

Advancing transit in
Northern Virginia
since 1964

July 2026



Executive Director
Newsletter



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A Message From Kate Mattice

As the nation celebrates 250 years this month, we also have an opportunity to reflect on how public transportation has been woven into the fabric of American life and progress. A country as vast as the United States could never have developed without a robust and multimodal transportation network. We see that in our region every day as the rails and roads that crisscross our communities define the local geography while carrying millions of people. We see it in the buildings that outline our skylines, many constructed to provide easy access to Metro stations, enabling seamless journeys.

Virginia and the Greater Washington region have often led the way. Back in 1888, electric streetcars began appearing on the streets of the District of Columbia and Richmond, foretelling the transit future to come. Monumental change came during the 20th century. We remember Claudette Colvin and Rosa Parks refusing to give up their bus seats, which led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and helped spark the Civil Rights movement. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act and, months later, the Urban Mass Transportation Act, establishing public transit investment as a national priority. It was in that same spirit of investment that the Virginia General Assembly created NVTC the same year.

The decades that followed brought the Metro Rail system, which celebrates its own milestone this year—50 years of operations. We also look to Metro Bus, local bus providers serving communities across Northern Virginia and those in neighboring counties in Maryland. NVTC also played an integral role in creating Virginia Railway Express. This commuter rail system is poised to transition to a true regional rail system in the coming decade, thanks to the foresight and investment from the Commonwealth of Virginia. We also look forward to advancements in bus rapid transit along Route 7, one of the busiest bus corridors in the Commonwealth. Our future looks bright, with investments in transit connecting even more of Northern Virginia to high quality, frequent and efficient public transit.

We can only imagine the progress that will be made in the next 50, or even 250, years.



Kate A. Mattice
Executive Director

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Save the Date

July 21- 22
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

August 27
Virginia Passenger Rail
Authority

September 3
Commission meeting

September 15 - 16
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

September 17
Program Advisory
Committee

Joint WMATA/
Legislative and Policy
Committees

September 18
VRE Operations Board

October 1
Commission meeting





Envision Route 7 hosts open house and advisory committee meeting as planning moves forward

Envision Route 7 continued to advance its work in June with two significant events – an open house June 9 at Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library in Alexandria and a Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting at NVTC's offices June 11.

[Envision Route 7](#) is a planned bus rapid transit route connecting Tysons and Alexandria. Feedback received at the open house informs the ongoing work of the current phase of the project, which looks at the impacts of bus priority on Route 7 from Seven Corners in Fairfax County to the Mark Center in Alexandria. While data analysis can provide insight into how traffic will flow in the future, it is also crucial to learn and understand what is important to the community.

The Envision Route 7 PTAC brings together jurisdictional staff and other project partners, including Metro, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), to discuss bus priority on the corridor. The June PTAC heard updates on ongoing outreach, preliminary data analysis results for both the roadway from Seven Corners to Mark Center as well as the Falls Church analysis. Additionally, the City of Alexandria staff presented updates on their transit projects that tie into the Route 7 corridor.



ENVISION
ROUTE 7

ALEXANDRIA Mark Center/
Southern Towers

NVTC committees receive updates on Envision Route 7, microtransit, Metro

NVTC committees heard updates on Envision Route 7, microtransit in Northern Virginia, Metro's development portfolio and Virginia's budget on June 18.

At the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) [meeting](#), Envision Route 7 Senior Program Manager Vikram Sinha presented the most recent outreach efforts along the corridor. Vikram also shared that the Commonwealth Transportation Board [approved Commuter Choice funding](#) for a new Metro Bus F2X route. This new route on Route 7 will enable more buses to run on the corridor during peak hours. We're excited about this new service, beginning in December 2026.

PAC members also heard presentations from [Arlington County](#) and OmniRide on their respective microtransit implementations. Staff shared insights from their programs, including helpful lessons learned, helping to inform others in the region interested in microtransit.



At the [joint meeting](#) of the WMATA and Legislative and Policy Committees, Metro Senior Vice President of Real Estate and Development Nia Rubin presented on Metro's joint development activities and ways that the agency is partnering with jurisdictions to leverage its real estate assets. The committee also heard from NVTC Program Analyst Shannon Bacon, who provided an assessment of Metro's overtime costs. Shannon updated the group on recent overtime trends, how Metro is doing relative to its peers and opportunities to address overtime costs moving forward. Overtime and labor costs have been a focus area in NVTC's recent reports on the performance and condition of the agency.

Along with NVTC's legislative liaisons, Executive Director Kate Mattice then provided an update on the state budget process. The committees reviewed the differences between the House and Senate budget proposals available at the time of the meeting, and the extent to which the proposals' transit provisions reflected the recommendations advanced by the SJ 28 Joint Subcommittee and DMVMoves.

*Find out more
about Virginia's
2027-2028
budget*

Commission welcomes Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke

The Commission welcomed Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke at its [June meeting](#). He praised Virginia's current and past Metro Board appointees for their dedication to making the agency better. Clarke also shared information on Metro's 50th anniversary, noting that there have been more than 7 billion customer trips since 1976 and previewed plans for July 4th celebrations on the National Mall. Clarke detailed the economic benefits of Metro, calling it the backbone of the Greater Washington region and noted that combined rail and bus ridership reached about one million people for a couple of days this spring. He also highlighted rail ridership in Virginia, which hit over 110,00 average daily rail entries in April, more than double the same month in 2022. Metro [later reported](#) that combined rail and bus ridership hit a record over more than 866,000 trips on Independence Day.

The Commission also [thanked Darien Flowers](#) for his service on the Metro Board. The Virginia secretary of transportation appointed Mr. Flowers to the Metro Board and NVTC in January and he served until May. The U.S. secretary of transportation then appointed him as a federal member of the Metro Board.



Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke (center with red tie) with NVTC's Executive Committee

NoVaTransit Talks kicks off with "Improving the Bus Rider Experience"

NVTC hosted its first NoVaTransit Talks webinar June 12. Chair Sarah Bagley kicked off the event with remarks noting the importance of transit to our region and its role in maintaining accessible and affordable communities. With the guiding theme of "Improving the Bus Rider Experience," we heard from Silas Sullivan (a former NVTC transit fellow!) on Alexandria's bus stop program, Gladys Hurwitz on Loudoun County's on-demand transit program and Wendy Sanford on CUE's bus network redesign and transit development plan. Our experts then joined Data Visualization Program Manager Sophie Spiliotopoulos for a discussion of some of the challenges, lessons learned and funding advice for the audience.

