



MONTHLY COMMISSION MATERIALS

October 2020 – Electronic Meeting

MEETING OVERVIEW – October 1, 2020

NVTC's October 1 meeting will be an electronic meeting, which is possible since Governor Northam signed into law a legislative amendment to provide authority for public bodies, such as NVTC, to conduct electronic meetings during a declared state of emergency when it is impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location. The public will be able to access the audio live stream through YouTube and Facebook Live.

Action Items:

- Resolution "Finding Need to Conduct the October 1, 2020 NVTC Meeting Electronically"
- Notice of Direct Contributions to the Jurisdictions
- NVTC Commuter Choice Program FY2020 Annual Report to the CTB
- Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects for Submission to the Commonwealth Transportation Board
- Preliminary FY2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to forward to the Jurisdictions

Other Meeting Highlights:

- Public Comment Received during Declared Emergency
- Presentation by the WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld
- Overview of WMATA and VRE's COVID-19 Response
- Reports from the Chair of the 3% Cap Working Group, the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee, and the Virginia WMATA Board Members
- Legislative Update
- Commuter Choice Program Update
- Transit Resource Center – Annual Transit Ridership and Parking Utilization

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**NVTC COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020
Via Electronic Participation
Public Streaming via YouTube
7:00 P.M.**

AGENDA

NVTC is receiving public comment during the declared state of emergency. Persons wishing to provide written public comment should submit comments by 3:00 p.m. on October 1 via [NVTC's website](#). Comments will be provided to Commissioners prior to the October 1 meeting.

NVTC Executive Committee will meet at 5:30 p.m. via electronic participation.

1. Opening Remarks
2. **ACTION ITEM: Approve the CONSENT AGENDA** (subject to approval of the chair)
 - A. **Approve Resolution #2419: Finding Need to Conduct the October 1, 2020 NVTC Meeting Electronically**
 - Includes Public Comments Received During Declared Emergency
 - B. **Authorize the Notice of Direct Contributions to the Jurisdictions**
3. **ACTION ITEM: Approve the Minutes of the September 3, 2020 NVTC Meeting**
4. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
 - A. Presentation by WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld
 - B. WMATA COVID-19 Response
 - C. Report from the Virginia WMATA Board Members
 - D. Other WMATA News
 - E. Report from the Chair of the 3% Cap Working Group
 - F. Report from the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee
5. **Commuter Choice Program**
 - A. Report from the Chair of the Program Advisory Committee
 - B. **Commuter Choice Program At Large**
 - **ACTION ITEM: Authorize the Executive Director to Submit the NVTC Commuter Choice Program FY 2020 Annual Report to the Commonwealth Transportation Board**

C. Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor

- **ACTION ITEM: Approve Resolution #2420: Approve the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects for Submission to the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Standard Project Agreements**

D. Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two Update

6. Legislative Update

- A. Report from the Chair of the Legislative and Policy Committee
- B. Virginia General Assembly Update
- C. Federal Update
- D. Annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing

7. NVTC Transit Resource Center

- A. FY 2020 4th Quarter (April through June) Transit Ridership Report and Service Changes
- B. FY 2020 4th Quarter Parking Utilization Report
- C. FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report

8. Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

- A. VRE COVID-19 Response
- B. VRE CEO Report and Minutes
- C. **ACTION ITEM: Approve Resolution #2421: Authorize the Referral of the Preliminary FY2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Jurisdictions**
- D. VRE CEO Delegated Spending Authority Increased

9. Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

- A. Monthly DRPT Report
- B. Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board Appointments

10. Executive Director Report

- A. Executive Director Newsletter
- B. NVTC Financial Report

Agenda Item #2: Consent Agenda

TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice and Scott Kalkwarf

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Consent Agenda (subject to approval by the chair)

ACTION ITEM: Approve the CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve Resolution #2419: Finding Need to Conduct the October 1, 2020 NVTC Meeting Electronically

The Commission is asked to approve Resolution #2419, which allows NVTC to confirm that the current declared COVID-19 public health emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for the Commission to assemble in a single location on October 1, 2020, to discuss and transact the business of the Commission. Furthermore, the resolution states that the items on this meeting's agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Commission and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. This is possible since Governor Northam signed legislation in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency to provide authority for public bodies, such as NVTC, to conduct electronic meetings during a declared state of emergency when it is impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location.

▪ Public Comments Received During Declared Emergency

According to the legislation signed by Governor Northam in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency ([budget amendment 137: Allow policy-making boards to meet virtually during emergency declarations, Item 4-0.01](#)), a public body or governing board convening a meeting in accordance with this subdivision shall make arrangements, if the means of communication allows, to provide the public with an opportunity to comment.

In advance of the October 1 meeting, NVTC solicited written comments from the public via [Google Forms through NVTC's website](#). Comments received by 3:00 p.m. on October 1 will be provided to Commissioners ahead of the meeting and Commissioners will have an opportunity to respond to the comments at the October 1 meeting.

B. Authorize the Notice of Direct Contributions to the Jurisdictions

The Commission is asked to authorize staff to provide notice of the FY 2022 direct contributions to NVTC's member jurisdictions for planning purposes. Each fall, NVTC staff proposes a preliminary General and Administrative (G&A) budget for the next fiscal year to be used by its member jurisdictions in planning their own budgets. The NVTC jurisdiction funding is provided to NVTC through direct payments from the member jurisdictions, as well as an amount taken off the top of state aid received by NVTC on behalf of its member jurisdictions. While the direct contributions are fixed in total, each jurisdiction is assigned a share based on its percentage of state aid and gas tax received through NVTC during the previous year.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PRELIMINARY FY2022 DIRECT G&A JURISDICTION CONTRIBUTIONS				
	FY 2020 Actual	Approved Budget FY 2021	Preliminary Budget FY 2022	FY 2022-2021 Budget Increase (Decrease)
City of Alexandria	\$ 39,016	\$ 39,567	\$ 41,964	\$ 2,397
Arlington County	61,616	64,369	66,434	2,065
City of Fairfax	4,966	4,651	4,453	(198)
Fairfax County	164,451	163,471	160,006	(3,465)
City of Falls Church	2,291	2,099	2,064	(35)
Loudoun County	11,907	10,090	9,325	(765)
TOTAL	\$ 284,247	\$ 284,247	\$ 284,247	\$ -



RESOLUTION #2419

SUBJECT: Finding Need to Conduct the October 1, 2020 Meeting Electronically

WHEREAS: On March 12, 2020, the Governor of Virginia declared a state of emergency in Virginia in response to the spread of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, a communicable disease of public health threat as so declared by the State Health Commissioner on February 7, 2020 ("COVID-19");

WHEREAS: In subsequent Executive Orders, particularly Executive Order Nos. 53 and 55, as amended, the Governor of Virginia, among other measures designed to ensure safe physical distancing between individuals, prohibited public and private in person gatherings of 10 or more individuals and ordered all individuals in Virginia to remain at their place of residence, with limited exceptions, to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 and prevent its spread;

WHEREAS: The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission finds that it has a responsibility to demonstrate to the public, through the Commission's conduct, the importance of maintaining proper physical distance from others and to avoid gathering in public where the risks of infection are highest, and to take measures that promote physical distancing in order to protect the public health and mitigate the impacts and spread of COVID-19, including, among others, conducting meetings electronically whenever possible;

WHEREAS: On April 22, 2020, the Virginia General Assembly adopted, and the Governor signed, budget bill amendments to HB 29 that expressly authorize "any public body, including any state, local, [or] regional body" to "meet by electronic means without a quorum of the public body . . . physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency . . ., provided that (i) the nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the public body . . . to assemble in a single location; (ii) the purpose of the meeting is to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the public body . . . and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities" among other provisions; and

WHEREAS: Several member jurisdictions of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission have adopted continuity of government ordinances pursuant to Va. Code Ann. § 15.2-1413 which ordinances, among other provisions, authorize regional bodies of which the locality is a member may meet electronically to transact business essential to the continuity of government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby finds that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the nature of the declared emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for the Commission to assemble in a single location on October 1, 2020, to discuss and transact the business of the Commission listed on the October 1, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC that hereby finds that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the October 1, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Commission and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC hereby finds that the items on the October 1, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda are encompassed within the continuity of operations ordinances adopted by several member localities of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as essential to the continued operation of the government during the disaster posed by the public health emergency resulting from COVID-19.

Approved this 1st day of October 2020.

Katie Cristol
Chair

Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer

MINUTES
NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – SEPTEMBER 3, 2020
Via Electronic Participation
Public Streaming via YouTube

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Chair Cristol at 7:01 P.M.

Members Present via Electronic Participation

Canek Aguirre
Walter Alcorn
John J. Bell
Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
Katie Cristol
Matt de Ferranti
Adam Ebbin
Eileen Filler-Corn
John Foust
Paul Krizek
Matt Letourneau
Jeff McKay
David Meyer
Jennifer Mitchell (Alternate, Commonwealth of Virginia)
Dalia Palchik
David Reid
Paul Smedberg
David Snyder
Richard Sullivan
Michael Turner
James Walkinshaw

Members Not Present

Libby Garvey

Staff Present via Electronic Participation

Kate Mattice, Executive Director	
Matt Cheng	
Andrew D’huyvetter	
Matt Friedman	
Allan Fye	
Rhonda Gilchrest	Aimee Perron Seibert
Scott Kalkwarf	Steve MacIsaac
Zachary Smith	Rich Dalton (VRE)
Melissa Walker	Greg Potts (WMATA)

Opening Remarks

Chair Cristol welcomed everyone to the September 3 NVTC meeting. She explained that given the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, this meeting is being conducted electronically. This is possible because the governor signed into law on April 22, 2020 a legislative amendment to the budget bill to allow public bodies to meet electronically without a physical quorum present to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of that public body. NVTC staff followed the procedures and guidelines in the legislation to give notice to the Commission, staff and the public.

Chair Cristol reviewed the procedures and instructions for the electronic meeting. All votes will be conducted by the commission secretary using a roll call vote. The only visual component of the meeting is the presentation slides which are being shown on Webex for Commissioners and on YouTube livestream for the public.

Commission Secretary Rhonda Gilchrest then called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

Tribute to Founding NVTC Commissioner Joseph Alexander

Chair Cristol announced that a NVTC founding member, Joseph Alexander, passed away at the age of 90 on August 30, 2020 at his home in Franconia. Mr. Alexander served on NVTC from its inception in 1964 until 1995, serving as chair for a three-year period from 1970 thru 1972. He served as the Lee District Supervisor on the Fairfax County Board for 32 years and he represented Fairfax County on NVTC for 31 of those years. He also represented NVTC on the WMATA Board of Directors for over 20 years, from 1971 – 1995, serving as chair four times. Furthermore, he was a founding member of the VRE Operations Board and served from 1988 -1995. VRE named one of its locomotives after him, honoring him for his service to VRE.

Chair Cristol stated that throughout his long tenure on NVTC Mr. Alexander was instrumental in helping establish the Metro system and the Franconia/Springfield Transportation Center, the VRE commuter rail system, and many other transit related projects. Even after he retired from political service in 1995, he continued to be a voice for transit as he transitioned to the role of a transportation consultant. He also continued to be active in the Virginia Transit Association (VTA) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). Joe Alexander truly was passionate about transit. As a life-long friend and supporter of NVTC, he would still attend many NVTC's events, including last year's December Legislative Briefing. Chair Cristol stated that he left a lasting impression on the region, the Commission, and members of NVTC and she hopes his legacy inspires the next generation.

Mr. McKay stated that Joe Alexander was a truly remarkable person and transformative character in Fairfax County, where he served on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for 32 years. Joe Alexander loved transit, which was reflected in all his work on WMATA, VRE and NVTC. He was very involved in APTA and he was known throughout the United States for his passion and advocacy for transit. Mr. McKay announced that the Fairfax County government ordered flags be flown at half-staff today in honor of Joe Alexander. Mr. McKay stated that Joe was a friend and

mentor, who was so proud of what Northern Virginia has done for transit. Mr. McKay thanked NVTC for its recognition of Joe Alexander's the impact on the Commission, as well as the flowers at the funeral service.

Changes to the Agenda

Chair Cristol thanked NVTC Commissioners who serve in the General Assembly for participating in this meeting as the General Assembly is currently in Special Session. She explained that since there is a caucus meeting at 8:00 p.m. and some of them will need to leave the meeting early, she suggested moving *Agenda Item #6 Legislative Update* to right after *Agenda Item #2 Electronic Meeting*, which will allow legislators to participate in updating the Commission on the Special Session. There were no objections.

Chair Cristol also stated that WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld had planned to attend this meeting to brief the Commission on WMATA Issues, but he unfortunately was pulled away and cannot participate. He plans to be at NVTC's October 1 meeting. She noted that the Commission will still hear from the WMATA Board members during their report.

Electronic Meeting

Ms. Mattice reviewed Resolution #2417 "Finding Need to Conduct the September 3, 2020 Meeting Electronically" and noted that it is identical to the resolution passed last month except the date of the meeting. She explained that this resolution confirms that the declared emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for NVTC to assemble in a single location on September 3, 2020, to discuss and transact the business of the Commission. Furthermore, the resolution states that the items on the September 3 Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Commission and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Ms. Mattice also explained that according to the legislation signed by Governor Northam in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, a public body convening a meeting during the declared emergency shall provide the public an opportunity to comment. Therefore, in advance of the September 3 meeting, NVTC solicited written comments through its social media and press releases. Comments received by 3:00 p.m. on September 3 were provided to Commissioners ahead of the meeting. Ms. Mattice noted that NVTC received one comment regarding the WMATA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Report on the Silver Line Phase 2 concrete panel issue.

Mr. Sullivan moved, with a second by Mr. Reid, to approve Resolution #2417 (copy attached). The vote was conducted by a roll call vote and the motion passed. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Alcorn, Bell, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, de Ferranti, Filler-Corn, Foust, Krizek, Letourneau, McKay, Meyer, Palchik, Reid, Smedberg, Snyder, Sullivan, Turner and Walkinshaw.

Legislative Update

General Assembly Update. Chair Cristol asked Speaker of the House Eileen Filler-Corn to give her insights on the Special Session, followed by any other legislator who wishes to comment.

Speaker of the House Filler-Corn stated that the General Assembly Special Session began August 18 and is focusing on legislation to address the most pressing challenges the Commonwealth faces today. The House is meeting virtually, with public participation also virtual. They have had robust public participation.

Ms. Filler-Corn stated that when the General Assembly adjourned in March, there was an excitement that they passed a fiscally sound budget, which would have strengthened Virginia's economy, made historic investments in transportation, and maintained a triple AAA bond rating. She was very proud to help carry Governor Northam's omnibus transportation bill, which made historic investments in transportation. The new fiscal reality is very different now and no one could have predicted the impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Ms. Filler-Corn stated that the Commonwealth needs to take a temporary budgetary timeout and pause on new spending in the budget and reexamine how best to reallocate the Commonwealth's resources. The General Assembly is working quickly to aid businesses, individuals and agencies hardest hit by the pandemic. She reviewed some of the budget revisions to address COVID-19 related assistance, criminal justice reform and police reform. She stated that it is a transformative package of legislation and goes to the heart of the inequities that have so long plagued the system in the Commonwealth. She noted that this Special Session is just the start of reform.

Delegate Krizek, who is a member of the House Appropriations Committee, stated that the committee has been working hard to unfreeze funding or find new sources of funding for these important initiatives that were just outlined by Speaker Filler-Corn. He stated that of interest to NVTC is the budget language sponsored by Delegate Sullivan to change the requirements of the joint annual meeting NVTC is required to hold along with VRE, CTB and NVT. He stated that he sees no concern that it won't pass, but that is predicated on the House reaching agreement on the budget with the Senate.

Senator Bell stated that the Senate is making progress to make sure Virginia is safe and can protect Virginians from COVID-19, as well as racial and social injustice. He is confident that, at the end of the day, the House and Senate will come to agreement on the budget. One of the key themes for him during this Special Session is that the General Assembly do no harm. It is important to not do things that will cause new hardship or expense. He is proud of the legislation to protect renters from evictions during the pandemic. Mr. Bell stated that the Senate is meeting in Richmond, although their meetings are virtual. All public testimony is live via virtual means to provide transparency and interaction.

Ms. Seibert provided additional information about Delegate Sullivan's amendment to address the annual joint meeting, which is required for NVTC, VRE, CTB and NVT. This amendment would provide a way for these organizations to not be in violation of the statute. She also noted that NVTC was also monitoring a bill sponsored by Senator Locke changing rules for the Landlord

Tenant Act for people who have their primary residence in hotels, which has implications on the transient occupancy tax used to fund the state's dedicated capital funding to WMATA. That bill has been passed by to be considered in the 2021 General Assembly Session.

Ms. Mitchell gave a brief overview of a proposed budget amendment to allow DRPT to reallocate funding between the statewide transit capital program and the new transit ridership incentive program to provide flexibility to meet its obligations to NVTC for WMATA, as well as other state transit operators. Based on initial calculations, if DRPT does not get this flexibility it could be a \$25 million loss to NVTC for its support of WMATA. Ms. Mitchell also noted that there is a budget amendment to clarify and give DRPT authority to act on behalf of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority until the Authority has been established and fully mobilized.

Federal Update. Ms. Mattice reported that Congress recessed for the traditional August break without securing a new COVID-19 relief package. Although the House voted on an emergency measure for the Postal Service on August 22, members are otherwise back in their districts and negotiations between the parties on pandemic legislation are at a standstill. The Senate declined to include additional emergency funding for transit in its most recent \$1 trillion COVID-19 relief bill in response to the House of Representative's HEROES Act passed in May. However, APTA is continuing to press for federal funding and estimates that the public transportation industry will need at least \$32 billion in the next round of emergency funding. Federal lawmakers will return to Capitol Hill on September 14, but there is no indication of when talks would resume on the next COVID-19 relief package.

Annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing. Ms. Mattice announced that the annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing is scheduled for Monday morning, December 7. The event will provide an overview of federal and state issues affecting transit in Northern Virginia. NVTC has invited Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine to participate as the keynote speaker. It has been decided that this year the event will be via a virtual format.

Minutes of the July 3, 2020 NVTC Commission Meeting

Mr. Krizek moved, with a second by Mr. Reid, to approve the minutes of the July 3, 2020 meeting. The vote was conducted by a roll call vote and the motion passed. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Alcorn, Bell, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, de Ferranti, Filler-Corn, Foust, Krizek, Letourneau, McKay, Meyer, Palchik, Reid, Sullivan, Turner and Walkinshaw. (Mr. Smedberg and Mr. Snyder did not participate in the vote.)

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Chair Cristol reminded the Commission that WMATA General Manager Wiedefeld will be at the October meeting. She asked WMATA Board members Smedberg and Letourneau to give the WMATA COVID-19 Report and the Virginia WMATA Board Member Report, which will be followed by the other WMATA reports.

Mr. Ebbin joined the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

COVID-19 Update and Report from Virginia WMATA Board Members. Mr. Letourneau stated that since Mr. Smedberg was having power issues due to the storm, he would start the update and Mr. Smedberg can join the conversation if he can reconnect. *[Mr. Smedberg was not able to reconnect and did not participate in the rest of the meeting. Ms. Mitchell voted as his alternate for the remainder of the votes.]*

Mr. Letourneau stated that in August WMATA moved to the “managed re-entry” phase of its recovery plan and restored most rail and bus service to pre-COVID levels. On August 16, Metrorail returned to regular opening times, closing at 11 p.m. each night, and is providing near-normal peak and off-peak service. On August 23, WMATA restored Metrobus service to 75% of pre-pandemic levels on weekdays, 85% on Saturdays, and 90% on Sundays.

Mr. Letourneau stated that he plans to update the Commission in broad terms regarding the financial condition of WMATA, but first he would like to explain why WMATA has gone back to this level of service given the financial difficulties. He explained that under the CARES Act, WMATA could not make any labor changes when service was reduced, although WMATA had to continue to pay all those idle employees. Although the costs are higher to run a high level of service, most of those costs (80%) of those costs are labor related. WMATA is not expending a great deal more to run this additional service.

Mr. Letourneau stated that regarding the budget, the CARES Act funding will run out by the end of this year. Without major budget changes or federal funds, WMATA will have difficulties running the Metro system and make payroll. So, the WMATA Board is working through some serious budget implications. The Board is well aware that the jurisdictions are also facing financial difficulties and recognize they aren’t in a position to provide additional funding. The only way to address the budget is to reduce service and costs. The WMATA Board meets on September 10 to discuss a public docket for reductions. The WMATA General Manager has discussed these implications with labor leaders and there is a mutual understanding of the situation. Although he can’t go into further detail, Mr. Letourneau stated that he did want to assure Commissioners that the WMATA Board is committed to provide as much communication as possible with the jurisdictions and NVTC as it goes through this process. He and Mr. Smedberg will also keep NVTC and jurisdictional staff as informed as possible.

Regarding other WMATA news, Mr. Letourneau stated that the WMATA Board had a very busy July, with a number of notable updates and actions. The WMATA Finance and Capital Committee received an update on WMATA’s sustainability initiatives. Most notable is that WMATA is entering into a lease agreement to begin installing new solar installations four Metrorail stations. The Safety and Operations Committee received an update on the collision near the Farragut West Station, where it was determined that human factors were the probable cause of the incident. The operator of the train involved in the collision was involved in multiple prior incidents, and the operator has since separated from WMATA. The WMATA Executive Committee received an update on WMATA’s Framework for Transit Equity. The purpose of the Transit Equity Framework is to advance equitable policies and practices that support WMATA’s mission. The framework outlines specific areas including policing, public participation, fares and service, sustainability, contracting and performance reporting that will be the focus of review and action plans.

