



Advancing transit
in Northern Virginia
since 1964



Executive Director Newsletter



June 2024

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A Message from Kate Mattice

As Rodgers and Hammerstein famously wrote, or Leslie Uggams [infamously sang](#), June is bustin' out all over. Bustin' out is also a perfect description of the recent work of our dedicated staff at NVTC. If you made it to this year's Virginia Transit Association (VTA) conference in Harrisonburg, you saw that in action. NVTC staff [presented](#) two well-attended panels, we took home an award for our most recent public transit marketing campaign, we watched one of our own graduate from VTA's first cohort of the Virginia Transit Leadership Institute and, of course, we made our presence known with a number of staff attending the conference. While our work focuses on Northern Virginia, people from every region of the Commonwealth took notice of our important research and outreach efforts.

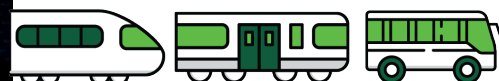
While many staff members were at VTA, key members of our communications team were attending a national conference where they took home another award for our marketing campaign. If you are keeping track, yes, that's two awards for our region-wide transit campaign!

Staff and I have also been hitting the road to discuss our work and celebrate events across our region—including presenting our I-66 Program of Projects in person to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, attending a ribbon cutting for Virginia Railway Express' expanded station in Fredericksburg and handing out NVTC-branded items for Bike to Work Day.

June promises to be just as epic. We are getting ready to host our first [Transit Innovation Summit](#), an ambitious, daylong event designed to highlight NVTC's research efforts and work to continually improve public transit in our region. It's a tentpole event to mark NVTC's 60th anniversary, one that has every member of our team involved in the planning and execution. While the Summit is fast approaching, staff are also working furiously to plan our official celebration event, to be held in September.

I'm proud of the work we are doing and the opportunities to share it with as many people as possible, to improve the quality of the transportation network for all who travel across and through our region.

Kate Mattice
Executive Director



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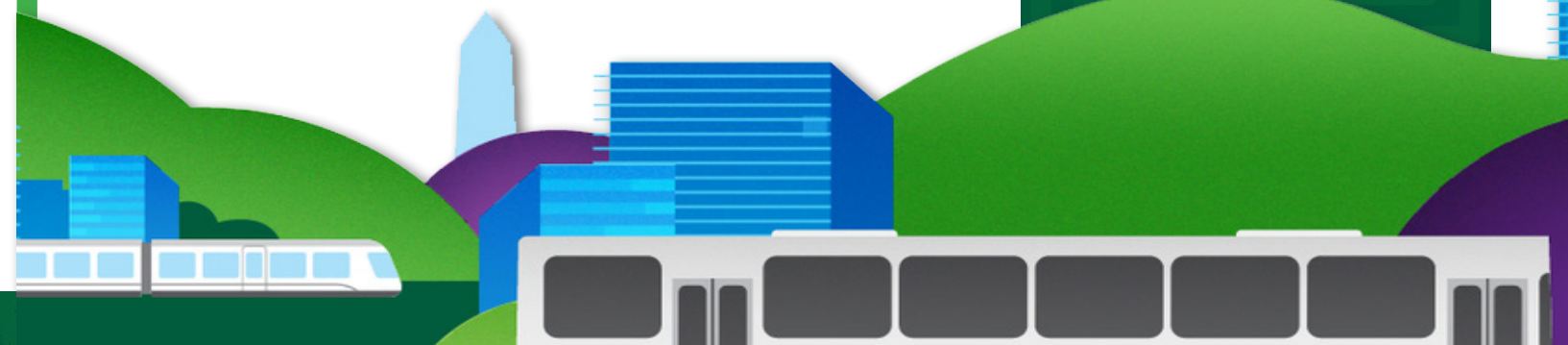


- June 14**
NVTC Transit Innovation Summit
- June 17-18**
Commonwealth Transportation Board
- June 21**
VRE Operations Board
- July 11**
Joint WMATA/Legislative and Policy Committees
- July 17-18**
Commonwealth Transportation Board
- July 18**
Commission Meeting (Special Date - All Virtual)
- July 19**
VRE Operations Board

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GA honors NVTC's 60th; Commission welcomes new members, thanks outgoing DRPT director

Sen. Adam Ebbin and Del. Paul Krizek [presented](#) the Commission with a [resolution](#) honoring NVTC on the occasion of our 60th anniversary, expressing the "General Assembly's congratulations on reaching this landmark in the Commission's history and appreciation for the leadership of the Commission in promoting public transit and other sustainable commuting options in Northern Virginia to the benefit of the region and the entire Commonwealth." We thank Sen. Ebbin, Del. Krizek and all of our Northern Virginia delegation for their continued support of NVTC and our region's transit network.



Welcome to new Commissioners

Chair Matt de Ferranti swore in four new Commissioners at NVTC's May meeting. Sen. Saddam Salim, Dels. Alfonso Lopez and Mark Sickles are first time Commissioners, while Del. Paul Krizek returns to the Commission. He previously served from 2020 to 2022. Del. David Reid has also returned to the Commission but was unable to attend the meeting.

Thank you, Jennifer DeBruhl

Commissioners also bid farewell to outgoing Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Director Jennifer DeBruhl, who will retire next month. Jen has dedicated over 30 years of distinguished public service to the transportation community with roles at DRPT, the

Virginia Department of Transportation and The Federal Highway Administration. Among her accomplishments, developing the [MERIT](#) program, launching the Virginia Breeze intercity bus and advancing [Transforming Rail in Virginia](#) by putting the financing package for the new Long Bridge together, as well as other key projects. We'll miss Jen and wish her the best!



Thank You!





NVTC staff present latest research at Virginia Transit Association conference

A number of NVTC staff members joined Executive Director Kate Mattice in Harrisonburg for the [Virginia Transit Association's annual conference](#). It was an opportunity to connect with transit professionals and elected leaders from across the Commonwealth and to learn about best practices and emerging trends in the industry. Staff members Ann McGrane, Sophie

Spiliotopoulos and Xavier Harmony led sessions entitled "Messaging the Value of Transit" and "Visualizing Transit Data."

Staff presentations to attendees

Transit Technology Senior Program Manager Ann McGrane and Senior Program Analyst



"Messaging the Value of Transit" session led by Ann McGrane and Sophie Spiliotopoulos

