



As NVTC prepares to expand its Commuter Choice program, there is much work to be done and many exciting projects ready to launch. Our recently released [I-66 Commuter Choice Annual Report](#), which we have shared with Virginia’s Secretary of Transportation and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), shares the successes of the initial 10 projects the Commission selected in June 2016. These multimodal projects are playing a pivotal role in improving travel in the corridor.

In the coming months, as a result of the new I-395/I-95 Annual Transit Payment program, NVTC will work with PRTC/OmniRide to begin funding transit and related projects in that interstate corridor. A forthcoming Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between our organizations, which the two Commissions will be asked to approve in December, will guide NVTC’s administration of the Annual Transit Payment, to be marketed as part of our Commuter Choice brand. In advance of the MOA, NVTC has been meeting with staff from the Virginia Department of Transportation and Department of Rail and Public Transportation to ensure a successful launch of the I-395/I-95 program. We are working to confirm the project launch timeline and mechanisms for identifying high performing projects.

Meanwhile projects in the I-66 corridor, funded in the second round, are gearing up. Of the 15 approved by the Commission last year, Loudoun County Transit’s new bus service between Purcellville and the Wiehle-Reston East Metrorail is the first to be implemented. This nonstop service, which began October 1, operates in both directions on the half hour during morning and evening rush hours. Other projects will become operational in the coming weeks and months. Keep an eye out for our plans next year to celebrate these projects.

A proposed third call for projects under I-66 Commuter Choice will come before the Commission in November. Following the Commission’s approval, online applications will be accepted via the NVTC website from November 2, 2018 through January 16, 2019. After that, eligible projects will be evaluated using a revised selection process that the Commission also will be asked to approve in November. As with their predecessors, all projects must move more people, increase opportunities to connect from one mode of travel to another, improve transit service, reduce roadway congestion, and increase travel options – all of which will benefit the toll payers on I-66 inside the Beltway.



**Executive Director**

## Inside this Issue

<a href="#">TPB Adopts Visualize 2045</a>	2
<a href="#">NOVA Transportation Studies</a>	3
<a href="#">Metro Undertakes Bus Passenger Survey</a>	3
<a href="#">Understanding Commuter Tax Benefits</a>	3
<a href="#">JCTA Meeting Includes Metro Updates</a>	4
<a href="#">New Commuter Choice Project Launched</a>	4
<a href="#">DRPT Posts Virginia Transit Ridership Data</a>	4
<a href="#">NVTC Hosts NTD Training</a>	5
<a href="#">Public Hearings on Proposed VRE Fares</a>	5
<a href="#">VRE Annual Master Agreement Survey</a>	5
<a href="#">VRE Quantico Station Improvements</a>	5
<a href="#">Metrorail On-Time Performance Improves</a>	6
<a href="#">Tickets to VRE’s Santa Train on Sale Soon</a>	6
<a href="#">Customer Satisfaction High at Arlington Commuter Stores</a>	6
<a href="#">Take the Bus Transformation Survey</a>	6



Northern Virginia Transportation Commission  
2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 620  
Arlington, VA 22201  
[www.novatransit.org](http://www.novatransit.org)



## Key Dates

Nov 1	<a href="#">NVTC Monthly Meeting</a>
Nov 1	<a href="#">WMATA Board Meeting</a>
Nov 8	<a href="#">NVTC Interim WMATA Committee Meeting</a>
Nov 8	<a href="#">NVTA Monthly Meeting</a>
Nov 15	<a href="#">WMATA Board Meeting</a>
Nov 16	<a href="#">TPB Monthly Meeting</a>
Nov 16	<a href="#">VRE Operations Board Meeting</a>
Nov 29	<a href="#">CTB Fall Transportation Meeting</a>
Dec 4-5	<a href="#">CTB Monthly Meeting</a>
Dec 6	<a href="#">NVTC Monthly Meeting</a>

## Transportation Planning Board Adopts Visualize 2045

Visualize 2045, the region’s long-range transportation plan, received the approval of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) on October 19. The plan contains more than 600 highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects, totaling \$291 billion, that the region expects to fund over the next 27 years. It includes the cost of new projects as well as operations and maintenance of the current system. WMATA improvements include added capacity to the Metrorail system, such as running only eight-car trains during peak periods. Transit projects in Northern Virginia include enhanced bus service and new park-and-ride lots in the I-66 and I-95/I-395 corridors, and reduced headways for VRE trains along both the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines.

The plan also includes a set of aspirational initiatives that the board identified for their potential to address some of the region’s biggest transportation challenges in the future. Transportation agencies in the region are urged to develop projects, programs, and policies to advance these initiatives. The seven initiatives are to:

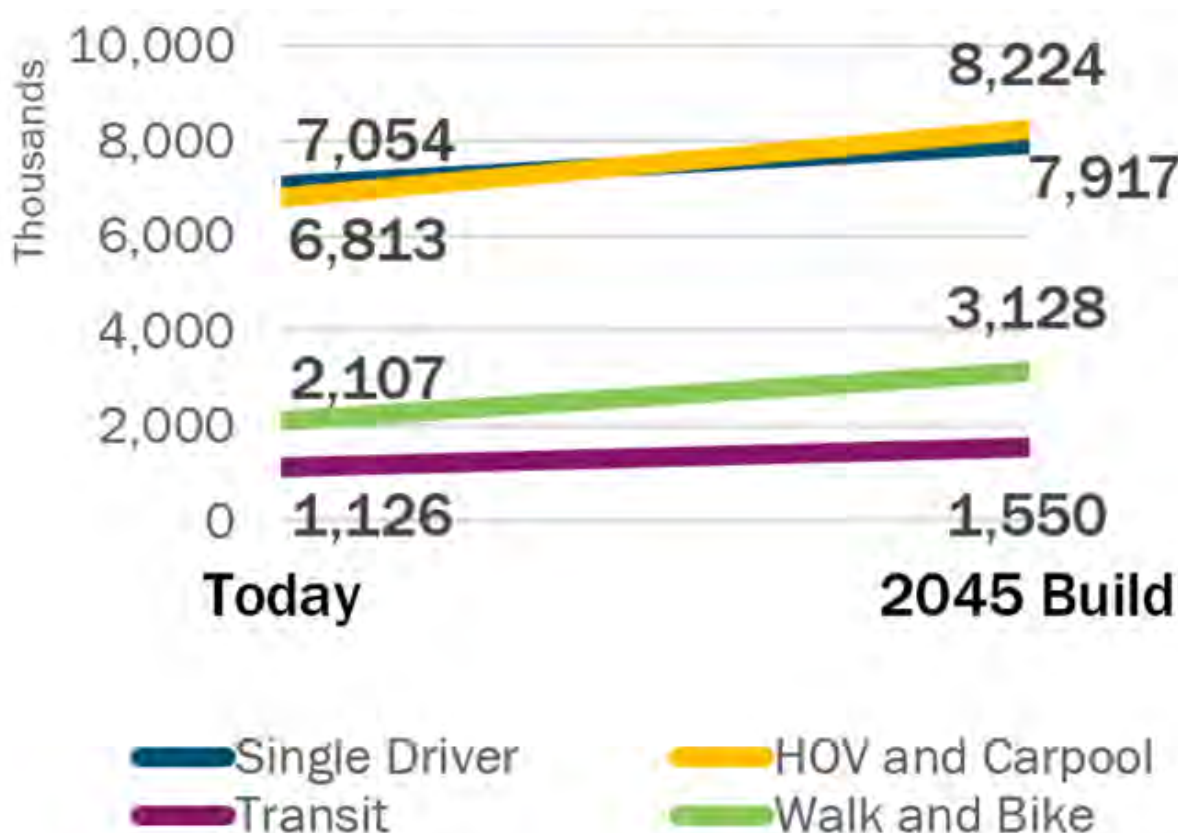
- Bring jobs and housing closer together
- Expand bus rapid transit and transitways

- Move more people on Metrorail
- Increase telecommuting
- Expand the express highway network
- Improve walk and bike access to transit
- Complete the National Capital Trail

“Over the last four years, members of the TPB, transportation agencies, and the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments have worked hard to put together Visualize 2045, a long-range plan that aims to provide affordable, sustainable, and multimodal transportation options for the residents and businesses of this region,” said TPB Chair Charles Allen. “The plan goes above and beyond previous plans by also featuring unfunded initiatives that have the potential to significantly improve the region’s transportation system and that the region agrees are worth pursuing.”

Many board members commended the extensive public outreach by staff about Visualize 2045 and the new features of the plan through surveys, forums, and community events across the region, which generated input from more than 6,000 people.

### All Trips by Mode



## Northern Virginia Jurisdictions Undertake Transportation Studies

Several NVTC jurisdictions are moving forward with transportation plans and studies. The City of Alexandria held two open houses in October to discuss its Transit Vision Plan and Choices Report. The report is the first step toward an [Alexandria Transit Vision Plan](#), which is intended to “develop a data-driven future bus transit network that will reflect the needs and priorities of city residents, workers and visitors.”

In Arlington, county officials are beginning the second phase of the [Core of Rosslyn Transportation Study](#) by collecting public comment during October. The study is aimed at improving the safety and accessibility of the Rosslyn business district for all users and transportation modes. The study is scheduled to wrap up in 2019.

Studies pertaining to electrified rental scooters are underway in two Northern Virginia municipalities. The City of Fairfax is evaluating how shared e-scooters could be



incorporated as a travel option, [hosting an on-line survey](#) to gauge resident’s opinions. In Arlington, officials approved a nine-month demonstration intend-

ed to study the use and safety of e-bikes and e-scooters. Rental companies must sign a memorandum with the county and meet safety requirements in order to obtain a permit to operate. Arlington officials will join their transportation colleagues from the District, Montgomery County and City of Baltimore to discuss their dockless bike- and scooter-share pilot programs. The [event is free and open to the public](#), but advance registration is required. It takes place Wednesday, October 31 from 12:30-3:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments offices, 777 North Capitol St. NE, Suite 300, Washington, D.C.

## Metro Undertakes Regional Bus Passenger Survey

Used to determine funding allocations, [Metro’s 2018 Bus Passenger Survey](#) also will provide data on ridership and travel characteristics. That data will help support Metro's planning efforts and provide general demographic information as required by federal regulations. Because Metro's funding from local jurisdiction is based, in part, on jurisdiction of residence, the survey is used to determine how transit funding is allocated based among the cities and counties that Metro services. Metro conducts a Bus Passenger Survey once every four years.

From October 2018 to February 2019, surveys will be distributed and collected aboard buses by trained research contractors throughout the Metrobus service area. Importantly, customers are asked to complete the survey each time they receive one. Customers can re-

main anonymous if they wish. However, address information is key to determining jurisdiction of residence for funding purposes.



## Understanding the Current State of Commuter Tax Benefits

Arlington Transportation Partners will explain how tax changes may impact local businesses and funding for commuting options, and share information about various multimodal projects at its upcoming Lunch and Learn on Wednesday, November 7. After the Tax Cuts

and Jobs Act went into effect this year, many businesses have struggled to figure out what these changes mean for their operations. This free event will help organizations navigate the tax changes and, in particular, their impact on commuter programs. [Registration is required.](#)




## JCTA Northern Virginia Meeting Includes WMATA Update

Members of Virginia's [Joint Commission on Transportation Accountability](#) (JCTA) were briefed by Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) General Manager Paul Wiedefeld and Department of Rail and Public Transportation Director Jennifer Mitchell [on October 10](#). Wiedefeld thanked the senators and delegates for their support of dedicated funding and spoke to recent improvements in customer satisfaction. He also assured JCTA members that the transit agency is cooperating with NVTC on its legislatively mandated report on Metro's performance. The report is due to the Governor and General Assembly by November 1. Mitchell's briefing also touched on NVTC's new responsibilities in regard to WMATA. She also shared the Commonwealth Transportation Board's new policy and guidelines that govern the circumstances under which Virginia would withhold funding from WMATA, as prescribed in the [2018 omnibus transit funding bill](#). The Commission [endorsed the policy and guidelines](#) in September.



## I-66 Commuter Choice Second Round Projects Underway

 Loudoun County [launched new bus service](#) between Purcellville and the Wiehle-Reston East Metrorail station on October 1. It is the first of 15 projects funded earlier this year in the second round of NVTC's [I-66 Commuter Choice](#) program to be implemented. Meanwhile, two other second-round projects caught the attention of the National Center for Mobility Management. [An article on the group's website](#) looks at PRTC/OmniRide's flexible vanpool program and on-demand commuter lot shuttles. Noting that Prince William County's "population is growing, its behavior is changing, and the area's infrastructure is strained to capacity, especially during rush hour," the piece goes on to say that "leadership within the organization is aware that some of the challenges that are ris-

ing to the forefront cannot be addressed with traditional options. The agency is actively working to do something about it."



## DRPT Creates Webpage for Virginia Transit Ridership Data

As part of its effort to ensure performance data is open and transparent, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has created a [performance data section on its webpage](#). Additional data may be added in the future. DRPT will post monthly ridership on the 23rd of each month.

Grantees will receive an email around the 10th of each month as a reminder that the prior month's ridership should be submitted no later than the 20th.



## NVTC Hosts National Transit Database Training

To help local transit agencies meet their federal reporting requirements, NVTC coordinated and hosted a two-day training session October 2-3 on the [National Transit Database](#). Those receiving grants from the Urbanized Area Formula Program or Rural Formula Program are required to submit certain data to the Federal

Transit Administration (FTA). The reporting requirements have allowed the FTA to make information – such as agency funding sources, inventories of vehicles and maintenance facilities, safety event reports, measures of transit service provided and consumed, and data on transit employees – available to the public.

## Public Hearings on Proposed VRE Fare Increase

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) will hold [10 public hearings this fall on its proposed fare increase](#), which if approved would take effect in July 2019. The first hearing is October 30 in Arlington and the last is November 15 in Fredericksburg. Public hearings also will be held in Alexandria, Burke, Manassas, Stafford, Woodbridge, and Washington, D.C. The increase is, on average, about 3 percent above current fares. VRE's Master Agreement requires the railway to cover 50 percent of its operating expenses through fares. Public comments may be submitted via [email](#) or fax ( 703-684-1313). The VRE Operations Board will decide whether to include the proposed increase in the fiscal year 2020 budget on December 21. NVTC and PRTC/OmniRide will consider the Operations Board's recommended budget on January 3.

Example Ticket	Current	Proposed	Difference
Monthly Pass: Spotsylvania to Union	\$327.60	\$336.80	<b>\$9.20</b>
Monthly Pass: Broad Run to Union	\$268.60	\$277.20	<b>\$8.60</b>
Monthly Pass: Backlick to Union	\$209.60	\$216.20	<b>\$6.60</b>
Single Ride: Spotsylvania to Union	\$11.90	\$12.15	<b>\$0.25</b>
Single Ride: Broad Run to Union	\$9.80	\$10.00	<b>\$0.20</b>

## NVTC Supports VRE's Annual Master Agreement Survey

NVTC staff joined their colleagues from PRTC/OmniRide and Virginia Railway Express to administer the railroad's Master Agreement Survey on October 3. NVTC uses residency data from the annual survey to help VRE determine jurisdictional subsidies. VRE receives funds from Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Stafford and Spotsylvania counties and the cities of Alexandria, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park. The survey is conducted on both the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines. Staff from the three organizations served as on-board survey collectors on 14 morning inbound VRE and four Amtrak trains.



## VRE Updates Passengers on Quantico Station Improvements

Virginia Railway Express (VRE) was at the Quantico station on October 17, sharing information about [planned improvements](#). The project includes construction of an island platform and pedestrian bridges; extension of the existing platform; and track modifications. VRE has received funding for this project through the Smart Scale Program for the remaining funding necessary for construction. The Quantico station, which sits on VRE's Fredericksburg Line, is also served by Amtrak.





## WMATA



On October 15, [Metro \(@wmata\) tweeted](#), “Some good news on a Monday: Metrorail on-time performance in September was the highest in more than 7 years (since at least Jan 2011), driven by strong railcar reliability & a 60 percent reduction in track problems. OTP for the month was 90% overall and 93% in rush hours.”



## Virginia Railway Express



Tickets for [VRE’s annual Santa Train](#) go on sale November 19 at 9 a.m. Tickets, which are [available online](#) and at select locations, generally sell out in under five minutes. The December 8 excursion will give kids and parents an opportunity to ride the train in the company of Santa and friends. The event also teaches kids about rail safety and promotes Operation Life-saver’s “Look, Listen, and Live” campaign. The Marine Corps will collect toys for its Toys for Tots program at select VRE stations following the train ride.



## Mobility Lab



A new [study by Mobility Lab](#) finds a high level of customer satisfaction at Arlington County’s Commuter Stores. Nine out of 10 customers are likely to recommend The Commuter Store to others. That’s up 3 percent from 2012, the last time the study was conducted. The study also found that 60 percent of The Commuter Store’s customers exclusively purchase their bus, Metrorail, and commuter rail tickets at the stores. More than 80 percent of customers can be considered “loyal,” which means that they are highly likely both to return to the stores and recommend them to others. Only 7 percent of Commuter Store customers report driving alone to work and 30 percent say they changed the way they travel to work after visiting a Commuter Store. Arlington has five Commuter Stores and four “Mobile Stores” that visit the county’s neighborhoods and shopping centers.



Customer Satisfaction Rates at Commuter Stores in Arlington, Virginia  
Executive Summary

## Washington Area Bus Transformation Project



The [Washington Area Bus Transformation Project](#), a regional effort to identify ways to make local bus service a more attractive transportation option, is urging riders and non-riders to take its survey. NVTC is supporting the project, with staff serving on the technical team and executive director on the strategic advisory panel. Data from [the five-part survey](#) — which includes sections on current travel, travel preferences, and travel budget — will be used to help reimagine the region’s bus network.

