

*Advancing transit in
Northern Virginia
since 1964*

October 2026



Executive Director Newsletter



NoVaTransit.org | NoVaRides.org | @NoVaTransit



A Message From Kate Mattice

We've spent a lot of time over the last year focused on our [Envision Route 7](#) program—which would bring even better bus service to the corridor connecting Tysons to the Mark Center/Southern Towers in Alexandria. We completed a new analysis, hosted two open houses for the public and convened many behind-the-scenes meetings. All of the work and outreach has been designed to advance planning for upgraded bus service in one of Northern Virginia's busiest corridors.

We're at a pivotal moment for Envision Route 7, one that will determine how this thoughtful planning moves into the design and operational phases. The route runs through multiple jurisdictions: Fairfax and Arlington Counties and the Cities of Falls Church and Alexandria. On top of that, the Virginia Department of Transportation controls a majority of the roadway. All have been at the table for the planning work. Each jurisdiction must now decide which roadway design to advance: which parts of the corridor should have center running bus lanes, curb running bus lanes or rely on other technology and service upgrades.

We will continue to engage with elected leaders from across the region, along with their staff, to explain how better bus service will benefit riders, nearby businesses and even the people who choose not to ride but still benefit from the promise of less traffic congestion when people can choose to use the high-frequency bus network.

While pure bus rapid transit (BRT) does include dedicated bus lanes, we're also focused on other bus priority measures, such as infrastructure and technology upgrades designed to speed up buses, making trips shorter and more appealing. Many can be installed now without waiting for the full buildout of BRT. And we're excited about another step forward for bus service on Route 7. This December, Metro will introduce the F2X, a limited-stop bus route funded through NVTC's Commuter Choice Program, providing more frequent and faster service in the corridor.

We know that Northern Virginia will continue to grow over the coming decades. Expanding bus service in the region will go a long way toward keeping us all moving.



Kate A. Mattice
Executive Director

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Save the Date

October 13
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

October 13-15
Governor's
Transportation
Conference

October 15
Joint WMATA/
Legislative and
Policy Committees

October 16
VRE Operations Board

November 5
Commission meeting

November 18
Virginia Passenger Rail
Authority

November 20
VRE Operations Board



ENVISION ROUTE 7 State and local agencies join NVTC for Envision Route 7 analysis discussion

Staff from state agencies, local jurisdictions and Metro joined NVTC September 9 to discuss bus priority options and potential traffic impacts related to the planned [Envision Route 7](#) project. Envision Route 7 would connect Tysons and Alexandria through one of Northern Virginia’s most traffic-congested corridors.

The meeting was the final Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting for Phase 4-2 of the study. We updated attendees on takeaways from outreach efforts and data analysis results. NVTC staff will hold additional PTAC meetings after the contract work ends to keep project partners updated on progress and continue regional discussions.

Marketing campaign promotes transit connections

NVTC launched a new marketing campaign in early September designed to promote the connections people can make by riding public transit. Backed by a grant from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the campaign encourages people to ride transit following a series of weekend Metro Rail shutdowns earlier this year, related to building the second entrance for the Crystal City Metro Station. This is our fifth marketing campaign since 2019.

