



**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES**

*Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.*

**DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff)** 128-6655

**1. General Property Information**

Property name: Norfolk & Western Class A No. 1218 Locomotive

Property address: VA Museum of Transportation, 303 Norfolk Ave SW

City or Town: Roanoke

Zip code: 24016

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: City of Roanoke

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building  Site  Structure  Object

**2. Physical Aspects**

Acreage: n/a

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban  Suburban  Town  Village  Hamlet  Rural

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

The 1218 is located on public display at the Virginia Museum of Transportation under the Claylor Pavilion in downtown Roanoke. The 1218 meets NR requirements for integrity of setting by being on a railroad line or a section of track adjacent to or near a railroad line. See: [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/Policy\\_clarification\\_for\\_integrity\\_of\\_locomotive\\_settings\\_4-09.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/Policy_clarification_for_integrity_of_locomotive_settings_4-09.pdf)

### 3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Modern Superpower Steam

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Motive Power Division, N&W Railway

If the builder is known, please list here: Norfolk & Western Railway, Roanoke Va.

Date of construction (can be approximate): Completed June 2, 1943

#### **Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):**

During its entire career on the N&W, No. 1218's appearance, changed very little. It was painted in standard locomotive black with and lettered 1218 on its cab while the tender sides were lettered Norfolk & Western in gold lettering.

Locomotive 1218 has a 2-6-6-4 wheel arrangement and is known as a Class "A" Articulated type by the railroad industry. The Norfolk & Western Railway (N&W) classified these locomotives with this wheel arrangement as Class A's. The Class A's were designed and utilized modern superpower articulated styles.

The 1218 is the only survivor of the 43 Class A's built for the N&W and the only existing 2-6-6-4 wheel arrangement in the world. When restored to operational excursion service in 1987, minor modern modifications were made to the 1218 for safety and current railroad operations. A twin seal beam headlight was added for better crew visibility at night, a 26L brake system was installed (common on modern railroad locomotives), a second steam powered dynamo generator was added for radios.

Principal dimensions:

Height: 16 ft.

Width: 11 ft. 2 inches

Weight: 951,600 lbs.

Fuel: Coal (35 tons) and Water (22,000 gals.)

Boiler Pressure: 300 lbs.

Tractive Effort: 114,000 lbs.

Horsepower: 6,000

Top Speed: 70+ mph

Drivers: 70 in.

Valve Gear: Baker

#### 4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

Norfolk & Western Class A No. 1218 is a coal-burning steam locomotive built in June 1943 by the Norfolk & Western Railway at their East End Shops in Roanoke, Va. No. 1218 was designated a Class A locomotive by the railroad and was one of 43 identical locomotives constructed in this class. The locomotive was delivered to the Norfolk & Western on June 2, 1943 (popularly known as the N&W) and entered freight service immediately.

Along with sister locomotives, the 1218 pulled fast freight/merchandise trains, passenger trains, troop trains for WW2, and military equipment trains during WW2. The locomotive powered trains until retirement in 1959 and was sold to the Union Carbide Chemical Company and used as a stationary boiler in South Charleston, WV. In 1964, the 1218 was no longer needed and purchased by the Steamtown Foundation and placed on display in Bellow Falls, Vt. until 1971 when the locomotive was sent to the Roanoke Transportation Museum for display.

In 1985, the locomotive was removed from the museum by Norfolk Southern and towed to Irondale, Al. for an operational restoration. The restoration was completed in April 1987 after which the locomotive powered mainline rail passenger excursions throughout the entire Norfolk Southern Railroad system. The 1218 was in excursion service from 1987-1991. The 1218 was retired from operational service and placed back on static exhibit at the Virginia Transportation Museum. In 2012, the ownership of the 1218 was transferred from the city of Roanoke to the Virginia Museum of Transportation.

The 1218 powered fast freight/merchandise, coal, troop/military and passenger trains between Norfolk, Va. and Cincinnati, Oh. from 1943 until 1959. These trains were vital for the country's growth and victories during WW2.

The 1218 pulled excursion all over the Norfolk Southern rail system from 1987-1991 before the locomotive needed another overhaul restoration. Due to costs, the 1218 was retired from excursion service in 1992 and returned to Roanoke in 1995. In 2003, the 1218 was put on display at the Virginia Museum of Transportation at 303 Norfolk Ave, SW in Roanoke, Va. where it is still currently.

##### 1218's Service Timeline

Regular Service: 1943-1959

Stationary Boiler Service (South Charleston, WV): 1959-1964

Display (Bellow Falls, VT and Roanoke, Va) 1965-1985

Restored for excursion Service: 1987-1991

Public display (VMT) 2003 – current

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Virginia Museum of Transportation archives

**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private:  X  Public\Local \_\_\_\_\_ Public\State \_\_\_\_\_ Public\Federal \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property** (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: \_\_\_\_\_

organization:  Virginia Museum of Transportation

street & number:  303 Norfolk Ave SW

city or town:  Roanoke  state:  Va  zip code:  24016

e-mail:  zmcginnis@gmail.com  telephone:  304-610-9667

Legal Owner's Signature:  See attached

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••**

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person:  Zac McGinnis

Daytime Telephone:  304-610-9667

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title:  Zac McGinnis- Social Media director

organization:  Virginia Museum of Transportation

street & number:  303 Norfolk Ave SW

city or town:  Roanoke  state:  Va  zip code:  24016

e-mail:  zmcginnis@gmail.com  telephone:  304-610-9667

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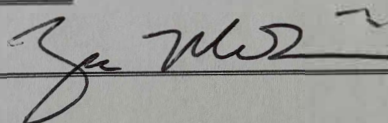
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Legal Owner's Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: 6/28/24

•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Zac McGinnis  
Daytime Telephone: 304-610-9667

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: Zac McGinnis- Social Media director

organization: Virginia Museum of Transportation

street & number: 303 Norfolk Ave SW

city or town: Roanoke state: Va zip code: 24016

e-mail: zmcginnis@gmail.com telephone: 304-610-9667

Date: 6/28/24

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!





Richard S. Thomas and  
the Eastern Railway of Virginia  
operating as a museum  
is a non-profit organization  
dedicated to the preservation  
of the history of the  
railroad industry in  
the United States.  
We are grateful for your  
support and participation  
in our activities.



1218

THE FIFE-NATIONAL COMPANY CHICAGO, U.S.A.

1218

1218

1218



A close-up photograph of a black metal plate, likely part of a piece of machinery. The plate is perforated with small holes and has the number "1218" painted in a bright orange color. In the background, there is a blurred orange metal frame structure. The lighting is bright, creating some highlights on the metal surfaces.

1218









