



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Commonwealth Transportation Board

Nicholas Donohue  
Chairperson

1221 East Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

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*Agenda item # 8*

### RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

February 17, 2026

#### MOTION

**Made By:** Mr. Fowlkes, **Seconded By:** Ms. Sellers

**Action:** Motion Carried

**Title: Rescission of January 6, 2026, Resolution and Action Entitled:**  
**Agreement with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Relating to the Shenandoah Valley**  
**Rail Trail**

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, pursuant to Item 374 (P) of Chapter 56, the General Assembly directed the Department of Conservation and Recreation to assess the feasibility for development of a linear park along the Shenandoah Valley rail corridor from Front Royal to Broadway, Virginia, with the assistance of the Departments of Transportation (VDOT) and Rail and Public Transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, the report was published in 2021, under the title *Feasibility Study for a Linear Park in the Shenandoah Valley*, and documented public survey and outreach finding widespread support for the project along the Norfolk Southern-owned rail corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2023, pursuant to Item 452 (I) of Chapter 1, and out of funds appropriated to the VDOT's State Trails Office, the General Assembly directed that up to \$35 million be allocated to the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail (SVRT) for the purpose of land acquisition, initial planning, and site development and stipulated that land acquisition by the Commonwealth shall not preclude the consideration of options to maintain rail transportation in the corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, in response to the General Assembly's request to consider options to maintain rail transportation in the corridor, VDOT assessed the constraints, considerations, and costs for constructing a trail alongside the subject rail line as an alternative to the previously studied rail-to-trail option; and

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**WHEREAS**, in November 2025, VDOT completed the assessment, which was conducted in three phases: Phase 1 - Alternatives Analysis (evaluating and identifying typical sections that could accommodate a rail-with-trail alternative), Phase 2 - Corridor Assessment (conducting field evaluations of track and structure conditions and performing the public outreach campaign), and Phase 3 - Assessment Findings (developing cost estimates and documenting of assessment outcomes); and

**WHEREAS**, by resolution on December 16, 2025, the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) Board authorized the VPRA Executive Director to allow for the receipt of funding from the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the execution of a possible grant agreement between VPRA and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation (SVBF), a private non-profit organization, for the acquisition of the SVRT corridor, with the residue of grant funding to be provided to SVBF by VPRA for construction of a recreational trail on that same corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 6, 2026, the Commonwealth Transportation Board approved the transfer, to VPRA, of the project and any unspent funds remaining from the General Assembly's \$35 million allocation to VDOT for the SVRT; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Commonwealth Transportation Board's January 6, 2026, resolution, the funding transfer from VDOT to VPRA intended for SVBF would be facilitated pursuant to an agreement requiring VPRA to: (i) conduct public hearings on the intended use of the funds received from the CTB for this project; (ii) ensure that any action related to the existing corridor provides for a trail alongside the rail while preserving the rail for other rail uses; (iii) give due consideration to any additional proposal received by VPRA by February 15, 2026, from an established organization that seeks to leave the rail intact and build a trail alongside the rail; and

**WHEREAS**, the resolution adopted by the VPRA Board on December 16, 2025, does not provide for any conditions on VPRA's receipt or use of SVRT funds aside from requiring that grant funding distributed to SVBF would not exceed the amount of funds provided to VPRA by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board hereby rescinds the Board's January 6, 2026, resolution and action entitled "*Agreement with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Relating to the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail*".

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