects that have received funding through SMART SCALE, the CTB is considering tying project funding decisions to how well the applying entity performs in project delivery. More information regarding this topic will be presented at the September CTB meeting.

To address project readiness, the CTB is considering an approach to streamline document approval before final submission. This entails making sure an applicant has approval for high level documents (cost estimates, reports, project schedules, resolutions, other required attachments) before a project is submitted. VDOT plans to provide earlier and more targeted support to applicants to coincide with the reduction in applications.

**Forward-Looking Process**

To better capture the future impacts of project implementation on congestion impacts, the Commonwealth Transportation Board is considering using 10-year future growth to determine congestion benefit scores instead of current congestion conditions. This is how the congestion factor was calculated in SMART SCALE Rounds 1 & 2 and was modified in Round 3 to prioritize existing conditions.

The economic development factor measures how each project supports economic development and improves goods movement. There are concerns that, as currently constructed, this factor does not account for future economic development. VDOT has engaged VEDP to develop a more forward-looking methodology which will be discussed at the September meeting.

**Land Use Factor Change**

Concerns raised about the current use of the land use score is that it accounts for where a project is located, not expected project outcomes. There is also concern that the land use score has disproportionately driven the types of projects that are selected for funding. To address these concerns, the CTB is considering a change to eliminate land use as a standalone score. Instead, the Commonwealth Transportation Board is considering using the land use scoring factor as a multiplier. The calculated land use benefit would be converted to a multiplier and would be used to increase benefit points in other factor areas thus enhancing the overall project score.

With the proposed removal of the land use factor and conversion to a multiplier, the CTB is considering reapportioning the points from the land use factor to the safety and congestion factors. This means that the CTB and SMART SCALE will continue to use the land use factor to encourage land use and transportation coordination, but a greater emphasis will be placed on safety and congestion factors. Final findings and recommendations of the proposed changes will be presented during the October meeting of the Commonwealth Transportation Board for the Board's consideration. Policy adoptions and other recommendations will take place at the December CTB meeting. VACo is soliciting feedback from members on these proposed changes and wants to hear how they could affect the transportation priorities in your localities.

## Virginia releases draft proposal to achieve universal broadband access with \$1.48 billion in federally allocated funds – Comments due by September 19



The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has released the [BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 2](#) for a public comment window that will close on September 19, 2023. Volume 2 of the BEAD Initial Proposal, as required under the [Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program's Notice of Funding Opportunity and supplemental guidance \(BEAD\)](#), includes critical components to effectively implement BEAD funding, including the application process, scoring criteria, and federal requirements for recipients of BEAD funds.

The BEAD program is a \$42.45 billion nationwide program to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs. DHCD is administering the Commonwealth's \$1.48 billion BEAD allocation to build upon the work of the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) to reach the remaining unserved regions of the Commonwealth. Once funding for universal broadband access is delivered, DHCD will focus on leveraging these investments through promoting affordability and improving adoption of service.

The proposed scoring criteria for subgrantee applications include a significant role for county governments in determining which internet service provider (ISP) projects are funded, and are weighted as follows:

- Cost Efficiency of Capital Outlay – 45%
- Affordability – 20%
- Fair Labor Practices – 10%
- ISP Consultation with Local or Tribal Government – 10%
- ISP Letter of Support from Local or Tribal Government – 10%

Upon receipt and consideration of comments to this document, the Commonwealth of Virginia will submit Volume 2 for consideration to the National Telecommunications and Information Association (NTIA), the administrators of BEAD.

For more information on DHCD's administration of the BEAD program, including the BEAD 5-year plan, [click here](#).

Comments to Volume 2 of the BEAD Initial Proposal should be submitted via email to [broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov) by 11:59PM September 19, 2023, for review and consideration.

**VACo Contact:** [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

## VRS Reports 6.1% Return for FY 2023



The Virginia Retirement System (VRS) recently reported a 6.1 percent return on its investment portfolio for the previous fiscal year, ending the year with approximately \$105 billion in assets. The rate of return for the three-, five-, and 10-year periods exceeded benchmarks. The health and well-being of VRS is important to local governments as it administers retirement programs and other benefit programs for state and local government employees, including teachers. VRS receives funds from employer contributions, employee contributions, and investment income.

The major asset classes performed as follows for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023:

- Public equity program returned 15.6%
- Fixed income program returned 0.5%
- Credit strategies program returned 5.7%
- Real assets program returned 1.7%
- Private equity program returned -0.7%
- Private investment partnerships 1.9%
- Multi-asset public strategies 7.7%

VRS serves more than 799,000 active and retired members. Based on assets, VRS is the 14<sup>th</sup> largest public and private pension systems in the United States, and 42<sup>nd</sup> largest in the world.

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

**Human Services – Children’s Services Act**

- Eliminates language that directed the implementation of rate-setting for private special education day placements funded through the Children’s Services Act. Redirects the proposed \$100,000 for consultant support for rate setting to a review by the Department of Education of private day placement decisions in localities with higher-than-average use of private day placements.