Mr. Letourneau also announced that this year's Platform Improvement Project is on track to be completed by September 8 with the reopening of the Vienna and Dunn Loring Stations. Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station is also undergoing platform reconstruction through December 2020, but the station will remain open during construction.

Mr. Letourneau announced that this week WMATA launched a new mobile payment option for riders with an iPhone or Apple watch. Mobile payments are accepted anywhere SmarTrip is accepted today including Metrorail stations, Metrobus fareboxes, parking garage exits, and on all local bus systems. This has been something NVTC has been discussing for a few years.

Mr. Sullivan thanked Mr. Letourneau for his report and stated that the budget implications are sobering. He asked about ridership and if it has increased as people are beginning to return to work. Mr. Letourneau replied that there has been an incremental increase in Metrorail ridership and Metrobus didn't have the same drop off the way rail did, although WMATA is seeing a slight decline in Metrobus ridership, which could be caused by people losing their jobs. There has been an increase in people returning to work, but WMATA is not seeing the same increases in rail ridership.

Mr. Turner asked if these tough budget decisions will affect Silver Line Phase 2. Mr. Letourneau replied that he can't answer that right now, but for the construction project itself there should be no impact since it is a Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) project. Regarding the public comment NVTC received about the concrete panels, Mr. Letourneau stated that the WMATA Board is expected to hear more about the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) report next week. It is his understanding that the report is being finalized.

Mr. Bell asked if there are any updates on public awareness campaigns letting the public know that it is safe to return to transit. Mr. Letourneau stated that WMATA's plans should be available soon and he agreed rider confidence is a big issue. WMATA's campaign is expected to start in the fall. He has asked WMATA to share this information with NVTC Commissioners. Mr. Bell observed that it is important to share WMATA's method of sanitizing and daily cleaning routines so the public can be confident WMATA is doing everything it can to keep riders safe. He noted that if WMATA shares this information with NVTC Commissioners, they in turn can reach out to their constituents to provide this information. He stated that it is important to gain riders' confidence. Mr. Letourneau asked Mr. Potts to follow up with Commission on this issue.

Mr. Reid stated that he and other legislators won't be able to stay to hear the State of Transit presentation and discussion and asked if the presentation can be made available to Commissioners. Chair Cristol stated that the meeting is being recorded on NVTC's YouTube channel. Ms. Mattice offered to send the presentation slides to Commissioners and she also offered that staff is happy to answer any questions offline. The presentation is also available on NVTC's meeting webpage.

Commissioners Ebbin, Filler-Corn, Krizek, Reid and Sullivan left the meeting and did not return.

Mr. Snyder stated that face masks are a fundamental requirement and asked how WMATA is enforcing the requirement and what is the level of compliance from riders. He also asked if WMATA has the ability to increase bus service versus rail service. Mr. Letourneau stated that the WMATA Board is briefed regularly on mask compliance and there is a very high compliance rate. He also stated that WMATA has some ability to adjust individual bus routes and tailor service to need, but the challenge is that most of WMATA's revenue comes from rail and currently WMATA is not collecting bus fares.

Mr. de Ferranti asked if there has been any discussion of federal funding coming later in the year. He would hate to see decisions made that cannot be reversed. Mr. Letourneau stated that the WMATA Board has discussed this from a timing perspective, but it can take months to implement major service changes. WMATA continues to advocate for a federal funding COVID-19 package for transit, alongside other transit operators and advocates.

NVTC 3% Cap Working Group. Chair Cristol reminded Commissioners that this year NVTC was tasked by the General Assembly to convene a working group on the usefulness of the 3% cap on the growth in Virginia's operating subsidy payments to WMATA and whether any additional items should be excluded from the cap. Over the summer, the working group absorbed and considered a great deal of information regarding the impact of the cap. NVTC staff also met with regional stakeholders from WMATA, D.C. and Maryland to discuss how Virginia's cap impacts them and inform the working group of the cap's effect beyond Virginia.

Chair Cristol reported that on July 16 the NVTC WMATA Committee received an update on the working group's efforts and provided feedback for the report to the General Assembly. The 3% Working Group met on July 30 and agreed with the comments provided by the NVTC WMATA Committee earlier in July. The working group found that the cap is useful in managing the growth of Virginia's subsidy payments to WMATA. Because the cap is so new, the 3% Working Group recommends the following:

- No changes should be made to the existing 3% cap legislation at this time;
- No additional exclusions should be considered at this time;
- NVTC should work with DRPT to clarify existing state policy guidance regarding the current legislative exclusions to the cap; and
- NVTC should continue to explore potential modifications to Virginia's 3% cap legislation, with the scope and timing of such an effort to be determined by the Commission.

Chair Cristol stated that the 3% cap working group will meet next week to complete the report to the General Assembly. The report will then go to the WMATA Committee on September 17 for review before being presented to the Commission in October, followed by approval in November. The final report is due to the chairs of the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees by November 10. She thanked staff, especially Zach Smith, for being instrumental in this effort.

Report from the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee. NVTC WMATA Committee Chairman Aguirre reported that on July 16 the WMATA Committee met to discuss the 2020 update to the Annual Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA and received an

update on the 3% Cap Working Group. As mentioned by Chair Cristol, the WMATA Committee provided feedback to the 3% Cap Working Group to recommend no legislative changes to the cap in the report to the General Assembly. The WMATA Committee is scheduled to meet on September 17 and October 29.

State of Transit in Northern Virginia

Chair Cristol stated that the Executive Committee received a preview presentation on this topic at its meeting earlier in the evening. She asked Executive Director Kate Mattice and Director of Finance and Administration Scott Kalkwarf to brief the Commission on the State of Transit in Northern Virginia.

Ms. Mattice reviewed the current trends in commuter travel, as well as ridership perceptions and challenges. She stated that since there is no crystal ball, it is hard to predict what will happen with transit in the future, but staff looked at where transit is now in the midst of the COVID-19 public health emergency and what to expect as people return to work. She acknowledged Dan Goldfarb who did much of the modelling and analysis to pull all data together for this presentation.

Ms. Mattice observed that transit ridership was looking up last year but starting in March 2020 the region saw significant drops in ridership due to COVID-19. Stay at home orders affected ridership differently for the various transit systems. Metrorail and VRE ridership got hit the hardest, while local bus and Metrobus weren't impacted as severely. Transit provided essential service for the region's essential workers during the pandemic. She reported that over the past few weeks, all transit systems have begun to bring service back online, many returning to near-normal service.

Ms. Mattice stated that increased work-from-home will continue to affect the region's travel networks. Pre-COVID-19, regional telework was consistent at 10% of workers. In general, Virginians now working from home are in the 35-50% range. It is anticipated that this number will decline as more people head back to the office in September and October. She stated that the level of telework affects Northern Virginia roadways differently. As more people return to work, traffic will increase on the highway and collector roads. The arterials—typically the last link to the office – did not see much reduced traffic during the pandemic, so the change will not be as great as in-person work increases. This means for transit that as people start to go back to work, there will be a greater need for transit, especially Metrorail and VRE.

Ms. Mattice stated that the public's perceptions of safety on transit will continue to affect ridership. Early Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance cautioned against transit use, but it was found to be baseless if face masks and distancing were required. Cleaning protocols, spacing and ventilation appear to be rider's biggest concerns. She stated that marketing/communication efforts will be vital to improving rider confidence.

Mr. Kalkwarf gave an overview of the transit revenue outlook. He reviewed the transit revenue resources including revenue through NVTC and revenue direct to WMATA. He stated that effective FY 2021 the WMATA Capital Fund withholding is now fixed at \$22.2 million per year.

This is about an \$8 million increase in the tax withholding over the method in effect during FY 2019 and FY 2020. Also, effective FY 2021, the tax rate converted to \$0.076 per gallon (\$0.077 diesel), revenue neutral, but indexed. The tax generated in May and collected by NVTC in July is the first month with the increase in the WMATA capital fund withholding. The estimated FY 2021 gross and net gas tax collections, assuming the state-wide motor fuels projections can be applied to the regional tax. The impact to NVTC collections is a \$14 million decrease over FY2020.

Mr. Kalkwarf stated that NVTC receives capital and operating assistance from DRPT for the NVTC local systems, except for Loudoun County, and the jurisdictions shares of WMATA funding requirements. The state assistance is allocated among the jurisdictions by NVTC's Subsidy Allocation Model (SAM) formula and the allocated state assistance is held in trust at NVTC where it is available for the jurisdictions' transit needs. Each year DRPT releases a Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) which includes the current year funding. While the FY 2021 SYIP is delayed, the FY 2020 SYIP has been extended to provide primarily operating assistance for the first quarter based on FY 2020 funding levels, and subject to CTB approval, DRPT plans to provide similar assistance for the second quarter.

Mr. Kalkwarf reviewed other areas NVTC is monitoring, including the budget bill introduced at the Special Session of the General Assembly to provide additional flexibility in funding transportation programs. Regarding the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor program, under a 40-year agreement with the Commonwealth, NVTC receives revenue from the I-66 tolling facility to fund a program of projects to benefit the users of the corridor. Revenue is net of the costs of operating the facility. Under an amended agreement, effective FY 2021 NVTC is to receive a \$10 million escalating annual payment, subject to available toll revenue, and effective FY 2022 NVTC is to receive an additional \$5 million escalating concessionaire payment, for a total of \$15 million annually. Due to significantly lower toll revenue due to the pandemic, NVTC is anticipating much less (approximately \$1.8 million) in toll revenue for FY 2021. For the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 program, NVTC and PRTC receive an annual \$15 million concessionaire payment from Transurban, which is expected in the next few months.

Mr. de Ferranti stated that the majority of Metro costs are labor costs (80%), but there are still an additional 10-20% in costs. He asked if there comes a point when running the system is worth it if ridership remains very low. Ms. Mattice stated that a big challenge in changing service is that bus/rail operators and mechanics are very skilled and hard to recruit. So, transit systems would not want to reduce the workforce if service demand is expected to come back. There are also other factors involved. Mr. Letourneau stated that it is important to provide at least a minimum level of service for the people that rely on both rail and bus to get to work. His personal opinion is that he would like to see WMATA begin to collect fares Metrobus as soon as possible. Currently fares are not being collected as riders are required to board from the back. He stated that his reasoning is for revenue, but also it sends a message to the public that it is safe to ride transit again. The more normal the rider's experience is will reinforce that it is a safe thing to do.

Ms. Palchik stated that it seems things have changed since the July NVTC meeting when only essential workers were encouraged to use transit, and now the message seems to be that transit is ready to welcome back riders as the system is safe. She asked if there is a concerted push on messaging and incentives. Ms. Mattice stated that the jurisdictions are about to launch a "safe to come back to transit" push, which is geared for the post-Labor Day timeframe. The local transit

systems plan to focus in the fall on “we are safe” and NVTC will follow-up with its marketing campaign after that. She has not heard about incentives and that may be a budget issue, but it’s certainly important to keep talking about them.

Mr. Bell asked about WMATA’s monthly burn rate (revenues versus costs). Mr. Letourneau stated that he believes more information on this will be presented at the September 10 WMATA Board meeting, but the estimate is that WMATA is losing \$2 million each day.

Mr. Snyder agreed with Mr. Letourneau’s comment about restoring bus fares. He also stated WMATA needs to work with building management and public and private employers to make the case for transit. Chair Cristol suggested engaging the local chambers of commerce to help get the message out. Mr. Letourneau stated WMATA would welcome any help. He stated that even though the region has seen more people return to work, it is not seeing the same increase in transit usage. It may be a safety issue, but he doesn’t want to discount that traffic is a lot better and for some people driving may be an option. As traffic congestion increases, the equation may change.

NVTC Transit Resource Center

Ms. Mattice stated that in 2016 NVTC sought to identify a comprehensive transit planning and data analysis tool to assist local jurisdictions in studying transit service changes. Staff identified TBEST, which stands for Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulations Tool, as an appropriate modeling structure to help transit agencies develop their short-term scenario planning and assess Northern Virginia transit networks. She asked NVTC Program Analyst Matt Cheng, who runs NVTC’s TBEST program, to give his presentation.

Mr. Cheng gave his presentation showcasing one of NVTC’s analytical tools, a transit planning software called TBEST, that staff have been working on for the past couple of years. It was developed out of the need to have a more data driven approach to transit planning, and the need for some jurisdictions to understand and react to bus changes. TBEST was originally developed by the Florida Department of Transportation and Center for Urban Transportation Research to assist agencies with their transit development plans.

Mr. Cheng stated that TBEST combines parcel land use, employment and census data to build a database of socioeconomic information that enables forecast ridership at the bus stop level. Since 2016 NVTC staff have developed this unique database for all Northern Virginia jurisdictions, as well as integrated Fairfax Connector, ART, DASH, CUE and WMATA transit systems into the model. This integration in TBEST has allowed NVTC staff to provide technical support for several key studies for Northern Virginia systems including, ridership forecasting for the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan, as well as ridership and accessibility analysis for upcoming Fairfax Connector area studies in Franconia-Springfield, Silver Line Phase II and Centreville-Vienna.

Mr. Cheng reviewed the three “pillars” of outputs of transit performance data that TBEST provides:

- Ridership estimation and stop level demand projection – how many people are boarding transit and the stop to system level.
- Socioeconomic and land use market analysis – what areas are transit routes covering, what are the demographics of riders near transit stops.
- Rider travel time or network accessibility – how much population, employment and other areas are accessible from certain origins and destinations using the transit network.

Mr. Cheng stated that a possible strategy moving forward could be for NVTC to provide local decision makers with more consistent, regionally focused data to help assist in anything from COVID-19 transit recovery or future sustainable planning. The main feature of TBEST is that it can calculate future ridership for every stop for every route in a system using land use and demographic data. Mr. Cheng reviewed several different scenarios of how TBEST data can be used, including predicting amounts of boardings for bus stops; creating forecasts for more broad changes on a scenario level (service frequency changes, changing route shapes, stop locations or even socio economic conditions); and determining the effect of adding a large amount of office workers to a specific area of Northern Virginia and how it impacts transit ridership. TBEST integrates all census and regional employment data including Title VI, commercial, service and industrial employment, language attributes, education level, and other household information to help planners understand the exact coverages of their transit routes.

Mr. Cheng stated that NVTC staff need to keep the model and land use fairly up to date in order to capture accurate results, and staff is gearing up for some major socioeconomic updates including the release of the census 2020 information, which will really help staff further analyze the trends of growth and travel in this region.

Mr. Cheng concluded by stating that NVTC staff continue to assist local, regional and state partners with TBEST technical assistance. There has been some interest from the jurisdictions in supporting some of our transit agencies in their own use of TBEST and DRPT has been a major proponent of it statewide. It could be helpful tool in transit recovery after COVID-19 and moving forward with a more data driven, sustainable approach.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Chair Cristol thanked Mr. Cheng for his presentation and suggested Commissioners contact staff directly if they have questions.

Commuter Choice Program

Ms. Mattice stated that Commuter Choice Senior Program Manager Ben Owen and his team were hard at work over the summer working on both the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor program and the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor program. She asked him to provide an update and outline the actions that are coming to the Commission in the fall.

Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Update. Mr. Owen stated that he and his team have charted a path for moving ahead with the Commuter Choice I-66 Round Four program, which was reviewed by Program Advisory Committee (PAC) members over the past several weeks. Of the 14 eligible projects, 11 are still under consideration for funding with a total funding

request of \$17 million. Three applications have been deferred by their applicants until the next round of funding and two applicants decreased their funding amount request. Because of the COVID-19 public health emergency, NVTC is allowing a one-time flexibility for existing programs to continue until their Commuter Choice funds are spent down. Usually the program is for a set 24-month period and if funds are left over, there would be a three-month grace extension. This one-time flexibility is because many systems were suspended or operated at reduced service levels.

Mr. Owen stated that in January 2020 it was anticipated that NVTC would receive approximately \$25 million over the two-year Commuter Choice I-66 Round Four program. The COVID-19 public health emergency that began in March caused a steep and enduring decline in the I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues that fund the Commuter Choice program. In the spring of 2020, monthly toll revenues dropped to approximately 10% of VDOT budgeted level.

Mr. Owen stated that combined with carryover and interest funding, NVTC staff propose an initial Round Four program selection of approximately \$4 million. As VDOT's FY 2021 revenues are based upon projections through next June, NVTC staff are proposing that the program expect no more than \$1.8 million in new FY 2021 toll revenues (50% of projected) for the Commuter Choice program plus an additional \$2.2 million from recoveries, carryover of previous balances and interest payments. While this is a conservative approach, any additional new revenues beyond the \$1.8 million in FY 2021 would still be available to NVTC for a second Supplemental Round Four program next year. Furthermore, NVTC would also anticipate the use of existing carryover revenues to program oversight and administration consistent with the approved FY 2021 NVTC General and Administrative Budget. NVTC would not solicit new proposals for the Supplemental Round Four program and would pull from the pool of projects unfunded in the Initial Round Four program.

Mr. Owen stated that based upon the very limited available revenues and the uncertainty of when travel volumes will increase in the I-66 Inside the Beltway corridor, NVTC staff have identified six projects for an initial funding program for Round Four. These projects provide the highest confidence for performance and/or support the return to travel patterns in the future, specifically continued operating funding for three existing Commuter Choice transit routes as well as three lower cost capital projects that would be underway quickly and support longer-term ridership growth. The staff proposed projects for the initial Round Four (FY 2021) funding include:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Application Title</u>	<u>Application Score (100 Points)</u>	<u>Funding Request</u>
Fairfax County	McLean Metro Station North Entrance	85	\$1,000,000
OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard	80	\$461,100
OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn	71	\$137,100
City of Fairfax	City of Fairfax Bike Share Implementation	59	\$460,000
Arlington County	Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn	57	\$710,000
Loudoun County	Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service	52	<u>\$709,030</u>
TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST			\$3,477,230

The remaining projects include new transit services, transit demand management efforts, and larger capital projects, would continue to be eligible for funding consideration in a Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) program of projects at the discretion of the Commission, pending available toll revenues.

Mr. Owen stated that NVTC's Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet on September 17 to make a recommendation on the proposed Round Four Program of Projects for Commission action at the October meeting. Staff are also working with the Commonwealth to identify a timeframe for briefing and seeking approval from the Commonwealth Transportation Board on the projects under consideration for funding. The current timeframe for the workshop briefing and approval is October and December, respectively. Public comment on the projects under consideration for funding is open from September 1 through September 21. A virtual town hall meeting will take place at noon on Friday, September 11, for members of the public to learn more about the proposed projects. Staff will share the comments with the PAC and the Commission prior to or in conjunction with any approval action on a Program of Projects.

Mr. Snyder stated that the City of Falls Church's application (Restoration of Peak-Period Metrobus Route 28X, Tysons Corner to Mark Center) scored very well but has been bumped to the next round of funding. Based on staff's comments, he observed that the Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) program is conditional on funding. He expressed his strong reservations and concern about this proposal since it was his understanding that the project would be funded. Chair Cristol asked staff to connect with Mr. Snyder and the city's transit staff to discuss his concerns. Mr. Snyder stated that the projects is a corridor project and would serve essential workers and not just the city.

Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Update. Mr. Owen stated that NVTC staff are preparing for the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two (FY 2022-2023) call for projects this fall. Staff are currently working with NVTC's Commonwealth partners to understand the potential impacts of COVID-19 on available revenue for the program. Working thru DRPT to try to understand the likelihood of full payment from Transurban given the COVID-19 public health emergency, NVTC should have a better idea of this year's payment around the time that the call for projects would open in November, given that the annual payment is due around the anniversary of the 395 Express Lanes' opening in November. However, staff plan to advance the call for projects regardless, providing as much continuity as possible for transit services and other operations projects that successfully recompile for funding. Staff have also begun to engage with the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), which has joint approval authority with NVTC over the I-395/95 corridor program, and recently briefed members of the NVTC-PRTC Joint Commission Working Group (JCWG) on the upcoming call for projects.

Mr. Owen stated that as part of the approval action to open the call for projects in November, staff will seek the Commissions' approval of a set of proposed policy changes to the Commuter Choice program:

- A framework for supporting larger capital projects within the structure of Commuter Choice that would manage the risk associated with more complex projects and, for ease of programming, introduce Commuter Choice funding awards that span consecutive two-year programs.

- A minimum funding award for Commuter Choice projects commensurate with recipients' administrative responsibilities under the program.
- A framework for transportation demand management (TDM) projects that would ensure funds are targeted to toll payers and have directly measurable outcomes.
- A requirement for upfront executive- or Board/Council-level support documentation for proposed projects that would require the significant engagement of a third party, such as VDOT, WMATA or another jurisdiction, for successful implementation.

Both NVTC and PRTC will be asked to approve the technical evaluation process for the Round Two program. Staff intend to mirror the evaluation process used for the I-66 Round Four program with no substantive changes. At the time that the I-66 Round Four technical evaluation process was adopted, staff indicated an intent, supported by applicants and the PAC/Commission, to use this process in both corridors for at least five years.

DRPT Report

DRPT Director Mitchell announced that today the Record of Decision, which completes the environmental process for the Long Bridge project, has been signed. It took over four years to complete and represents a strong collaboration between the Commonwealth, D.C. Department of Transportation (DDOT), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), VRE, Amtrak and CSX. This is a huge milestone for the project and gives the ability to move forward with the preliminary engineering.

Ms. Mitchell stated that DRPT continues to work to mobilize the Virginia Rail Passenger Authority. Board appointments are expected to be announced in the next few weeks. She also corrected her July DRPT written report and noted that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) did meet in August with one agenda item (Hampton Roads Bridge tunnel). The next CTB meeting is scheduled for September 16-17, which will include action to extend transit operating assistance by one quarter and DRPT's recommendation regarding WMATA certification.