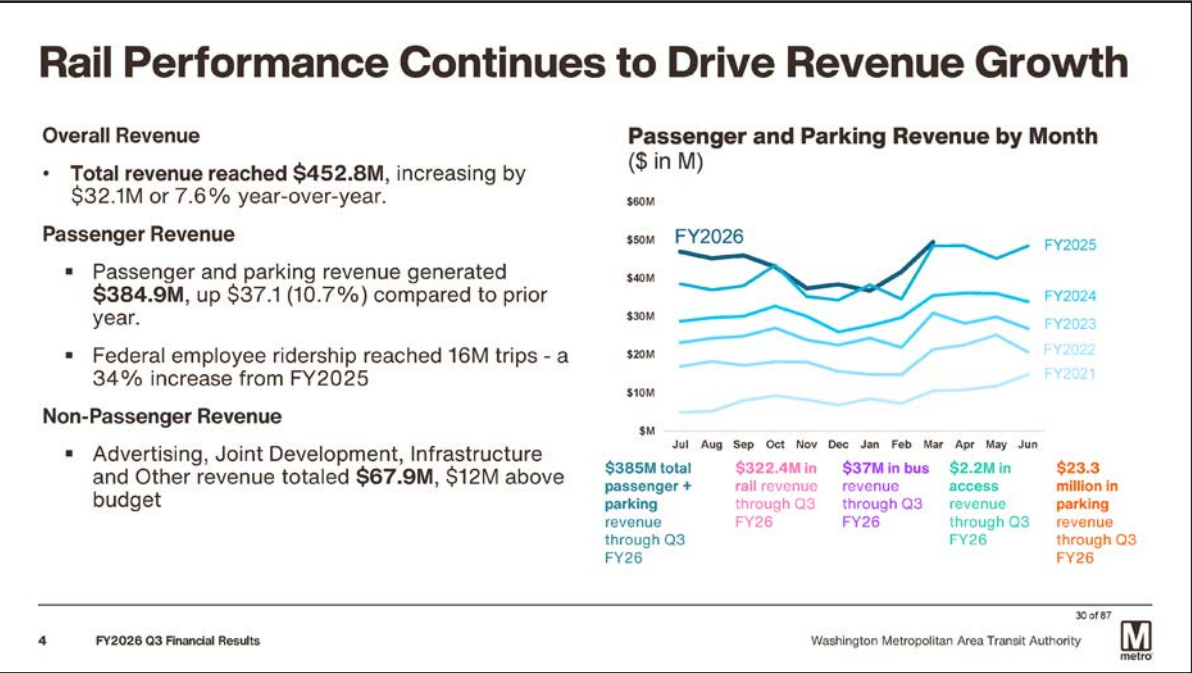
The event was a great opportunity to showcase the hard work being done around our region and share information across jurisdictional lines.



To view the webinar, click the images above or scan the QR code!

Metro revenues show strong growth

The Metro Board’s Finance and Capital Committee received a [financial update](#) at its [meeting](#) June 11 showing that year-to-date revenue and expenses are on track to meet forecasts. Highlights include 7.6% year-over-year revenue growth, strong uptake of the Tap. Ride. Go. fare payment system and continued investment in key capital programs. One such investment is the [Rail Modernization Program](#), which includes the Red Line Modernization Project, funded in Metro’s FY 2027 budget. The Board heard about planning activities, coordination with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and a prospective timeline. Metro submitted a letter to the FTA requesting entry into the Capital Investment Grant program on May 29 and will continue briefing the Board quarterly as the project moves forward.



General Assembly passes Biennial State Budget

Legislators returned to Richmond June 29 to approve a [conference agreement](#) on the FY 2027-2028 biennial state budget after reaching a compromise on a new tax on data centers’ electricity consumption, which is expected to generate up to \$600 million annually. The agreement includes \$153 million in general funds for additional Metro operating assistance over FY 2027-2028 and establishes a new Northern Virginia contribution requirement for Metro capital beginning in FY 2029. It also authorizes Northern Virginia localities to seek voter approval for a local sales tax that may be used for public transportation, schools or both. While the agreement addresses several recommendations developed through the General Assembly’s SJ 28 Growing Needs of Northern Virginia Public Transit Joint Subcommittee and DMVMoves, the operating assistance remains a two-year solution and the capital framework does not fully address Virginia Railway Express or local transit needs. The General Assembly accepted Gov. Abigail Spanberger’s budget amendments, making it final.



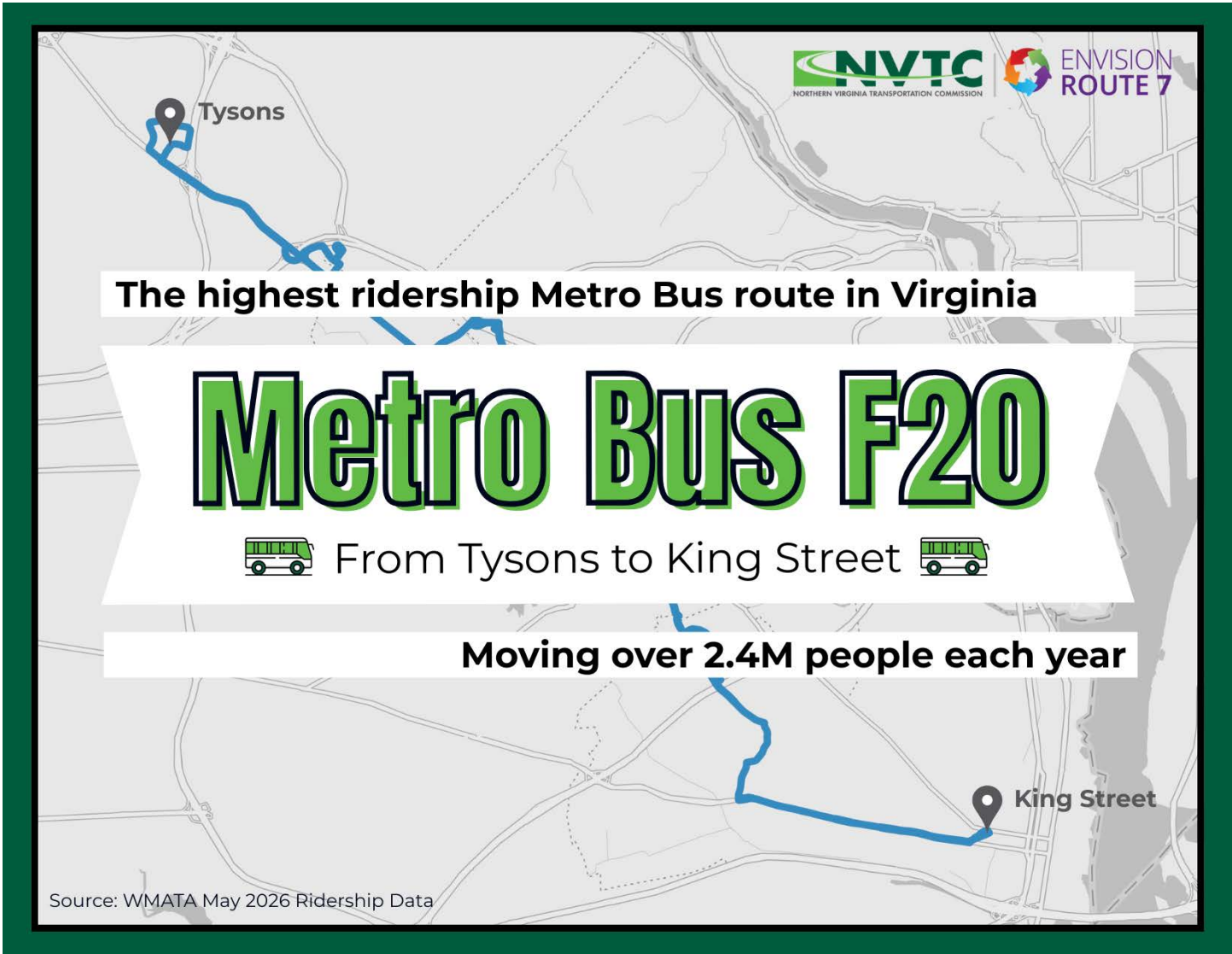
CHARTING TRANSIT

Virginia’s busiest bus route is getting better

The [Metro Bus F20](#), which runs along Route 7, has the highest ridership of any bus route in Virginia. It serves a diverse corridor stretching from the Tysons Metro Station in Fairfax County to the King St - Old Town station in Alexandria, carrying millions of riders each year.

NVTC is investing heavily in the F20 corridor to make transit as efficient as possible for the communities along the bus line. NVTC’s Envision Route 7 project is partnering with local jurisdictions to improve service through bus priority measures. And our Commuter Choice program helped fund the F2X, a new limited-stop Metro Bus service launching in December 2026.

