
VIRGINIA STATE BUDGET

2012 Special Session I

Budget Bill - HB1300 (Chapter 2)

Bill Order » Office of Transportation » Item 451

Department of Transportation

Item 451	First Year - FY2011	Second Year - FY2012
Ground Transportation Planning and Research (60200)	\$41,632,095	\$65,076,510 \$65,395,932
Ground Transportation System Planning (60201)	\$37,203,983	\$50,837,888 \$50,492,044
Ground Transportation System Research (60202)	\$1,720,427	\$11,556,477 \$11,872,899
Ground Transportation Program Management and Direction (60204)	\$2,707,685	\$2,682,145 \$3,030,989
Fund Sources:		
Commonwealth Transportation	\$41,632,095	\$65,076,510 \$65,395,932

Authority: Title 33.1, Code of Virginia.

1. Included in the amount for ground transportation system planning and research is no less than \$4,500,000 the first year and no less than \$4,500,000 the second year from the highway share of the Transportation Trust Fund for the planning and evaluation of options to address transportation needs.

2. In addition, the Commonwealth Transportation Board may approve the expenditures of up to \$500,000 the first year and \$500,000 the second year from the highway share of the Transportation Trust Fund for the completion of advance activities, prior to the initiation of an individual project's design along existing highway corridors, to determine short-term and long-term improvements to the corridor. Such activities shall consider safety, access management, alternative modes, operations, and infrastructure improvements. Such funds shall be used for, but are not limited to, the completion of activities prior to the initiation of an individual project's design or to benefit identification of needs throughout the state or the prioritization of those needs. For federally eligible activities, the activity or item shall be included in the Commonwealth Transportation Board's annual update of the Six-Year Improvement program so that (i) appropriate federal funds may be allocated and reimbursed for the activities and (ii) all requirements of the federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program can be achieved.

3.a. The Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment shall recommend to the Commonwealth Transportation Board all allocations of such funds in this paragraph. The planning and evaluation may be conducted or managed by the Department of Transportation, Department of Rail and Public Transportation, or another qualified entity selected and/or approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

b. The office shall work directly with affected Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop and implement quantifiable and achievable goals relating to congestion reduction and safety, transit and HOV usage, job/housing ratios, job and housing access to transit and pedestrian facilities, air quality, and/or per-capita vehicle miles traveled pursuant to Chapters 670 and 690 of the 2009 Acts of Assembly.

c. For allocation of funds under Paragraph 1, the Office may give a higher priority for planning grants to (i) regional

organizations to analyze various land development scenarios for their long range transportation plans, (ii) local governments to revise their comprehensive plans and other applicable local ordinances to designate urban development areas pursuant to Chapter 896 of the 2007 Acts of Assembly and incorporate the principles included in such act, and (iii) local governments, regional organizations, transit agencies and other appropriate entities to develop plans for transit oriented development and the expansion of transit service. Such analyses, plans, and ordinances shall be shared with the regional planning district commission or metropolitan planning organization and the department.

4. The Secretary of Transportation, in conjunction with the Department of Transportation, shall undertake an analysis of the potential to substantially reduce the size and scope of the Virginia Transportation Research Council (VTRC) in order to more effectively utilize funding available for transportation in the Commonwealth. Such study shall detail the sources of the VTRC funding by functional area and by staffing levels; evaluate the cost-effectiveness of conducting research activities in-house; investigate cost savings potentially available from outsourcing materials and related engineering research; consider the potential of directing federal grants through Virginia's research universities; and consolidate soft-science evaluations into the department's existing offices of policy analysis and management services.

The Secretary shall present to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Transportation Committees and the Senate Finance and Transportation Committees no later than October 15, 2010, a report outlining his recommendations on a reorganization of the research activities currently undertaken at the VTRC, and identify how to implement budget reductions to the Council of 25 percent, 50 percent and 75 percent would be implemented so that the findings of the study may be incorporated into amendments to the fiscal year 2010-2012 biennial budget in the 2011 Session of the General Assembly.