**Human Services – Behavioral Health**

- \$58 million to expand and modernize the comprehensive crisis services system, including investments in additional crisis receiving centers and crisis stabilization units and enhancements to existing sites.
- \$10 million for the one-time costs of establishing additional mobile crisis services in underserved areas.
- \$10 million for comprehensive psychiatric emergency programs or similar models of psychiatric care in emergency departments.
- \$30 million for permanent supportive housing for individuals with serious mental illness and \$4 million for supervised residential care for 100 individuals, with priority to be given to projects serving individuals who face extraordinary barriers to discharge from state hospitals.
- \$4.4 million to increase funding for the first three steps of STEP-VA (same-day access, primary care screening, and outpatient services).
- \$5.1 million in one-time funding for the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to contract with local law enforcement agencies for off-duty officers or officers working overtime to provide transportation services or to assume custody of an individual under an emergency custody order or a temporary detention order who is awaiting admission to a facility or for whom a bed has not been identified. DCJS is directed to coordinate with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to set criteria for awarding contracts and to ensure DCJS contracts are not duplicative of contracts under DBHDS’s Off Duty Officer Program.
- \$1.5 million for the Virginia Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program.
- \$7.5 million for DBHDS and partners to provide technical assistance to school divisions seeking guidance on integrating mental health services and grants to school divisions to contract with public or private providers for community-based mental health services.
- \$500,000 for DBHDS to evaluate public-private partnership arrangements for the Catawba Hospital transformation plan or other potential alternatives for the provision of behavioral health or substance use disorder services. Language directs DBHDS to assess how the surrounding localities may share efforts in transporting and taking custody of individuals under ECOs or TDOs who would otherwise be transported to Catawba Hospital; additional language directs DBHDS to consult with the Opioid Abatement Authority to assess whether surrounding localities may pool their opioid settlement funds to assist with the transformation plan.
- \$4 million for DBHDS to contract with the Virginia Mental Health Access Program to develop integrated mental health services for children.
- \$1.4 million in opioid settlement funding for purchase and distribution of naloxone.
- \$4.2 million for child psychiatry and children’s crisis response services for children with mental health and behavioral disorders.

**Human Services – Health**

- Extends the Joint Subcommittee to Examine the Commonwealth’s Pandemic Response and requires it to provide an interim status report by the first day of 2024 session and a final report by September 1, 2024. The Joint Subcommittee was originally scheduled to submit its final report by September 1, 2023.



- Designates \$5.8 million from the \$143.25 million appropriated for affordable access to higher education to address nursing shortages, with priority to be given to increased compensation for full and part-time faculty to remain competitive with nursing salaries.
- \$3 million for the Nursing Preceptor Incentive Program to increase the maximum incentive payment from \$1000 to \$5000 and expand eligibility to licensed practical nurses and registered nurses.
- \$943,856 GF/\$698,322 NGF for rent costs for local health departments.
- \$3.4 million GF in FY 2024 in state matching funds for federal Drinking Water State Revolving Fund awards from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- \$5 million in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to establish the Earn to Learn Nursing Education Acceleration Program, which will award grants for the formation of collaborative clinical training arrangements between high schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, and health providers.

#### **Human Services – Medicaid**

- Funds 500 additional Developmental Disabilities waiver slots, effective January 1, 2024.
- Provides a 12.5 percent rate increase for Early Intervention services, excluding case management, for all children under age three enrolled through Medicaid, effective January 1, 2024.
- Authorizes the reprocurement of the state's managed care service delivery system, with implementation no earlier than July 1, 2024; directs the Department of Medical Assistance Services to exclude dental services, developmental disability waiver services, and other services currently excluded from managed care from the development of a managed care contract.

#### **Human Services – Social Services**

- \$2.3 million GF in foster care and adoption cost of living adjustments.

#### **Courts and Public Safety**

- An additional \$2.1 million for assistance to localities with police departments ("HB 599" funding), which is designated as one-time funding.
- Provides \$250,000 to establish the Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman within the Office of the State Inspector General. The Ombudsman is to provide information to interested parties regarding the rights of inmates and employees; monitor conditions of confinement; assess compliance with existing policies and best practices; and make recommendations to support the safety and well-being of inmates and employees, among other responsibilities. Establishes the Corrections Oversight Committee to advise the Ombudsman and sets out requirements for membership.
- Directs the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, in collaboration with the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, with the assistance of VACo and VML, to submit a report by October 15, 2024, on juvenile detention center cost savings strategies, which is required to include a proposal to reduce state assistance in order to incentivize consolidation of juvenile detention centers in the Commonwealth and recommendations for consolidation of five to eight juvenile detention centers.
- Directs the Department of Juvenile Justice to provide a report on the impact of revisions to the guidelines for determining length of stay for juveniles who are indeterminately committed to the Department, to include an analysis of the impact of the guidelines on staffing ratios and bed space, as well as options for meeting the Department's anticipated capital and operating needs. The report is due December 1, 2023.

