



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Kala Quintana  
703/ 524-3322 ext 104

[kala@nvtdc.org](mailto:kala@nvtdc.org)

### **NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSIT AND RIDESHARING NEARLY MATCH SINGLE-OCCUPANT VEHICLES IN MORNING COMMUTES IN THE I-66 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY**

**Arlington, VA**— The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) has released a new report on morning commuting in one of the region’s major corridors—I-66 just outside the Beltway. The report shows that nearly half of all commuters in this corridor are ridesharing or using transit.

With funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), staff of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) counted traffic crossing a screen line stretching between Idylwood Road and Braddock Road including I-66, U.S. 29, U.S. 50 and Little River Turnpike (Rte 236) in the fall of 2008. The traffic counts also included bus and rail passengers.

Nearly half (44%) of the persons traveling inbound during the peak hours of the morning commute (6:30 am – 9:30 am) across the screen line were using transit (Metrorail, Metrobus, VRE and OmniRide) or ridesharing. The remaining travelers (56%) were driving alone.

In the newly released report, rail and bus passengers comprised 23% of the total and persons who were ridesharing totaled 21%.

The peak hour for this study was 7:00 am – 8:00 am. During this hour transit ridership increased from 23% to 26% and single occupant vehicles decreased from 56% to 53%.

Many people assume that there is little use of transit in areas outside the region’s core employment locations. Therefore it is particularly noteworthy that nearly half of the inbound morning peak travelers were not driving alone but in fact were either ridesharing or using bus and rail while crossing the screen line, indicating that both suburban and ex-urban commuters

traveling in this corridor are relying heavily on ridesharing and transit for their morning commutes.

Another significant finding was that the single I-66 HOV lane carried an average of 2,626 persons per lane per hour during the 6:00 to 9:00 A.M. peak -- more than two and a half times as many persons per lane per hour as the 1,003 persons using the general purpose /unrestricted lanes on I-66.

Three previous studies by MWCOC for VDOT and NVTC found significant shares of commuters were also using transit and ridesharing in other key commuting corridors in Northern Virginia.

In the fall of 2007, counts at a screenline in the I-95 corridor just outside the beltway showed that 47% of inbound peak period commuters in this corridor were either ridesharing or using transit.

In the I-395 corridor in fall of 2006, inside the Beltway at a Glebe Road screen line (stretching from the George Washington Parkway in the east to Columbia Pike west of I-395), 34% of persons traveling inbound during the morning peak period used transit and another 31% were ridesharing. Only 35% drove alone.

Similarly, in the I-66 corridor at a 2005 screen line inside the Beltway at Glebe Road (stretching from Route 29 to the north to Route 50 to the south), during the inbound morning peak period, transit carried 37% and ridesharing comprised another 26%. Only 36% drove alone.

NVTC's current report contains detailed tables of data from the fall of 2008 for the most recent screenline count. It is available on NVTC's website at:

<http://www.thinkoutsidethecar.com/research/reports/I-66%20Outside%20Beltway%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>

**NVTC is the leading source of information about public transportation issues in Northern Virginia.** NVTC is a regional agency with the mission of managing traffic congestion, restoring clean air, boosting the economy and improving the quality of life for all of Northern Virginia's citizens through effective public transit and ridesharing networks. NVTC includes the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church covering over 1,000 square miles with a population of 1.6 million. The agency manages up to \$200 million of state and federal grant funds each year for public transit and serves as a forum for its board of 20 state and local elected officials to resolve issues involving public transit and ridesharing. **For more information please visit [www.thinkoutsidethecar.org](http://www.thinkoutsidethecar.org) or call 703-524-3322.**

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