

# Getting There: Newly named Smart Scale brings road aid to Fredericksburg region

BY SCOTT SHENK THE FREE LANCE-STAR | Posted: Monday, June 20, 2016 12:15 am

Names apparently carry a lot of weight in the transportation world.

Officials, for example, would like you to know that the state's new prioritization program (aka House Bill 2 or HB2, the latter of which is also the name of a controversial transgender bill) has a new name.

It is now called Smart Scale.

It's not the first name change for an area or state road project.

The Interstate 95 express lanes initially were known as the HOT lanes.

The Rappahannock River Crossing, a major planned project, got its name during the divisive battle over the Rappahannock Parkway, a proposed toll road that certain Spotsylvania County supervisors had shoveled off to some musky corner, where it collects dust. At some point, there was an attempt to change the parkway's name to the Greenway, but that faded away with the parkway.

## Work coming to bridge near you

The Chatham Bridge has spanned the Rappahannock River for 75 years, and it looks every bit its age.

Most of the concrete is crumbling, with a few rough spots covered by plywood.

Each winter, gaping potholes open in the pavement, and some have even offered a view of the river beneath the bridge.

Two years ago, a wayward tractor-trailer driver brought a mammoth piece of machinery onto the bridge, which led to a weight limit being posted. It was yet another slight for the structurally deficient bridge that opened the year World War II was raging its way across the globe.

But a fix is on the horizon, something many probably thought would never happen.

The \$20 million repair and facelift should transform the decrepit structure into an updated span with access for people on foot and bike, where now there are sidewalks covered with sand and grime accumulated during years of battles with winter storms.

Speaking of bridges, they were a common theme for region projects awarded funding in a pair of new state initiatives last week.

Seven Fredericksburg District bridge projects were granted funding (to the tune of just more than \$170 million) for rehab work, replacement or entirely new structures. The southbound portion of the I-95 Rappahannock River Crossing project, which includes a bridge along with parallel roads, accounts for much of that funding.

Other bridge projects in the recent round of funding include:

The State Route 207 bridge in Caroline: Plans call for the replacement of the westbound bridge's superstructure at the Mattaponi River.

Mudd Tavern Road bridge in Spotsylvania County: The current I-95 overpass will be replaced with a new structure.

Mount Olive Road bridge in Spotsylvania: The bridge over the North Anna River, currently closed to traffic with a detour in place, will be replaced with a new structure.

U.S. 1 bridge in Stafford: The bridge over the Chopawamsic Creek near the Prince William County line will be replaced.