- Reduces Cannabis Control Authority funding by \$5.9 million; authorizes the Department of Planning and Budget to transfer up to \$2.5 million in balances from funding provided in 2021 for start-up costs for the Authority to cover the one-time costs of a seed-to-sale tracking system.
- \$1.3 million GF for probation and parole positions to offset declining special fund revenue.
- \$1.3 million for the Crime Victim-Witness Fund.
- \$5 million for the Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund to support implementation of evidence-informed gun violence intervention and prevention efforts.
- \$15 million for the Operation Ceasefire Grant Fund, which is used to implement violent crime reduction strategies, provide equipment for law enforcement agencies, and award grants to organizations that are involved in group violence intervention efforts.
- \$10 million for the Safer Communities Program to support holistic, community-based strategies that address the root causes and conditions of community violence.
- \$95,000 to contract with Impact Living Services for the Impact First Responders program to provide education and training related to trauma, resiliency, and critical incident stress management, as well as peer and mental health support to first responders.
- \$1 million for a witness protection program; the Department of Criminal Justice Services is directed to work with law enforcement and other stakeholders to develop an application process to award grants, which will be used to provide assistance of up to 90 days to witnesses to defray their costs for lodging, medical, transportation, food, and other expenses.
- \$103,800 to the Department of Fire Programs for electric vehicle firefighter training.
- \$452,682 for the Virginia State Police to provide expanded impaired driving training for state and local law enforcement.
- \$10 million for victims of mass violence; directs DCJS to convene a workgroup to assess gaps in available services for victims of crimes, especially mass violence events, and identify specific options to ensure that individuals affected by violence are able to cover health and mental health expenses that are not covered by insurance.

### **Water Quality**

- Directs \$644.5 million in mandatory deposits to the Water Quality Improvement Fund from FY 2022 and FY 2023 to the following uses: \$338.4 million to the Natural Resources Commitment Fund; \$100 million to the Resilient Virginia Revolving Loan Fund; \$25 million for dam safety improvements; \$151 million towards the Enhanced Nutrient Removal Certainty program; and \$30 million to the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (of which \$1 million is to be directed to York County and \$9 million to the City of Falls Church for specific projects).
- \$71 million in ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds in FY 2024 for the Enhanced Nutrient Removal Certainty Program.

### **Transportation**

- Directs the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, with assistance from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, to evaluate rail-centric economic development opportunities in the Bedford, Campbell, and Lynchburg region of central Virginia.
- Allocates funding previously appropriated to the State Trails Office to specific trails.
- Appropriates \$150 million in excess FY 2022 revenues to Interstate 64 improvements, as authorized by the 2022 Appropriation Act.
- Transfers \$75 million in uncommitted balances from the Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Bank to the Transportation Partnership Opportunity Fund to support major economic development initiatives.

**Reserves**

- Deposits \$289.6 million from excess FY 2023 revenues to the Revenue Reserve Fund.

**Tax Policy**

- Provides an individual income tax rebate of \$200 for individuals and \$400 for married filers, up to the amount of the filer's tax liability after the application of deductions, subtractions, or credits.
- Increases the standard deduction to \$8500 single/\$17,000 married, beginning in tax year 2024, contingent on withholding collections meeting the forecast for July-December 2023.
- Removes the age limit for the military retirement benefit income tax subtraction, beginning with tax year 2024.
- Increases the business interest deduction from 30 to 50 percent, beginning with tax year 2024.
- Reinstates the sales tax holiday for energy/water efficient products, school supplies, and hurricane preparedness equipment through July 1, 2025; for 2023, the holiday is October 20-23.

**Other Items**

- Language clarifies that fixtures in a data center, when classified as real estate, are to be valued by a locality based on the cost approach, as required by legislation enacted in 2022.
- Authorizes the Department of General Services (DGS) to construct a water supply line (the "Commonwealth Line"), which will be owned and operated by Prince Edward County, to be located in Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties, and towns located within the boundaries of Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties, to serve the needs of the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital, Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation (Phases 1 and 2) and Nottoway Correctional Center. The language also (1) authorizes DGS "...to acquire by purchase, gift or power of eminent domain such lands, structures, rights-of-way, franchises, easements and other interests in lands of any person, association, partnership, corporation, railroad, public service, public utility, municipality or political subdivision to construct, provide and operate the Commonwealth Line in the Localities, all without obtaining the consent or permission of any locality or public body ..."; (2) declares that the "... ownership, construction and operation of the Commonwealth Line by DGS shall not be subject to any state or local permitting requirements or similar ordinances or regulations."; and (3) authorizes DGS to transfer ownership and/or authorization of the line to Prince Edward County without "... the consent or permission of any locality or public body."
- \$250,000 for the Secretary of Finance to evaluate potential economic incentives to attract sports teams to the state.

**VACo Contacts:** [VACo Legislative Team](#)





Weldon Cooper Center  
*for Public Service*

# Local Government Equity Clinic: Applications Open

The Weldon Cooper Center shares that the Virginia Institute of Government is expanding its Local Government Equity Clinic nationwide this fall. The [Local Government Equity Clinic](#) is a collaboration between the Virginia Institute of Government and School of Data Science at the University of Virginia. The program leverages the expertise and resources of both organizations to further shared goals around data for the public good. The Clinic serves local government staff and leaders who are interested in better understanding and managing issues of equity and diversity in their workplaces and communities.

Ideal candidates who will get the most of this experience are local government practitioners:

- with an interest in equity who have not already had a significant amount of training in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- who want to leverage equity to better serve their communities and expand their personal/professional network of local government professionals similarly invested in building equitable communities
- who want to promote equity but do not yet have the competency or comfort level to operationalize equity in local government

This dynamic virtual program will run every other Friday from Sept. 29 to Dec. 15. Cost varies according to organizational size. More information and applications available at <https://vig.coopercenter.org/local-government-equity-clinic>.

# Join RELI for our Fall Policy Webinars!

**Webinar #1: Climate Action: Local Government and School Collaboration**

**Friday, September 15: Noon –1:15 pm | Free**

**Speakers:**

- Babur Lateef, M.D., Chairman, Prince William County Public Schools
- Cathy Lin, Director, Facilities and Operations, Arlington Public Schools
- Dan Storck, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Chair, Environmental Committee
- Michael Turner, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors



Hon. Babur Lateef  
Chair  
Prince William School Board



Cathy Lin  
Director  
Facilities & Operations  
Arlington Public Schools



Hon. Dan Storck  
Mount Vernon District Supervisor  
Fairfax County



Hon. Michael R. Turner  
Ashburn District Supervisor  
Loudoun County

*Moderator: Jay Fisette, former Arlington County Board Member*

## Key Questions

- Is there any value in local governments and their school systems coordinating on climate actions? Integrated plans? Goals? Technical support? Procurement?
- What are some tangible examples of successful collaboration?
- Do elected officials have a role, opportunity or responsibility to advance this collaboration? What about the Manager/Superintendent and staff?
- Does successful collaboration require a “champion?”
- Is it important to set up structures to enhance collaboration, or is ad hoc communication sufficient?
- What opportunities are there in the key areas where government/schools have control: Public buildings? Rooftop solar? Fleets?
- How can you communicate this collaboration to your advantage?

**REGISTER NOW!**

# Virginia Counties Recognized for Model Programs



**RICHMOND (August 3, 2023)**—The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) is pleased to announce the 33 recipients of the 2023 Achievement Awards, which recognize excellence in local government programs. VACo received 135 submissions.

Winning entries focused on addressing issues of addiction, education, and revitalization, as well as finding solutions to other challenges that counties face daily.

[Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#)

[Winning Program Descriptions](#)

[2023 Achievement Awards Entries](#)

“I want to thank all who participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the Achievement Awards,” VACo Executive Director **Dean Lynch** said. “I’m encouraged to see that we received 135 submissions, our highest total ever. This tells me that the VACo Achievement Awards’ mission of identifying and celebrating the innovative work by local government officials continues to resonate with our counties. We thank all who participated and give special recognition those who won an award.”

**Charles Hartgrove**, ICMA-CM, Director of the Virginia Institute of Government; **Dr. Sheryl Bailey**, Visiting Professor of Practice at Virginia Tech, and former Chesterfield County Deputy County Administrator; and **Larry Land**, retired VACo Director of Policy Development, served as judges for this year’s statewide competitive awards program.

**Alleghany County** and its **Alleghany/Covington School Consolidation** program won this year’s **Best Achievement Award**.



“What Alleghany County achieved is historic – a feat that has been accomplished only three times in the Commonwealth since 1982,” Dr. Bailey said. “It took Alleghany County more than 50 years of conversation to complete the merger of the new Alleghany Highlands Public Schools. But Alleghany County got it done, and in its first year of operations saved more than \$450,000 in personnel costs without any involuntary layoffs. The consolidation assisted county leaders to navigate the nationwide teacher shortage. This Best Achievement Award program deserves a ‘Go Alleghany Cougars!’”

The judges also selected a Best Small County Achievement Award (50,000 or less population) and a Best Large County Achievement Award. **Dinwiddie County** and its **City Planning Project** program captured the **Best Small County Achievement Award** while **Chesterfield County** and its **Chesterfield Recovery Academy** program earned the **Best Large County Achievement Award**.

Hartgrove, who served his first year as judge, said Dinwiddie County’s winning program reflects an important criterion for the VACo Achievement Awards. “We are inspired by innovative programs that connect students with local governments,” Hartgrove said. “We think it’s important for the future of local government to show the youth that serving at the local level can be a rewarding and successful career choice. This program is designed to spark a student’s interest in planning or local government administration. Congratulations to Dinwiddie County for designing such an impactful program.”

Land praised Chesterfield County for being a leader in the Achievement Awards program. “Chesterfield County again has developed a program that sets itself apart,” Land said. “The Chesterfield Recovery Academy is the first recovery school in the state, and is a multi-community effort that can be replicated by other counties to help fight against adolescent addiction. Thank you, Chesterfield County, for creating an environment of support for families and those struggling with addiction.”

**Chesterfield County** tops the all-time Achievement Awards list with 49. Chesterfield County has won an award in each year of the 21-year history of the program. **Henrico County** is second on the list with 42 Achievement Awards while **Loudoun County** is third with 30.

The VACo Achievement Awards is a competitive program open to local government members of the association.

### [Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#)

[Winning Program Descriptions](#) | [Achievement Awards Website](#) | [2023 Achievement Awards Entries](#)  
[Past Winners](#) | [Past Judges](#) | [20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Achievement Awards Video](#)

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VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

### CONTACT

Gage Harter | 804.343.2502 | [gharter@vaco.org](mailto:gharter@vaco.org)

### VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

1207 East Main Street | Richmond, Va. 23219 | [www.vaco.org](http://www.vaco.org)



## Register now for the NACo 2023 Rural Action Caucus (RAC) Symposium

**November 5–7 | Greenbrier County, WV**

We invite you to register today for the National Association of Counties (NACo) [Rural Action Caucus \(RAC\) 2023 Fall Symposium](#) in Greenbrier County, West Virginia.

Elected and appointed county officials, national thought leaders and partners will identify rural challenges and elevate solutions through information exchanges and policy discussions. This unique event is an opportunity to engage with your peers and national experts on topics important to rural America, including broadband deployment, rural development, workforce challenges, substance abuse and community resilience.

**[REGISTER NOW](#)**

## Letter from VACo Executive Director Dean Lynch - NACo Leadership Academy



Dear VACo Members,

It was a great conference in Travis County, Texas, and many of the 95 counties from Virginia were represented. A key theme of the session was leadership - hiring, retaining, and developing existing leaders to be even better - and emerging leaders to be ready to address the increasing complexity of county government.

The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy helps to accomplish this goal and announced the milestone of having over 10,000 graduates nationwide. Seventy counties across Virginia have used the Academy ([www.naco.org/skills](http://www.naco.org/skills)), and those counties have received over \$270,000 in scholarships to cover some of the enrollment cost of each person.

### Hear from VA graduates:

Rockingham County: *"This isn't your run-of-the-mill leadership class. The insights from global leaders as well as weekly breakout groups were invaluable."*

Richmond County: *"This course helped to provide the courage I needed to improve as a leader and also set out many tools and reminders to use along the way. Great job -thanks for allowing me to be a part of the course."*

I know great leadership is important in all of our counties. This program helps us accomplish that. The final cohort of 2023 kicks off September 18, and scholarship funds/volume discounting are available (enroll 5 participants for \$5,000 for a limited time).

Please contact Academy Enrollment Director Treina Smith-Slatt ([treinas@pdaleadership.com](mailto:treinas@pdaleadership.com)) if you have questions about the program and enrollment.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Dean A. Lynch, CAE  
VACo Executive Director



# PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



## WHO WE ARE

A team of public service professionals dedicated to serving local governments and other public agencies.

## WHAT WE DO

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### PLANNING

Manages and supports long-range planning efforts and other complex land use projects.



### ZONING

Administers land use processes, recommends amendments to ordinances and maps, as needed.



### ADMINISTRATIVE

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# PULASKI COUNTY

# RFP



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL CHANGE AGENT FIRE/EMS & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Pulaski County is seeking a contractor with high-level management skills in fire, EMS and the emergency management industry to restructure our community service delivery based on the findings and recommendations of the recent Fire/EMS/Emergency Management study.

[READ THE RFP](#)



## Get to know one of VACo's Premier Partners – OneDigital

### Host

**Dean Lynch | Executive  
Director | Virginia  
Association of Counties**

### Guests

**Matt Hedley, CFP | Vice  
President, Retirement  
Services | OneDigital**

**Sarah Anne Struckmann  
| Business Development  
Executive | OneDigital**

Short | [One Minute of OneDigital](#)

Part 1 | [Introductions | Learn more about OneDigital](#)

Part 2 | [Top Priorities for Counties?](#)

Part 3 | [Working with the Public Sector](#)

Part 4 | [Making Life Easier for Counties](#)

Part 5 | [OneDigital Relationship with Health Carriers](#)

Part 6 | [Support of VRS Hybrid Employee](#)

Part 7 | [Assist in Dealing with Benefit Costs](#)

Part 8 | [Utilize OneDigital – which offers Benefits, Retirement, and HR Support](#)

Part 9 | [Wealth and Retirement](#)

Part 10 | [HR, Benefits, Retirement Industry Trends](#)

Part 11 | [How does VRS Factor in OneDigital's Guidance?](#)

Part 12 | [Plan Sponsors](#)

Part 13 | [Public versus Private](#)

Part 14 | [Opportunities during a Recession](#)

Part 15 | [Timeline to Implement Retirement Program](#)

Part 16 | [Thank You](#)





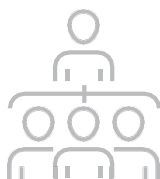
Counties affect the lives of residents every day. When our frontline staff are empowered as leaders, we deliver services more effectively. **The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy is a resource that connects your staff with practical leadership training.** HPLA uses an innovative, interactive online learning platform that combines real-time webinars, recorded sessions and small group discussions to deliver effective training without traveling away from the county – saving money and maximizing time.

#### THE ACADEMY FOCUSES ON FIVE ESSENTIAL SKILLS:



##### LEAD:

Engage teams and stakeholders to foster positive climates and exceed common expectations



##### ORGANIZE:

Plan, lead and execute organizational change more effectively and consistently



##### COLLABORATE:

Establish alignment and strong partnerships through building stronger relationships



##### DELIVER:

Measure projects and processes to deliver results aligned with county and community priorities



##### COMMUNICATE:

Create clarity, confidence, and community

**The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy empowers frontline county government professionals with fundamental, practical leadership skills to deliver results for counties and residents.**

**NACo Member County cost per enrollee begins at \$1,995.**

Additional discounts may apply. Contact us for more details.

With a curriculum developed by the late *General Colin Powell* and public and private sector leaders, NACo High Performance Leadership Academy gives students the opportunity to learn from world-class faculty. All content is guided by an expert facilitator.

**Find out more at [NACo.org/Skills](https://www.naco.org/Skills)**





## OneDigital is thrilled to be one of VACo's newest Premier Partners.

What truly distinguishes OneDigital as a leading **insurance, financial services, and HR consulting advisory firm** is our holistic approach to creating environments that enable people to do their best work and live their best lives. OneDigital understands that counties face rising insurance costs while still struggling to attract/retain talent. This is why we use proprietary software to provide accurate and predictable insurance consulting projections for those core benefits that impact your bottom line and incorporate solutions to improve retention. While voluntary benefits may be the focus of other providers, OneDigital has the expertise in alternative funding strategies, best-in-class analytics, and an in-house actuarial team.

OneDigital has a track record of providing cost-saving solutions to counties. This has been achieved through creative funding strategies, rate holds, and exclusive partnerships with various carriers. One of these exclusive partnerships is through VACORP and Anthem Life. OneDigital is responsible for the inception of the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) which is through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Our team of fierce advocates negotiated a 5-year locked rate, including short-term and long-term disability benefits. Your division may already work with us in this capacity, as we currently serve over 270 public sector entities in the VLDP program.



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**Sarah Anne Struckmann**  
**Business Development Executive**  
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434-987-2240



At OneDigital, we harness the power of one to solve complex challenges for businesses and people. Scan the code to the left to watch the video and learn more.



## *Opioid Abatement Authority Updates*

### OAA Board of Directors Finalizes \$23 Million in Grants to 76 Cities & Counties

On Friday June 23, 2023, the Board of Directors for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) voted to award more than \$23 million in grants to 76 Virginia cities and counties for opioid abatement and remediation efforts. The vote confirmed the full Board's approval of recommendations made by the OAA's grants committee, which earlier recommended the slate of awards. [Read the Press Release.](#)

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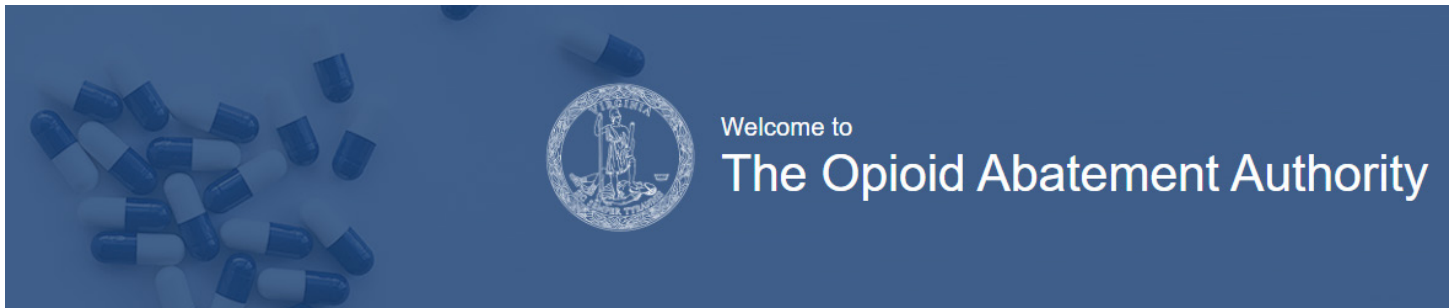
## New Application Period for Planning Grants for Individual Cities and Counties Open

The Grants Committee of the Opioid Abatement Authority has voted to open a 2nd application period this year for Planning Grants for Individual Cities and/or Counties. The application period opens July 1, 2023 and closes September 30, 2023. This will be the last opportunity for planning grants from the OAA.

Planning Grants must result in a plan that can be executed into an application for funds from the OAA. The performance period will be 12 months. The Grants Committee will consider awards at their December 4, 2023 meeting. Click on the link below to review requirements and additional information.

**GRANTS PORTAL**





## *Best Practices for Local Governments in the Allocation of Opioid Settlement Funding*

**Tony McDowell, Executive Director | Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority**

Virginia has already received settlements worth more than \$500 million from prescription opioid manufacturers and distributors, and that number could double. Most of these funds will flow to Virginia's cities and counties for efforts to abate the opioid crisis. As Virginia's cities and counties develop local and regional plans for the use of these funds, some best practices are beginning to emerge.

