



Regional Vision ▪ Collaborative Leadership ▪ Professional Service

January 27, 2026

Virginia Tourism Corporation
901 East Cary Street, Suite 900
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Support for Designation of the Virginia Piedmont Tourism Region

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), I am pleased to express our support for the establishment of the *Virginia Piedmont Region* as a formally recognized tourism region within the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) statewide framework.

The VTC currently recognizes the *Central Virginia Tourism Region* as encompassing an extensive collection of counties, including Madison, Orange, Greene, Albemarle, Louisa, Fluvanna, Nelson, Charlottesville, Amherst, Campbell, Appomattox, Prince Edward, Nottoway, Buckingham, Cumberland, Goochland, Hanover, Powhatan, Amelia, Dinwiddie, Chesterfield, Henrico, Prince George, and Sussex. Further, the VTC recognizes the *Northern Virginia Tourism Region* as encompassing the eclectic counties of Culpeper, Rappahannock, Fauquier, Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Caroline. These two VTC regions do not align with tourists' travel tendencies, nor support any cohesive tourism identity or unified marketing strategies.

The localities participating in the proposed *Virginia Piedmont Region* - Fauquier, Rappahannock, Madison, Culpeper, Orange, Greene, Albemarle/Charlottesville, Nelson, Fluvanna, and Louisa – actively function as an interconnected geography for planning, economic development, and visitor activities. From a regional planning perspective, this area represents a cohesive landscape shaped by shared transportation corridors, rural and small-town development patterns, and common economic drivers that naturally extend across jurisdictional boundaries.

The TJPDC, in coordination with the Rappahannock–Rapidan Regional Commission, recently completed a Super-Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that explicitly recognizes that these same counties share distinct tourism commonalities, including rich agricultural landscapes, vibrant main streets, historic sites, wineries and breweries, and proximity to the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah National Park, creating a natural and unified visitor experience where visitors travel organically within The Region's lodging, dining and recreating. These shared priorities align closely with the objectives of the proposed *Virginia Piedmont Region* and reflect how residents, businesses, and visitors already experience this part of the Commonwealth as a unified destination rather than a collection of isolated localities.

From a planning standpoint, regional designation also supports coordination across state and regional initiatives, including GO Virginia Region 9. Aligning tourism regions with existing economic development and planning geographies strengthens the Commonwealth's ability to strategically invest in quality-of-life assets, support small businesses, and encourage longer visitor stays that generate measurable economic benefit.

For these reasons, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission supports the request for Virginia Tourism Corporation to formally recognize the Virginia Piedmont Region as a distinct tourism region in the Commonwealth. We commend the participating localities and destination marketing organizations for their collaborative, multi-year efforts and believe this designation will enhance both regional cooperation and Virginia's overall tourism strategy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christine Jacobs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christine" and last name "Jacobs" clearly distinguishable.

Christine Jacobs
Executive Director
Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission