

TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice, Dinah Girma and Dan Goldfarb, PE

DATE: May 28, 2020

SUBJECT: NVTC Transit Resource Center

At the June meeting, the Commission will receive an update on the FY 2020 3rd Quarter Transit Performance and the FY 2020 Year-To-Date (YTD) 3rd Quarter Parking Utilization. The update will highlight changes in ridership and review changes to transit operations across Northern Virginia due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Why is ridership data collection so important to transit?

Transit ridership data is vital since the data is used to allocate both Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) transit funding. The FTA collects data through the National Transit Database (NTD) and uses it to allocate federal transit formula funds to WMATA. DRPT collects ridership data from transit operators across the Commonwealth and uses it to distribute operating assistance.

A. FY 2020 3rd Quarter (January through March) Transit Ridership Report and Service Changes

The FY 2020 3rd Quarter Ridership report (January to March 2020 compared to January to March 2019) is the first reporting period to capture the impact of the COVID-19 on the area's transit systems. This period also includes the ridership impact in 2019 from the federal government shutdown.

Compared to the 3rd quarter of last fiscal year, overall transit ridership (rail, bus, and paratransit) decreased by approximately 10%. For non-Metrorail modes, 3rd quarter ridership decreased slightly less with an 8% decrease. Table 1 shows the 3rd quarter bus ridership boardings by system, compared to last year's 3rd quarter.

For all transit modes in Northern Virginia, January ridership showed an increase of 16% over the same period last year, reflecting the impacts of the government shutdown which ended on January 25, 2019 and the return to a more regular commuting pattern for January 2020. Ridership data for February showed a 7% increase over the same period last year. March ridership began the month with strong ridership, but due to the impacts of COVID-19, the second half of the month showed dramatic decreases in ridership and travel demand. March ridership decreases in Northern Virginia ranged from 30% to 50% compared to last year.

Table 1: Transit Boardings in Virginia by System

System	3rd Quarter FY 2019	3rd Quarter FY 2020	% Change
Arlington Transit	655,703	659,303	1%
Alexandria DASH	833,956	767,507	-8%
Fairfax County Connector	1,926,510	1,792,502	-7%
Fairfax City CUE	145,101	128,099	-12%
Loudoun County Transit	389,269	368,221	-5%
OmniRide	546,670	524,812	-4%
Virginia Railway Express	1,016,731	920,999	-9%
Metrobus	3,768,895	3,364,491	-11%
Metro Access	83,311	64,610	-22%
Total	9,366,146	8,590,544	-8%

Source: OLGA and WMATA

As stay at home orders began around the middle of March, transit providers in Northern Virginia responded by decreasing levels of service (except the City of Fairfax's CUE service) as well as implementing operational changes (Table 2) such as rear door boarding and elimination of fare collection. OmniRide instituted a 10-person limit on all buses meaning that any increase in demand will require additional vehicles to be put in service. Overall, weekday bus service levels have decreased approximately 60% in Northern Virginia, slightly greater than pre-COVID-19 weekend service.

Table 2: Transit Operational Changes Due to COVID-19

System	Rear Door Boarding	Elimination of Fares
Arlington Transit	April 17	April 17
Alexandria DASH	March 20	March 20
Fairfax County Connector	April 11	March 24
Fairfax City CUE	March 19	March 19
Loudoun County Transit	March 30	March 30
OmniRide	March 25	March 25
Metrobus	March 24	March 23

Source: NTD Data Collection Activities FY2020

As shown in Table 3, WMATA also closed some Virginia Metrorail stations and reduced train frequency on all rail lines in order to match demand.

Table 3: Metrorail Station Closures

Station	Date of Closure
Arlington Cemetery	March 19
Clarendon	March 26
East Falls Church	March 26
Eisenhower Ave	March 26
Greensboro	March 26
McLean	March 26
Van Dorn	March 26
Virginia Square-GMU	March 26

Source: WMATA

Starting in the middle of March, the method of how ridership data is collected has been forced to evolve. Previously, data collection was based primarily on farebox data. Since COVID-19 operational changes went into effect, some operators have installed automatic passenger counters on rear doors and all operators have drivers manual tally the number of boardings.

It is important to note that all data collection methods have some systematic error. It can be expected that the different methods in collecting and recording the data might have different results. However, the trends and patterns, regardless of the current methods being deployed in the field, are expected to adequately capture the data necessary for planning and programming activities.

With respect to ridership data reported to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD) program, which is important since NTD data is used to calculate Federal funding support for WMATA, data collection waivers for this year may be submitted. That decision will be made in coordination with each jurisdiction and NVTC's NTD consultant team.

B. FY 2020 3rd Quarter (January through March) Metrorail Station Entries

Table 4 shows, compared to the same period last year, an approximately 11% decrease in total Metrorail Virginia station entries for the 3rd quarter of the fiscal year. Like other transit modes in the region, January and February had significant increases over last year. January 2020's rail ridership reflects an increase due to the government shutdown which ended on January 25, 2019. March rail ridership shows a significant decrease compared to the same period last year due to the COVID-19 restrictions that were put in place throughout March, Metrorail station closures, and significantly reduced demand.

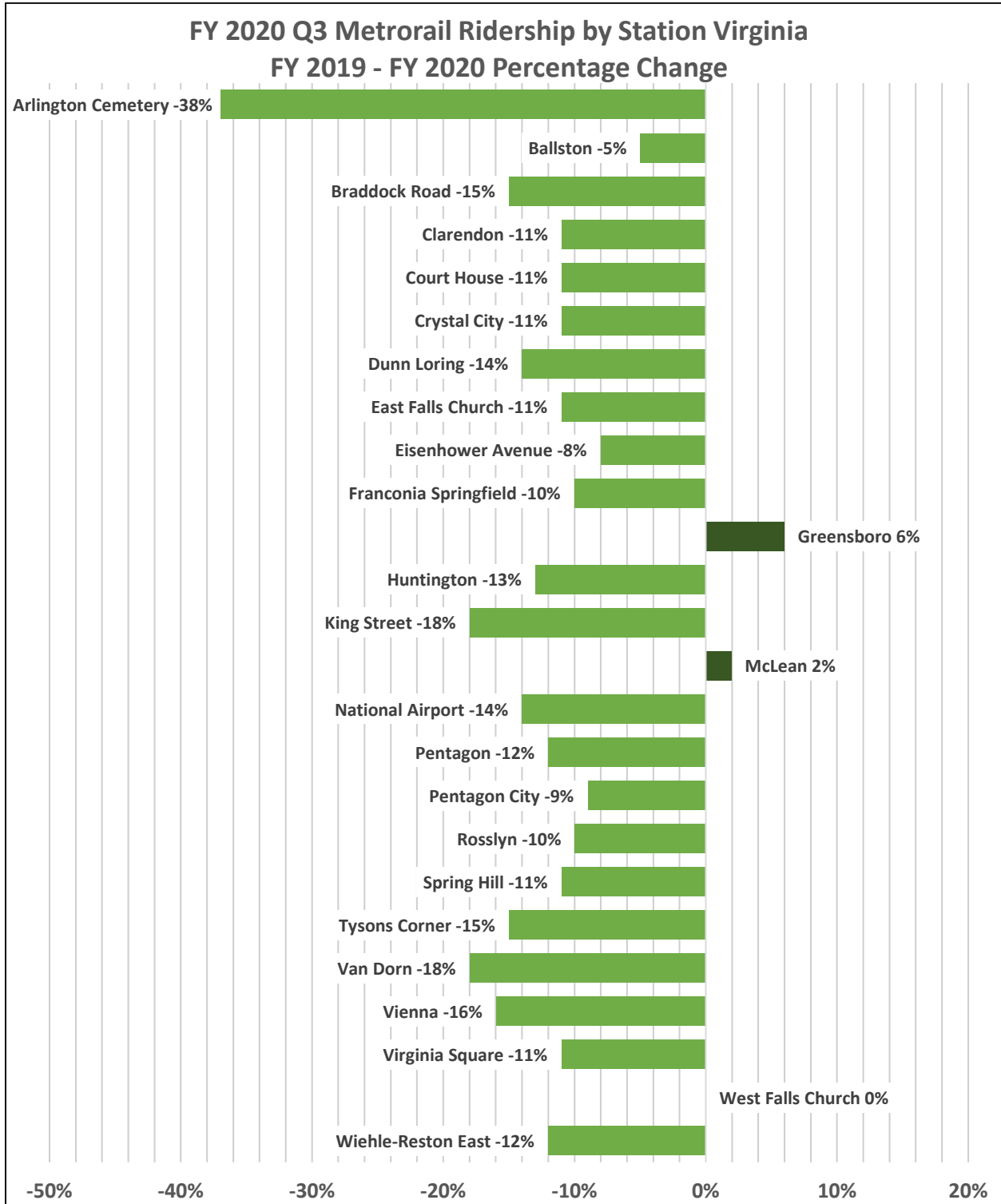
Table 4: WMATA Metrorail Virginia Station Entries

	3rd Quarter FY 2019	3rd Quarter FY 2020	% Change
Weekday Average	135,395	118,373	-13%
Saturday Average	47,096	40,782	-13%
Sunday Average	31,813	29,543	-7%
Total	9,691,134	8,608,442	-11%

Source: WMATA

Figure 1 and Table 5 present the station level data. Only two stations on the Silver Line showed an increase as compared to last year. All other Virginia stations shows a decrease in ridership.

Figure 1



Source: WMATA. Ridership is based on station entries





**Table 5: Metrorail Ridership by Station in Virginia
3rd Quarter FY 2020**

Line/Station	Year	January	February	March	Total	Percent Change FY19 - FY20
Silver						
Greensboro	FY19	31,445	29,863	32,480	93,788	6%
	FY20	42,623	38,281	18,545	99,449	
McLean	FY19	45,136	44,364	48,961	138,461	2%
	FY20	62,120	54,675	23,961	140,756	
Spring Hill	FY19	24,533	23,424	27,773	75,730	-11%
	FY20	28,447	25,386	13,814	67,646	
Tysons Corner	FY19	81,445	75,211	88,450	245,106	-15%
	FY20	89,344	80,680	38,936	208,960	
Wiehle-Reston East	FY19	159,828	159,987	189,675	509,490	-12%
	FY20	193,168	171,481	84,362	449,011	
Total Silver Line	FY19	342,387	332,849	387,339	1,062,575	-9%
	FY20	415,702	370,502	179,618	965,822	
Orange						
Dunn Loring	FY19	80,959	80,794	92,182	253,935	-14%
	FY20	93,699	83,660	40,568	217,928	
West Falls Church	FY19	49,668	53,233	60,128	163,029	0%
	FY20	69,117	62,015	32,363	163,495	
Vienna	FY19	177,483	187,362	214,940	579,785	-16%
	FY20	209,762	191,696	87,717	489,175	
Total Orange Line	FY19	308,111	321,389	367,250	996,749	-13%
	FY20	372,578	337,371	160,648	870,597	
Silver/Orange						
Ballston	FY19	210,467	210,276	232,778	653,521	-5%
	FY20	255,698	241,169	120,788	617,655	
Clarendon	FY19	109,963	105,607	118,343	333,913	-11%
	FY20	124,323	116,249	54,993	295,566	
Court House	FY19	147,176	143,921	161,103	452,201	-11%
	FY20	168,319	158,710	76,488	403,517	
East Falls Church	FY19	81,478	83,031	96,074	260,583	-11%
	FY20	103,542	84,815	42,542	230,900	
Rosslyn	FY19	293,057	289,477	331,288	913,822	-9%
	FY20	356,379	319,132	159,007	834,518	
Virginia Square	FY19	85,999	86,065	95,173	267,237	-11%
	FY20	100,047	94,136	44,277	238,460	
Total	FY19	928,141	918,378	1,034,759	2,881,278	-9%
	FY20	1,108,309	1,014,212	498,095	2,620,616	

Source: WMATA. Ridership is based on station entries



Line/Station	Year	January	February	March	Total	Percent Change FY19 - FY20
Blue						
Arlington Cemetery	FY19	15,321	11,225	39,248	65,795	-38%
	FY20	15,485	14,505	10,914	40,905	
Franconia Springfield	FY19	119,212	123,000	144,675	386,886	-10%
	FY20	149,277	128,062	69,683	347,022	
Van Dorn	FY19	54,120	55,040	60,783	169,943	-18%
	FY20	57,459	51,855	29,391	138,705	
Total	FY19	188,653	189,266	244,706	622,624	-15%
	FY20	222,221	194,422	109,988	526,631	
Yellow						
Eisenhower Avenue	FY19	31,124	36,747	44,980	112,851	-8%
	FY20	43,351	39,430	21,027	103,807	
Huntington	FY19	133,815	140,345	156,540	430,700	-13%
	FY20	152,455	138,609	81,723	372,786	
Total	FY19	164,939	177,092	201,520	543,551	-12%
	FY20	195,805	178,038	102,750	476,593	
Blue/Yellow						
Braddock Road	FY19	99,570	95,550	106,163	301,283	-15%
	FY20	107,008	96,883	51,529	255,421	
Crystal City	FY19	229,812	231,251	271,624	732,687	-11%
	FY20	275,804	253,114	123,809	652,727	
King Street	FY19	130,540	132,538	160,572	423,651	-18%
	FY20	141,054	132,230	75,772	349,055	
National Airport	FY19	130,117	121,626	171,112	422,855	-14%
	FY20	147,703	136,101	79,099	362,903	
Pentagon	FY19	283,811	277,540	298,793	860,143	-12%
	FY20	317,067	285,718	154,308	757,093	
Pentagon City	FY19	255,181	267,611	320,946	843,738	-9%
	FY20	318,423	299,087	153,473	770,983	
Total	FY19	1,129,031	1,126,116	1,329,210	3,584,357	-12%
	FY20	1,307,058	1,203,133	637,990	3,148,181	
Total Virginia Stations	FY19	3,061,262	3,065,088	3,564,784	9,691,134	-11%
	FY20	3,621,673	3,297,680	1,689,089	8,608,442	

Source: WMATA. Ridership is based on station entries



C. FY 2020 3rd Quarter Parking Utilization Report

Virginia Metrorail parking facilities experienced a large decline in usage due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, as both bus and rail services were reduced in the second half of March. In addition, surface parking lots were closed in March at East Falls Church, West Falls Church and Vienna to allow construction staging for the 2020 summer shutdown on the Orange Line. These stations are expected to be closed for approximately seven to nine months.

Table 6 and Figure 2 provide an overview of the parking utilization year to date. The parking data represents utilization for an average weekday year to date. Therefore, parking lot closures or reductions in capacity are not fully represented in the lot capacity, especially for middle of the month or temporary work closures. The objective of the utilization data is to provide a metric to understand the parking dynamics and provide an overall snapshot of how the parking facilities are operating at the station located in Northern Virginia.

Table 6: WMATA Virginia Parking Facility Usage (Average Weekday) - 3rd Quarter FY 2020

Station	2019 Capacity	2019 % Usage	2019 Average	2020 Capacity	2020 % Usage	2020 Average	% Change (2019-2020)
Huntington*	2,732	75%	2,049	2,732	66%	1,803	-12%
West Falls Church	2,009	56%	1,125	1,275	56%	714	-37%
Dunn Loring	1,964	45%	884	1,964	41%	805	-9%
Vienna**	4,719	73%	3,445	4,719	70%	3,303	-4%
Franconia	5,069	56%	2,839	5,069	52%	2,636	-7%
Van Dorn	361	101%	361	361	84%	303	-16%
East Falls Church	422	115%	422	422	91%	384	-9%
Wiehle-Reston East	2,300	95%	2,185	2,300	85%	1,955	-11%
Total¹	19,576	77%	13,310	18,842	68%	11,903	-11%

Source: WMATA

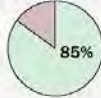
*Huntington South Garage closed August 2018

**Garage rehab at Vienna, 450 spaces

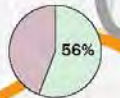
¹Starting on March 15, surface parking lots closed East Falls Church, West Falls Church and Vienna Stations for “pre-construction” activity in preparation for Metro 2020 summer shutdown on the Orange Line

**FY 2020 YTD
WMATA Virginia Parking Utilization Rate
(Average Weekday)**

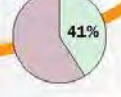
Wiehle-Reston East



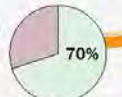
West Falls Church-VT/UVA



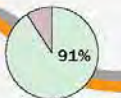
Dunn Loring-Merrifield



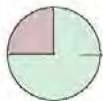
Vienna/Fairfax-GMU



East Falls Church*



Legend

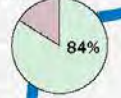


% FY2020 YTD Utilized Parking by Station

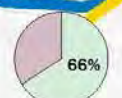
Station	FYTD20 Lot Capacity
Huntington	2,732
West Falls Church-VT/UVA	1,275
Dunn Loring-Merrifield	1,964
Vienna/Fairfax-GMU	4,719
Franconia-Springfield	5,069
Van Dorn Street	361
East Falls Church	422
Wiehle-Reston East	2,300
Northern Virginia Total	18,842

* East Falls Church overutilization caused by parking usage turnover

Van Dorn St



Huntington



Franconia-Springfield