The first of these is **establishing a local abatement committee** comprised of various stakeholders including prevention and treatment specialists, public health, behavioral health, law enforcement, and people with lived experience.

Some communities are holding **town hall style public meetings** or listening sessions so that local leaders can hear from residents who have been directly affected by the prescription opioid epidemic, as well as from service providers and community-based organizations. The OAA's Board of Directors has been following this approach, and has already conducted six public listening sessions around the state. The feedback from these sessions has been instrumental in informing the Board's strategy for allocating grants.

Local governments are encouraged to **engage with community partners**, especially those that have already been fighting the opioid epidemic for years. This certainly includes the local Community Services Board, but in addition there are many non-profits, grassroot organizations, treatment providers, and recovery support organizations that want to be involved. During its listening sessions the OAA Board has heard numerous examples of such organizations that have been barely surviving financially, working off of donations and volunteer effort. These organizations often know exactly how to reach the people who are sick and suffering, and have a track record of stretching dollars for maximum impact. The OAA is only able to provide funding to cities, counties and state agencies. This means the opioid settlement funds will not reach these non-government organizations unless there is a partnership with the local government.

The OAA is committed to providing assistance to cities and counties in developing their abatement plans. We offer **planning grants** and are in the process of launching a series of best-practice webinars and workshops. For more information please visit us at [www.voaa.us](http://www.voaa.us).



# SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

## PHOTO SPEED ENFORCEMENT

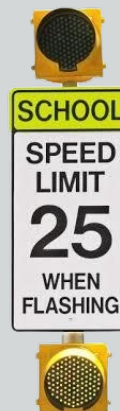


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- \* Reduction in dangerous traffic stops
- \* Reassignment of Officers to needed areas
- \* Reduction of high speed police pursuits
- \* No cost to agency or local government

### COMMUNITY SCHOOL BENEFITS

- \* Traffic Calming
- \* Additional tool for SRO's
- \* Increased safety for children
- \* Changes driver behavior



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Every effort is made to inform and educate the public through social media and press releases as well as a 30-day warning period.

### CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Single lane LIDAR leaves no questions with photo speed enforcement, and is 100% accurate in identifying the correct vehicle.

## SLOWER VEHICLES = SAFER SCHOOLS

With our proactive combination of technology and public information and education, most communities have a 92% reduction in speeding, making their schools a safer place to walk play and learn.



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**Or FAX credit card purchases to 804.788.0083**

Questions? Call 804.788.6652.



The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. **The cost is \$100 per ad for non-VACo members.** VACo publishes the ad on its website and mobile app as well as the upcoming County Connections issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Valerie Russell](#).

[CITY MANAGER](#) | City of Lexington  
| Posted September 8

[LEAD MECHANIC \(WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT\)](#) | City of Fredericksburg | Posted September 8

[CODE INSPECTOR I OR II \(RESIDENTIAL COMBINATION INSPECTOR\)](#) | City of Alexandria  
| Posted September 7

[DIRECTOR OF FINANCE](#) | Pulaski County | Posted September 6

[CITY MANAGER](#) | City of Salem  
| Posted September 6

[PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE INSPECTOR \(I, II, OR III\)](#) | City of Alexandria | Posted September 6

[PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR](#) | City of Alexandria | Posted September 6

[AUTOMATION COORDINATOR](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 5

[UTILITY PLANT MECHANIC](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 5

[FINANCE DIRECTOR](#) | Wythe County  
| Posted September 5

[DIRECTOR OF PIEDMONT COURT SERVICES](#) | Mecklenburg County  
| Posted September 5

[ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT – BUILDING/LAND USE DEPARTMENT](#) | Lancaster County | Posted September 5

[LICENSE PRACTICAL NURSE – RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM \(PART-TIME\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 1

[CLINICIAN \(CD\) – ADULT OUTPATIENT MHSUD](#) | Hanover County | Posted September 1

[PSYCHIATRIC NURSE SUPERVISOR](#) | Hanover County | Posted September 1

[PROGRAM COORDINATOR II – CRISIS AND URGENT CARE SERVICES](#) | Hanover County | Posted September 1

[PERMIT TECHNICIAN \(CD\)](#) | Hanover County | Posted September 1

[SUPPORT COORDINATOR \(CD\) – DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES](#) | Hanover County | Posted September 1

[DEPUTY CITY MANAGER](#) | City of Harrisonburg | Posted August 30

[PLANNING COORDINATOR](#) | Montgomery County | Posted August 30

[CHIEF OF POLICE](#) | Town of Pulaski  
| Posted August 30

[ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER](#) | City of Staunton | Posted August 30

[IT SUPPORT SPECIALIST](#) | Middlesex County | Posted August 30

[SOLID WASTE DEPUTY DIVISION MANAGER](#) | Bedford County | Posted August 30

[GIS MANAGER](#) | Bedford County  
| Posted August 30

[DAY SUPPORT COUNSELOR](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted August 30

[TRAINING ANALYST](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted August 30