Thanks to these and other projects, Route 7 riders will soon be able to catch a bus as often as 6 minutes at the busiest stops during the busiest times of day—connecting them more easily to work, school, appointments and entertainment.



TSDAC endorses MERIT operating and TRIP recommendations

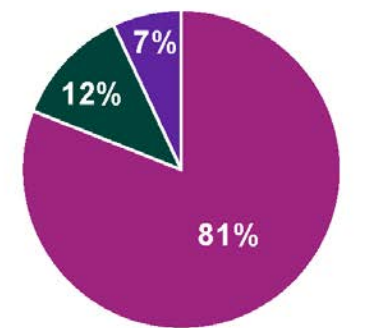
The Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC), of which NVTC Executive Director Kate Mattice is a member, endorsed DRPT’s recommendations for the MERIT Operating and TRIP programs during its meeting in Richmond on July 7. This action marks a major milestone in TSDAC’s work to update two of the Commonwealth’s major transit funding programs and advances the recommendations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for consideration.

The final MERIT Operating recommendations organize transit agencies into rural, small urban and large urban cohorts, with cohort-specific base allocation metrics and a separate performance fund to incentivize productivity and service utilization. The TRIP recommendations provide greater flexibility across funding categories and broaden eligibility to include local governments. DRPT staff will now draft CTB policies, open a public comment period and seek CTB approval in October.

MERIT Operating Policy Recommendations

#	Policy Recommendations – MERIT Operating
1a	Consistent with Federal guidelines, cohorts will be defined by three different area types: Rural, Small Urban, and Large Urban. The list of agencies within each cohort will be revisited every 3 years or following a decennial census, whichever comes first.
1b	Total MERIT Operating revenues will be apportioned as follows: Rural (7%), Small Urban (12%), Large Urban (81%). These apportionment percentages will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

MERIT Operating Revenue Distribution by Cohort



■ Large Urban ■ Small Urban ■ Rural

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

APTA conference provides sneak peek at Maryland’s Purple Line

Executive Director Kate Mattice got an insider tour of Maryland’s future [Purple Line](#) while attending the American Public Transportation Association [Rail Conference](#) in Baltimore at the end of June. The tour included a visit to the Purple Line Operations and Maintenance Facility in Prince George’s County and the construction site in Silver Spring, where work is underway to connect the Purple Line to Metro’s Red Line. Kate was excited to see the progress on the 16-mile line that will run from New Carrollton to Bethesda and is scheduled to open next year.





Get the details at
[novatransit.org/
commuterchoice](http://novatransit.org/commuterchoice)



Approved Projects funded by the Commuter Choice Program:



Ballston-MU Metro second entrance



Increased service on ART 55



Boosting service to Loudoun County Transit
281/681, 483/883;
New direct route Leesburg - Washington, D.C.



Supporting service on OmniRide 612, 622;
New route Gainesville - Union Station



Two new Metro Bus routes: A6X, F2X



Boosting service to
Fairfax Connector
598, 697, 698, 699



NVTC staff sharpen communication skills

NVTC staff spent Monday, June 15 learning how to expand communication and collaboration skills. The lessons were part of the yearly all-staff training we provide to strengthen our team and continue to foster a productive work environment. Thank you to Margarita Rozenfeld of Incite International for her always engaging and thoughtful facilitation of this training.



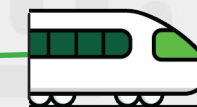
Welcome, Sumbal Abid!

We're excited to announce that Sumbal Abid has recently joined the NVTC team as an administrative assistant. Sumbal will be in charge of carrying out administrative activities essential to NVTC. She will also be a front desk presence for our office where she will greet guests and help answer questions.

Sumbal recently earned a master's degree in business administration in public and private sector leadership and a master's degree in design leadership.



Welcome aboard!



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Arlington, VA 22201
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