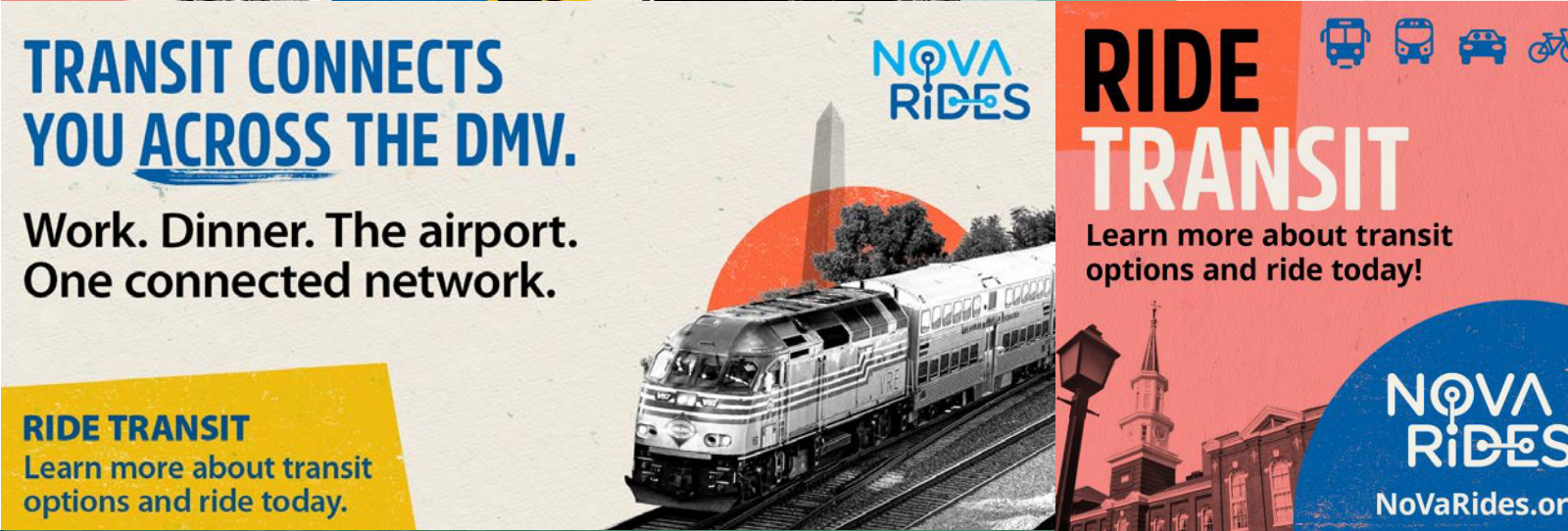
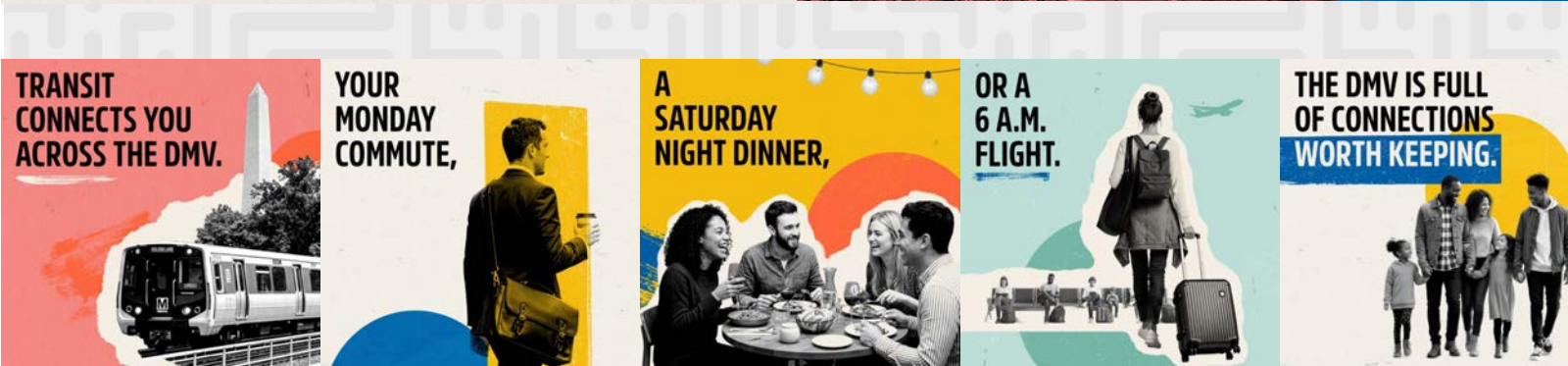
With Commission approval, we issued a request for proposals and signed a contract with Sensis, a Bethesda-based firm that has done work on transit marketing, including Metro’s Better Bus initiative. The campaign promotes all of Northern Virginia’s transit agencies in both the images used and the accompanying ad copy.

