

INTRODUCED: April 13, 2026

AN ORDINANCE No. 2026-085

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept funds in the amount of \$275,000.00 from the Virginia Transit Association and to appropriate the increase to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Special Fund Budget by increasing estimated revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Public Works' Shared Mobility Special Fund by \$275,000.00 for the purpose of funding a Free Rides to Work program.

Patron – Mayor Avula

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: APR 27 2026 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, be and is hereby authorized to accept funds in the amount of \$275,000.00 from the Virginia Transit Association for the purpose of funding a Free Rides to Work program.

§ 2. That Article I, Section 2 of Ordinance No. 2025-057, adopted May 12, 2025, which adopted a Special Fund Budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, and made appropriations pursuant thereto, be and is hereby amended by increasing estimated

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: _____ REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

revenues and the amount appropriated to the Department of Public Works' Shared Mobility Special Fund by \$275,000.00 for the purpose of funding a Free Rides to Work Program.

§ 3. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

O&R REQUEST

DATE: February 25, 2026

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

THROUGH: The Honorable Danny Avula, Mayor

THROUGH: Odie Donald II, Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Tanikia Jackson, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Letitia Shelton, Director of Finance

THROUGH: Meghan Brown, Director of Budget & Strategic Planning

THROUGH: Al Wiggins, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Bobby Vincent Jr., Director of Public Works

FROM: Dironna Moore Clarke, Deputy Director, Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility

RE: TO AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER TO ACCEPT FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$275,000.00 FROM THE VIRGINIA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION'S TANF FARE-FREE GRANT, AND TO AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 SPECIAL FUND BUDGET BY INCREASING ESTIMATED REVENUES, AND APPROPRIATE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS' SHARED MOBILITY SPECIAL FUND BY \$275,000.00 FUNDING THE FREE RIDE TO WORK PROGRAM.

ORD. OR RES. No.

PURPOSE: To authorize and execute a cooperation agreement with the Virginia Transit Association to receive funds in the amount of \$275,000.00, and appropriate the increase to Special Fund (02915 Cost Center) for the Department of Public Works' Shared Mobility Program.

BACKGROUND: The Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility has demonstrated that, through car-centric planning as well as land-use and transportation policies over the last century, marginalized people and low-income communities have been denied the same accessibility as those who can afford a personal vehicle. While increasing transit and multimodal access can help, to fully access the same network as the wealthier residents, low-income residents need flexible access to a vehicle that can reach further employment centers that are not accessible via fixed route public transportation, biking, and walking.

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate the feasibility of a subsidized van-share/micro-transit for low-income residents. Many vital living-wage employment destinations are only accessible by personal vehicle, this service meets equitable accessibility goals as well as trip reduc-

tion and environmental goals. This program demonstrates the willingness of low-income residents to use cost-share services in the long term.

This program will continue to provide access while de-incentivizing single occupancy vehicle trips. The program will expose residents to the benefits of ride-sharing as a cost saving measure, as well as a way to reduce vehicle trips, and meet personal environmental impact goals.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: The Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility engaged the public in an intensive, equity focused, planning process from Spring 2021 to Winter 2024 while completing the Path to Equity: Policy Guide for Richmond Connects and the Richmond Connects Strategic and Action Plans. During that time, 6 rounds of community engagement to hear feedback were completed. Over 20,000 Richmonders participated in some way during the process. Hundreds of hours were spent having conversations with residents who have been left out of previous planning processes and access to jobs and economic centers was common in collected feedback.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL: The Free Rides to Work program conforms to the Equitable Transportation Vision set forth in the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT: The total amount of this award is \$275,000.00. The Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility will use the funding for the Free Rides to Work program. There is no match requirement.

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon Adoption.

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: April 13, 2026

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: April 27, 2026

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent Agenda.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Land Use, Housing and Transportation Standing Committee Meeting.

AFFECTED AGENCIES: Department of Public Works; Law Department; Planning and Development; Economic and Community Development; Department of Public Utilities; Finance Department; Budget and Strategic Planning; Copies also sent to: City Mayor (Danny Avula); Chief Administrative Officer (Odie Donald, II); and City Attorney.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.:

ATTACHMENTS: Virginia Transit Association Award Letter

STAFF: Dironna Moore Clarke, Deputy Director, Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility
x3074

Brandon King, Program and Operations Supervisor, Office of Equitable Transit and
Mobility x4696

June 03, 2025

Dironna Moore Clarke
Deputy Director OETM/DPW City of Richmond
City of Richmond
1500 E. Franklin Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Dironna:

On behalf of the Virginia Transit Association (VTA), I am pleased to inform you that your Fiscal Year 2026 Zero Transit Fare for Working Families Grant Program application has been approved.

Your project has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$137,500 for the first half (July-Dec 2025) of FY2026, and a minimum of \$137,500 for the second half (Jan-June 2026) of FY2026 to fund project activities specific to public transportation services. Please note that any funds not used during the first half of FY2026 may be deobligated and redistributed to approved grantees after January 1st.

The grant award is contingent on the approval by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and full execution of a Sole Source Agreement between VDSS and VTA.

Should Richmond Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility (Sub-Recipient) wish to accept the grant and proceed with the Project, you will be asked to provide VTA with a formal grant acceptance letter as well as a signed Cooperative Agreement. Please be advised that reasonable administrative expenses, such as staff time to prepare monthly requests for reimbursement and quarterly status reports, are eligible as well as community educational outreach about the existence and benefits of the program. Additional costs including commercial advertising, office space, and electronic office supplies such as printers and computers are not eligible for funding. The monthly grant reimbursement request award is contingent on VTA's review and approval.

To complete the agreement, VTA requests that in addition to the formal grant acceptance letter, the Cooperation Agreement be signed and returned immediately so that the application can be expedited. This will obligate the grant funding to the Project before the start of the FY26 fiscal year. This Cooperation Agreement outlines roles and responsibilities and key program requirements mutually agreed to by VTA and the Sub-Recipient. Once received, please complete the signature process within two weeks.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

Please refer to the Zero Transit Fare for Working Families Grant Program Guidelines (available at <https://vatransit.com/TANFGrant>) for a list of the program requirements.

- **Project Eligibility:** All projects must solely serve TANF eligible persons and/or individuals with a dependent child whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, and subrecipients must be able to document and verify TANF and income eligibility.
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- **Reimbursement:** The Zero Transit Fare grant program is a reimbursement program. As a subrecipient to VTA, you will be required to pay expenses directly and then submit a request for reimbursement through VTA on a monthly basis. Please note that no funds for which reimbursement will be requested can be expended prior to full execution of a Sole Source Agreement between VTA and VDSS.
- **Outcome Reporting; Quarterly Status Reports:** The subrecipient will submit a monthly outcome report along with the monthly reimbursement request. In addition, the subrecipient shall submit quarterly supplemental information relevant to programmatic progress for inclusion in VTA's state-mandated quarterly progress reports. This information will inform VTA's quarterly reports due no later than August 15, November 15, February 15, and May 15. Reports will contain detailed descriptions of program activities and outcomes.
- **Project Records:** The subrecipient must maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project, including but not limited to TANF eligibility screening and transit ridership.

Thank you for your work in public transit and for advancing your project through the Zero Transit Fare for Working Families Grant Program. We look forward to seeing your project implemented.

Should you have any questions, please contact me by phone at (804) 643-1166 or by email at TANFgrant@vatransit.com. Laura Kitchin Greenleaf, TANF Grant Coordinator, will schedule an orientation for you and other subrecipients before FY 2026 begins in July.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danny Plaugher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Danny Plaugher
Executive Director