



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Transportation Board

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Agenda item # 10

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

September 21, 2022

MOTION

Made By: Dr. Smoot **Seconded By:** Mr. Byers
Action: Motion carried, unanimously

Title: Approval of Virginia Highway Safety Investment Strategy

WHEREAS, pursuant to §33.2-373 of the *Code of Virginia*, it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (the Board) to establish the Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program (the Program) to reduce motorized and non-motorized fatalities and severe injuries on highways in the Commonwealth, whether such highways are state or locally maintained; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to §33.2-373 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Board shall adopt an investment strategy to guide the investments of the Program, and the investment strategy shall cover a period of at least five years and seek to achieve a significant reduction in the anticipated number of fatalities and severe injuries over the covered period and shall give priority to projects, strategies, and activities based on the expected reduction in fatalities and severe injuries relative to cost, including improvements that are widely implemented based on a high-risk roadway feature that is correlated with a particular crash type, rather than crash frequency; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to §33.2-373 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Board, beginning in Fiscal Year 2024, shall, after program administration costs, allocate safety funds in accordance with its adopted investment strategy that includes allocating at least 54 percent of safety funds for infrastructure projects, 29 percent of funds to address the behavioral causes of crashes, and the remaining amounts for other eligible safety projects pursuant to the investment strategy; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) have developed a proposed data-driven highway safety investment plan

that will deploy Virginia’s limited highway safety resources to projects and efforts with maximum potential to reduce traffic deaths and injuries; and

WHEREAS, a key finding from data-driven analysis demonstrates that systemic and hybrid safety projects—proven low-cost improvements, such as high-visibility backplates, flashing yellow left turn signals, and rumble strips, systemically spread on a roadway network—provide more potential crash reduction benefits for lower costs than do spot improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, in its workshop meeting on December 7, 2021, the Board was presented with the proposed investment strategy and information and recommendations relating to the prioritization and investment of limited Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to maximize the benefits in crash reductions and make progress toward the Commonwealth’s “Toward Zero Deaths” vision for roadway safety; and

WHEREAS, after due consideration of the information received, the Board believes that the investment strategy, as set forth in Attachment A, should be adopted and used to select projects for highway safety funding in the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) to improve transparency in the project selection process, accelerate delivery of selected projects and investment strategies, and aid in achieving reductions in fatalities, serious injuries, and non-motorized crashes; and

WHEREAS, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) signed into law November 15, 2021 provides the largest long-term federal investment in infrastructure in history; and

WHEREAS, the recent uplifts in both federal and state revenues supporting the Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program have enabled the previously identified systemic and hybrid infrastructure initiatives to be fully funded and their scheduled completion is being accelerated to the maximum extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the recent uplift in both federal and state revenues supporting the Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program also support the inclusion and acceleration of systemic safety improvements on locally-maintained roads in the Six-Year Improvement Program beginning in Fiscal Year 2023; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Highway Safety Investment Strategy, as set forth in Attachment A, to govern prioritization and selection of highway safety infrastructure and behavioral projects for funding, is approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board directs the Commissioner of Highways in coordination with the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles to take all actions

Resolution of the Board
Approval of Virginia Highway Investment Strategy
September 21, 2022
Page 3 of 3

necessary to implement and administer this investment strategy, including, but not limited to, the development of Implementation Plans and supporting guidance establishing the process for screening, scoring and selection of projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Highway Safety Improvement Strategy approved herein is hereby effective as of the date of this resolution and replaces and supersedes the January 12, 2022 entitled “Approval of Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Strategy.”

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Attachment A

Highway Safety Investment Strategy

VDOT shall coordinate with DMV in the development of a Highway Safety Investment Strategy that includes an investment plan for deployment of infrastructure improvements and behavioral countermeasures.

On an annual basis, VDOT will, in cooperation with DMV, report on the following:

- a. Progress on advancement of the infrastructure and behavioral safety implementation plan;
- b. Recommendations for changes to the infrastructure and behavioral portion of the investment plan, as needed.

