



2026 Legislative Agenda

With *six individual jurisdictions* coming together to speak as one voice under the name of the [Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission \(PRTC\)](#), it is critical to outline key policy-level priorities for state and federal initiatives.

Long-term Sustainable Funding that Supports OmniRide's Transit Programs

- Secure long-term sustainable transit funding that provides adequate growth to meet current and future operating and capital needs for [OmniRide](#) services, specifically supporting the recognition of funding gaps for transit across Northern Virginia as outlined in the DMVMoves Task Force Recommendations and SJ 28 Joint Subcommittee Resolution.
- Address the \$22 million funding gap in FY 2027 by securing additional Commonwealth funding that supports [OmniRide](#)'s strong post-pandemic ridership in both local and express services.
- Restore and protect existing state, regional, and local funding for public transit to proactively address the continuing decline in purchasing power of the regional gas tax. Ensure that a sustainable transit funding solution is funded through net new revenues and does not reduce funding from existing sources.

Action:

- Actively promote legislation brought forth in the Virginia House of Delegates or Senate that will establish funding for new revenues that supplant the flat revenues of the motor fuels tax, including presence at hearings, discussions with committee members, and communications that will help build support for transit services that lower the costs to workers across the region.
- Work with the business community, higher education communities, key local stakeholders, and elected leaders to support funding for current and future operational demands, such as service frequency improvements and expansion to connect residents with key employers (ex. Micron, George Mason, etc.) within Western Prince William's Innovation District.

Protect Existing Transit Programs and Funding

- [Oppose](#) redirection of funds from public transportation, especially of toll revenues and operating assistance for local communities.
- Promote efforts to enhance the funding of existing state transit programs and revenue sources that benefit local transit systems, especially for [OmniRide](#) and VRE.
- Oppose changes to workforce requirements that would endanger our ability to work with contracted personnel services for maintenance and operations.

Action:

- Oppose efforts of any state or regional bodies to attempt to take funds from hard-fought sources such as I-95/395/66 tolls, NVTA, or any other programs. Oppose efforts to sacrifice local services and their unique ability to provide lower-cost and flexible service for the sake of large transit programs which may have fiscal challenges and would be less responsive to the needs of our community.
- Support DRPT programs or legislative packages that maximize resources provided. Raise awareness and highlight [OmniRide](#)'s excellent post-pandemic recovery and success. Oppose any reductions to existing and codified funding levels, as this provides guardrails and relative consistency in revenue streams for state-level operational and capital support.
- Ensure that new or modified Commonwealth Transportation Board policies closely track their legislative intent and do not negatively affect Northern Virginia public transit providers. Advocate for data-driven funding formulas in DRPT's Making Efficient and Responsible Investments in Transit (MERIT) program that are transparent, recognize the diversity of local transit service policy priorities, and maximize funding predictability for transit agencies

Mitigate the Loss of Federal Funds as I-66 HOV Lanes are now HOT Lanes

- **OmniRide** lost federal funds in December 2015 when a new Federal Transit Administration (FTA) policy no longer gave credit to transit systems operating on HOT lanes, only HOV lanes.
 - When I-95 converted to HOT lanes **OmniRide lost \$1M in federal funds over the next five years on I-95 alone.** As I-66 is now converted from HOV lanes to HOT lanes, **OmniRide** will see **another loss of \$615K** in annual federal operating funds on existing routes in future years.
 - PRTC and NVTC have evaluated the federal policy climate to determine if seeking a policy reversal is appropriate, but it is not likely as of now.
 - When considering the future impacts of funding, this loss of revenues for operating high intensity motorbus services in these congested corridors is contradictory to policy goals.



Action:

- Preserve TRIP (Transit Ridership Incentive Program) funding for commuter-driven regional routes, new travel patterns such as off-peak service (i.e., late morning and mid-day), or the demand for service not funded by traditional toll-revenues. Use this funding stream to support routes for a more extended period, especially when connecting multiple transit systems or modes in a post-COVID commuter era.
- Support a legislative effort within the TRIP program that increases the length of time for step-down in the state-supported portion of funding in the post-COVID commute/telework era.
- Watch for opportunities to address this long-standing HOT to HOV revenue loss. These revenues offset expenses that will be pushed from the federal to the local level due to the Commonwealth's P3 programs, an unintended consequence for the Commonwealth.

Policy Priorities

- Oppose state-level creation of unfunded mandates that would increase local costs or impact the employment relationship for contracted employment services at **OmniRide**.
- Support Federal Transit SmartBenefits for the ongoing Federal Return-To-Work. Maintain and expand existing transit subsidies for federal workers and tax credits for private employers, as express route fares and passes offset **OmniRide** expenses. **OmniRide** has seen double-digit ridership increases the last three years on express routes with significant and sustained growth throughout 2025.
- Continue to support flexibility in remote public meetings. Monitor legislation that provides flexibility for public bodies to conduct virtual public meetings, greater access for the public, and opportunities to participate remotely beyond declared states of emergency.
- Collaborate on joint aspects of the PRTC and Virginia Transit Association (VTA) Annual Legislative Agendas. As statewide initiatives are proposed by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) or the General Assembly, VTA members will work collectively to support or shape policy that will increase transit funding and expand or protect services. PRTC will coordinate with NVTC, VRE, and other transit systems to support commuter-based services that assist the Northern Virginia economy.



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