In addition to the ads, Sensis rebranded [novarides.org](#), which includes a new trip planner using the Transit app. Novarides.org also has links to all of our transit agencies so people can learn more about each one.

Ads are being shown on Facebook, Instagram and Reddit, as well as other online placement. We’re also getting the word out on Spotify and other audio streaming platforms. The campaign includes Spanish-language advertising, comprising 30% of the total ad buy.

The campaign runs until mid-November and NVTC’s communications team will provide a report on its performance once it wraps up.

Check out the Spanish and English graphics from the campaign on the next page!





Proposed Commuter Choice policy changes presented

NVTC held the Joint Commission Working Group (JCWG) [meeting](#) September 17 to brief Commissioners from NVTC and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission on the upcoming Commuter Choice I-395/I-95 Call for Projects. Director of Programs and Policy Ann McGrane and Program Analyst Jason Adle provided background on the Commuter Choice program, proposed policy and scoring changes for the FY 2028-2029 funding cycle that the Commissions will take action on in October, and the anticipated funding amount.

The JCWG was followed by the Program Advisory Committee, where Senior Program Manager Vikram Sinha provided an update to committee members on the Envision Route 7 program as the Phase 4-2 project wraps up and we look toward next steps for the program.

Proposed Policy and Scoring Changes

Policy Change

Changes maximum funding allocated to one project from a flat \$20M to 50% of available funding

Scoring Changes

1. Distinguish between accessibility and equity locations
2. Remove diversion mitigation criterion and create new safety criterion worth 15 points
3. Change weighting of transportation connections from 15 to 10 points

Technical Merit Scoring Changes	
Current	Proposed
Transportation Connections, 15	Transportation Connections, 10
Diversion Mitigation, 10	Safety, 15
Accessibility and Equity, 15	Accessibility and Equity, 15
Travel time savings, 15	Travel time savings, 15
Person Throughput, 45	Person Throughput, 45



