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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 48

Offered January 14, 2026

Requesting the Commission on Local Government to study the feasibility and necessity of providing all cities and towns in the Commonwealth with the authority to require dedication of land for sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements. Report.

Patron—McLaughlin

Committee Referral Pending

10 WHEREAS, in 2014, the General Assembly passed legislation granting authority to the governing body of
11 any town located in the Northern Virginia Transportation District to require the dedication of land for
12 sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements on property being divided or developed if the property is designated
13 for such improvements on the locality's adopted pedestrian plan; and

13 for such improvements on the locality's adopted pedestrian plan; and
14 WHEREAS, curbs and gutters are critical drainage structures that help to mitigate flooding and erosion
15 and prevent damage to building foundations by channeling rainwater and snow into designated drainage
16 systems; and

16 systems, and
17 WHEREAS, communities with continuous, well-maintained sidewalk networks tend to have higher
18 property values and increased curb appeal, which attracts buyers, investors, and businesses to such
19 communities; and

WHEREAS, providing walkable infrastructure with compliant curb ramps enhances the safety of pedestrians and is essential in improving accessibility for individuals without access to a vehicle, individuals with disabilities, parents with strollers, and older adults; and

22 with disabilities, parents with staffers, and older adults, and
23 WHEREAS, the dedication of land for sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements prior to or during
24 property division or development can prevent future costly construction or repairs, where such costs would be
25 borne by the locality and the taxpayers residing within that locality; and

25 borne by the locality and the taxpayers residing within that locality, and
26 WHEREAS, the Commission on Local Government was established as a permanent body within the
27 Department of Housing and Community Development to help ensure that all localities within the
28 Commonwealth are maintained as viable communities for their citizens and is best suited to analyze the
29 impacts of dedicating land for public safety, accessibility, environmental, and economic benefits; now,
30 therefore, be it

31 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Commission on Local
32 Government be requested to study the feasibility and necessity of providing all cities and towns in the
33 Commonwealth with the authority to require dedication of land for sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements.

In conducting its study, the Commission on Local Government (the Commission) shall analyze the impact of providing the authority to the local governing body of each city and town in the Commonwealth to require the dedication of land for sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements and (i) evaluate societal impacts within such cities and towns, including impacts on pedestrian safety and accessibility; (ii) estimate the economic impacts to cities and towns, including any cost savings that may stem from requiring such improvements, any expected economic stimulation as a result of increasing pedestrian accessibility to local businesses, and any expected increase in property values; (iii) identify any potential environmental impacts; (iv) evaluate the impact of providing a city or town with the authority to require the dedication of land for such improvements on the willingness of property developers or buyers to continue to invest in projects or purchase property within such community if the required dedication of land results in the costs of such improvements being passed on to the developer or buyer; and (v) evaluate the necessity and feasibility of providing such authority to such local governing bodies in all cities and towns, including identifying any potential hurdles or local regulations that might discourage such local governing bodies from using the authority granted to adopt a regulation requiring the dedication of land for such improvements. If the Commission identifies any potential hurdles or regulations that might discourage local governments from adopting such regulation if granted the authority to do so, the Commission shall provide recommendations to address such hurdles and to encourage cities and towns to require the dedication of land for such improvements.

50 cities and towns to require the dedication of land for such improvements.
51 All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon
52 request.

52 request.
53 The Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2026, and shall submit to the Governor
54 and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for
55 publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as
56 provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative
57 documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2027 Regular Session of the General Assembly and
58 shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.