Proposed MERIT & TRIP Policy Changes

CTB Workshop

October 13, 2026

DRPT

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



MERIT/TRIP Policy Change Briefing

- Summary of Public Comments Received
- CTB approval on policy changes for the MERIT Capital, MERIT Operating, and TRIP programs at the October CTB Action meeting.
- If approved, Policy Changes will take effect for the FY2028 funding cycle that opens in December 2026

Public Comment Summary

- Public Comment Period
  - Open from August 3 to September 18, 2026
  - CTB Resolutions Posted on DRPT Website
- Received 4 Public Comments *(included in CTB materials)*
  - Virginia Transit Association (VTA)
  - Southern Environmental Law Center
  - Hampton Roads Transit
  - Via
- Letter from TSDAC Chair *(included in CTB materials)*

MERIT Capital: Draft Edits to Resolution

- Language Added to MERIT – Capital Resolution
  - *WHEREAS, DRPT received feedback from TSDAC, transit agencies, and funding partners across the Commonwealth that they value the Board providing reliable and predictable operating and capital funding to support strategic long-term financial planning;*
  - *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board directs the Director of DRPT to examine innovative approaches to allocate MERIT Capital funding through a combination of formula and/or discretionary grants, to engage proactively with TSDAC, transit agencies, and industry stakeholders, and to provide the Board with periodic updates.*
- Context
  - Reflects the Secretary's desire to see six years of funding programmed in DRPT's SYIP
  - Responds to transit agency desire for funding predictability
  - Syncs with ongoing DRPT efforts to provide reliable, predictable funding projections for transit agencies (ex. similar to goals of MERIT Operating formula changes pending before CTB for approval)

October CTB Action Meeting

- Approval of CTB Resolution for MERIT – Operating
- Approval of CTB Resolution for MERIT – Capital
- Approval of CTB Resolution for Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP)