



Code of Virginia §46.2-916.1 through §46.2-916.3 govern the use of golf carts and utility vehicles on Virginia highways. The code allows for the governing body of any county, city or town to authorize the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on public highways within its jurisdictional boundaries.

A locality can designate a state maintained road for use by golf carts and utility vehicles without any explicit approval from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). However, Code of Virginia §46.2-916.2 (D) states that, “No public highway shall be designated for use by golf carts and utility vehicles if such golf cart and utility vehicle operations will impede the safe and efficient flow of motor vehicle traffic.” VDOT, being responsible for the safe and efficient flow of traffic on state maintained highways has the authority to determine if the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles impedes the safe and efficient flow of motor vehicle traffic. Although a locality does not need VDOT approval prior to designating a road for use by golf carts and utility vehicles, VDOT does have the authority and the responsibility to overturn the designation if it is deemed that golf carts and utility vehicles impede the safe and efficient flow of motor vehicle traffic.

#### **VDOT Land Use Permit Required by Law**

The General Rules and Regulations of the Commonwealth Transportation Board provide that no work of any nature shall be performed on any real property under the ownership, control, or jurisdiction of VDOT until written permission has been obtained from VDOT. Written permission is granted for the above-referenced activity through the issuance of a land use permit.

By issuing a permit, VDOT is giving permission only for whatever rights it has in the right-of-way; the permittee is responsible for obtaining permission from others who may also have an interest in the property.

The permittee will be civilly liable to the Commonwealth for expenses and damages incurred to VDOT as a result of violation of any of the rules and regulations of this chapter. Violators shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished as provided for in §33.1-19 of the Code of Virginia.

#### **Application Requirements**

Application for a land use permit authorizing the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on state maintained highways shall be made through the local district permit office by the requesting locality.

The district administrator’s designee receiving the request shall coordinate review and approval of the request with all appropriate VDOT personnel.

The regional traffic engineer (or their designee) shall perform a review of the land use permit application and supporting material.

Application forms and general information regarding VDOT land use permitting authorizing the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on state maintained highways can be obtained by contacting the local district permit office where the designation is being requested or at the following VDOT web site:

<http://www.virginiadot.org/business/bu-landUsePermits.asp>

The form necessary to make application is the LUP-A Land Use Permit Application.

### **Contact Information**

A list of counties with their corresponding VDOT district offices and contact information may be obtained on the VDOT web site at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/about/districts.asp>.

### **Permit Fees & Charges**

The application fee for a land use permit authorizing the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on state maintained highways shall be waived.

### **Surety Requirements**

It is not necessary for the locality to provide a surety for the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on state maintained highways.

### **Insurance Requirements**

It is not necessary for the locality to secure and maintain insurance to protect against liability for personal injury and property damage associated with the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on state maintained highways.

### **General Requirements**

Any county, city or town may designate a roadway as appropriate for golf cart and/or utility vehicle usage regardless of who owns or maintains the road within the constraints and requirements of the Code of Virginia.

The locality must consider the speed, volume, and character of motor vehicle traffic using such highways to determine if golf cart and utility vehicle operation is compatible with state and local transportation plans and if said operation is consistent with the Commonwealth's Statewide Pedestrian Policy.

The locality shall provide VDOT with evidence of its consideration of the speed, volume, and character of motor vehicle traffic for routes being considered for golf cart and utility vehicle designation.

The locality shall provide VDOT with an overall route plan to show connectivity to and from specific origins and destinations. EXAMPLE: Residences to a local park, ball field, community center, etc.

In general, a designated route should not cross an un-signalized intersection where the annual average daily traffic (AADT) exceeds 2000 vehicles per day or where peak period traffic volumes do not allow for the safe crossing of golf carts and utility vehicles.

VDOT shall consider the volume and posted speed limit of all roadways intersecting a designated route so that designated route(s) do not cross high volume, low-speed roadways.

The posted speed limit of the highway to be designated shall not exceed 25 miles per hour.

The AADT of the highway to be designated shall not exceed 1000 vehicles per day.

The designated route shall not cross a highway where the posted speed limit exceeds 25 miles per hour except where the intersection is controlled by a traffic signal and the speed limit of the intersecting highway does not exceed 35 miles per hour.

In the Town of Colonial Beach and in towns with a population of 2,000 or less, a golf cart and utility vehicle may cross a highway at intersections marked with signage posted by VDOT. The Regional Traffic Engineer (or their designee) shall recommend approval or denial of sign installation(s).

All costs associated with the installation and maintenance of all required signage shall be borne by the locality.

The designated route shall not have geometric constraints that restrict minimum intersection sight distance or stopping sight distance for the posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour.

The total pavement width of the designated route shall not be less than 17 feet in width. This width may include any drivable paved or grass shoulders on each side of the travel way.

Where parking is allowed on the designated route the minimum pavement width shall be 24-feet with parking on one side and 29-feet with parking both sides (See the VDOT Road Design Manual for subdivision streets with AADT < 2000 vehicles per day).

Actual truck traffic shall not exceed 10%. VDOT shall determine if said traffic creates an operational or safety concern for the use of golf carts and utility vehicles on the designated route.

Routes with high incidences of crashes will not be considered for designated use by golf carts and utility vehicles.

VDOT shall make a determination as to whether on-going development will trigger any thresholds that would deem the designated route as not compatible for the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles.

All persons operating a golf cart or utility vehicle on any public highway shall have in their possession a valid driver's license.

All golf carts or utility vehicles operated on a public highway shall display a slow-moving vehicle emblem in conformity with Code of Virginia §46.2-1081.

Golf carts and utility vehicles shall be operated upon the public highways only between sunrise and sunset unless equipped with headlights as are required for these classes of vehicles.

The following link

<https://insidevdot.gov.virginia.gov/div/te/ES/Misc%20Operations/Golf%20Cart%20Permit%20Guidelines.pdf> is for the Guidelines - Designation of Golf Cart and Utility Vehicles For State-Maintained Highways in Virginia

### **General Requirement Exceptions**

Operation of a golf cart to cross a highway from one portion of a golf course to another portion thereof or to an adjacent golf course or to travel between a person's home and golf course if the total trip does not exceed one-half mile in either direction and if the posted speed limit on the highway does not exceed 35 miles per hour.

Operation of a golf cart and/or utility vehicle by local government employees for official business or purpose on highways with posted speed limits that do not exceed 35 miles per hour.

Operation of a golf cart and/or utility vehicle by employees of public or private two-year or four-year institutions of higher education on highways within the property limits of such institutions provided the golf cart and/or utility vehicle is being operated on highways with posted speed limits that do not exceed of 35 miles per hour.

Operation of a golf cart and/or utility vehicle on a secondary highway with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less and within three miles of a motor speedway with a seating capacity of at least 25,000 but less than 90,000. This use is limited to the same day as any race or race-related event conducted at said speedway.

Operation of a golf cart and/or utility vehicle by employees of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for official business or purpose on highways located within DCR property or upon VDOT maintained highways located adjacent to DCR property with posted speed limits that do not exceed 35 miles per hour.

### **Permit Revocation**

At the discretion of the district administrator's designee, the land use permit may be revoked and the route designation removed for non-compliance with all requirements contained herein and/or specific conditions of the permit.

### **Permittee Notice**

The preceding provisions are intentionally condensed in format and should not be loosely interpreted by the permit applicant without consultation with the central office permit manager or the district administrator's designee and affirmation from the Land Use Permit Regulations.