Virginia Railway Express

Chair Cristol stated that there are no VRE action items this month. She asked Mr. Dalton to give his report.

Mr. Dalton reported that VRE continues to operate at reduced service levels. VRE has seen daily ridership slowly increasing from 1,000 daily trips at the beginning of the July to approximately 1,200 daily trips by the end of August. On-time performance for the months of July and August were 94% and 90%, respectively. He reviewed the measures VRE is taking to address the COVID-19 public health emergency, which include enhanced measures to be ready to welcome back riders. He also noted that VRE continues to require masks and will provide them if a passenger does not have one. VRE is still seeing almost 100% compliance.

Mr. Dalton stated that in August he presented to the Operations Board an unaudited review of VRE's financial status for FY 2020. Before counting any federal or state funding related to pandemic assistance, VRE's preliminary net operating budget was \$900,000. This was possible because VRE was in a strong financial position in February before COVID-10 hit, as well as being about to realize reduced expenses as a result of lower service levels and management-directed deferred discretionary spending. VRE staff continue to work remotely and business functions are fully operational. Mr. Dalton stated that VRE continues to scenario plan for various levels of ridership and funding for FY 2021. VRE continues to maintain prudent fiscal management. His focus continues to be on the health and safety of the riders, staff and contracted service providers, with an eye on life after COVID-19.

Mr. Dalton thanked Mr. de Ferranti for taking time to tour VRE operations and see VRE's enhancements to respond to the pandemic. Chair Cristol noted that VRE always has an open-ended invitation for Commissioners to take a VRE tour. Mr. de Ferranti thanked Mr. Dalton and his team for the tour.

Chair Cristol stated that there will be a Closed Session at the end of the meeting to discuss the appointment of a new VRE CEO.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Mattice encouraged Commissioners to read her Executive Director Newsletter. She observed that with the many presentations during this meeting, it is evident that staff has been busy over the summer. She thanked Commissioners for their engagement in the many committee meetings that have been scheduled. She reviewed the upcoming committee meetings and events:

- The Legislative and Policy Committee is scheduled to meet virtually on September 10 at 4:00 p.m. to begin working on strategy and substance for the 2020 NVTC Legislative and Policy Agenda.
- The Program Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet virtually on September 17 at 5:00 p.m., to discuss its recommendation to the Commission for the October meeting regarding the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Four Program of Projects.
- The WMATA Committee is scheduled to meet virtually on September 17 at 6:00 p.m. to focus on the annual Report of the Performance and Condition of WMATA and the 3% Cap Report. The WMATA Committee will then meet again on October 29 at 6:00 p.m.
- The annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing will be a virtual format on the morning of December 7.

Ms. Mattice noted that the Financial Reports for June 2020 and July 2020 were provided to Commissioners in their meeting materials. There were no questions from Commissioners.

Closed Session

Chair Cristol reviewed the Closed Session procedures for the benefit of the listening public. She stated that the livestream will resume when the committee returns to Open Session. Ms. Cristol moved, with a second by Mr. Meyer, the following motion to go into Closed Session:

Pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia), the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission moves to convene a Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter concerning the appointment of the Virginia Railway Express Chief Executive Officer.

The vote was conducted by a roll call vote and the motion passed. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Alcorn, Bell, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, de Ferranti, Foust, Letourneau, McKay, Meyer, Mitchell, Palchik, Snyder, Turner and Walkinshaw.

The Commission entered into Closed Session at 9:28 p.m. NVTC Legal Counsel Steve MacIsaac participated in the Closed Session. The Commission returned to Open Session at 9:46 p.m.

Chair Cristol moved, with a second by Ms. Bennett-Parker, the following certification:

The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge and with no individual member dissenting, at the just concluded Closed Session:

- 1) Only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed; and
- 2) Only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed or considered.

The vote was conducted by a roll call vote and the motion passed. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Alcorn, Bell, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, de Ferranti, Foust, Letourneau, Meyer, Mitchell, Palchik, Snyder, Turner and Walkinshaw. (Mr. McKay did not participate in the vote.)

Chair Cristol reported that following a thorough recruitment and selection process, the VRE Operations Board unanimously recommended that the Commissions (NVTC and PRTC) appoint Richard Dalton as VRE's Chief Executive Officer. Resolution #2418 would appoint Richard A. Dalton as the VRE Chief Executive Officer effective upon action by each of the Commissions and execution of the Employment Agreement by the Commissions and Mr. Dalton. The resolution also approves the Employment Agreement and authorizes the chair to execute it on behalf of the Commission.

Chair Cristol moved, with a second by Ms. Bennett-Parker, to approve Resolution #2418 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Alcorn, Bell, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, de Ferranti, Foust, Letourneau, McKay, Meyer, Palchik, Snyder, Turner and Walkinshaw. (Ms. Mitchell did not participate in the vote.)

Chair Cristol stated that PRTC is also voting on this appointment at its September 3 meeting. On behalf of the Operations Board and NVTC, she gave a hearty congratulations to Mr. Dalton. She appreciates his expertise, deep passion for VRE, his vision for the future, and commitment to partner with the two Commissions and the Operations Board.

Mr. Dalton thanked the Commission and appreciates the opportunity to lead VRE. He looks forward to working with the Commission and NVTC staff, as well as the PRTC Commission and staff, jurisdictional staff and other valued stakeholders to continue VRE's success. He thanked his wife, Beverly, and the rest of his family. He stated that the support received from family and friends is an integral part in the work done for the region and the community VRE serves. Chair Cristol also thanked his family as she knows first-hand the amount of time he devotes to VRE.

Adjournment

Without objection, Chair Cristol adjourned the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

Approved this 1st day of October 2020.

Katie Cristol
Chair

Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer



RESOLUTION #2417

SUBJECT: Finding Need to Conduct the September 3, 2020 Meeting Electronically

WHEREAS: On March 12, 2020, the Governor of Virginia declared a state of emergency in Virginia in response to the spread of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19, a communicable disease of public health threat as so declared by the State Health Commissioner on February 7, 2020 (“COVID-19”);

WHEREAS: In subsequent Executive Orders, particularly Executive Order Nos. 53 and 55, as amended, the Governor of Virginia, among other measures designed to ensure safe physical distancing between individuals, prohibited public and private in person gatherings of 10 or more individuals and ordered all individuals in Virginia to remain at their place of residence, with limited exceptions, to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 and prevent its spread;

WHEREAS: The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission finds that it has a responsibility to demonstrate to the public, through the Commission’s conduct, the importance of maintaining proper physical distance from others and to avoid gathering in public where the risks of infection are highest, and to take measures that promote physical distancing in order to protect the public health and mitigate the impacts and spread of COVID-19, including, among others, conducting meetings electronically whenever possible;

WHEREAS: On April 22, 2020, the Virginia General Assembly adopted, and the Governor signed, budget bill amendments to HB 29 that expressly authorize “any public body, including any state, local, [or] regional body” to “meet by electronic means without a quorum of the public body . . . physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency . . ., provided that (i) the nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the public body . . . to assemble in a single location; (ii) the purpose of the meeting is to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the public body . . . and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities” among other provisions; and

WHEREAS: Several member jurisdictions of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission have adopted continuity of government ordinances pursuant to Va. Code Ann. § 15.2-1413 which ordinances, among other provisions, authorize regional bodies of which the locality is a member may meet electronically to transact business essential to the continuity of government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby finds that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the nature of the declared emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for the Commission to assemble in a single location on September 3, 2020, to discuss and transact the business of the Commission listed on the September 3, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC that hereby finds that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the September 3, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Commission and the discharge of the Commission's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC hereby finds that the items on the September 3, 2020 Commission Meeting Agenda are encompassed within the continuity of operations ordinances adopted by several member localities of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as essential to the continued operation of the government during the disaster posed by the public health emergency resulting from COVID-19.

Approved this 3rd day of September 2020.



Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer



Katie Cristol
Chair



RESOLUTION #2418

SUBJECT: Appointment of VRE Chief Executive Officer

WHEREAS: The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission appointed Richard A. Dalton as the Acting Virginia Railway Express Chief Executive Officer ("VRE CEO"), effective 11:00 p.m. on November 14, 2019, when a vacancy arose in that position, and delegated to the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board responsibility to recruit and recommend to the Commissions candidates for appointment to the position;

WHEREAS: The Virginia Railway Express Operations Board established a nationwide VRE CEO recruitment and selection process utilizing the services of a recruitment contractor, and appointed a VRE CEO selection committee to manage the process;

WHEREAS: Fifty-four candidates submitted applications for the position, and three finalists were selected by the selection committee for interview; and

WHEREAS: Having concluded its recruitment and selection process, the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board recommends the appointment of Richard A. Dalton as the VRE CEO in accordance with the terms of the employment agreement agreed upon by the Operations Board and Mr. Dalton and presented to the Commission (the "Employment Agreement").

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby appoints Richard A. Dalton as the VRE Chief Executive Officer effective upon action by each of the Commissions and execution of the aforesaid Employment Agreement by the Commissions and Mr. Dalton.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby approves the Employment Agreement and authorizes the chair to execute it on behalf of the Commission.

Approved this 3rd day of September 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff McKay", is written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Cristol", is written over a horizontal line.

Katie Cristol
Chair

Agenda Item #4: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)



TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice, Andrew D’huyvetter and Zach Smith

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic setting forth a series of actions at the federal, state, and local levels to combat and contain the spread of the virus during this public health emergency. Since that time, NVTC jurisdictional transit agencies, including WMATA and VRE, have implemented substantial changes to transit operations, many of which are being updated daily. The information provided in these staff reports reflect decisions as of the publication date and are subject to change.

At the October meeting WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld will join the Commission to have a discussion on WMATA-related issues. The Commission will also receive reports from the chairs of NVTC’s 3% Cap Working Group and the NVTC WMATA Committee, as well as the Virginia WMATA Board members.

A. Presentation by WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld

WMATA General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld will join the Commission at its October meeting to discuss WMATA’s COVID-19 response, WMATA’s fiscal condition, and other items.

B. WMATA COVID-19 Response

On March 13 WMATA implemented Phase 3 of its Pandemic Flu Plan. Phase 3 is the highest level of response and includes all subsequent mitigation steps required during a public health emergency. WMATA expects to be at Phase 3 until further notice and has [developed a website for customers to stay up-to-date with the latest information](#).

On May 11 WMATA announced its service focused recovery plan. Below are planned service changes that will support changing demand for transit.

- WMATA announced it would [begin its managed re-entry phase of its recovery plan](#) in mid to late August.
 - On August 16 WMATA provided additional rail service and re-opened the Silver Line and West Falls Church Station. Rail service is approximately 90% of pre-COVID levels.

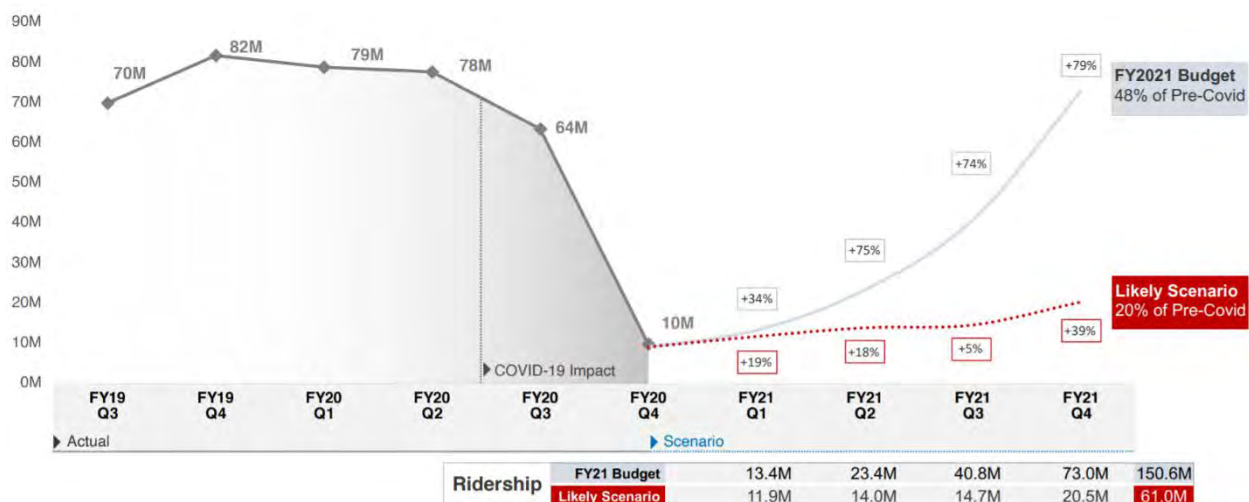
- On August 23 WMATA [re-opened the East Falls Church and Arlington Cemetery Stations](#). WMATA also provided additional Metrobus service, restoring approximately 75% of pre-COVID service. Metrobus remains free with rear door boarding.
- On September 8 WMATA completed its summer 2020 Platform Improvement Project reopening all 91 Metrorail stations for service.

C. Report from the Virginia WMATA Board Members

- Reinstatement of Metrobus Fare Collection and Authorization of Public Hearing for FY 2021 Budget Changes

On September 18 the WMATA Board [authorized a public hearing on a proposed six month change to the FY 2021 budget](#) as a result of impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As originally envisioned in May, the FY 2021 budget projected ridership would recover to 48% of pre-COVID-19 levels overall for the year. However, COVID-19 impacts on WMATA's FY2021 revenue and ridership are more severe than originally projected. Ridership recovery estimates are now projected to be 20% of pre-COVID-19 levels by the end of FY 2021 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: FY 2021 Operating Budget Scenarios



Source: [WMATA Finance and Capital Committee FY 2021 Budget Update and FY 2020 Budget Outlook](#)

The total operating budget gap is expected to be \$212 million by the end of FY 2021 (Figure 2). CARES Act funding is anticipated to be depleted by December 2020 or January 2021, and WMATA does not anticipate additional federal legislation to provide COVID-19 relief.

The operating budget gap is proposed to be resolved through management actions and WMATA Board actions. The WMATA GM/CEO is proposing nearly \$43 million of management actions to reduce FY 2021 expenses. Approximately \$139 million in cost savings would be generated from Metrobus and Metrorail service reductions and fare adjustments. In addition, restoring fare collection on Metrobus in January 2021 is projected to generate nearly \$5 million in fare revenue in FY 2021.

Figure 2: Actions Needed to Close Remaining FY 2021 Funding Gap

	Likely Scenario
Management Actions	(\$42.6)
Board Actions	(\$169.4)
Defer Capital Projects	(\$30.0)
Service Cuts/Adjustments	(\$139.4)
Total Savings Achieved	(\$212.0)

Source: [WMATA Finance and Capital Committee FY 2021 Budget Update and FY 2020 Budget Outlook](#)

Proposed FY 2021 Metrorail changes include:

- Standardizing 12-minute weekday peak and off-peak headways on the Blue, Orange, Green, Yellow and Silver Lines.
- Changing Red Line weekday headways to six minutes all day.
- Reducing the number of trains/operators by shortening trips where possible (i.e. “turnback” on Red and Yellow Lines).
- Closing at 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday (Retain 11:00 p.m. closing on Friday and Saturday evenings).
- Opening Silver Line Phase 2 on July 1, 2021.

[Proposed Metrobus service changes](#) include maintaining the current reduced August service plan, instead of adding more service later in FY 2021. WMATA staff also identified \$30 million of potential FY 2021 capital program deferrals that will not have an impact of safety or state of good repair efforts to further offset the budget gap.

The proposed changes to the FY 2021 budget will go through the public comment process in September and October. The WMATA Board is anticipated to approve the changes to the FY 2021 budget in November, so WMATA can begin to implement the service changes in December 2020. Fare collection on Metrobus is expected to resume in January 2021.

The effects of the pandemic are expected to continue to impact the region through FY 2022. Current ridership scenarios estimate that the system will recover 25% to 50% of pre-COVID-19 ridership levels by the end of FY 2022. The FY 2022 funding gap is expected to be larger than FY 2021 due to expense growth, loss of fare revenue, and no additional federal support. Further actions will be needed to balance the budget, considering a potential funding gap estimated between \$469 to \$658 million. Additionally, should the funding jurisdictions not fully fund the FY 2022 operating subsidy at its FY 2021 pre-credit funding level, the gap would further increase by \$135 million for a total gap ranging from \$604 million to \$793 million.

- Rail Operations Control Center Improvement Plan

On September 10 the Safety and Operations Committee [received an update on the Rail Operations Control Center \(ROCC\) Improvement Plan](#). The plan addresses the direction, vision, approach and current status of the plan to transform culture and performance in the ROCC. The plan includes short (by the end of CY 2020), medium (by the end of CY 2021) and long-term (end of CY 2022 and beyond) objectives tied to five areas of focus:

1. Leadership and Performance
2. Roles and Accountability
3. Process Culture
4. Talent Management
5. Training

The areas of focus combine all ROCC-related improvement efforts including Corrective Action Plans, culture change, and operational technical issues.

WMATA staff have implemented initial actions at the ROCC to address morale and performance. These actions include launching a national search for a director to lead the ROCC, responding to the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission's audit of the ROCC, and launching an organizational assessment to identify what the ROCC needs to change in order to improve.

The Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) also released a report on its audit of the ROCC, which is covered in "Section D. Other WMATA News" in this document.

- Public Hearing Report on Parking Changes at Grosvenor-Strathmore Station

On September 24 the WMATA Board [anticipates approving a public hearing report on parking changes at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Station](#). The Grosvenor-Strathmore Station site is under contract for a joint development, which is anticipated to require the removal of WMATA's surface commuter parking lot of approximately 408 spaces. WMATA is building a garage expansion of approximately 212 spaces to offset some of the surface parking spaces that will be removed. However, WMATA staff recommends deferring a decision to replace the remaining 196 surface parking spaces.

- Title VI Program Update

On September 24 the Board anticipates [approving an update to WMATA's Title VI Program](#). The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires WMATA to prepare and submit a Title VI Program update every three years. The 2020 Title VI Update reports on WMATA's activities from January 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020 and updates several program elements including demographic data, WMATA's Language Assistance Plan, the Public Participation Plan, Title VI service monitoring standards and Title VI complaints received and investigated since the previous update. In addition, WMATA's analysis found no significant difference in service provided to minority and low-income passengers versus other passengers during the reporting period.

- MTPD Community Engagement Update and Approval of Appointments to MTPD Investigations Review Panel

On September 24 the [WMATA Board is anticipated to receive a presentation on the Metro Transit Police Department \(MTPD\)](#) community policing and engagement efforts and approve appointments to the MTPD Investigations Review Panel. MTPD is implementing different initiatives to incorporate best practices in law enforcement and community outreach. The WMATA Board recently established the MTPD Investigations Review Panel to review and submit changes to the MTPD Chief of Police on policing and training to improve the integrity of investigations, transparency and thoroughness and fairness of the process. Additionally, the MTPD created the Internal Oversight and Youth Services Bureau (IOYSB) to oversee the MTPD's increased role with youth in the region and launched the #8CantWait campaign to highlight existing policies to improve community policing.

- Virtual SmarTrip Fee Waiver

On September 24 the WMATA Board is anticipated to authorize a six-month waiver of the \$2 fee for acquiring a new virtual SmarTrip card. The authorization would apply retroactively to September 1, 2020, the first day of the launch of the SmartTrip Mobile Payment. WMATA staff recommends waiving the fee to accelerate the utilization of mobile payment. The waiver of the virtual SmarTrip is expected to result in a loss of \$800,000 of revenue, which is anticipated to be off-set by an estimated \$4.4 million in cost savings from implementing a mobile payment system.

- Customer Outreach, Communications and Engagement

On September 24 the WMATA Executive Committee anticipates [receiving an update on WMATA's customer communication, outreach and engagement efforts](#). WMATA staff report a shift in how customers contact WMATA. Telephone contact is down while live chat engagements increased 180% over a three-year period. Ninety-two percent of customer inquiries are about trip planning, while complaints represent 8%. WMATA will continue to develop plans for person-to-person outreach to engage minority, low-income and non-English proficient populations.

- Agency Safety Plan Training

On September 24 the Safety and Operations Committee anticipates [receiving a training on WMATA's Agency Safety Plan](#). FTA requires public transportation agencies receive FTA funding to develop an agency safety plan that includes the processes and procedures to implement a safety management system. A safety management system is a comprehensive, collaborative approach to managing safety. It brings management and labor together to control risk better, detect and correct safety problems earlier, share and analyze safety data more effectively, and measure safety performance more precisely. WMATA's Agency Safety Plan is similar to the existing System Safety Program Plan that WMATA uses to manage safety. WMATA will seek Board approval for the Agency Safety Plan in October to comply with FTA's December 31, 2020 due date so submit the plan.

▪ Bus Transformation Project: Proposed Metrobus Service Guidelines

On September 24 the Executive Committee is anticipated to [receive an update on the recommendations and accomplishments from the Bus Transformation Project](#) and how those efforts advance WMATA's Framework for Transit Equity (Figure 3). Additionally, the Board will receive a briefing on the draft Metrobus service guidelines.

Figure 3: Bus Transformation Project Recommendations and Progress to Date

Frequent and Convenient Bus Service	
Recommendation	Progress to Date
Establish regional standards across bus systems:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Metrobus service guidelines for September 2020 Board discussions
Assess Metrobus' current service definitions and funding allocation formula:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under development
Leverage existing efforts to operate flexible on-demand services:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RideOn Flex completed one-year pilot
Bus Priority on Roadways	
Recommendation	Progress to Date
Support implementation of bus priority projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOT/WMATA Bus Priority partnership resulting in close coordination to expand TSP, queue jumps, camera enforcement, and bus priority lanes described above
Implement enforcement policies that support bus priority:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DDOT piloting stationary cameras for bus lanes
Customer Experience	
Recommendation	Progress to Date
Mobile fare payment launched September 1, 2020:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows convenient and contactless payment for customers
Integrate major bus routes and Metrorail system in regional transit map:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under development
Provide free transfers between bus and rail:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially included in FY2021 budget, but implementation on hold due to pandemic
Provide low-income fare product:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District pilot on hold due to pandemic
Develop pass products across all providers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated in FY2021 budget, but on hold due to pandemic
Improve safety for everyone on board:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented collision avoidance technology pilot on buses
Improve comfort and cleanliness:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased cleaning of vehicles to include daily vehicle sanitization
Test and evaluate zero emission buses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed Zero-Emissions Bus Update document and received \$4.2M grant to purchase new electric buses/equipment

Source: WMATA Executive Committee Framework for Transit Equity: Metrobus Service Guidelines

WMATA staff have also developed draft Metrobus service guidelines to enable clear decision-making when deciding where to add, adjust, or remove service. Metrobus's current guidelines were adopted in 2000 and are focused on crowding, productivity and cost effectiveness and do not reflect the customers' experience. WMATA's draft service guidelines and performance targets have been developed by proposed service classifications and tiers (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Metrobus Service Guidelines Proposed Service Classifications and Service Tiers



Source: [WMATA Executive Committee Framework for Transit Equity: Metrobus Service Guidelines](#)

WMATA staff is anticipated to engage jurisdictional staff and local bus providers on the proposed Metrobus Service Guidelines in the Fall of 2020. WMATA will seek Board approval on the guidelines in December 2020.

▪ Inspector General's Semiannual Report to the Board

On September 10 the WMATA Executive Committee [accepted the Inspector's General Semiannual Report](#). The report summarizes activities of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) from January 1 – June 30, 2020. During the reporting period, the OIG investigative work resulted in the recovery of \$174,054 in fraudulent payments to a WMATA employee. The audit work also resulted in one audit report and 33 contract audit reports with \$1.1 million in possible savings.

D. Other WMATA News

▪ WMATA Launches Mobile Fare Payment

On September 1 WMATA [launched a new mobile payment option](#) for riders with an iPhone or Apple Watch. Mobile payments are now accepted anywhere SmarTrip is used, including Metrorail stations, Metrobus, Metro-owned parking garages, and on all local bus systems with SmarTrip, including DASH, ART, Fairfax Connector, Cue, Circulator, Loudoun County Transit and OmniRide. Mobile payment provides an addition to the suite of ways to pay for transit, and all existing payment options continue to remain available.

Mobile payments provide riders with a "touch-free" payment experience, avoiding the need to touch card readers or vending machines. Instead, riders pay by holding their iPhone or Apple Watch device near the card reader on the fare gate or farebox (Figure 3). The new options are available in Apple Wallet and through the new SmarTrip app in the App Store. Customers can also use the app to purchase or add passes to SmarTrip without having to use a ticket vending machine, sales office, rail station, or retail store. The Android app for will be available in the coming months.

Figure 5: WMATA's Mobile Payment Options for iPhone and Apple Watch

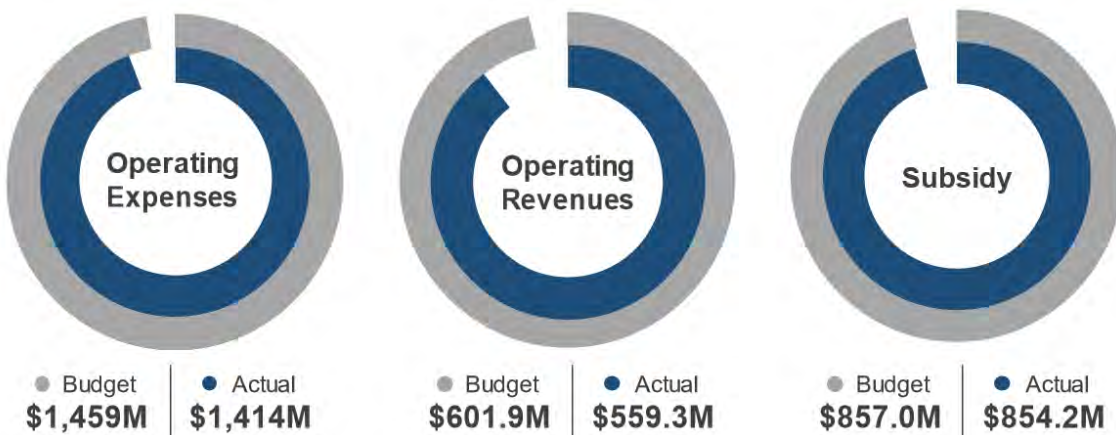


Source: WMATA

WMATA's successful launch of the SmarTrip app was supported by extensive feedback from NVTC's regional fare collection working group and represents a significant accomplishment of the [Northern Virginia Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan](#). NVTC staff, led by Patricia Happ, will continue to stay engaged with WMATA regarding ongoing improvements to the SmarTrip app and other fare collection initiatives.

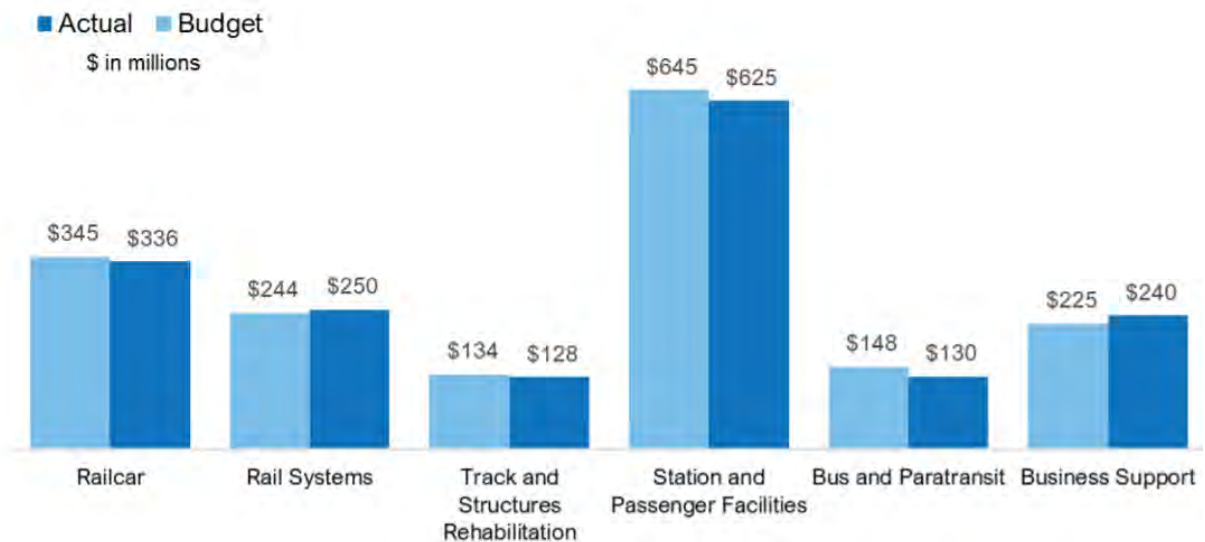
- FY 2020 Q4 Financial Report

WMATA [released its financial report through Q4 FY 2020](#). WMATA's operating expenses through the fourth quarter were \$1.927 billion or \$12.6 million less than budget. Operating revenues were \$580.8 million through the fourth quarter (excluding CARES Act), funding 30% of operating expenses. Including CARES Act, total revenue was \$801.7 million or \$12.6 million below budget. Revenue losses from COVID-19, impacting ridership and non-passenger revenue, were offset by CARES Act funding as well as savings from labor costs allocated to capital projects and from materials expenses. As a result, WMATA's net subsidy for the fiscal year was on budget at \$1.125 billion.

Figure 6: Year to Date Q4 FY 2020 Operating Results

Source: WMATA Q4 FY 2020 Financial Report

Through Q4 of FY 2020, WMATA invested \$1.709 billion in the Capital Improvement Program, 98% of the \$1.740 billion FY 2020 budget.

Figure 7: FY 2020 Year to Date Capital Budget vs Actual by Investment Category

Source: [WMATA Q4 FY 2020 Financial Report](#)

▪ Summer 2020 Platform Improvement Project

On September 8 WMATA [completed the summer 2020 Platform Improvement Project](#) with the reopening of the Vienna and Dunn Loring Stations. WMATA's Platform Improvement Project aims to rebuild 20 outdoor stations that have deteriorated due to routine wear and tear. The reopenings mark the end of summer station closures to reconstruct aging platforms at four Orange Line stations in Virginia and the first time all 91 rail stations have been open since the COVID-19 pandemic. The first six stations were completed in Summer 2019 (Braddock Rd, King St-Old Town, Eisenhower Ave, Huntington, Van Dorn St and Franconia-Springfield). Work to reconstruct Reagan National Airport Station began in early August and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Like the summer 2019 shutdown, NVTC's Matt Cheng led the region's mitigation

planning and coordination efforts to ensure riders had and were aware of transit alternatives and to facilitate information sharing between dozens of stakeholders.

▪ Washington Metrorail Safety Commission Report on the Rail Operations Control Center

The Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) [released a report on its audit of WMATA's Rail Operations Control Center \(ROCC\)](#). The ROCC is responsible for overseeing train movement on mainline tracks, track access, power restoration, communications and emergency response and provides a critical safety function for Metrorail service.

The WMSC audit report is based on extensive interviews with ROCC employees, discussions with Metrorail management, reviews of documents and other audit work performed between January 2020 – July 2020. In addition, the audit report focuses on all ROCC operations, rules, procedures and training, and related sections of the Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook. The WMSC identified 21 findings requiring corrective actions as part of this audit. New findings in the report indicate a toxic workplace culture in the ROCC and instances where staff attempted to manipulated safety event investigations. WMATA responded to a draft audit report sent by the WMSC and is required to propose corrective action plans for each finding no later than 45 days after the issue date of the report.

E. Report from the Chair of the 3% Cap Working Group

At the October meeting Chair Katie Cristol, who also serves as the chair of the 3% Cap Working Group, will brief the Commission on the draft [NVTC Working Group Report on Virginia's 3% Cap on the Growth in Operating Assistance Payments to WMATA](#).

On May 22 Governor Northam [signed the state's biennial budget](#) directing the chair of NVTC to convene a working group to review the impact of Virginia's 3% cap on the annual growth in operating subsidy payments to WMATA. After direction from the WMATA Committee in July, the working group met on September 9 to refine and complete the report to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. With only two years of WMATA budget development since the passage and implementation of the 3% cap, the Working Group recommends:

- No changes be made to the existing 3% cap legislation;
- No additional exclusions to the cap be considered at this time;
- No legislative changes be considered before the cap has been in place for five WMATA budget development cycles; and
- NVTC continue to evaluate the impact of Virginia's 3% cap legislation.

The Commission will be asked at the November meeting to authorize the NVTC Executive Director to send the report to the appropriate committee chairs in the General Assembly. NVTC staff will work with the chairs of Commission and the WMATA Committee on the timeline to present a more in-depth companion report on Virginia's 3% cap to the Commission.

F. Report from the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee

At the October meeting NVTC WMATA Committee Chair Canek Aguirre will give an update on committee activities during the last month. The WMATA Committee met on September 17 and reviewed the NVTC 3% Cap Working Group's report to the General Assembly and subsequently referred the report to the Commission. Mr. Smedberg and Mr. Letourneau also provided an update to the committee on WMATA's FY 2021 budget changes and the FY 2022 budget outlook. The next NVTC WMATA Committee meeting is scheduled for October 29 at 6:00 p.m.



Virginia's 3% Cap on the Growth in Operating Assistance Payments to WMATA

NVTC Staff Draft Report for NVTC Discussion (10/01/2020)

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Preface

This report is in response to Chapter 1289 Item 442.H1-2 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly that states:

- 1. The Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission shall convene a workgroup which includes the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, local government representatives, and private sector stakeholders to review the impact of the 3% cap on operating assistance in the approved WMATA budget pursuant to § 33.2-1526.1.J., Code of Virginia. The workgroup shall report to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees by November 10, 2020, on the usefulness of the cap and whether additional items should be excluded.*
- 2. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation shall provide staff support for the workgroup.*

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly imposed a 3% cap on growth on Virginia's annual operating subsidy to WMATA as a part of its commitment to a dedicated source of capital funding.¹ In any year where the annual increase in the approved WMATA budget exceeds 3% (apart from legislative exemptions), the legislation directs the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to withhold 35% of the funding allocated to NVTC as capital and operating assistance to help its local jurisdictions meet their financial obligations to WMATA from the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund.

This report focuses on the 3% cap on the growth of Virginia's share of overall annual WMATA operating assistance. The cities of Alexandria, Falls Church and Fairfax, and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun make their operating assistance payments to WMATA, which collectively make up Virginia's share.

The 3% cap does not apply to the local jurisdictions, meaning that each year any individual jurisdiction's operating subsidy may increase more or less than 3% compared to the previous year. This is due to fluctuations in the budget formula that are driven by the amount of service provided, changes to transit fares, and other financial factors.

Jurisdictional subsidy payments are made using a mix of local funds, regional gas tax revenues, and funding from the Commonwealth distributed through the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC). NVTC jurisdictions use a range of local funds, such as property tax revenues, general funds and local "30 percent" funding from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to support their WMATA subsidy payment. NVTC also holds in trust a portion of regional gas tax revenues generated within each jurisdiction that is dedicated for WMATA purposes. Furthermore, the Commonwealth of Virginia, through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), provides funds to the NVTC jurisdictions for a portion of their WMATA operating subsidy commitments.

¹ § 33.2-1526.1.K of the Code of Virginia

Executive Summary

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly imposed a 3% cap on growth on Virginia's annual operating subsidy to WMATA as a part of its commitment to a dedicated source of capital funding. In any year where the annual increase in the approved WMATA budget exceeds 3% (apart from legislative exemptions), the legislation directs the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to withhold 35% of the funding allocated to NVTC as capital and operating assistance to help its local jurisdictions meet their financial obligations to WMATA from the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund. In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly directed the formation of NVTC's 3% Cap Working Group to examine the 3% cap and assess its usefulness and whether additional exemptions to the cap should be considered.²

NVTC's 3% Cap Working Group found that Virginia's 3% cap appears to be a useful tool to manage the growth in Virginia's operating subsidy given its recent implementation. With only two years of WMATA budget development since the passage and implementation of the 3% cap, the Working Group recommends:

- No changes be made to the existing 3% cap legislation;
- No additional exclusions to the cap be considered at this time;
- No legislative changes be considered before the cap has been in place for five WMATA budget development cycles; and,
- NVTC continue to evaluate the impact of Virginia's 3% cap legislation.

The Working Group, made up of representatives from NVTC jurisdictions, private sector stakeholders and the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, found that the cap provides some predictability in subsidy growth and does appear to provide fiscal controls that help WMATA with cost containment.

The Working Group determined it is too soon to recommend changes to Virginia's 3% cap legislation since the cap has only been in place for two WMATA budget cycles. The Working Group further recommends no legislative changes be considered before WMATA has implemented the cap in five budget development cycles and that NVTC continue to evaluate the impact of the cap. The Working Group also did not identify any new exemptions, also referred to as exclusions, to the cap.

To support the Working Group's deliberations, NVTC staff solicited input on the impact of the cap from additional stakeholders in the region, including staff from the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia and WMATA.

NVTC staff also examined the historical jurisdictional operating subsidies to differentiate the actual drivers of Virginia's operating subsidy increases. Accordingly, this report presents the historical operating subsidies and other factors that impact year to year fluctuations in the overall operating subsidy.

² Ibid.

1. Introduction

In 2020, the General Assembly directed the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) to form a Working Group to review the impact of Virginia's legislatively-mandated 3% cap on the growth in operating assistance payments to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The General Assembly directed the Working Group to include the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, senior transportation officials representing NVTC jurisdictions and private sector stakeholders to be led by NVTC's Chair.³

In May 2020, NVTC convened the 3% Cap Working Group with members as follows:

Chair: Katie Cristol, NVTC Chair, Arlington County

Vice Chair: Kate Mattice, NVTC Executive Director

Commonwealth Representative: Jennifer Mitchell, DRPT Director

Senior-Level Transportation Officials:

- Yon Lambert, City of Alexandria
- Dennis Leach, Arlington County
- Tom Biesiadny, Fairfax County
- Wendy Block Sanford, City of Fairfax
- Cindy Mester, City of Falls Church
- Penny Newquist, Loudoun County

Private Sector Stakeholders:

- Clayton Medford, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce
- The Honorable Randy Minchew, former member of the Virginia House of Delegates
- Stewart Schwartz, Coalition for Smarter Growth
- Jason Stanford, Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance

The Working Group met three times between May and September 2020. NVTC staff interviewed members of the 3% Cap Working Group and Virginia's Principal WMATA Board Members as well as staff from the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia and WMATA to get their perspective of Virginia's 3% cap. In addition, NVTC staff conducted extensive research and analysis to inform the Working Group's meetings and discussion.

2. Enactment of Virginia's 3% Cap Legislation

As part of the WMATA dedicated capital funding legislation, the 2018 Virginia General Assembly imposed a 3% cap on growth on Virginia's annual operating subsidy to WMATA. In any year where the annual

³ 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly. Chapter 1289 Item 442.H1-2.

increase in the approved WMATA budget exceeds 3%, the legislation directs the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to withhold 35% of the funding allocated to NVTC as capital and operating assistance to help its local jurisdictions meet their financial obligations to WMATA from the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund.⁴

The legislation also excludes certain items when determining if the annual increase in the operating subsidy exceeds 3%. The legislative exclusions to the cap include:

- any service, equipment or facility that is required by any applicable law, rule or regulation;
- any major capital projects approved by the WMATA Board before or after the effective date of the CTB policy;
- any payment or obligation resulting from a legal dispute or proceeding; and,
- any service increases approved by the WMATA Board.⁵

Each year, the CTB must affirm annually via resolution that WMATA has met this and other requirements of the dedicated funding legislation.⁶ NVTC will also take part in DRPT's upcoming review of CTB policy guidance regarding the current legislative exclusions to the cap.

The State of Maryland also passed similar legislation in 2018 that imposed a 3% cap on growth on Maryland's annual operating subsidy to WMATA, with near-identical exclusions. As such, starting in fiscal year 2020, WMATA develops its annual operating budget to meet both state's 3% cap legislation.

3. Background on Operating Assistance Payments to WMATA

The General Assembly charged the Working Group with reviewing the impact of Virginia's 3% cap on the growth in operating assistance in the approved WMATA budget. To that end, the Working Group reviewed the historical jurisdictional operating subsidies, ridership trends, and WMATA's past and present contracts to evaluate the extent of their impact on Virginia's operating subsidy. This section presents the actual drivers of the historical operating subsidies and describes how WMATA has implemented the cap to meet the requirements of Virginia's 3% cap legislation.

Historical WMATA Operating Subsidy Trends

Day to day operation of WMATA is funded primarily through passenger fare revenue and the jurisdictional operating subsidy provided by the WMATA Compact signatories: Maryland, the District of Columbia and Virginia.⁷ In Virginia, NVTC jurisdictions, which include the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church and Fairfax, and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun, pay the subsidy.⁸ Loudoun County began contributing to WMATA's jurisdictional operating subsidy in FY 2021, as service on the Silver Line Phase 2 is budgeted

⁴ § 33.2-1526.1.K. of the Code of Virginia

⁵ Chapter 1133 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly has not been implemented by WMATA in a budget cycle. As such, the legislation's impact on Virginia's operating subsidy is unknown.

⁶ Commonwealth Transportation Board. "Approval of Policy and Guidelines for Implementation of Governance and Funding Reforms for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)." Pg. 5. September 18, 2018.
<<http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/resources/2018/sept/reso/3.pdf>>

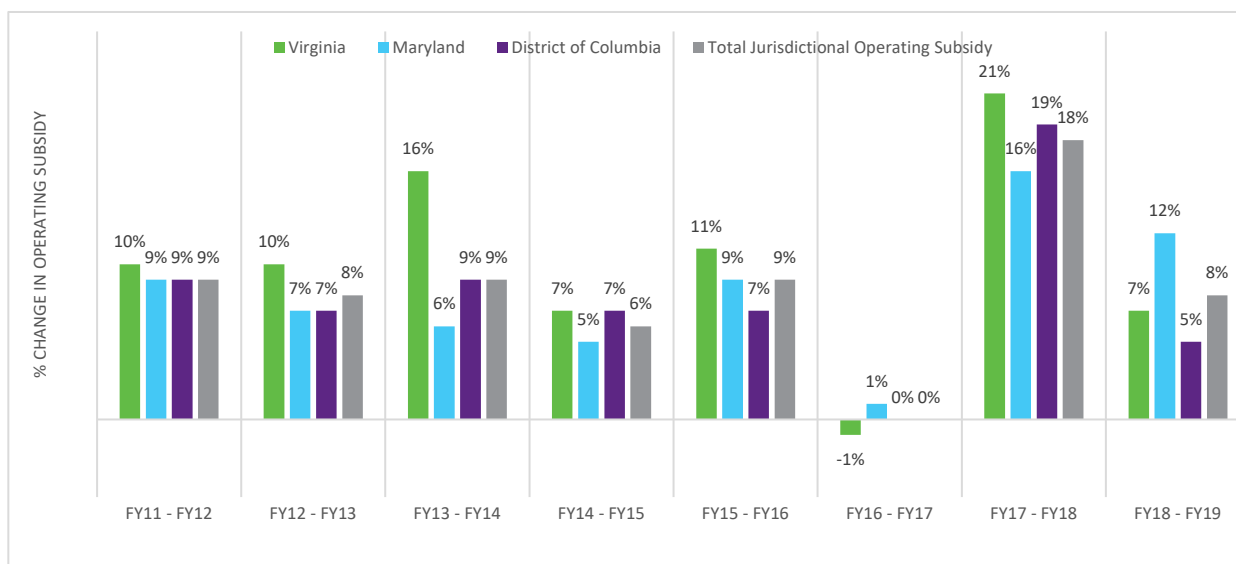
⁷ WMATA Compact. "Commitments for Financial Participation." Pg. 9. August 19, 2009.
<https://www.wmata.com/about/board/upload/Compact_Annotated_2009_final.pdf>

⁸ Ibid.

to commence that fiscal year. WMATA's operating costs are also funded to a lesser extent through additional non-fare revenue.⁹

Prior to the cap, WMATA calculated the historical jurisdictional operating subsidies using WMATA Board-approved subsidy allocation formulas based on inputs that represent a jurisdiction's request for and use of WMATA's three modes of transit service: Metrobus, Metrorail, and MetroAccess. As such, the total annual operating subsidy increases varied between 0% – 18%, and the annual operating subsidy increases in Virginia varied from -1% to 21% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Annual (%) Change in Jurisdictional Operating Subsidies Prior to the Legislative Cap (FY 2011 - FY 2019)



Source: FY 2011 – FY 2019 Approved WMATA Budgets and Board Approved Resolutions

Data from FY 2011 – FY 2018 indicate that the increase in the historical jurisdictional operating subsidy is primarily attributable to the increasing Metrorail operating subsidy, especially in Virginia with the opening of Silver Line Phase 1.