Infrastructure Investment Plan

VDOT shall develop an infrastructure investment plan for the continued deployment of proven systemic and hybrid safety countermeasures across the roadway network, including VDOT and locally-maintained facilities. The implementation plan shall:

- a. Include, but not be limited to: edge-line rumble strips on the primary system; centerline rumble strips on the primary system; pavement shoulder wedge; chevrons and curve visibility enhancements; high-visibility traffic signal backplates; flashing yellow arrows; unsignalized intersection signage and marking; pedestrian crossing improvements; pavement markings, traffic control devices, and other enhancements on two-lane rural roads; road diets; and other systemic/hybrid safety improvements as identified through research or data-driven analysis;
- b. Be consistent with the emphasis areas included in Virginia's current Strategic Highway Safety Plan and in support of achievement of CTB adopted performance targets;
- c. Include an estimate of the effectiveness of full deployment of the implementation plans; and
- d. Be updated periodically to advance additional systemic safety improvements.

In order to prioritize, accelerate and maximize the deployment of systemic and hybrid infrastructure safety improvements, the Board will not approve new spot improvement projects until existing systemic and hybrid infrastructure initiatives have been fully funded and their scheduled completion is accelerated to the maximum extent possible, including additional systemic safety improvement treatments identified for implementation. In general, spot improvements projects should be implemented or advertised for construction within one year of the budgeted year of allocation or funding may be subject to reprogramming.

Highway safety funding for infrastructure projects will be distributed as follows:

- a. After funds are set aside for program administration (approximately 5 to 10 percent), the remaining funds shall be programmed to projects in accordance with the above safety infrastructure implementation plan through the Six-Year Improvement Program.
- b. Minimum funding levels for locally-maintained roadways shall be based on the proportion of fatalities on locally-maintained versus VDOT-maintained roads with funds available beginning in Fiscal Year 2023 for use on systemic safety improvements.
- c. The funds for VDOT-maintained roads will be programmed based on the risk-based locations of the systemic safety treatments included in the Implementation Plans.
- d. The funds for spot improvement projects on VDOT-maintained roads will be programmed based on a risk assessment and/or benefit cost analysis.

Funding for systemic infrastructure projects on locally-maintained roads will be awarded through a competitive application process with projects that have a higher return on investment receiving priority. If a sufficient number of projects on locally-maintained roadways are not identified and funds remain, the remaining funds may be used to fund and advance projects on VDOT-maintained roadways. VDOT oversight of safety projects on locally-maintained roads will continue to be in accordance with Chapter 7 of VDOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program Implementation Guidelines and other existing Locally Administered Project requirements.

In cases where programmed infrastructure funds are no longer needed for the delivery of a project, or additional funds become available (beyond that assumed in the Implementation Plans), the unexpended surplus and unallocated funds will be reserved and managed centrally by VDOT to address budget adjustments on existing highway safety projects, to further advance systemic safety improvements, or to fund other safety infrastructure projects.

A project that has been selected for funding must be initiated, and at least a portion of the programmed funds expended, within one year of the budgeted year of allocation or funding may be subject to reprogramming. In the event a locally-administered project is not advanced to the next phase of construction when requested by the Board, the locality may be required, pursuant to §33.2-214 of the *Code of Virginia*, to reimburse VDOT for all state and federal funds expended on the project.

Behavioral Strategy Investment Plan

DMV shall develop a behavioral strategy investment plan for the deployment of behavioral countermeasures across the state to address the behavioral causes of crashes. The behavioral safety plan shall:

- a. Include, but not be limited to investments relating to: Occupant Protection Education and Outreach; Impaired Driving Education and Outreach; Speed Education and Outreach; and Pedestrian/Bike Education and Outreach;
- b. Be consistent with the emphasis areas included in Virginia's current Strategic Highway Safety Plan and in support of achievement of CTB adopted performance targets;
- c. Include an estimate of the effectiveness of full deployment of the Implementation Plans; and
- d. Be updated periodically to advance additional behavioral safety improvements.

In cases where programmed behavioral funds are no longer needed for the delivery of a specific initiative, or additional funds become available (beyond that assumed in the Implementation Plans), the unexpended surplus and unallocated funds will be reserved and managed centrally to address budget adjustments or to further advance other behavioral initiatives.