7

Commuter Choice celebrates OmniRide's 40th birthday

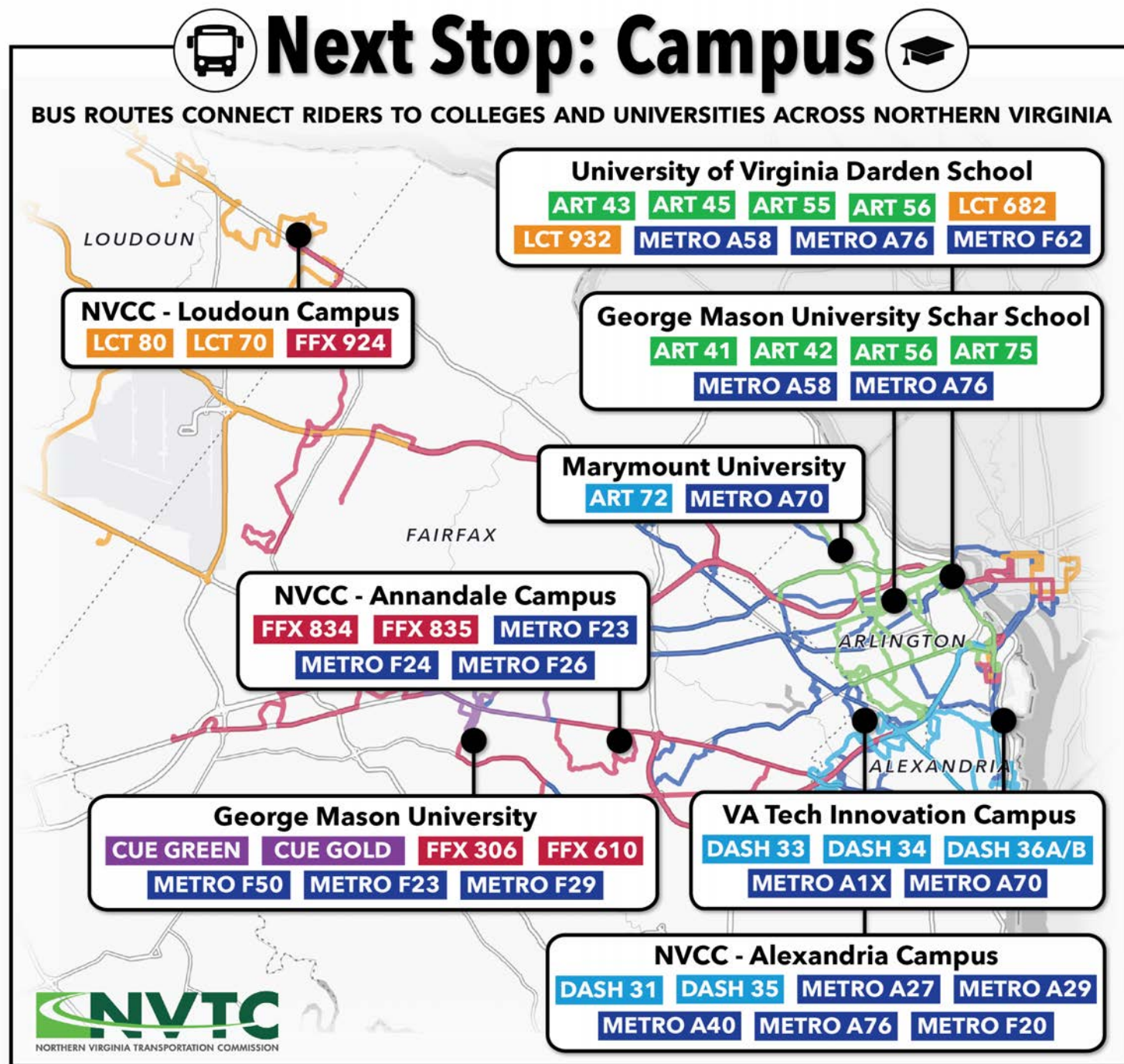
Strategic Communications Director Sarah Godfrey, Deputy Director of Programs and Policy Amanda Sink, Communications Specialist Colie Touzel and Administrative Assistant Sumbal Abid were on hand to mark the 40th anniversary of OmniRide September 23. NVTC staff engaged with community members and shared information about NVTC's Commuter Choice Program, which has made significant [investments](#) in OmniRide commuter and local bus service. OmniRide Executive Director Dr. Bob Schneider spoke about the impacts of 40 years serving the region and how this milestone would not have been possible without their employees, partners and communities.

The celebration even included creation of a time capsule. There will be another celebration on Wednesday, October 14 from 4-8 p.m. at OmniRide's Western Maintenance Facility.