Notably, over the same time period Metrorail experienced extensive reliability issues, resulting in a ridership decline of nearly 20%, decrease in farebox revenue due to loss of ridership, the need to close portions of the rail system to address system reliability (i.e. SafeTrack) and a loss of transit ridership due to nationwide factors that are outside of WMATA's control (i.e. gas prices, telework, etc.), all of which necessitated jurisdictional operating subsidy increases.^{10 11} Declining Metrorail farebox recovery rates of nearly 15% due to declining ridership was the single largest factor in WMATA's total jurisdictional subsidy increases from FY 2011 – FY 2018.

Since wage and salary levels are a significant portion (approximately 70%) of WMATA's operating budget, the Working Group examined the average wage increases for Amalgamated Transit Union 689, WMATA's

⁹ Note: Other non-fare revenue include advertising revenues, revenues from joint development transactions and other cost-savings.

¹⁰ Federal Transit Administration. "National Transit Database Form S-10." <<https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/ntd-reporting-system-forms>>

¹¹ Note: SafeTrack is an accelerated track work plan to address safety recommendations and rehabilitate the Metrorail system to improve safety and reliability. <<https://wmata.com/service/SafeTrack.cfm>>

largest union.¹² While collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) cover a number of elements including work rules, pensions and health care coverage, wage increases represent a significant part the financial elements in the CBAs between WMATA and its union employees.

Data presented to the Working Group found the annual wage increases for union employees range from 0% to 4% per year in the multi-year CBAs over FY 2009 – FY 2024, demonstrating that the cap appears to be a helpful tool in WMATA’s negotiations with labor.¹³ Moreover, the 2017 report prepared by former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, *Review of Operating, Governance and Financial Conditions at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority*, examined WMATA’s hourly labor costs and found them to be relatively in line with peer transit agencies.¹⁴

WMATA’s Approach to Applying the Cap

Before WMATA implemented the 3% cap legislation during its budget development process, the jurisdictional operating subsidy bills were calculated using WMATA Board approved formulas based on each mode at WMATA: Metrobus, Metrorail and MetroAccess.¹⁵ The formulas are primarily of function of inputs that include ridership, population, number of stations, revenue hours, revenue miles, and ridership by jurisdiction residents.¹⁶ These formulas are generally referred to as the historic formulas and WMATA continues to include them in part of its new approach to budget development.

The implementation of Virginia’s 3% cap legislation prompted WMATA to re-examine its operating subsidy allocation methodology to comply with the legislation. In FY 2020, the WMATA Board approved a new methodology to apply the cap to the operating subsidy.¹⁷ This approach has yielded some unintended consequences, which NVTC and its component jurisdictions continue to explore.

4. Usefulness of Virginia’s 3% Cap

The Working Group evaluated the usefulness of the cap by examining how well the cap protected Virginia’s operating subsidy against significant increases during the last two WMATA budget cycles (FY 2020 and FY 2021). For both FY 2020 and FY 2021, Virginia’s base operating subsidy increased by 3% each year. Legislatively excluded subsidy growth assigned to Virginia represented an additional 1.0% increase in FY 2020 and an additional 9.3% increase in FY 2021 (Figure 2).^{18 19} The vast majority of FY 2021’s legislative exclusions were for additional operating costs, including startup costs, associated with the

¹² Keeping Metro Safe, Reliable and Affordable. “Comparing to Other Large Transit Agencies.” Pg. 82. January 2019.

<<https://wmata.com/initiatives/strategic-plans/upload/KMSRA-Strategic-Plan-Jan-2019.pdf>>

¹³ WMATA. “WMATA Board Resolutions 2011-41, 2013-18, 2019-48.” <https://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/washington-metropolitan-area-transit-authority_washington-dc/>

¹⁴ Former United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “Review of Operating, Governance and Financial Conditions at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority – 2017.” Pg. 4. December 27, 2017. <<https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2018/RD7>>

¹⁵ WMATA. “Approved Fiscal Year 2018 Budget – Appendix F.” Pg. 212. July 1, 2017.

<https://www.wmata.com/about/records/public_docs/upload/FY2018-Approved-Budget.pdf>

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ WMATA. “WMATA Board Resolution 2019-09.” Pg. 6. March 18, 2019. <<https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/10B-FY2020-Budget-Adoption-FINALIZED.pdf>>

¹⁸ WMATA. “Approval of Public Hearing Staff Report and adoption of FY2020 Operating Budget and FY2020-2025 CIP.” Pg. 24. March 14, 2019. <<https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/3B-FY2020-Budget-CIP-Approval-REV-03-12.pdf>>

¹⁹ WMATA. “Approval of the FY 2021 Budget and FY 2021 – 2026 CIP.” Pg. 4. April 2, 2020.

<<https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/3A-FY2021-Budget-Approval-TO-POST.pdf>>

Silver Line Phase 2 project. Though projects like Silver Line Phase 2 or the future Potomac Yard Metrorail station cause fluctuations in Virginia's operating subsidy, they greatly contribute to meeting the transit needs of Northern Virginians.

Figure 2: Change (%) in FY 2020 and FY 2021 Jurisdictional Operating Subsidies with Legislative Exclusions

FY20 Subsidy with Legislative Exclusions				FY21 Subsidy with Legislative Exclusions			
	Annual Subsidy Operating Growth	Federal Mandates/Litigation	% Change in FY20 Operating Subsidy	Annual Operating Subsidy Growth	Federal Mandates	Silver Line Phase 2	% Change in FY21 Operating Subsidy*
VA	3.0%	1.0%	4.0%	3.0%	0.5%	9.3%	12.8%
MD	3.0%	1.3%	4.3%	3.0%	1.2%	6.0%	10.2%
DC	3.0%	0.9%	3.9%	3.0%	0.5%	6.3%	9.8%
Total	3.0%	1.1%	4.1%	3.0%	0.8%	7.0%	10.8%

Notes:

FY 2020 Legislative Exclusions included \$4.7 million in ADA Paratransit Cost Increases (Federal Mandate), \$2.5 million in litigation (Legal Disputes) and \$4.1 million in Occupational, Safety and Health Costs (Federal Mandate). FY20 also included a \$1.2 million budget adjustment for the Fraternal Order of Police and a \$429,305 service reduction for the 2A Metrobus route.

FY 2021 Legislative Exclusions included \$1.1 million to comply with DOT safety and training requirements (Federal Mandate), \$7.6 million in paratransit cost increases (Federal Mandate) and \$78.4 million in operating costs for Silver Line Phase 2 (Capital Projects).

*Figure does not include subsidy credits from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

From this perspective, the Working Group considers Virginia's 3% cap a useful tool to manage the growth in Virginia's operating subsidy increases. Since the cap has only been in place for two WMATA budget cycles, **the Working Group recommends no legislative changes to Virginia's 3% cap on the growth in operating assistance payments to WMATA at this time.**

Impact of Virginia's 3% Cap on Additional Stakeholders

NVTC staff also sought perspectives on the impact of Virginia's 3% cap with staff representatives from the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland. Because WMATA is a regional entity, a cap on any jurisdiction's operating subsidy impacts the other jurisdictions' operating subsidy. Overall, Virginia's counterparts in Maryland and the District of Columbia indicated that Virginia's cap helps manage the growth in the total jurisdictional operating subsidy. They also individually indicated similar concerns regarding the unintended consequences of WMATA's application of the legislative cap, and a desire to have uniformity in legislative caps between Virginia and Maryland.

NVTC staff also discussed Virginia's 3% cap with WMATA's General Manager and senior leadership team who expressed that Virginia's cap adds some stability to WMATA's budget and forces WMATA to examine its spending. They understood the importance of complying with the legislative 3% cap but articulated the challenges of implementing two legislative caps in such a complex funding environment.

5. Additional Exclusions to Virginia's 3% Cap

The current legislative exclusions to Virginia's 3% cap include:

- any service, equipment or facility that is required by any applicable law, rule or regulation;
- any major capital projects approved by the WMATA Board before or after the effective date of the CTB policy;
- any payment or obligation resulting from a legal dispute or proceeding; and,
- any service increases approved by the WMATA Board.²⁰

The Working Group recommends no additional exclusions to the cap. The Working Group acknowledged the impact of the legislative exclusions on the ability to predict Virginia's annual operating subsidy, but the existing exclusions have not presented NVTC jurisdictions with major challenges in the past two budget cycles.

6. Working Group Recommendations

Because the cap has only been in place for two WMATA budget development cycles, NVTC's 3% Cap Working Group recommends:

- No changes be made to the existing 3% cap legislation;
- No additional exclusions to the cap be considered at this time;
- No legislative changes be considered before the cap has been in place for five WMATA budget development cycles; and,
- NVTC continue to evaluate the impact of Virginia's 3% cap legislation.

7. Conclusion

Virginia's 3% cap appears to be a useful tool to manage the growth in Virginia's annual operating assistance payments to WMATA. Since the cap has only been in place for two budget cycles, the Working Group agreed that it is too soon to recommend changes to the 3% cap legislation and no legislative changes be considered before the cap has been in place for five WMATA budget development cycles. While no changes to the existing 3% cap legislation should be made at this time, the Working Group recommends NVTC continue to evaluate the cap and continue ongoing engagement with WMATA to address the unintended consequences resulting from WMATA's approach to applying the cap.

²⁰ Chapter 1133 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly has not been implemented by WMATA in a budget cycle. As such, the legislation's impact on Virginia's operating subsidy is unknown.

Agenda Item #5: Commuter Choice Program



TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice, Ben Owen and Jae Watkins

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Commuter Choice Program

At the October meeting the Commission will be asked to take action to: 1) approve the submission of the Commuter Choice Program FY 2020 Annual Report to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB); and 2) approve and submit to the CTB for approval the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects and authorize the Executive Director to execute Standard Project Agreements for the selected projects. The Commission will also receive a briefing on the upcoming Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two (FY 2022-2023) call for projects.

A. Report from the Chair of the Program Advisory Committee

At the October meeting Program Advisory Committee Chair Dave Snyder will give an update on committee activity during the last month. On September 17 the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) met and unanimously endorsed staff's proposed Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects and recommends that the Commission approve this program on October 1. The program would invest the limited program revenues available in FY 2021 in six low-cost projects that would deliver robust benefits to I-66 toll payers and ensure continuity of NVTC's program administration and marketing activities.

The PAC strongly supports staff's intention to seek a supplemental programming action next spring by the Commission and CTB, when the full revenue picture for Round Four will be more apparent, including: actual toll revenue collected in FY 2021 and estimated revenue for FY 2022. A total of five new transit services, new commuter incentives and larger capital efforts submitted under the Round Four call for projects would be candidates for this funding. The PAC strongly supports the use of project technical scores for selection of this supplement program, subject to public comment and available funding.

Overall, the PAC agrees with the staff's programming approach and finds it prudent given the COVID-19 public health emergency's revenue uncertainty. The PAC shares staff's optimism for a more favorable revenue situation next spring.

B. Commuter Choice Program At Large

- **ACTION ITEM: Authorize the Executive Director to Submit the NVTC Commuter Choice Program FY 2020 Annual Report to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)**

At the October meeting the Commission will be asked to authorize the executive director to submit the NVTC Commuter Choice Program FY 2020 Annual Report to the CTB. **The proposed annual report will be provided at the October meeting as a Blue Item.** The FY 2020 report is the first to include a look-back on the performance of projects funded under the program since its inception in 2015, as required per the respective [I-395/95](#) and [I-66 Inside the Beltway](#) Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with the Commonwealth. It is also the first report to feature both a printed overview summary of the program and a more detailed website to accompany the report. The website feature allows NVTC to expand outreach and share Commuter Choice program news to more stakeholders without requiring in-person meetings or events.

Figure 1: Commuter Choice 2020 Annual Report Cover and Website Preview Page



Highlights of the report include:

- Since 2015, the Commuter Choice program has invested over \$60 million in 46 transit and multimodal improvements in the I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95 corridors. These investments fueled a 26% growth in commuter bus ridership and showed continued increases before the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- On the I-66 corridor, the Commuter Choice program funded 56 new bus trips each day that supported the ridership growth.
- Along these two commuting corridors, NVTC staff found that commuter bus and rail transit are complementary transit services to each other. The modes serve different markets and trip purposes, and both were enjoying ridership gains before the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Figure 2: Featured Program Highlights from the Commuter Choice 2020 Annual Report

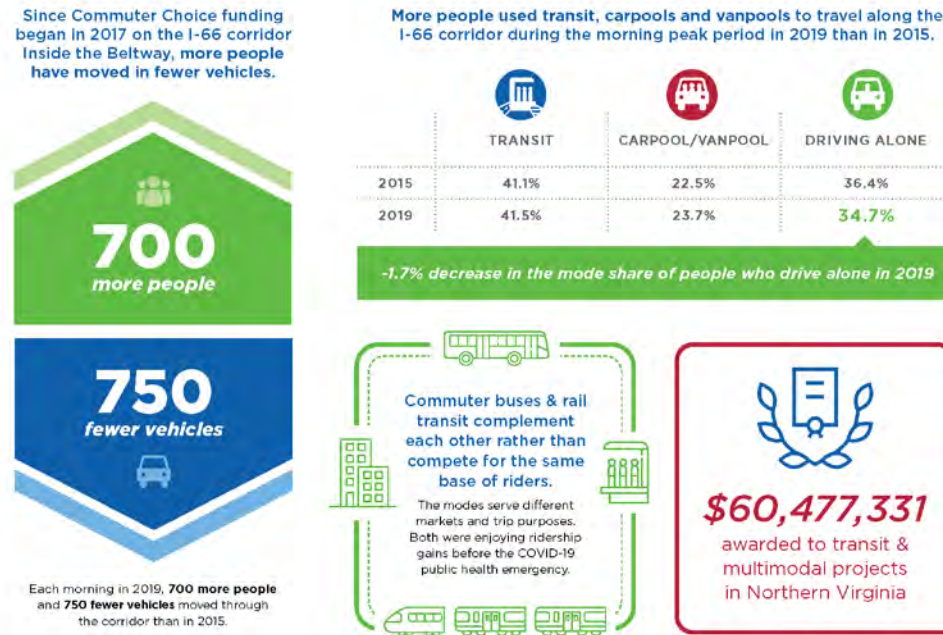
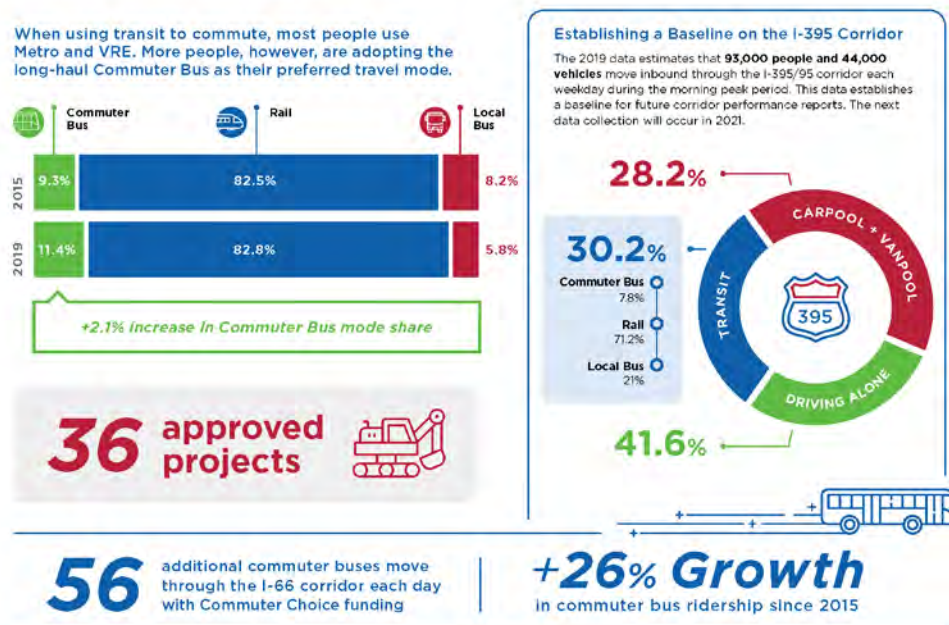


Figure 3: Featured Program Highlights from the Commuter Choice 2020 Annual Report



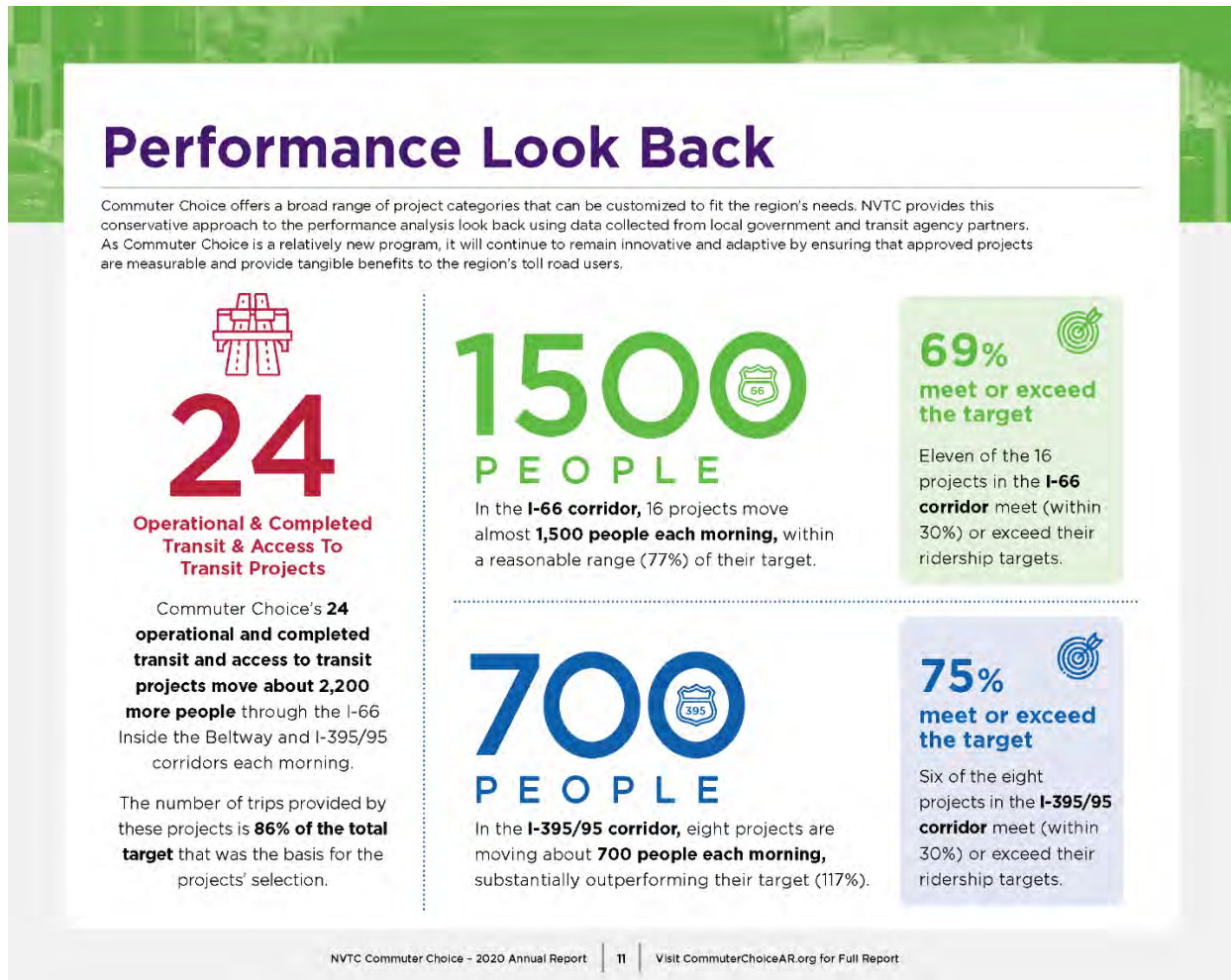
Performance highlights from the report include (Figure 4):

- Commuter Choice is helping the I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95 corridors perform more efficiently, with more travel options for commuters. Between 2015 – when the Commuter Choice program was established – until 2019, 700 *more* people moved through the I-66 inside the Beltway corridor in 750 *fewer* vehicles.
- The share of drive-alone trips in the I-66 Inside the Beltway corridor dropped from 36.4% in 2015 to 34.7% in 2019.
- Commuter Choice’s 24 operational and completed transit and access to transit projects move about 2,200 more people through the I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95 corridors each morning.
- The number of trips provided by these projects is 86% of the total target that was the basis for the projects’ selection.
- In the I-66 corridor, 69% of the projects meet or exceed their targets. There are 16 operational and completed projects that move over 1,500 people each morning, within a reasonable range (77%) of their target.
- In the I-395/95 corridor, 75% of the projects meet or exceed the targets. There are eight operational projects that move close to 700 people each morning, substantially outperforming their target (117%).

Staff obtained the performance data from [biennial traffic and transit ridership counts](#) conducted in the I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95 corridors as well as annual project-specific data from funding recipients, as required per each project’s Standard Project Agreement. As in prior years, the annual report also includes information about the projects selected for funding and the benefits that were the basis for evaluation and selection of each project.

The annual report is due to the CTB by October 31 each year (within 120 days of the end of NVTC’s fiscal year). For the I-395/95 corridor program, the MOA requires that the report be submitted jointly by NVTC and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), which has joint approval authority with NVTC over the program. As NVTC manages the program on the two Commissions’ behalf per the [MOA with PRTC](#), NVTC staff have prepared the report and PRTC will also take action on October 1 to authorize its submittal to the CTB.

Figure 4: Preview of the Performance Look Back from the Commuter Choice 2020 Annual Report



C. Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor

- **ACTION ITEM: Approve Resolution #2420: Approve the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects for Submission to the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Standard Project Agreements**

At the October meeting the Commission will be asked to approve Resolution #2420, which will approve the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects, as shown in Table 1 as well as consider a Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program in the spring of 2021 with strong consideration of each project's application score, based upon availability of funding and public comment. The resolution will also authorize the executive director to execute the Standard Project Agreements.

The Initial Round Four program provides a total of \$3,777,230 for six low-risk, low-cost strategies that will demonstrate robust benefits to toll payers and provide continuity for corridor commuters, as well as support NVTC's program administration and oversight activities for the year. Staff propose a conservative approach to fund only a single year of the two-year Round

Four (FY 2021-2022) program at this time using program carryover, interest, and less than 50% of the projected FY 2021 I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) expects to provide to NVTC.

By next spring, staff expect to identify the full amount of toll revenue that will be available for the two-year period that the Round Four program was originally expected to cover. Based upon revenue availability, staff will ask the Commission to select a supplemental (FY 2022) program from the five new transit services, new commuter incentives and larger capital efforts that were submitted to the Round Four call for projects and remain in consideration for funding.

With this context, the PAC unanimously endorsed the initial Round Four program at its September 17 meeting and directed staff to advance it to the full Commission for consideration.

**Table 1: Recommended Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor
Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program**

	Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Four Project Name	Applicant	Funding Request
1	McLean Metro Station North Entrance	Fairfax County	\$1,000,000
2	Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard	OmniRide	\$461,100
3	Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn	OmniRide	\$137,100
4	City of Fairfax Bike Share Implementation	City of Fairfax	\$460,000
5	Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn	Arlington County	\$710,000
6	Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service	Loudoun County	\$709,030
	<i>Program Administration and Oversight for FY 2021</i>	NVTC	\$300,000
		TOTAL	\$3,777,230

Upon approval by NVTC, the Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program will be submitted to the CTB for adoption into the Commonwealth's FY2021 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Staff will brief the CTB in October and anticipate the CTB's approval of a final set of projects in December, thereafter staff will begin the process of executing Standard Project Agreements with funding recipients.

Benefits of the Recommended Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program

Collectively, the recommended Initial (FY 2021) Program will achieve the following benefits upon full implementation and as travel patterns in the corridor revert to more typical conditions:

- ✓ Moves an additional 1,000 people through the corridor during the morning peak period
- ✓ Saves approximately 47,000 hours of travel delay per year during the commute peak periods

- ✓ Connects people to 10 activity centers in Virginia and the District of Columbia
- ✓ Continues three existing, high-performing express bus services in the I-66 corridor
- ✓ Improves access to two Metrorail stations, one each along the Orange and Silver Lines, for nearby residents and commuters
- ✓ Allows buses on several busy routes to travel more quickly along Lee Highway in Arlington, reducing travel times and operating costs

Project Summaries for the Recommended Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program

The following projects are recommended for funding under the Initial (FY 2021) Program. Project profiles with maps are available on the [Commuter Choice website](#).

McLean Metrorail Station North Entrance

Fairfax County (\$ 1,000,000)

Commuter Choice funding would support the addition of a second entrance to the McLean Metrorail Station on Scotts Crossing Road. Commuters that wish to access the existing entry from the north need to cross State Route 123, a 10-lane crossing that could be a barrier to some. With up to 2,000 prospective residents moving into the redeveloping area north of the current station, this project would create a shorter, more convenient walk to the Metro and increase its visibility.

Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard

OmniRide (\$ 461,100)

Funded in both the inaugural year of the Commuter Choice program and again in Round Three (FY 2020), this project supports the Gainesville to the Pentagon/Navy Yard express bus service between the University Boulevard Park and Ride lot and the Pentagon/Navy Yard. With consistent utilization of the service since its inception, the service is expected to grow to serve over 400 daily riders in the next year. The renewal would continue support for this highly utilized commuter bus service through June 2022.

Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn

OmniRide (\$ 137,100)

A renewal of a bus service initially funded in the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Three (FY 2020) program, of this project supports four morning and four evening peak direction, express bus trips between the Heathcote Commuter lot in Haymarket and Rosslyn-Ballston corridor. Completed in December 2018, the Heathcote Commuter lot has 230 spaces, and buses originating from the lot connect to four Metrorail stations and the Arlington campus of George Mason University.

Bike Share Implementation

City of Fairfax (\$ 460,000)

Commuter Choice funding would support the addition of four bike share stations in the City of Fairfax within the two-mile 'bike shed' of the Vienna Metrorail station. The stations would help residents and visitors connect to Metrorail, commuter buses and regional trails and add to the extensive Capital Bikeshare network, including a nearly complete expansion project in Fairfax County.

Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn

Arlington County (\$ 710,000)

Commuter Choice funding would support the design and construction of peak-period, peak-direction high-occupancy vehicle (HOV)/bus-only lanes on Lee Highway (US 29) through pavement treatment, restriping, and signage. The project's focus is a segment of Lee Highway between North Veitch Street and Rosslyn that carries up to 60 buses during the rush hour, including Arlington Transit (ART), Metrobus and Loudoun County Transit buses.

Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service

Loudoun County (\$ 709,030)

Commuter Choice funding would support one year of operating costs for the Metro Connection bus service linking the Town of Purcellville to the Wiehle-Reston East Metrorail station and the leasing fees for 125 parking spaces. Initially funded in the Commuter Choice Round Two (FY 2019), this successful route has experienced consistent ridership growth on its nine weekday, peak-period round trips.

Program Administration, Evaluation, Oversight, Marketing and Outreach

NVTC (\$300,000)

This funding provides for NVTC's staff positions and support contractors who provide day-to-day management of Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor and ensure that the program is meeting the intent and requirements of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Commonwealth. Specific activities include administering calls for projects; evaluating proposed projects and developing proposed programs of projects; program operations and oversight; coordination with the Commonwealth, applicants and grantees; managing quarterly and annual reporting; grant and contract management; and coordinated communications and outreach efforts along the I-66 corridor.

Public Comment on the Recommended Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program

NVTC solicited public comment on the six projects in the Recommended Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program from September 1 to September 21, 2020. NVTC promoted awareness of the proposed projects via social media and encouraged the applicants to promote the comment period via their channels. To provide the public with additional information about Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor and the proposed projects, NVTC held a virtual town hall meeting via YouTube at noon on Friday, September 11 that was also [available for subsequent viewing](#).

NVTC received a total of five comments during this period, all but one of which were received via online survey, an indication that the targeted online outreach approach was an effective method of engagement. The [Summary of Public Comment: Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four \(FY 2021\)](#) provides a detailed overview of the feedback received during the public comment period.

Projects to Be Considered for the Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program

The five projects that will be under consideration for inclusion in the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program based upon the additional available revenue are shown in Table 2. These projects represent larger projects that would be challenging

to program with the revenue available now and/or efforts that rely on ridership demands that may be slower to materialize given the ongoing repercussions of the public health emergency.

Based upon the recommendation of the PAC, the selection of projects under the Supplemental Round Four program will be based upon the strong consideration of the technical score noted in the Table 2, based upon availability of funding and public comment. NVTC program administration and oversight needs for FY 2022 will be provided to the Commission for consideration at the same time as the Supplemental Round Four program selection.

Table 2: Projects to Be Considered for the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program

Applicant	Application Title	Application Score (100 Points)	Funding Request
City of Falls Church	Restoration of Peak-Period Metrobus Route 28X, Tysons Corner to Mark Center	73	\$3,305,967
OmniRide	TDM Strategy – I-66 Corridor Vanpool Parking Benefit	62	\$85,000
Fairfax County	New Bus Service from Reston South to Crystal City	59	\$5,110,800
Town of Vienna	New Park and Ride at Patrick Henry Library	56	\$5,050,000
Fairfax County	TDM Strategy – Fare Buy Down on Bus Service from Reston North to Crystal City	44	\$154,500
NVTC	<i>Program Administration and Oversight for FY 2022</i>		TBD
TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST			\$13,706,267

Round Four (FY 2021-2022) Program Background

The Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Four (FY 2021-2022) call for projects, which closed in January, produced 14 eligible applications with a total funding request of \$32.9 million. Applications were received from Arlington County, the City of Fairfax, the City of Falls Church, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, PRTC (OmniRide) and the Town of Vienna. At the time, NVTC anticipated \$25 million in toll revenues for new projects over the two-year period, as per the [Second Amended and Restated Memorandum of Agreement Transform66: Inside the Beltway Project \(MOA\)](#) with the Commonwealth. All 14 eligible projects were scored according to [the project selection process and criteria](#) approved by NVTC in November 2019.

NVTC notified the CTB of a delay in the Round Four program development process in May, after the COVID-19 public health emergency caused a drop of up to 90% in VDOT's monthly I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenue collections and thus uncertainty in the funding that would be available for the program. In August, VDOT provided NVTC with an updated revenue estimate for FY 2021 that identified a total \$3.6 million payment to NVTC over the course of the year, based on collecting 40% of the annual toll revenue that had been budgeted prior to the public health emergency. Around the same time, applicants also deferred three proposed projects until the

next funding round and reduced the funding requests on two others, resulting in 11 proposed projects still under consideration with a total funding request of \$17.2 million.

D. Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two Update

At the November meeting the Commission will be asked to take three actions in relation to opening the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two (FY 2022-2023) call for projects:

1. Approve a series of policy changes governing the Commuter Choice program in both corridors, I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95, that will take effect beginning with the Round Two (FY 2022-2023) call for projects in the I-395/95 corridor.
2. Adopt the technical evaluation process used for last fall's I-66 Round Four call for projects as the process that will be used for calls for projects in both corridors until the Commission approves changes to it, thereby making the evaluation approach consistent program-wide.
3. Authorize NVTC staff to open the call for projects.

Each action is discussed further below. PRTC, with which NVTC shares approval responsibilities for the I-395/95 corridor program, will be asked to take the same actions next month.

Proposed Commuter Choice Policy Changes

NVTC staff has identified a set of policy changes to improve NVTC's management of Commuter Choice – specifically to ensure that the program is encouraging and supporting strong efforts that benefit toll payers and providing proper stewardship of funds for a competitive program with rigorous performance reporting requirements. Staff discussed the following changes with eligible applicants in July and members of the PAC and the I-395/95 Joint Commission Working Group (JCWG), on which both NVTC and PRTC are represented, in August and September. Overall, Commissioners and applicant staff understood the need and rationale for the changes. NVTC staff refined the proposals in response to feedback received.

The proposed policy changes would apply to future calls for projects in both Commuter Choice corridors: I-66 Inside the Beltway, beginning with Round Five (FY 2023-2024) and I-395/95, beginning with Round Two (FY 2022-2023). PRTC will also be asked to approve the changes in relation to the I-395/95 corridor program.

Proposed Framework for Larger Capital Projects

NVTC staff seek to encourage infrastructure project proposals under Commuter Choice and wish to clarify how NVTC will accommodate them under the program. While lower cost capital and operating projects will continue to be eligible and considered for the Commuter Choice program, this new framework will provide guidance for those applicants seeking larger cost capital projects, ensuring that they meet the program's two-year funding obligation and five-year funding expenditure deadlines for all funded projects. In doing so, staff seek to create as little new process as possible relative to other regional funding partners for infrastructure projects, namely DRPT and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

The following additional parameters would apply only to projects for which at least approximately \$5 million is being requested for capital activities:

- The only activities that Commuter Choice would support are asset acquisition (including land) and construction.
- The largest amount of Commuter Choice funding that could be requested is \$20 million.
- The project must be ready to begin construction within two years of Commuter Choice funding allocation in order to be considered for funding. NVTC would request additional information on the project's planning status, scope, schedule, budget and other funding, and review these in parallel to the standard eligibility review and technical evaluation.
- Commuter Choice funds for the project may be programmed over two consecutive two-year programs. For instance, a hypothetical capital project seeking \$18 million in I-395/95 Round Two (FY 2022-2023) could receive \$10 million in Round Two and \$8 million in Round Three (FY 2024-2025).
- NVTC would conduct more frequent and in-depth progress meetings. These may be held in conjunction with other regional funding partners.

There would be no changes to the scoring for these projects, nor would changes to the Commuter Choice MOAs with the Commonwealth be needed.

Proposed Minimum Funding Award

Staff propose to establish \$200,000 as the minimum funding award amount for any Commuter Choice project. Receiving Commuter Choice funds carries administrative responsibilities – including quarterly progress reporting, annual performance reporting and submitting detailed reimbursement requests. The minimum award would ensure that any efforts that the program funds are at least commensurate with the administrative responsibilities. Additionally, only two of 45 projects funded to date have been below this amount.

Proposed Requirements for Transportation Demand Management Campaigns

Staff propose to establish parameters around standalone transportation demand management (TDM) projects – specifically education, outreach and incentive campaigns to encourage commuters to shift away from drive-alone trips, especially for commuting. Specifically, any standalone TDM projects would need to be:

- Targeted exclusively to I-395/95 or I-66 Inside the Beltway toll payers.
- Have directly measurable ridership outcomes.

Eligible strategies would include, for example, targeted vanpool subsidies for new riders, targeted rail station parking fee reductions for new or returning riders and targeted transit fare reductions (e.g., linked to particular SmarTrip cards). Applicants may propose other strategies that meet these requirements and/or may group complementary strategies into a single TDM project proposal.

Overall, NVTC must ensure that these funds are strictly benefitting toll payers in line with requirements of Virginia legal precedent and that NVTC can readily measure the impacts of its funding support. Both aspects are a challenge with traditional TDM campaigns that are typically incremental and focused on broader groups of travelers (e.g., by employer or by geography).

For other types of project, such as new and enhanced bus services, staff will continue to encourage applicants to consider project-specific TDM elements – such as introductory fare-free campaigns and marketing and promotional activities – when they are developing project proposals.

Proposed Requirement for Partner Support Documentation

Staff propose to require executive-, Board- or Council-level support documentation as part of the application for any proposed project that would be operated by, constructed by or involve significant modifications to facilities owned by a third-party. Examples of such situations include:

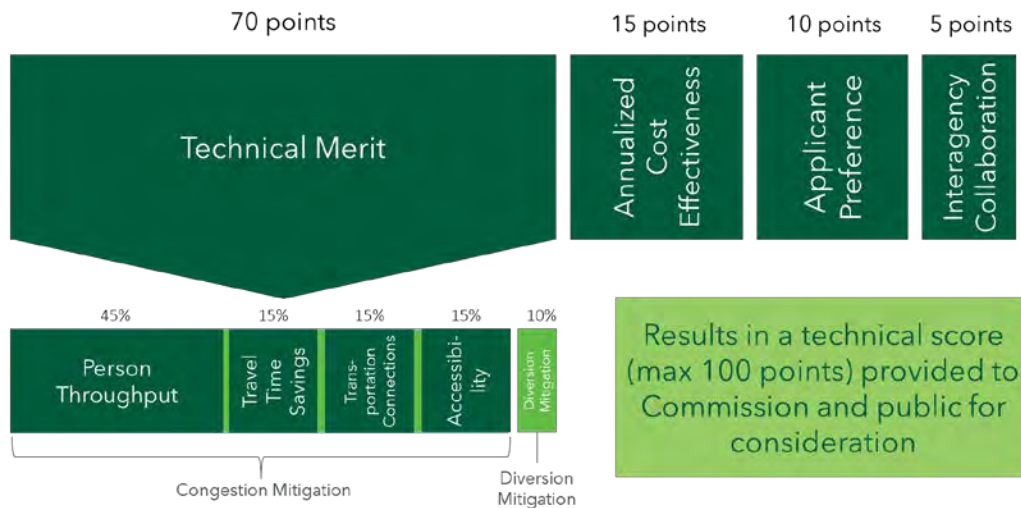
- A proposed bus service improvement for which a local jurisdiction is the applicant but WMATA, OmniRide or another jurisdiction's bus service would be the operator.
- A proposed modification to VDOT-owned roadway or other right-of-way.
- A proposed expansion of a rail station owned by WMATA or VRE.

To fulfill the requirement, an applicant for a proposed project with significant third-party engagement would need to obtain an executive-level signed letter or Board- or Council-approved resolution from the third party indicating awareness of and general support for the project, along with indication of willingness to work with the applicant to resolve any outstanding steps or issues. Staff seek to establish this requirement to ensure that any projects funded involve significant third-party engagement, regardless of cost or complexity, can proceed smoothly toward implementation.

Round Two Technical Evaluation Process

Staff will ask the Commission to adopt the evaluation process used for the I-66 corridor program's Round Four call for projects last fall as the process that will be used for calls for projects in both corridors until such time as the Commission desires to make changes to it. Staff indicated the intent last fall to keep the process in place for both corridors without substantive changes for at least five years to provide predictability for applicants and a consistent basis for evaluating the outcomes of Commuter Choice funding. Figure 1 shows the process.

Figure 5: Proposed Technical Evaluation Process for the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two (FY 2022-2023) Program



PRTC will be asked to take a comparable action regarding the I-395/95 corridor program.

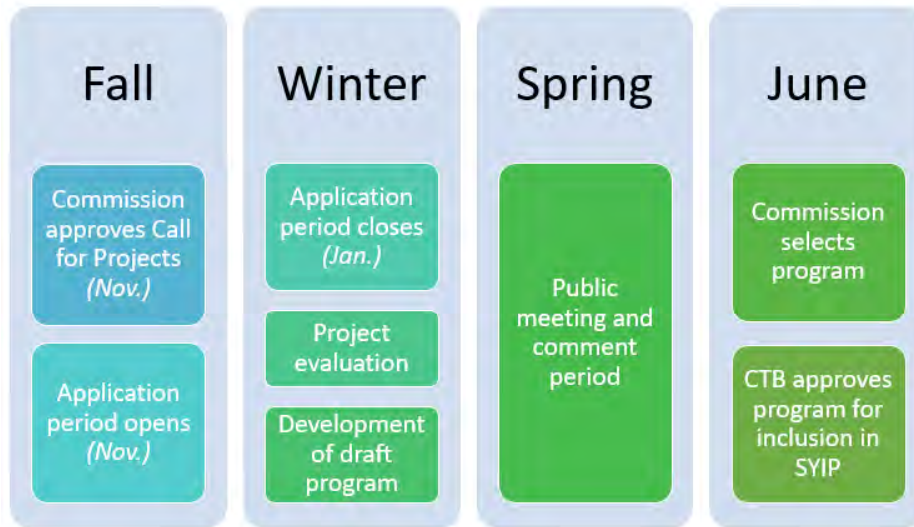
Opening the Call for Projects

At the November meeting the Commission will be asked to authorize a call for projects for the [Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor](#) Round Two (FY 2022-2023). Projects selected for funding will be included in the Commonwealth's FY 2022 to FY 2027 Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP). The program follows the selection process prescribed in the MOA, whereby staff evaluate eligible projects and develop a proposed program of projects for the I-395/95 JCWG to consider. The I-395/95 JCWG recommends a program of projects to the two full Commissions (NVTC and PRTC), which then adopt a program and refer it to the CTB for final approval and adoption into the SYIP. NVTC staff will conduct a public comment period and share comments with the JCWG and both Commissions prior to any action to adopt a program of projects.

NVTC staff are working with Commonwealth partners to understand any potential implications of the COVID-19 public health emergency on the amount of revenue that will be available for the Round Two (FY 2022-2023) program. Unlike in the I-66 corridor, revenue for the I-395/95 corridor program comes from an annual transit investment payment to the Commonwealth by Transurban, the concessionaire for the 95 and 395 Express Lanes, which operate at all times of day. Transurban has [indicated publicly](#) that they expect to make their next annual payment as planned this November. Full funding for the two-year program, per the MOA for the I-395/95 corridor program, would provide about \$30 million for new projects.

The call for projects notice, which will include information about how to apply for funds, will be issued to eligible applicants following approval by the Commissions in November. Online applications will be accepted via the NVTC website from November 9, 2020 until January 29, 2021. The proposed schedule for the Round Two call for projects is shown below:

**Figure 6: Proposed Schedule for the Commuter Choice on the I-395/95
Round Two Call for Projects**



NVTC staff will begin applicant engagement around the Round Two call for projects with an introductory webinar for all eligible applicants about the program and call for projects at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, October 6. Staff will thereafter request more information from potential applicants about their project ideas and will review these in terms of alignment with program eligibility and goals with each eligible applicant at one-on-one workshop sessions after the call for projects opens.

The one-on-one workshops will also provide an opportunity for NVTC and applicant staff to review the application form and other required materials in detail. Staff is developing additional resources, including a video overview, to assist applicants through the application process.

**RESOLUTION #2420**

- SUBJECT:** Approve the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects for Submission to the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Standard Project Agreements
- WHEREAS:** Under the *Second Amended and Restated Memorandum of Agreement Transform66: Inside the Beltway Project* (MOA), NVTC is responsible for selecting and administering multimodal projects under Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor that allow more people to travel faster and more reliably through the I-66 Inside the Beltway corridor;
- WHEREAS:** The principal objective of the Commuter Choice program is to select projects that meet goals identified in the MOA, which are to (1) maximize person throughput and (2) implement multimodal improvements to (i) improve mobility along the corridor, (ii) support new, diverse travel choices and (iii) enhance transportation safety and travel reliability;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC is responsible for Commuter Choice project selection; financing and financial management; compliance, including evaluation, reporting, and quality assurance; and providing information to the public;
- WHEREAS:** From November 2019 to January 2020, NVTC conducted a Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Four call for projects for a two-year program, for which 11 project applications with a total funding request of \$17.2 million are under consideration for funding;
- WHEREAS:** The MOA projected that, under typical traffic conditions, NVTC would receive \$10 million in FY 2021 and \$15 million in FY 2022 for its Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor program, for a total of \$25 million for a two-year program;
- WHEREAS:** Traffic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency reduced the projected amount of I-66 inside the Beltway toll revenue available for FY 2021 Commuter Choice projects to approximately \$3.6 million;
- WHEREAS:** Based upon the current uncertainty of future travel behaviors, any estimate of available FY 2022 funding would be speculative at best;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC seeks a conservative approach to fund only a single year of the Round Four program at this time using program carryover, interest, and less than 50% of the projected FY 2021 I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC is confident that traffic on the I-66 inside the Beltway corridor and resulting toll revenues will be higher in FY 2022 than in FY 2021 and that there will be greater confidence in forecasting FY 2022 Commuter Choice funding by spring 2021;

WHEREAS: NVTC seeks to provide immediate funding for a one-year program that funds low-risk, high impact projects, namely continuations of previously funded transit services and small capital projects;

WHEREAS: Based upon the evaluation by NVTC staff and the Program Advisory Committee, staff recommends approval of the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program of Projects that includes six projects and NVTC's administrative costs, totaling \$3,777,230 (Table 1); and

WHEREAS: The Program Advisory Committee recommends that the Commission seek to approve a supplemental program of Round Four projects in spring 2021 sourced from the remaining Commuter Choice in the I-66 Corridor Round Four project applications with strong consideration each project's application score, based upon the availability of funding and public comment (Table 2).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby approves the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program and authorizes staff to submit the Program of Projects to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for briefing and action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NVTC will select a Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program in the spring of 2021 with strong consideration of each project's application score, based upon availability of funding and public comment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC authorizes the executive director, or her designee, to execute the Standard Project Agreements for the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program following approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Approved this 1st day of October 2020.

Katie Cristol
Chair

Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer

**Table 1: Recommended Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor
Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Program**

	Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Four Project Name	Applicant	Funding Request
1	McLean Metro Station North Entrance	Fairfax County	\$1,000,000
2	Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard	OmniRide	\$461,100
3	Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn	OmniRide	\$137,100
4	City of Fairfax Bike Share Implementation	City of Fairfax	\$460,000
5	Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn	Arlington County	\$710,000
6	Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service	Loudoun County	\$709,030
	<i>Program Administration and Oversight for FY 2021</i>	NVTC	\$300,000
	TOTAL		\$3,777,230

**Table 1: Projects to Be Considered for the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor
Supplemental Round Four (FY 2022) Program**

	Application Title	Applicant	Application Score (100 Points)	Funding Request
7	Restoration of Peak-Period Metrobus Route 28X, Tysons Corner to Mark Center	City of Falls Church	73	\$3,305,967
8	TDM Strategy – I-66 Corridor Vanpool Parking Benefit	OmniRide	62	\$85,000
9	New Bus Service from Reston South to Crystal City	Fairfax County	59	\$5,110,800
10	New Park and Ride at Patrick Henry Library	Town of Vienna	56	\$5,050,000
11	TDM Strategy – Fare Buy Down on Bus Service from Reston North to Crystal City	Fairfax County	44	\$154,500
	<i>Program Administration and Oversight for FY 2022</i>	NVTC		TBD
			TOTAL	\$13,706,267



NVTC staff collected five responses during the Public Comment period for the Initial Round Four (FY 2021) Commuter Choice program on the I-66 corridor, open from September 1 - 21, 2020. The targeted outreach strategy to increase public engagement included hosting a virtual town hall event, asking jurisdictional partners to promote the open period and using social media and web channels to spread the message. Of the five responses, we received four responses via the web form hosted at www.novatransit.org and one response via email.

- Comments submitted via email
- Comments with a focus on the overall Commuter Choice program
- Comments specific to the Commuter Choice program on the I-66 corridor
- Comments about specific projects



Comments submitted via email

The Greater Washington Partnership is a civic alliance of the leading employers from Baltimore to Richmond and one of our priorities is strengthening the transportation system throughout the Capital Region. I am submitting public comment to support the proposed staff recommendations for the Commuter Choices on the I-66 for Round Four.

Due to the updated I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenue estimates from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), NVTC staff presented a smaller Program of Projects for the current fiscal year (FY 2021) for approval in October and will hold the remaining projects for consideration prior to FY 2022. This approach is prudent, while ensuring key projects can move forward in FY21. **The Greater Washington Partnership encourages support of the staff recommendation of the six proposed projects for the Initial Round Four (FY 2021) funding of the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Program as outlined in the September 3, 2020 monthly Commission meeting.**

This approach allows for some projects to move ahead immediately while still providing opportunity for additional projects to be funded once there is greater confidence around the level of funding available from FY 2022 revenues.

Maggie Gendron

Manager, Transportation

802-793-9738



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Comments with a focus on the overall Commuter Choice program (both the I-395/95 and I-66 corridor)

Both programs should place a stronger emphasis on interventions that change transit and operations, like restriping, new metro entrances, and dedicated lanes. These provide visible capital benefits which are reflected in increased long-term benefits for all members of our region, while spending this valuable money on one-time transit operation grants are as good as money down the toilet when there is less funding available and the service is cut. Commuter choice is best enabled by subsidizing capital improvements so that localities and agencies can affordably operate their own reliable services.

Comments specific to Commuter Choice program on the I-66 corridor

Too many projects that are funded are located far, far away from the corridor that will allegedly see a reduction in trips, and this is not reflected in scoring methodology. Bike racks at Manassas VRE, for example, which were funded in an earlier round, would be better funded by outside-the-beltway revenue when it becomes available. Revenue should be spent (by all agencies, not just Arlington and metro) to move more people through the inside the beltway region (which is largely in Arlington) without diverting funds to remote boondoggles like the unused VRE bike racks.

Comments About Specific Projects

Fairfax County - McLean Metrorail Station Entrance

- Seems short-sited and at odds with the comprehensive planning for Tysons and the station area. Like a fix-it solution for a development that was erroneously built too far from transit that will stymie transit access for closer, more appropriately sited developments.
- Meh
- This is a valuable investment in improving transit access to a major destination and redeveloping area.



OmniRide - Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard

- Peak commuter services seem like poor investments when so many people are working from home.

OmniRide - Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn

- Peak commuter services seem like poor investments when so many people are working from home.

City of Fairfax - City of Fairfax Bike Share Implementation

- A lazy and wasteful use of funds that will not actually increase commuter choice or decrease vehicle trips on the corridor. As an individual who often commutes by bike, I cannot imagine a single individual who would commute by bikeshare to an already walking-distance metro station rather than by a personal bike, and I cannot imagine how you can either. This item should be re-scored.
- Bike share works best in a relatively dense area with many destinations and all-day travel demand. This area does not seem like it would generate substantial bike share use.

Arlington County - Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn

- This is a critical project that has more technical merit than almost any other alternative. This capital improvement will multiply the effect of other transit spending being undertaken by Metro, Arlington, and other agencies. An important and valuable multiplier for other spending that will result in truly premium transit that has real potential to decrease vehicle trips on the corridor.
- Would prefer that this be an all-day bus lane, but this seems a valuable investment as it would save bus riders a lot of time getting into and out of Rosslyn.

Loudoun County - Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service

- Peak commuter services seem like poor investments when so many people are working from home.

Agenda Item #6: Legislative Update



TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice, Zach Smith and Aimee Perron Seibert

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Legislative Update

At the October meeting the Commission will be briefed on legislative developments during the Virginia General Assembly Special Session as well as any updates on Congressional actions related to public transit.

A. Report from the Chair of the NVTC Legislative and Policy Committee

At the October meeting Legislative and Policy Committee Chair David Meyer will give an update on committee activities over the last month. The Legislative and Policy Committee met on September 10 to discuss the General Assembly's special session and develop the NVTC's priorities for the 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda. This year, NVTC's proposed state and federal legislative priorities are focused on protecting existing transit programs and revenues and making it easier to access transit. The Commission will receive a briefing on the proposed 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda at the November meeting and will be asked to approve the final 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda at the December meeting. The next Legislative and Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for October 15 at 10:00 a.m.

B. Virginia General Assembly Update

The General Assembly convened in Special Session on August 18 in to address legislation related to the COVID-19 public health emergency, criminal justice reform and revisions to the budget due to new revenue forecasts. The Commonwealth [collected \\$121 million less in transportation funds](#) than had been budgeted in FY 2020, and Secretary of Finance Aubrey Layne projects a shortfall of \$750 million in transportation revenues over the next two fiscal years.

Governor Northam and members of the General Assembly have proposed several budget amendments to reduce the impact of the projected transportation revenue loss on the Commonwealth. NVTC is monitoring the following amendments to the 2020 – 2022 biennium budget:

- [Item 430 P](#) – Provides CTB with flexibility to address revenue reductions.
- [Item 443 D.3.](#) – Allows the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to act for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority for a limited period of time.

- [Item 444 B](#) – Provides stability for DRPT’s operating budget.
- [Item 4-0.01 #1h](#) – Provides flexibility for joint public meetings to convene remotely during states of emergency.

C. Federal Update

On September 10 the Senate failed to advance its latest COVID-19 relief bill the “Delivering Immediate Relief to America’s Families, Schools and Small Businesses Act ([S.178](#)).” The bill would have provided \$300 billion in COVID-19 relief funding. However, the bill did not include funding for public transportation. There is no indication of when talks would resume on the next COVID-19 relief package.

The current surface transportation bill, the FAST Act, which provides over \$61 billion over five fiscal years for programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration is set to expire on September 30, 2020. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approved [a five-year surface transportation bill](#) in July 2019, but the other three Senate committees with jurisdiction over transportation have yet to act. Congress is anticipated to seek a one-year extension of the bill before considering a new multi-year bill.

D. Annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing

The annual Joint NVTC-PRTC Legislative Briefing is scheduled for Monday, December 7 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The event will be held as a webinar and will provide an overview of federal and state issues affecting transit in Northern Virginia. NVTC has invited Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine to participate as the keynote speaker.

TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

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

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Transit Resource Center

At the October meeting the Commission will receive an update on the FY 2020 4th Quarter Transit Performance, FY 2020 Year-To-Date (YTD) 4th Quarter Parking Utilization and the FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report. The update will highlight changes in ridership and review changes to transit operations across Northern Virginia due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

A. FY 2020 4th Quarter (April through June) Transit Ridership Report and Service Changes

The FY 2020 4th Quarter Metrorail Ridership and Parking Data Report (April to June 2020 compared to April to June 2019) is the second reporting period to capture the impact of the COVID-19 on the area's transit systems.

Compared to 4th quarter of FY 2019, the impacts of ridership on non-Metrorail modes is very noticeable as Virginia stay-at-home orders and mandatory telework that began in mid-March continued. The result was an overall 78% decrease in ridership, resulting in 8,424,369 fewer transit trips for the regional transit providers.

Table 1: Transit Boardings in Virginia by System

System	4 th Quarter FY 2019	4 th Quarter FY 2020	% Change
Arlington Transit	757,592	270,818	-64%
Alexandria DASH	982,546	230,328	-77%
Fairfax County Connector	2,190,369	808,704	-63%
Fairfax City CUE	149,867	50,675	-66%
Loudoun County Transit	473,303	37,464	-91%
OmniRide	627,495	90,386	-86%
Virginia Railway Express	1,207,191	38,322	-97%
Metrobus	4,346,111	851,845	-71%
Metro Access	89,499	21,095	-76%
Total	10,824,006	2,399,637	-78%

Source: OLGA and WMATA

Table 2 shows Weekday, Saturday and Sunday average boardings were down significantly due to the pandemic.

Table 2: WMATA Metrorail Virginia Station Entries

	4 th Quarter FY 2019	4 th Quarter FY 2020	% Change
Weekday Average	146,047	7,393	-95%
Saturday Average	61,686	4,146	-93%
Sunday Average	41,523	3,115	-92%
Total	10,834,786	574,939	-95%

Source: WMATA

However, as shown in Figure 1, during FY 2020 Q4 WMATA closed nine Virginia Metrorail stations to take advantage of reduced ridership during the pandemic and to better coordinate two major Virginia Metro capital projects: rebuilding station platforms along the Orange Line and connecting Silver Line Phase 2 to the existing Metrorail system. In order to address service needs that still existed, free express and local bus service were provided between closed stations.

Figure 1: Stations Closed During 2020 Platform Improvement Project



Source: WMATA

B. FY 2020 4th Quarter Parking Utilization Report

Table 3 provides an overview of average weekday parking utilization for FY 2020 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. Since COVID-19, parking facility usage decreased by 25% (in parallel with ridership decreases) and as people drove less and increased telework.

Table 3: WMATA Virginia Parking Facility Usage (Average Weekday) – 4th Quarter FY 2020

Station	2019 Capacity	2019 % Usage	2019 Average	2020 Capacity	2020 % Usage	2020 Average	% Change (2019-2020)
Huntington*	2,732	72%	1,967	2,732	59%	1,612	-18%
West Falls Church	2,009	54%	1,085	1,275	46%	587	-46%
Dunn Loring	1,964	44%	864	1,964	38%	746	-14%
Vienna**	4,719	72%	3,398	4,240	56%	2,374	-30%
Franconia	5,069	55%	2,788	5,069	36%	1,825	-35%
Van Dorn	361	100%	361	361	59%	213	-41%
East Falls Church	422	115%	485	422	81%	342	-30%
Wiehle-Reston East	2,300	93%	2,139	2,300	92%	2,116	-1%
Total¹	19,576	76%	13,087	18,363	58%	9,815	-25%

Source: WMATA

*Huntington South Garage closed August 2018

**Garage rehab at Vienna, 450 spaces; Vienna Lot 1, 479 spaces were closed as of 3/15/20

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. Paid Parking was suspended as of April 5, 2020.

C. FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report

The FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report provides an overview of the transit ridership trends during FY 2020. Prior to COVID-19 and the sudden increase in teleworking, transit ridership overall for all modes was trending 5% higher in FY 2020 compared to the same period in FY 2019. However, the public health emergency has hit the transit ridership particularly hard resulting in a FY 2020 overall reduction of 24% compared to FY 2019. The sections below provide a snapshot of the impact of COVID-19 on transit providers in Northern Virginia.

▪ FY 2020 Regional Transit Performance Trends

Starting in March, transit ridership dropped dramatically. By the summer, the ridership started to increase slightly. Typically transit moves over a quarter million people on an average day in Northern Virginia. Although this year has been impacted greatly by COVID-19, the amount of people moved daily by transit in FY 2020 is still approximately equal to the daily traffic volume on I-395, an indication that transit is still a vital and effective transportation service even during the pandemic.

Prior to COVID-19, FY 2020 showed a 4% increase for bus in Northern Virginia compared to FY 2019. Since COVID-19, bus ridership declined by over 75% for those months.

- FY 2020 Revenue Miles

The impacts of COVID-19 resulted in a drop in ridership and for most systems a decrease in service operated. Only CUE continued to operate similar levels of service during this period. As ridership is slowly returning, systems have been increasing levels of service.

- FY 2020 System-Specific Trends

Metrorail

Weekday ridership is influenced greatly by commuter travel. The weekday average ridership is approximately twice the Saturday or Sunday average ridership. Prior to COVID-19, ridership showed a slight increase of 2%. Since COVID-19 overall weekday ridership has dropped close to 40%, due to the increase in telework. The weekend ridership has significantly decreased as well as a result of COVID-19.

VRE

Prior to COVID-19, the Virginia Railway Express experienced strong ridership and train utilization. VRE service – which operates on weekdays, primarily in the morning and evening commuter periods – carries close to 10% of the transit riders in Northern Virginia. Since COVID-19, VRE ridership a decreased by over 90%.

ART

Unlike other bus systems in Northern Virginia, ART ridership peaked in FY 2017. Recent ridership levels started to show a return to higher levels. Prior to COVID-19, ART showed a greater than 10% increase in ridership. Since COVID-19 there has been over 50% drop in ridership.

CUE

CUE ridership had been stabilizing since a high in 2015. Prior to COVID-19, CUE was holding steady with ridership similar to FY 2019. Since COVID-19, CUE saw a 60% decline in ridership. CUE has maintained the same level of service during this period in anticipation of ridership returning.

DASH

DASH has the third largest bus ridership in Northern Virginia. Prior to COVID-19, DASH showed over a 10% increase in ridership compared to the same period in FY 2019. Since COVID-19, FY 2020 showed an approximately 70% decline in ridership.

Fairfax Connector

Fairfax Connector carries the second highest number of bus riders in Northern Virginia. Prior to COVID-19, Fairfax Connector showed stable ridership to the same period in FY 2019. Since COVID-19, Fairfax Connector showed the lowest percent reduction in ridership compared to other systems.

Loudoun County Transit

Loudoun County Transit had experienced consistent ridership levels with only modest variation over the past five years. Prior to COVID-19, Loudoun County Transit showed an approximately 10% increase in ridership for FY 2020. Since COVID-19, Loudoun County Transit has had one of the highest drops in ridership, likely a function of increased telework and similar to other commuter-based services.

Metrobus

Metrobus carries the majority of bus riders in Northern Virginia. Service and ridership have declined since FY 2016, but recent trends show ridership stabilizing. Prior to COVID-19, ridership in FY 2020 was holding steady at FY 2019 levels. Since COVID-19, overall Metrobus for the fiscal year has experienced a 24% decrease in FY 2020 ridership in Virginia, when compared to FY 2019.

OmniRide

In the past OmniRide showed a decline in riders, much of that is due to local service versus long haul commuter bus service. Prior to COVID-19, ridership showed an increase of 4% for FY 2020. Since COVID-19, OmniRide showed one of the highest decreases in ridership, likely a function of increased telework similar to other commuter-based services.

FY 2020 Q4 Metrorail Ridership and Parking Data



Figure 1: Virginia Metrorail Ridership by Station, Change from FY 2019 Q4 to FY 2020 Q4

Station	
East Falls Church	-100%
Virginia Square	-100%
Arlington Cemetery	-100%
Van Dorn	-100%
Clarendon	-100%
McLean	-100%
Greensboro	-100%
Eisenhower Avenue	-99%
Wiehle-Reston East	-98%
Vienna	-97%
West Falls Church	-97%
Tysons Corner	-97%
Dunn Loring	-97%
Crystal City	-96%
Pentagon	-96%
Rosslyn	-95%
Court House	-94%
Spring Hill	-94%
Pentagon City	-94%
National Airport	-94%
Ballston	-89%
Braddock Road	-88%
Franconia Springfield	-86%
King Street	-85%
Huntington	-83%

Source: WMATA. Ridership is based on station entries

Note: The following stations were closed during FY 2020 Q4 due the Summer 2020 Platform Improvement Program: Vienna, Dunn Loring, West Falls Church, East Falls Church, Wiehle-Reston East, Spring Hill, Greensboro, Tysons Corner, and McLean. These additional stations were closed due to COVID-19: Virginia Square-GMU, Clarendon, Eisenhower Ave., and Van Dorn St.