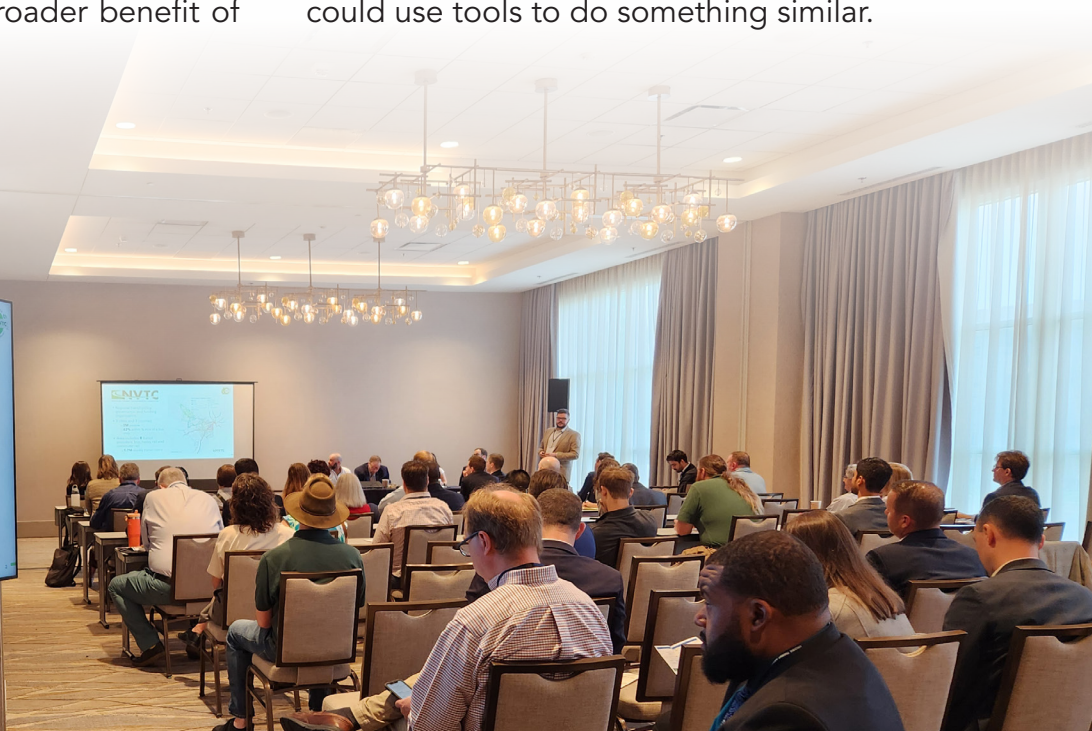
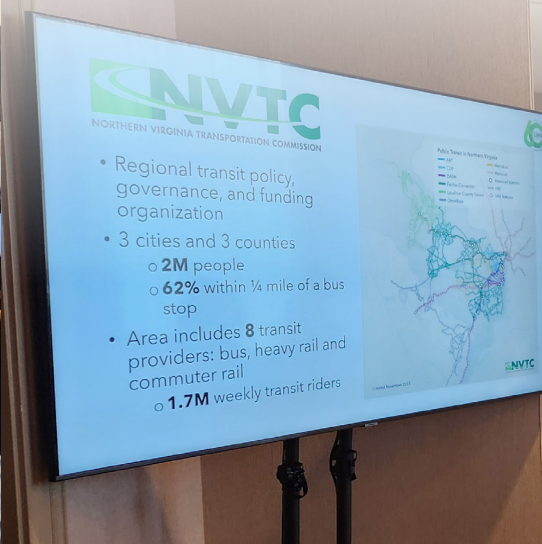


"Visualizing Transit Data" panel with Xavier Harmony and Sophie Spiliotopoulos

Sophie Spiliotopoulos presented on "Messaging the [Value of Transit](#)" on the first day of the VTA conference. In addition to sharing the results that Northern Virginia's transit system generates \$1.5 billion in annual tax revenue to Richmond, they discussed the approaches and tools used to communicate those results in a tangible, meaningful way. It led to a great conversation with the audience about the broader benefit of

transit in Virginia.

Senior Program Manager Xavier Harmony and Senior Program Analyst Sophie Spiliotopoulos participated in a panel discussing "Visualizing Transit Data." They shared examples of how they incorporate data visualization into the Transit and Data Analysis Program at NVTC and how others could use tools to do something similar.





CTB Member Mary Hynes and VTA Executive Director Danny Plaucher

Virginia Transit Association Awards

Congratulations to Commonwealth Transportation Board member and former Commissioner Mary Hynes on winning VTA's Joe Alexander Distinguished Public Official Leadership Award. She has been a strong advocate for public transit in Northern Virginia during her tenure on the Arlington County Board, NVTC, Metro Board, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, Commonwealth Transportation Board and other important bodies. We are glad that her 30 years of work on public policy and transportation issues at the county, regional, and statewide levels are being recognized and we are proud to have nominated her for this honor.

We are also excited that NVTC's "[Ride With Us](#)" regional marketing campaign won the Outstanding Transit Marketing award.

Virginia Transit Leadership Institute Graduation

NVTC Senior Grants and Procurement Manager and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Liaison Officer Brittany Sumpter graduated from the Virginia Transit Leadership Institute. The nine-month comprehensive program of the Virginia Transit Association is designed to engage, elevate and cultivate emerging leaders in the public transportation sector. She was one of 16 professionals selected to participate in this development opportunity. We are proud of her accomplishment.

Photo: Senior Grants and Procurement Manager Brittany Sumpter, DRPT Director Jennifer DeBruhl and VTA



Danny Plaucher, Kate Mattice and Communications Specialist Colie Touzel, and NVTC staff (left to right)



Adam Hager, Brittany Sumpter, Xavier Harmony, Kate Mattice, Sophie Spiliotopoulos, Ann McGrane, Colie Touzel, Vikram Sinha, Daniel Knickelbein and Allan Fye



VRE celebrates expanded Fredericksburg station

Executive Director Kate Mattice and Communications Specialist Colie Touzel helped celebrate as Virginia Railway Express (VRE) held a ribbon cutting for the rehabilitation of the Fredericksburg rail station, part of the Commonwealth's \$4 billion [Transforming Rail](#)

[in Virginia](#) initiative. These improvements will increase safety for VRE riders and pedestrians, enhance the passenger experience, and restore the iconic image of the station and surrounding infrastructure.



NVTC committees discuss the path to long-term, sustainable funding for transit

NVTC's WMATA and Legislative and Policy Committees held a [joint meeting](#) on May 16 to hear updates on General Assembly activities and NVTC's work toward establishing long-term, sustainable funding for public transit in Northern Virginia. NVTC Legislative Liaison Aimee Perron-Seibert and Executive Director Kate Mattice shared with the committees that the Commonwealth passed a biennial budget that included just under \$145 million in additional funding for Metro over the next two years, helping our Northern Virginia localities cover Virginia's share of Metro's operating budget gap in that period. We also updated the committees on DMVMoves, the joint Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Metro initiative established to develop a unified vision for public transit in the region. The next DMVMoves meeting is scheduled for June 10 in Arlington County.

WMATA Senior Program Manager Andrew D'huyvetter, Transit Data and Analysis Senior Program Manager Xavier Harmony and Senior

Program Analyst Adam Hager presented several items, all related to NVTC's work geared toward long-term funding for Metro and other public transit agencies. Andrew provided an update on the forthcoming Joint Subcommittee on Northern Virginia Public Transit (SJ 28) and how NVTC will play a vital role in supporting the General Assembly with the study. Xavier presented an overview of NVTC's Regional Bus Analysis, a key effort in outlining the funding needs for local bus systems in the region. Adam provided a preview of NVTC's 2024 "Annual Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA," noting that staff this year will focus on supporting the myriad efforts advancing the local, regional and statewide conversations around long-term funding for public transit.

The Commission will receive a report on these topics from Committee Chairs Walter Alcorn and Canek Aguirre at the June Commission meeting. The two committees will meet again July 11.





Final Virginia budget provides additional Metro funding, pauses 3% cap

We were pleased to see Gov. Glenn Youngkin sign a two-year [budget bill](#) on May 13 that provides extra funding for our jurisdictions to pay their Metro bills. The final budget includes \$60.2 million in FY 2025 and \$84.5 million in FY 2026 for additional operating assistance to Metro. Additionally, the 3% cap, which limits how much additional funding Virginia provides in operating assistance to Metro, will be suspended for two years. Meanwhile, efforts are underway to

tackle the looming issue of finding a long-term, sustainable funding option for Metro, including Sen. Adam Ebbin's bill [SJ 28](#), which establishes a joint-subcommittee to study public transit funding needs in Northern Virginia. The Senate has appointed Sens. Adam Ebbin, Scott Surovell and Jennifer Boysko, as well as Commissioner and Fairfax County Supervisor Walter Alcorn to the subcommittee. We expect the House appointments to be provided later this spring.

2024 Special Session I

Budget Bill

2024 - 2026 Biennium

HB6001

> Introduced

> **Enrolled**

> Chapter 2

SB6001

> Introduced

2022 - 2024 Biennium

HB6002

> Introduced

> Enrolled

> Chapter 1

SB6002

> Introduced

Committee Reports

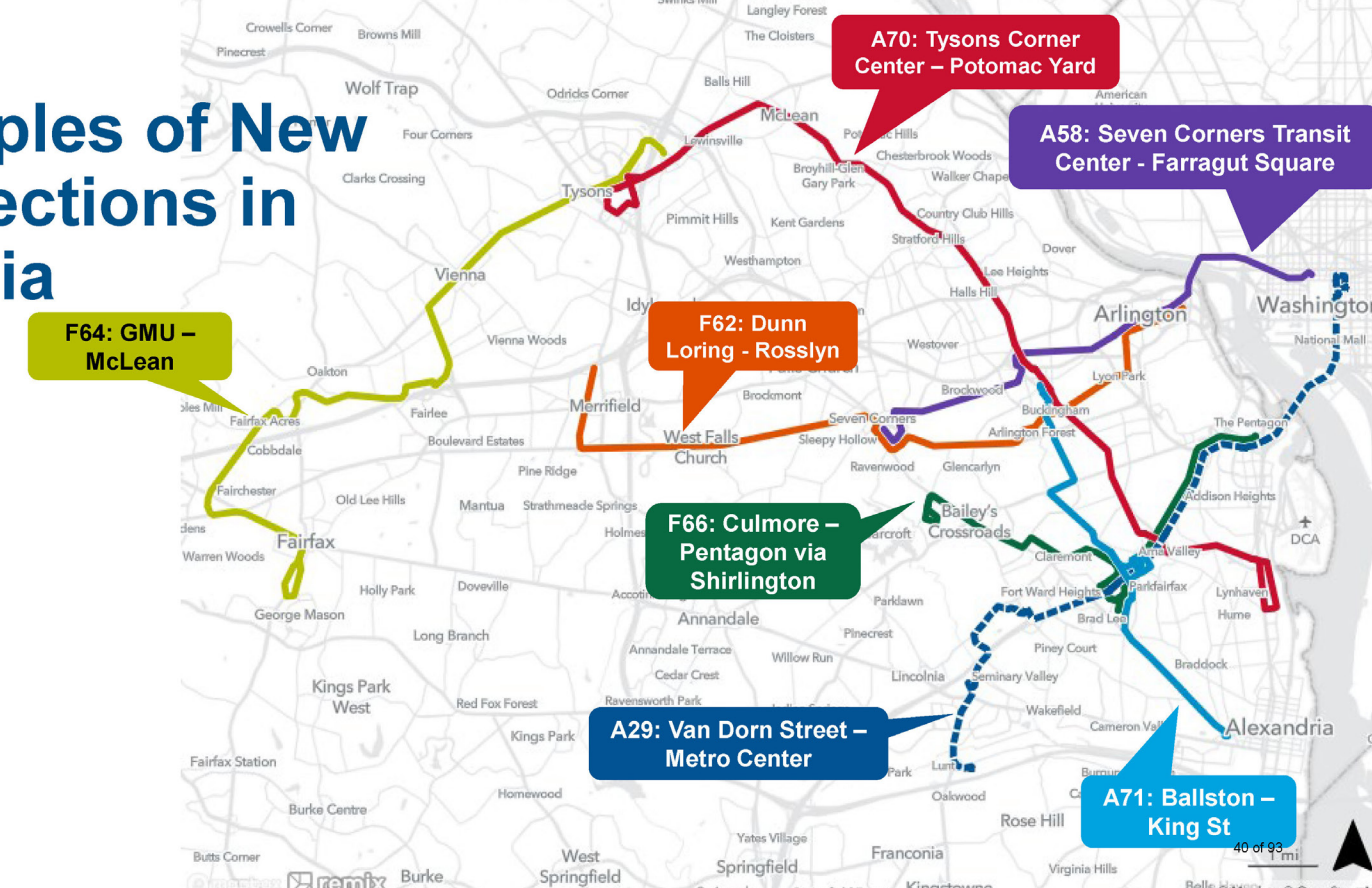
2024 Special Session I

Budget Bill - HB6001 (Enrolled)

Enacting Clause	First Year - FY2025	Second Year - FY2026	Totals
Part 1: Operating Expenses	\$87,541,229,718	\$89,126,953,245	\$
Legislative Department	\$155,788,662	\$135,613,662	\$
Judicial Department	\$694,302,681	\$701,201,863	\$
Executive Department	\$83,893,870,555	\$85,369,466,540	\$
Executive Offices	\$107,286,486	\$107,217,826	\$
Office of Administration	\$4,313,910,984	\$4,366,588,164	\$
Office of Agriculture and Forestry	\$156,221,594	\$152,302,294	\$
Office of Commerce and Trade	\$777,553,143	\$779,247,541	\$
Office of Education	\$27,998,383,472	\$28,561,955,323	\$
Office of Finance	\$2,850,604,740	\$2,860,843,063	\$
Office of Health and Human Resources	\$30,954,831,439	\$32,535,517,807	\$
Office of Labor	\$777,048,606	\$771,630,500	\$
Office of Natural and Historic Resources	\$1,087,608,074	\$614,652,395	\$
Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security	\$3,107,784,892	\$3,084,532,206	\$
Office of Transportation	\$11,214,779,158	\$10,812,302,236	\$
Office of Veterans and Defense Affairs	\$261,299,932	\$238,127,931	\$
Central Appropriations	\$306,558,035	\$484,569,254	\$
Independent Agencies	\$2,797,267,820	\$2,920,671,180	\$
State Grants to Nonstate Entities	\$0	\$0	\$



Examples of New Connections in Virginia



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Metro advances Better Bus Network

The [Metro Board](#) authorized public hearings on the proposed 2025 Better Bus Network on May 9. Beginning May 13, Metro will commence its third and final phase of public engagement on the 2025 [Better Bus Network](#) ahead of anticipated adoption in fall 2024. The Better Bus Network Redesign initiative began public and stakeholder engagement activities in fall 2022 and has since worked to produce both a long-term, visionary network and near-term, year-one network with planned implementation in summer 2025.

The Better Bus Network uses the same financial resources as FY 2024 levels but includes an updated service design, new route names, bus stop consolidation and greater regional

connectivity. The Virginia [route map](#) for the proposed 2025 Better Bus Network and individual [route profiles](#) are available for review online. Metro staff have been invited to brief NVTC's WMATA Committee at its July 11 meeting.

Members of the public can provide input through online and in-person surveys, discovery days, pop-ups throughout the region and ride-alongs. More information on the Better Bus Network can be found at www.wmata.com/betterbus.





Commonwealth Transportation Board subcommittee briefed on I-66 Commuter Choice Program of Projects

Executive Director Kate Mattice [briefed](#) the Commonwealth Transportation Board's (CTB) Rail and Public Transportation Subcommittee this week, along with Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Director Jen DeBruhl and Director of Northern Virginia Transit Programs Todd Horsley, on the draft [I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2025-2026 Program of Projects](#). The proposed \$31 million program includes funding for 15 transit improvements, commuter incentives and access to transit enhancements proposed by Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, OmniRide, Prince William County and Virginia Railway Express. Together, they would

support 2,700 additional daily transit trips in the I-66 corridor, save commuters \$2.6 million each year in fuel costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70%, relative to drive-alone travel. The draft program also includes funding for NVTC and DRPT to conduct an in-depth assessment, in close collaboration with localities and transit operators in the corridor, of current and future I-66 corridor travel needs and potential projects that could address these needs and contend for future I-66 Commuter Choice funding. Besides discussing the projects, Jen, Todd and Kate reviewed NVTC's role in Northern Virginia transit as well as how tolling works in the region with CTB members.



I-66 Commuter Choice: Draft FY 2025-2026 Program of Projects



Applicant	I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2025-2026 Application	Proposed Award	Score (100 Points)
Arlington County	ART 75 Service Enhancement: Shirlington to Virginia Square	\$397,160	56
Fairfax County	Fairfax Connector Route 697: Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride to L'Enfant Plaza (Continuation)	\$2,130,488	69
	Fairfax Connector Route 698: Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride to the Pentagon (Continuation)	\$1,506,053	78
	Fairfax Connector Route 699: Monument Drive Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C. (Continuation)	\$2,592,444	60
	Fairfax Centre Bikeshare Expansion	\$510,000	64
	Fairfax Connector Route 610: Centreville to George Mason University *	\$1,826,943	45
Loudoun County	Loudoun County Transit Route 281/681 Service Enhancement: Stone Ridge Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C. (Continuation)	\$553,000	84
	Loudoun County Transit Route 483/883: Harmony Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C. (Continuation)	\$281,000	93
OmniRide	OmniRide Route 612: Gainesville to the Pentagon (Continuation)	\$2,393,125	89
	OmniRide Route 622: Haymarket to Rosslyn	\$1,621,275	62
	OmniRide Route 653: Warrenton and Gainesville to L'Enfant Plaza *	\$3,805,125	63

(continued)



* Project was referred to DRPT's Outside the Beltway funding program based on the nature of the anticipated benefits. If DRPT opts to fund the project, it would be removed from Commuter Choice consideration.

Public comment on the projects under consideration for funding closed this week with nearly 90 comment submissions from Northern Virginia residents and commuters. The Commission will be asked to adopt the

Program of Projects at its June 6 meeting and refer it to the CTB for final approval later in the month as part of the Six-Year Improvement Program.

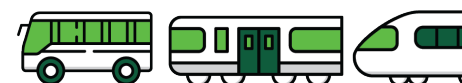


NVTC-led marketing campaign earns national recognition

NVTC's "[Ride With Us](#)" regional marketing campaign won a first-place award from the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) in the category of digital-social media campaign (paid). That campaign ran last summer following the reopening of Metro's Yellow Line Bridge and the opening of Potomac Yard-VT Station and encouraged people to ride all of our public transit systems. Marketing and Engagement Manager Monique Blyther managed the campaign, with the aid of Communications and Public Affairs Manager Matt Friedman. It was a partnership between the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax County, OmniRide and Virginia Railway Express.

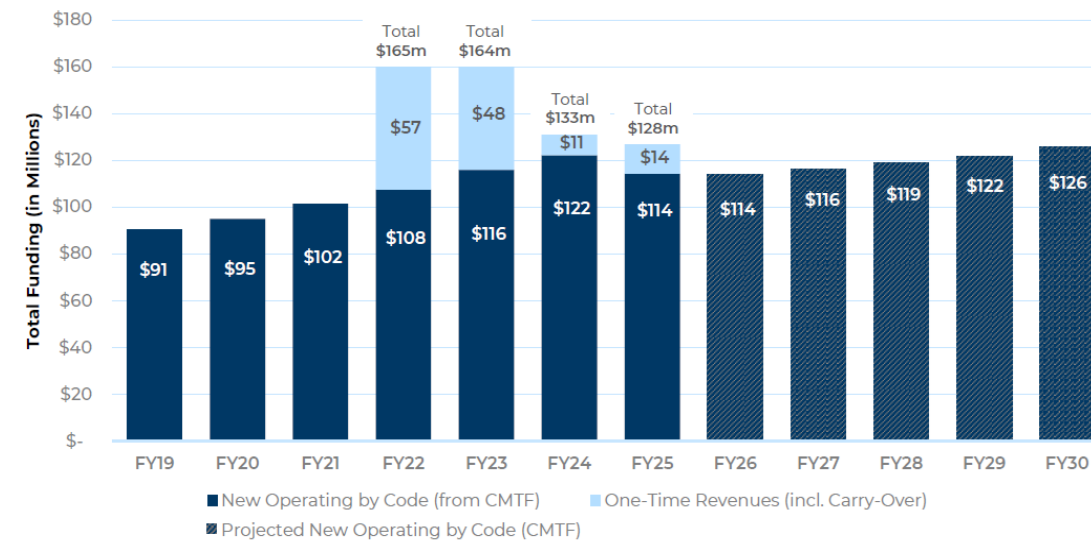


Monique and Matt attended [NAGC's Communications School](#) in New Orleans where they learned best practices for government communications and hearing from nationally recognized speakers including political strategists Donna Brazile and Doug Heye and former National Transportation Safety Board Chair Robert Sumwalt.



MERIT – Operating Assistance Revenue Projections

MERIT - Operating Assistance Total Funding FY19 to FY30
FY19-FY25 Actual, FY26-FY30 Projected



- For the past 3 fiscal years the Operating Assistance program has been supplemented with one-time revenues
- In FY25, VRE was removed from the formula
- In FY25, DRPT was also able to keep the program funded above projected levels using one-time revenues
- In FY26 and beyond projected funding is based on normal allocations without one-time revenues

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

DRPT presents transit funding for FY 2025 with reductions anticipated in FY 2026

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) staff presented the proposed FY 2025 state transit funding allocations and revenue outlook to the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) at its April 30 meeting. While the FY 2025 funding levels for DRPT's capital and operating assistance programs exceeded expectations and most local projects are proposed for funding, DRPT staff did warn of the reduction in state aid anticipated in FY 2026 with a potential loss of \$14 million below FY 2025 funding levels (see chart below). DRPT's MERIT programs for operating and capital assistance,

as well as the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP), are provided to all public bus transit systems in Virginia through formula and/or competitive grant processes. Of note, DRPT's capital and operating funding for Metro and Virginia Railway Express were removed from DRPT's formula program in 2018 and 2024, respectively. The full presentation from the April TSDAC meeting can be found [online](#).



Happy Workiversary



Rhonda Gilchrest
37 Years of Service



Scott Kalkwarf
24 Years of Service



Melissa Walker
16 Years of Service



Andrew D'Huyvetter
8 Years of Service



Allan Fye
6 Years of Service



Brittany Sumpter
5 Years of Service



Thank you for riding with NVTC!

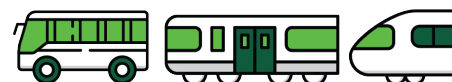


WELCOME Colie Touzel

Colie Touzel joined NVTC at the end of April as our first-ever communications specialist. They'll be working closely with Marketing and Engagement Manager Monique Blyther and Communications and Public Affairs Manager Matt Friedman.

Colie joins us most recently from the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO), where they worked as the Public Involvement and Title VI Coordinator. Colie's previous experience includes working for the Virginia Tech College of Architecture

and Urban Studies communication's team and interning for several transportation and urban planning organizations. Colie has a bachelor's degree in English from the University of South Carolina and a graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech. Colie is looking forward to learning more about our Northern Virginia transit network via their commute from Fredericksburg and is truly grateful to work at NVTC!

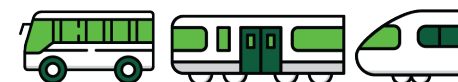


WELCOME Will Heltzel

Will Heltzel joined NVTC in May as a Transit Fellow supporting our zero-emission bus efforts, as well as other work in our Transit Technology program. Will is a student at Virginia Tech who just completed his first year in their master of urban and regional planning program. Will is a staunch advocate for transit as a way to promote accessibility, public health and climate change mitigation. Previously, as an English teacher in France, Will enjoyed traveling to and soaking

in the beauty of great European cities. In the future, Will hopes to work in transit or pedestrian planning.

We thank the [Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation](#) for their ongoing support of NVTC's Transit Fellow program, which seeks to prepare the next generation of transit professionals.



Region celebrates Bike to Work Day

Transit Fellow Robert Rudesill joined Immediate Past Chair Dalia Palchik and her Fairfax County staff for [Bike to Work Day](#) on May 17. It's a day when people are encouraged to ride a bike rather than drive to their destinations. It's also a

day where many organizations host pit stops to give out coffee, water and other goodies. This pit stop took place at the [Jim Scott Community Center](#), not far from the Vienna-GMU Metro Station.



Transit Innovation Summit



Keynote speaker:
Bob Schneider, Executive Director,
OmniRide

Stuff they didn't teach in planning school: Opportunities for transit excellence in a post-pandemic world.



Friday, June 14, 2024

8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

George Mason University

Schar School, Van Metre Hall
3351 Fairfax Dr., Arlington, VA 22201



RSVP @ novatransit.org/transitsummit





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