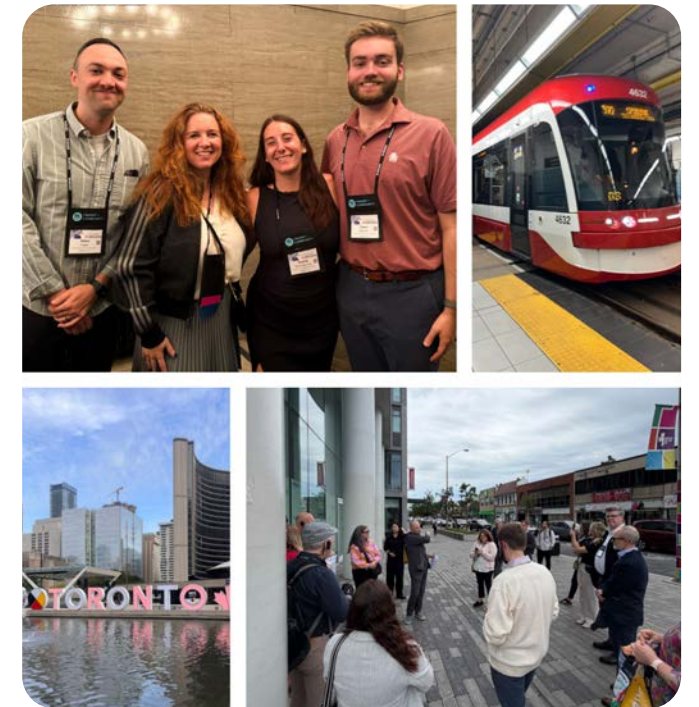
–Charting Transit– Next Stop: Campus

Bus routes across Northern Virginia connect students, faculty and staff to more than a dozen college and university campuses. Whether it's ART and Metrobus stopping at Marymount University in Arlington, CUE and Fairfax Connector traveling to George Mason University, or DASH pulling up to NVCC-Alexandria, the region's transit agencies have campus commutes covered. The graphic below shows just a handful of the transit-accessible campuses in NoVa and the bus routes that serve them.



NVTC attends Mpace Transit + Community Conference in Toronto

Chair Sarah Bagley and several NVTC staff heard from experts across the continent at Mpace's annual [Transit + Community Conference](#) in September in Toronto. Attending a combination of panel sessions and mobile workshops around the city, Chair Bagley, along with Data Visualization Program Manager Sophie Spiliotopoulos, NVTC WMATA Program Manager Adam Hager and Program Analyst Owen Williams, learned how other cities are tackling transit funding and governance challenges and how robust transit networks are helping create vibrant, healthy communities. They particularly enjoyed learning how Toronto's more than two dozen transit agencies work together to create a seamless, integrated experience for residents and visitors alike.



Images from Mpace: (top left, left to right) Adam Hager, NVTC Chair Sarah Bagley, Sophie Spiliotopoulos and Owen Williams

Kate participates in Leadership Greater Washington 2027

Executive Director Kate Mattice is honored to be participating in [Leadership Greater Washington](#) as a member of the Class of 2027. As the cohort kicks off, she looks forward to building relationships with leaders from across the Greater Washington region, learning from their perspectives and experiences and sharing hers.

Kate is especially excited for the opportunity to collaborate on regional issues such as housing, public safety and, of course, transit. Over the next 10 months, the group will be engaged in conversations about our region that are designed to inspire collective action and meaningful civic impact.



Class of 2027, Kate Mattice second row from top, second in from left.

Meet NVTC's 2026 Commissioners



(left to right) Front row: Canek Aguirre, Kate Garman Burns, Sarah Bagley, Matthew Letourneau; Second row: Kannan Srinivasan, Dalia Palchik, Maureen Coffey, Kirk McPike; Third row: Saddam Azlan Salim, Catherine S. Read, Matt de Ferranti, Justine Underhill; Fourth row: James "Jimmy" N. Bierman, Jr., Mariia Zimmerman, David Snyder; Back row: Daniel Storck, Paul Krizek

Not pictured: Juli Briskman, David Reid, Alfonso Lopez, Takis Karantonis, Walter Alcorn, Rachna Sizemore Heizer

Read the biographies of NVTC's Commissioners at novatransit.org

Good luck, Daniel Knickelbein!

We said goodbye to Daniel Knickelbein in September, who will be joining the Policy Communications Team at the Federal Highway Administration. Daniel joined NVTC as a Senior Program Analyst in March 2024 and was promoted to Commuter Choice and Policy Program Manager in October 2024. During his time at NVTC, Daniel was instrumental in managing the recently completed [I-66 Needs Assessment Study](#) and guiding jurisdictional staff through all phases of the Commuter Choice programming process. Thank you, Daniel, for your hard work and good luck in your future endeavors!



NVTC staff celebrating Daniel Knickelbein, middle, third from bottom right



2026 NVTC, PRTC & VRE

LEGISLATIVE FORUM

Join us for an engaging discussion about the future of transit in Northern Virginia and how it shapes our region's quality of life.

RSVP - TODAY -

8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Monday, December 14, 2026

George Mason University
Mason Square Campus
3351 Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22201

novatransit.org/2026-legislative-forum/





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