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Northern Virginia
since 1964



September 2025

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Executive Director Newsletter





A Message From Kate Mattice

Fall means back to school and back to work on two major efforts to establish sustainable transit funding for Metro, Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and the other transit agencies operating across Northern Virginia. We expect DMVMoves, the joint task force convened by Metro and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the General Assembly's SJ 28, Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee, to finalize their recommendations by the end of this season.

While DMVMoves focuses on public transit in the Greater Washington region, SJ 28 drills down on the Northern Virginia-specific funding needs. Metro has identified a funding gap for capital improvement costs between \$450 and \$500 million that would be shared across D.C., Maryland and Virginia. At the same time, available funding for VRE and Northern Virginia's local bus agencies, which falls onto local, regional and state resources, has not kept up with the historically high inflation we have experienced in recent years. Work toward finding solutions in our region may also benefit other parts of the state.

All this work builds toward the 2026 General Assembly Session, where we see an opportunity to rethink how we fund transit and provide a reliable, growing source of transit funding that does not need to compete with other needs. Our data show that two million people use Northern Virginia's transit network every week - up more than 17 percent since last fall alone. We are hopeful that these combined funding efforts will ensure that the network remains robust and reliable for the riders of today and tomorrow.


Executive Director



In This Issue

- 4 Commission adopts principles for future transit funding
- 5 Commissioners hear about efforts to speed up buses in NoVa, Envision Route 7 study goals
- 6 Planning work advances for Envision Route 7 BRT
- 7 Alcorn, de Ferranti sworn in to Metro Board
- 7 8000-Series railcars on the way
- 8 DRPT presents updated MERIT assistance formulas
- 8 APTA seminar focuses on building stronger transit boards
- 9 Mass Transit magazine recognizes NVTC's Ann McGrane
- 10 Welcome, Owen!
- 10 Welcome NVTC's new general counsel
- 11 Commuter Choice presented at international conference



September 16 - 17
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

September 18
Program Advisory
Committee

September 18
Joint WMATA & Legislative
and Policy Committees

September 19
VRE Operations Board

October 16
Executive Committee
and
Joint WMATA & Legislative
and Policy Committees

Note:
NVTC will not hold an
October Commission
Meeting.

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Commission adopts principles for future transit funding

Commissioners adopted a [resolution](#) at their monthly meeting July 17, outlining principles for Northern Virginia as the Greater Washington region seeks to establish long-term funding stability for Metro and the region's other transit agencies.

NVTC developed the resolution in response to the progress from [DMVMoves](#), the joint task force created by Metro and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. NVTC supports the concepts developed so far by DMVMoves and encourages the task force to keep these principles in mind as it works toward final recommendations:

- Ensure the existing Metro system is safe, reliable, efficient and effective while retaining and investing in a highly skilled transit workforce.
- Reduce and manage the backlog of improvements that ensure Metrorail, Metrobus and MetroAccess assets are in a state of good repair.
- Drive significant operating cost savings through capital investments in the Metrorail system, including automation and advanced signaling, providing long-term structural efficiencies to Metro's operating cost profile while maximizing system safety.
- Allow Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia to identify the appropriate sources to generate sufficient revenue to cover its proportional share of the Metro funding solution.

While DMVMoves focuses on the Greater Washington Region, the Virginia General Assembly's Northern Virginia [Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee](#) continues its work toward finding specific funding solutions for public transit in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee expects to make recommendations that will be used to write legislation for the 2026 General Assembly Session.



RESOLUTION #2571

SUBJECT: NVTC Principles in Response to DMVMoves Funding Concepts

WHEREAS: In May 2024, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), launched DMVMoves, an initiative that seeks to develop a long-term vision for world-class transit in the Greater Washington region, identify the scale of the financial need for WMATA and other transit agencies, and offer sustainable funding concepts for the region;

WHEREAS: Through Resolution #2552 approved January 16, 2025, NVTC articulated its guiding principles on future transit funding for WMATA, local bus systems, and VRE in addition to cost containment strategies and operational efficiencies;

WHEREAS: At its May 2025 meeting, the DMVMoves Task Force reviewed and discussed a Proposed WMATA Funding Concept that included \$500-600 million per year regional capital funding need, indexed at 3% per year beginning in FY 2028, to maintain existing service, adequately manage WMATA's state of good repair backlog, advance rail automation and advanced signaling in the Metrorail system, and establish a regional bus priority fund of \$50-100 million per year to speed project delivery and improve travel times, reliability and safety across the region;

WHEREAS: Taken together, WMATA asserts that the Proposed DMVMoves WMATA Funding Concept would enable WMATA to continue to provide safe, frequent and reliable rail and bus service across the region and generate significant operating budget savings through long-term capital investments in a modernized, automated rail system, including meeting the system capacity needs first identified in the Blue/Orange/Silver Capacity Study;

WHEREAS: At its May 2025 meeting, the DMVMoves Task Force preferred a WMATA funding approach in which the regional partners commit to generating sufficient revenue to cover their proportional share of the WMATA capital funding need (identified as Option A) over a regional sales tax with a proportional share of jurisdictional revenues sent to WMATA (identified as Option B);

WHEREAS: NVTC and the Commonwealth of Virginia recognize that the Proposed DMVMoves WMATA Funding Concept does not address an operational funding gap starting in FY 2027 in Virginia of at least \$153 million per year due to the rebaselining of the WMATA operating budget;

WHEREAS: In Virginia, the General Assembly established a Joint Subcommittee, through Senate Joint Resolution 28 (SJ28), explicitly to study at least 15 sources of





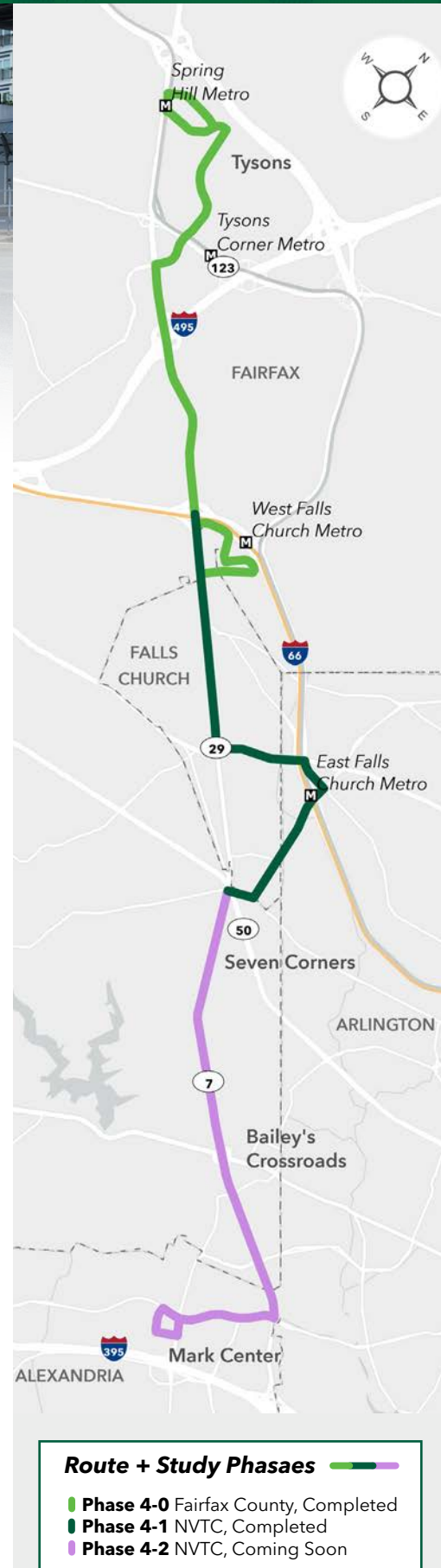
Commissioners hear about efforts to speed up buses in NoVa, Envision Route 7 study goals

Commissioners heard two presentations during their July meeting regarding efforts to improve bus service in Northern Virginia. First, staff presented "[Bus Priority Basics](#)," diving into technological and infrastructure up-grades designed to keep buses moving. These upgrades include transit signal priority, queue jumps, dedicated bus lanes and enhanced bus stops. Many of these improvements are already being used in the region and there are plans to expand their prevalence.

NVTC staff also updated Commissioners on the current phase underway for the planned [Envision Route 7](#) BRT connecting Tysons to Alexandria, by way of Falls Church and Seven Corners. This study builds on previous research and examines the portion between Seven Corners and Alexandria. It's also taking a further look at options in the City of Falls Church.



July 2025 all-virtual Commission Meeting





ENVISION ROUTE 7



Planning work advances for Envision Route 7 BRT

NVTC hosted its second meeting of the [Envision Route 7](#) Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) in August, bringing together a broad range of jurisdictional partners, operating agencies and other regional partners to foster regional collaboration on this important bus rapid transit project. The proposed bus rapid transit system (BRT) would make buses faster and more reliable on Route 7 between Tysons and Alexandria. NVTC's

consultant team from Kimley-Horn provided updates on data collection and traffic simulation work along the corridor from Seven Corners to Alexandria, as well as initial plans for the next phase of outreach. We also heard updates from Arlington County staff about projects on their section of the corridor and updates from other regional partners on planned initiatives and projects elsewhere along Route 7.

Interactive website explains Envision Route 7, bus priority improvements

NVTC released a new tool to explain Envision Route 7 and other efforts toward making buses faster and more reliable on Route 7. The [web-based tool](#) allows you to find out more about our current project analyzing bus priority and bus rapid transit.

*Explore the interactive website!
Scan the QR code or click the
image below.*



What is Bus Rapid Transit?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is designed to have **higher capacity** and **better reliability** than typical bus service. It includes **bus priority** measures such as high-frequency service (15 minutes or less), dedicated lanes, transit signal priority, queue jumps, off-door fare payment, and platform-level boarding.

Envision Route 7 establishes a phased approach to building out BRT. By identifying and implementing targeted bus improvements along the corridor, customers don't have to wait for

Alcorn, de Ferranti sworn in to Metro Board

Commissioner Walter Alcorn of Fairfax County was [sworn in](#) as a Metro Board principal director representing Virginia at the Board's meeting July 10, while Matt de Ferranti of Arlington formally joined the Board as an alternate. We are also delighted that Mr. Alcorn will serve as chair of the Safety and Operations Committee.

Paul Smedberg, who was reappointed 1st vice chair of the Metro Board last month, will serve on the Finance and Capital Committee. The Board also reappointed Valerie Santos of the District of Columbia to a second one-year term as Board Chair at its June 26 meeting.



8000-Series railcars on the way



The Metro Board received an [update](#) on the 8000-series railcars during its [meeting](#) July 10. While impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including global supply chain challenges and rail supplier consolidation, delayed delivery of the base order, Hitachi is expected to deliver the first pilot railcars in June 2027. The 8000-series railcars will feature significant interior and exterior design enhancements, ADA compliance measures, safety and security features and customer experience improvements. The FY 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Program fully funds a total of 360 railcars. Metro also held a contest to pick the winning design for the look of the new railcars.

DRPT presents updated MERIT assistance formulas

The Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC), which Executive Director Kate Mattice serves on as a representative of the Virginia Transit Association, met August 27 to further discuss the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) proposed changes to the MERIT Program operating and capital assistance formulas. DRPT staff and consultants provided additional background information about their preferred operating formula scenario, which adjusts sizing and performance metrics, as well as other scenarios they tested. While we continue to have concerns about the lack of transparency during this process, DRPT has committed to providing additional data so that we can better understand how the formulas reward different policy priorities.

Goals of MERIT Operating Formula Evaluation

1. Emphasis on **outcome focused metrics** (ridership/service) vs. input (operating cost) focused metrics
2. Emphasizing **performance-based** allocation
3. Formula **simplification**
4. Year-over-year **predictability** in allocation

24

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

This is particularly important so that we can understand why Northern Virginia agencies, especially ones with substantial commuter services, appear to suffer under the proposed formula.

Transit Board Members & Board Administrators Seminars

JULY 19-22, 2025
KANSAS CITY, MO

APTA seminar focuses on building stronger transit boards

Board Administrator Rhonda Gilchrest attended the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) annual Transit Board Member and Transit Board Administrator [Seminar](#) in Kansas City, Missouri in July. Transit board members, including Metro Board members Paul Smedberg and Canek Aguirre, and board administrators came

together for peer exchange and professional development on board governance and policy-making for public transportation agencies. Topics included national and regional transit advocacy, funding and financing, safety and security, procurement practices and building constructive Board relations.



Mass Transit magazine recognizes NVTC's Ann McGrane

We are excited to share that Mass Transit magazine recently honored Deputy Director of Programs and Policy Ann McGrane as one of their [40 Under 40](#). Ann joined NVTC in 2022 as transit technology senior program manager, overseeing our work on the [Value of Transit](#) and zero-emission bus technology. In her current role, Ann manages our team of analysts and is the liaison to the communications team.

Ann told Mass Transit, "I enjoy that my work has a tangible (and hopefully positive) impact on people's everyday lives. I believe that our communities benefit when transit, walking and biking are feasible and reliable alternatives to using a car. I see my job as supporting this vision for a more multimodal and affordable transportation future."

The magazine also recognized former NVTC Transit Fellow, [Nneoma Ugwu](#). It's a thrill to see national recognition for both outstanding women.



*Read the article here!
Scan the QR code or
click the image above.*





Commuter Choice presented at international conference

Commuter Choice and Policy Program Manager Daniel Knickelbein presented at the seventh annual [Bridging Transportation Research](#) (BTR) online conference in August. BTR is an international conference focused on bringing together transportation researchers, planners, engineers and policy professionals from around the globe to share best practices on a variety of transportation topics. Daniel presented at the Managed Lanes session and gave an overview of NVTC's Commuter Choice program, sharing how toll revenues can be reinvested into transit projects that benefit toll payers and the traveling public. Presenting alongside Daniel were staff from the Valley Transportation Authority of Santa Clara, California and researchers from Texas A&M University and Georgia Tech.



45 buses to operate expanded services



31 bus service improvements



14 new express bus routes



7 commuter incentive programs



5 bikeshare expansion projects



4 rail station enhancements



3 park-and-ride lots



1 bus rapid transit line

Welcome, Owen!

We welcomed Owen Williams as a new program analyst in August. He's a lifelong Virginian and two-time graduate of William & Mary, where he earned both his bachelor's degree and a master's in public policy. His studies focused on state and local governance, finance and budget policy, and critical infrastructure. In applied research roles, including with Virginia's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission ([JLARC](#)), he explored rural service delivery, transportation issues, infrastructure governance and interagency and multi-jurisdictional coordination. Owen is looking forward to bringing this background to NVTC and supporting its work on sustainable transit funding, local governance and legislative priorities that strengthen Northern Virginia's communities. We're delighted to have him on board!

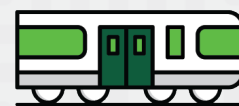


Welcome NVTC's new general counsel



NVTC staff sat down with NVTC's new legal counsel MinhChau Corr over lunch August 28. It was an opportunity to get to know her as she starts her new role. The VRE Operations Board hired Ms. Corr last month and she will also provide legal services to NVTC. She comes to us from Arlington County and replaces Steve McIsaac, who retires in September.

Welcome aboard!





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