[SENIOR RESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR \(PINE FOREST\)](#) | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 30

[RESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR \(IN HOME\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted August 30

[SCHOOL BUS TECHNICIAN](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted August 30

[FLEET SERVICES DIVISION MANAGER](#) | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 30

[ASSISTANT COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY](#) | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 30

[CONSTRUCTION PROJECT MANAGER](#) | Fauquier County | Posted August 30

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted August 29

[TOWN MANAGER](#) | Town of Pulaski  
| Posted August 28

[DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES](#) | Albemarle County | Posted August 28

[DIVISION DIRECTOR – BENEFITS PROGRAMS](#) | Hanover County  
| Posted August 28

[PLANNER – DEVELOPMENT REVIEW](#) | Hanover County | Posted August 28

[BUYER](#) | Roanoke County | Posted August 25

[POLICY, PLANNING & COMPLIANCE DIRECTOR](#) | Virginia Retirement System | Posted August 24

[PLANNING ASSOCIATE](#) | Fauquier County | Posted August 24

[PROCUREMENT MANAGER](#) | King George County | Posted August 24

[DEPUTY FINANCE DIRECTOR](#) | Accomack County | Posted August 24

[DEPUTY DIRECTOR – HUMAN RESOURCES](#) | Accomack County  
| Posted August 24

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****DIRECTOR** | Albemarle County  
| Posted August 23**SENIOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE****WORKER** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**POLICE OFFICER** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**DEPUTY TREASURER I** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**APPARATUS TECHNICIAN** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**PLANNER I** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**COMMUNICATION'S OFFICER** | Prince George County  
| Posted August 22**SAFETY, SECURITY, & TRAINING COORDINATOR** | City of Harrisonburg  
| Posted August 21**CASHIER GROUNDS ATTENDANT (PT)** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 21**SENIOR CLINICIAN (FT)** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 21**VAN DRIVER (PT)** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 21**SENIOR CLINICIAN - CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 21**SENIOR CLINICIAN-CHILD & ADOLESCENT SERVICES** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 21**COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR** | Arlington County  
| Posted August 21**BUILDING OFFICIAL** | Northumberland County  
| Posted August 21**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR** | Lee County  
| Posted August 21**ASSISTANT COUNTY****ADMINISTRATOR** | Lee County  
| Posted August 21**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES** | Spotsylvania County  
| Posted August 21**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS** | Gloucester County  
| Posted August 21**DEPUTY CHIEF** | Frederick County  
| Posted August 21**DEPUTY CLERK II** | Culpeper County  
| Posted August 21**WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP MANAGER** | Albemarle County  
| Posted August 21**COMMUNICATION OFFICER TRAINEE** | Campbell County  
| Posted August 17**CUSTODIAN II** | Campbell County  
| Posted August 17**INTERN-DIGITAL MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS** | Campbell County  
| Posted August 17**DIRECTOR OF TOURISM** | City of Lexington  
| Posted August 17**UTILITY ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVE I/II/III** | James City County Service Authority  
| Posted August 16**PURCHASING AGENT** | Isle of Wight County  
| Posted August 15**PLANNER I OR II** | The Berkley Group  
| Posted August 15**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR** | Westmoreland County  
| Posted August 15**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - PLANNING AND ZONING** | Isle of Wight County  
| Posted August 15**PLANNER/GIS TECHNICIAN** | Fluvanna County  
| Posted August 15**REGIONAL RADIO SYSTEM****MANAGER** | Northampton County  
| Posted August 14**FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC & FIREFIGHTER/EMT** | Carroll County  
| Posted August 14**LEAD CASHIER** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 14**CASHIER/GROUNDS ATTENDANT** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 14**CAPITAL PROJECT MANAGER** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 14**HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 14**CRISIS CLINICIAN** | Chesterfield County  
| Posted August 14**SENIOR ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY** | Roanoke County  
| Posted August 14**DEPUTY CLERK** | Roanoke County  
| Posted August 14**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER** | City of Lynchburg  
| Posted August 11**DEPUTY DIRECTOR** | Loudoun County  
| Posted August 11**TOWN MANAGER** | Town of Dayton, VA  
| Posted August 11**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR** | City of Alexandria  
| Posted August 11**UTILITIES MANAGER** | Powhatan County  
| Posted August 11**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR** | Powhatan County  
| Posted August 11**ENGINEER III** | Loudoun County  
| Posted August 11**ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT (ALS) PROVIDER (INTERMEDIATE/ PARAMEDIC)** | Grayson County  
| Posted August 11



## VALUE OF VACo



### ADVOCACY

VACo's lobbying efforts have helped stem the tide of unfunded mandates and have saved Counties millions of dollars every year.



### EDUCATION

Our educational programs offer County leaders and staff opportunities to become more effective in their communities.



### MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Some of VACo's best moments are when members convene and work to improve communities all over the Commonwealth.



### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Our business development opportunities offer savings and innovative approaches to delivering services at the County level.

## VACo LEADERSHIP



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**Jason D. Bellows**  
Lancaster County



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VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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