Table 1: Metrorail Ridership by Station in Virginia
4th Quarter FY 2020

Line/Station	Year	April	May	June	Total	Percent Change FY19 - FY20
Silver						
Greensboro	FY19	36,004	36,927	39,196	112,127	-99.5%
	FY20	233	129	183	545	
McLean	FY19	54,237	56,443	58,505	169,185	-99.7%
	FY20	192	180	117	489	
Spring Hill	FY19	31,536	31,918	37,159	100,613	-94.1%
	FY20	3,295	2,597	2	5,894	
Tysons Corner	FY19	97,024	99,234	101,228	297,486	-96.9%
	FY20	5,017	4,252	74	9,343	
Wiehle-Reston East	FY19	214,125	210,257	201,795	626,177	-97.8%
	FY20	7,417	5,966	168	13,551	
Total Silver Line	FY19	432,926	434,779	437,883	1,305,588	-97.7%
	FY20	16,154	13,124	544	29,822	
Orange						
Dunn Loring	FY19	97,995	100,719	98,367	297,081	-96.9%
	FY20	5,205	4,031	-	9,236	
West Falls Church	FY19	71,679	65,071	63,433	200,183	-96.9%
	FY20	3,537	2,709	-	6,246	
Vienna	FY19	235,018	229,044	227,087	691,149	-98.1%
	FY20	7,087	5,998	-	13,085	
Total Orange Line	FY19	404,692	394,833	388,887	1,188,412	-97.6%
	FY20	15,829	12,738	-	28,567	
Silver/Orange						
Ballston	FY19	248,796	247,355	246,100	742,251	-88.9%
	FY20	15,687	21,483	45,184	82,354	
Clarendon	FY19	124,538	124,586	121,673	370,797	-99.8%
	FY20	79	22	521	622	
Court House	FY19	169,837	170,595	164,176	504,608	-94.3%
	FY20	7,379	8,253	12,991	28,623	
East Falls Church	FY19	104,444	104,928	102,943	312,315	-100.0%
	FY20	-	-	-	-	
Rosslyn	FY19	355,878	349,464	343,887	1,049,229	-94.9%
	FY20	13,779	15,228	24,326	53,333	
Virginia Square	FY19	101,207	99,916	98,255	299,378	-99.9%
	FY20	24	23	401	448	
Total	FY19	1,104,700	1,096,843	1,077,034	3,278,577	-95.0%
	FY20	36,948	45,010	83,423	165,381	

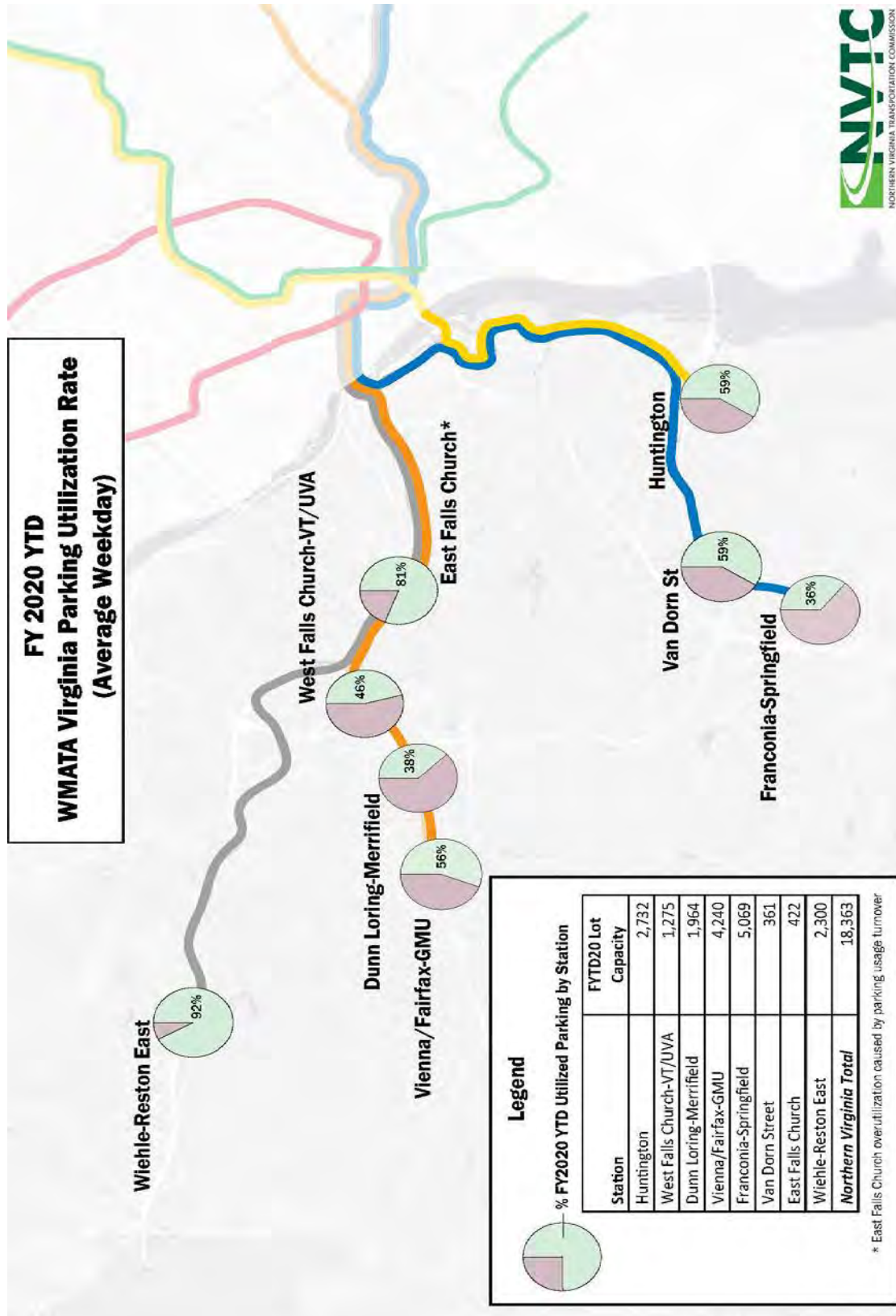
Line/Station	Year	April	May	June	Total	Percent Change FY19 - FY20
Blue						
Arlington Cemetery	FY19	54,453	50,844	52,058	157,355	-99.9%
	FY20	78	41	71	190	
Franconia	FY19	171,090	118,437	-	289,527	-86.1%
Springfield	FY20	10,007	11,740	18,385	40,132	
Van Dorn	FY19	66,579	49,189	-	115,768	-99.6%
	FY20	24	13	424	461	
Total	FY19	292,122	218,470	52,058	562,650	-92.8%
	FY20	10,109	11,793	18,880	40,782	
Yellow						
Eisenhower Avenue	FY19	50,106	36,890	-	86,996	-99.3%
	FY20	127	44	444	615	
Huntington	FY19	169,921	128,534	-	298,455	-82.8%
	FY20	15,113	16,196	20,022	51,331	
Total	FY19	220,027	165,424	-	385,451	-86.5%
	FY20	15,240	16,240	20,466	51,946	
Blue/Yellow						
Braddock Road	FY19	115,777	85,795	-	201,572	-88.1%
	FY20	6,257	7,196	10,565	24,018	
Crystal City	FY19	293,628	303,113	322,941	919,682	-95.9%
	FY20	9,798	11,204	16,321	37,323	
King Street	FY19	181,405	131,917	-	313,322	-84.5%
	FY20	13,248	14,833	20,505	48,586	
National Airport	FY19	175,926	192,047	213,824	581,797	-93.7%
	FY20	10,102	10,606	16,025	36,733	
Pentagon	FY19	314,941	348,914	411,668	1,075,523	-95.5%
	FY20	13,336	14,676	20,599	48,611	
Pentagon City	FY19	347,604	341,975	332,632	1,022,211	-93.8%
	FY20	14,095	16,588	32,487	63,170	
Total	FY19	1,429,281	1,403,761	1,281,065	4,114,107	-93.7%
	FY20	66,836	75,103	116,502	258,441	
Total Virginia Stations	FY19	3,883,748	3,714,112	3,236,927	10,834,787	-94.7%
	FY20	161,116	174,008	239,815	574,939	

Source: WMATA. Ridership is based on station entries



Note: The following stations were closed during FY 2020 Q4 due the Summer 2020 Platform Improvement Program: Vienna, Dunn Loring, West Falls Church, East Falls Church, Wiehle-Reston East, Spring Hill, Greensboro, Tysons Corner, and McLean. These additional stations were closed due to COVID-19: Virginia Square-GMU, Clarendon, Eisenhower Ave., and Van Dorn St.

Figure 2: Virginia Metrorail Parking Utilization by Station, FY 2020 Year to Date





www.novatransit.org

FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report

October 1, 2020



FY 2020 Annual Transit Performance Report

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13. Northern Virginia Metrorail, Average Transit Boardings by Station; (Weekday/Saturday/Sunday), FY 2019 - FY 2020
14. Northern Virginia Metrorail, Average Transit Boardings by Station; (Weekday/Saturday/Sunday), FY 2019 - FY 2020, cont.

Until the impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency and the corresponding high percent of teleworking, transit ridership was 5% higher in FY 2020 compared to the same period in FY 2019. Over the entire year for FY 2020, there was a 24% reduction in ridership when comparing to FY 2019 period.

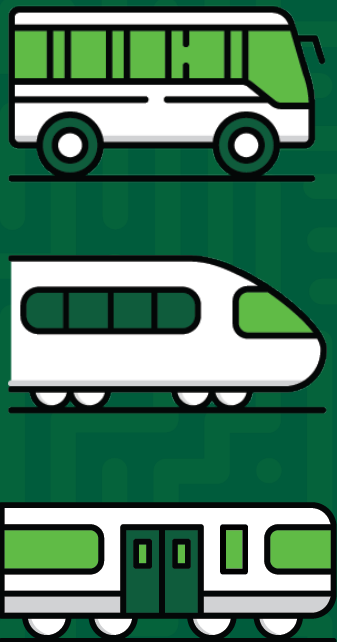
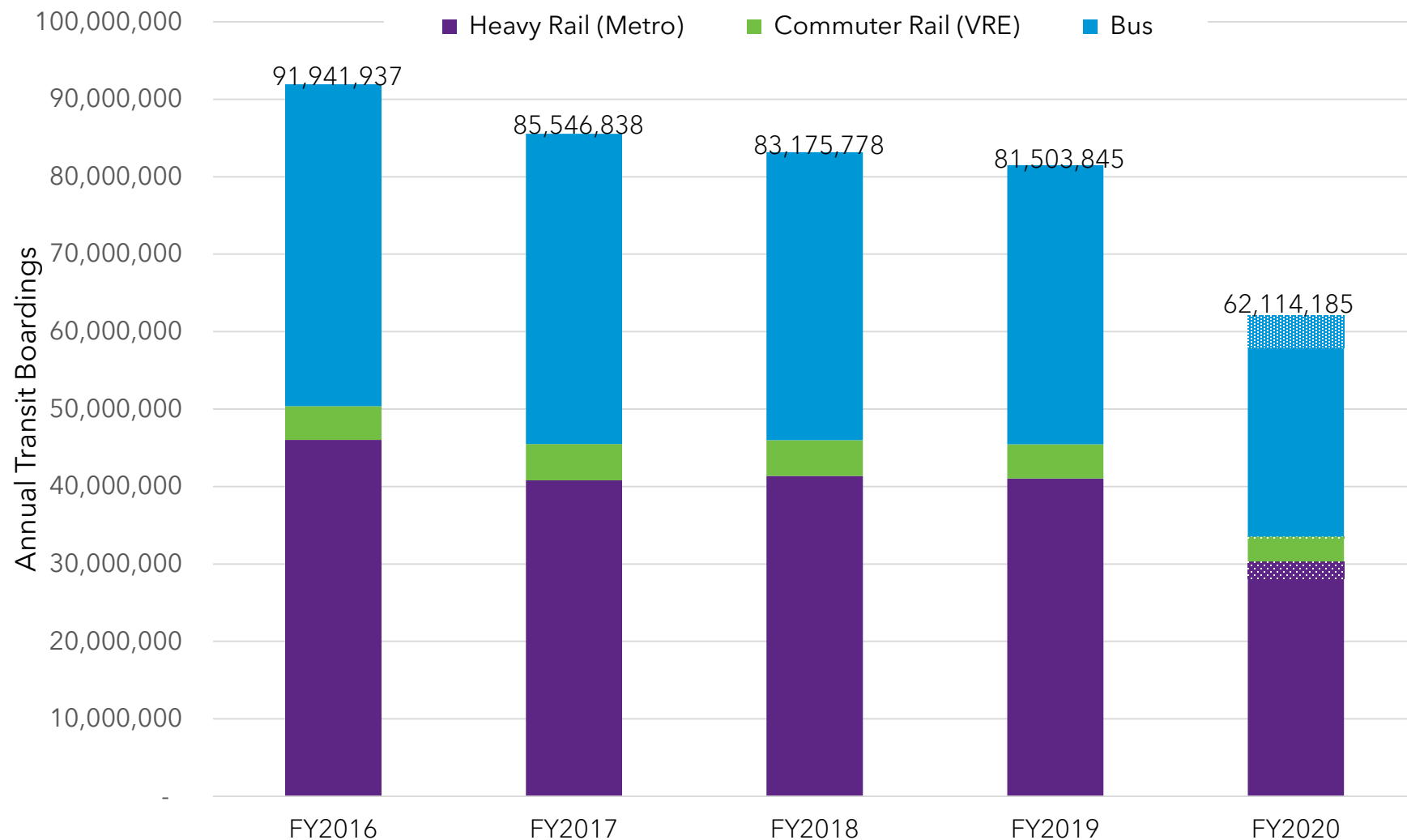


Figure 1: Northern Virginia Annual Transit Boardings (All Modes), FY 2016 - FY 2020



Shaded area represent COVID related stay at home months

Figure 1a: Northern Virginia Annual Transit Boardings, FY 2020 Snapshot

Transit ridership in FY 2020 was following a similar monthly variation as observed in previous years, until the COVID-19 public health emergency. Starting in March, transit ridership dropped dramatically. By the summer, ridership started to increase slightly.

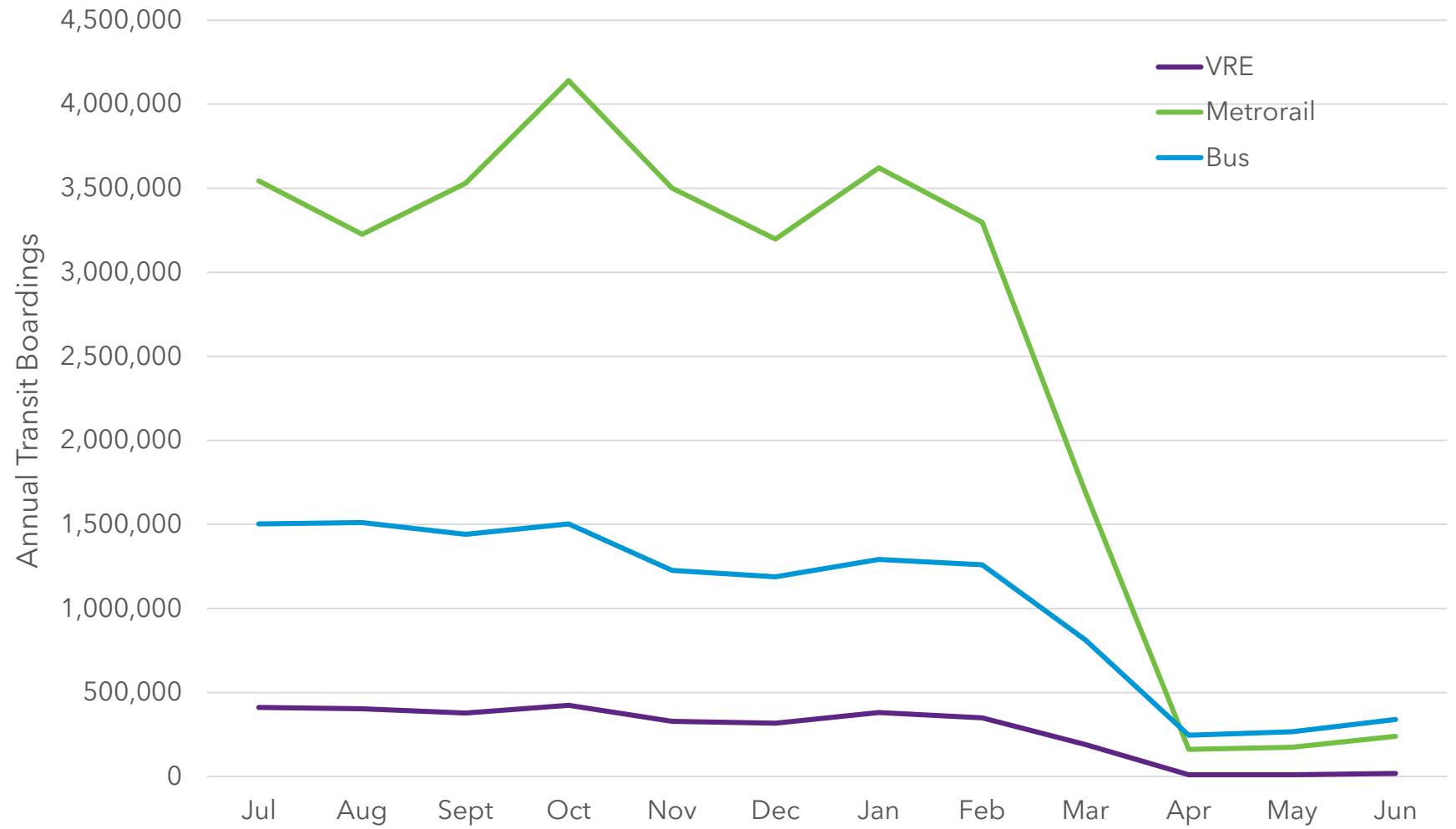
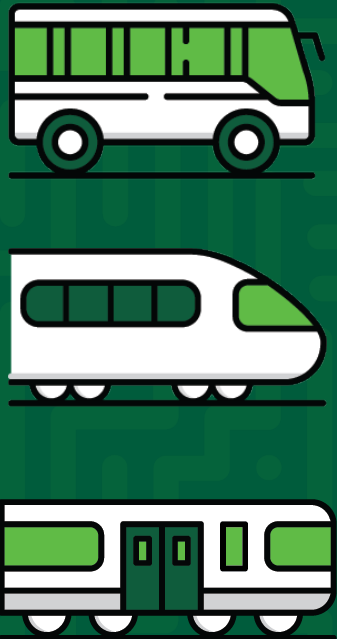
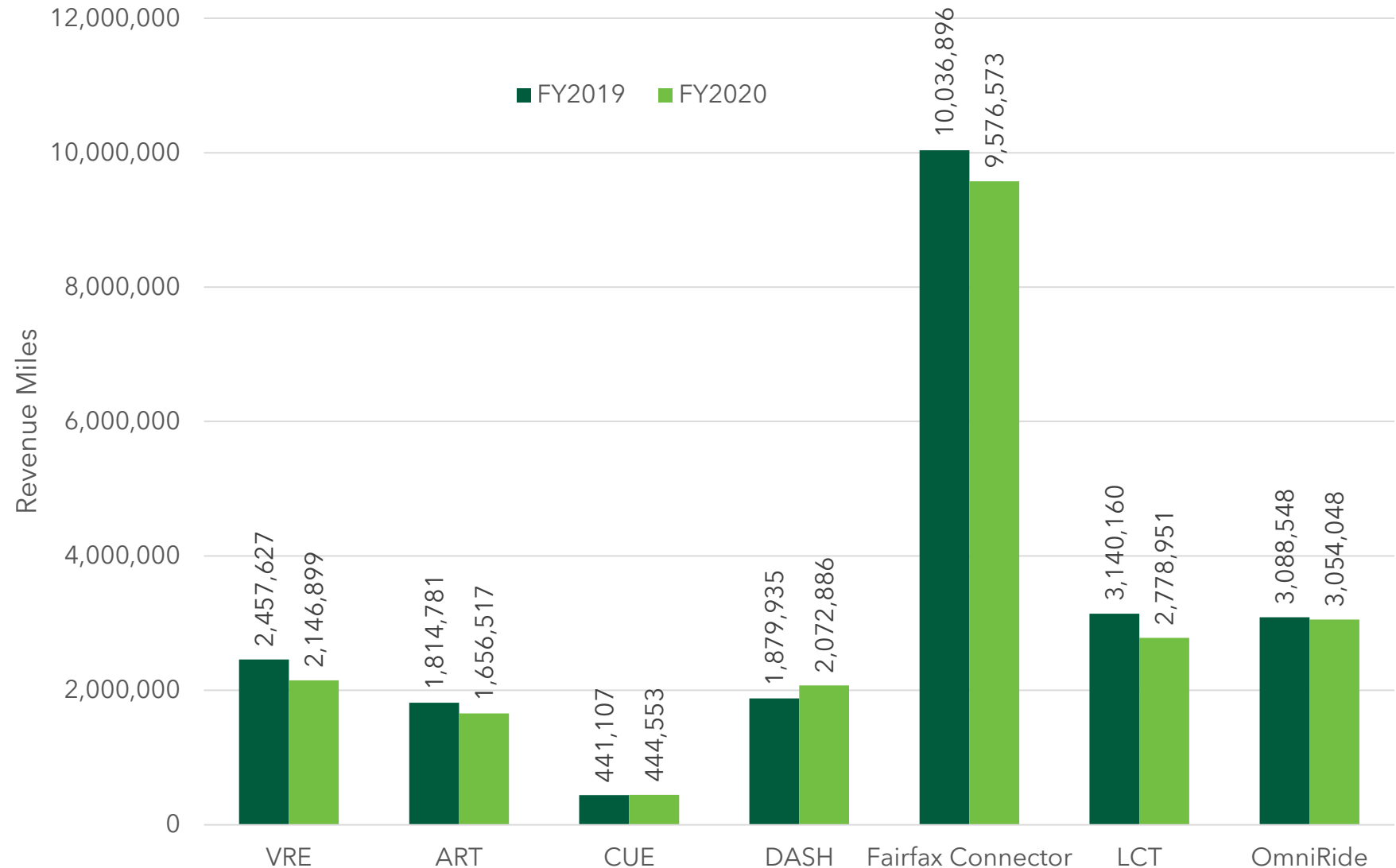


Figure 1b: Northern Virginia Revenue Miles, FY 2019 - FY 2020

The impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency resulted in a drop in ridership and for most systems a decrease in service operated. Only CUE continued to operate similar levels of service during this period. As ridership is returning, systems have been increasing levels of service.

DASH did show an increase of service, prior to the impacts of COVID-19. During the period impacted by COVID-19, DASH reduced service similar to other jurisdictions.



Typically transit moves over a quarter million people on an average day in Northern Virginia. Although this year has been impacted greatly by the COVID-19 public health emergency, the amount of people moved daily by transit in FY 2020 is approximately equal to the daily traffic volume on I-395.

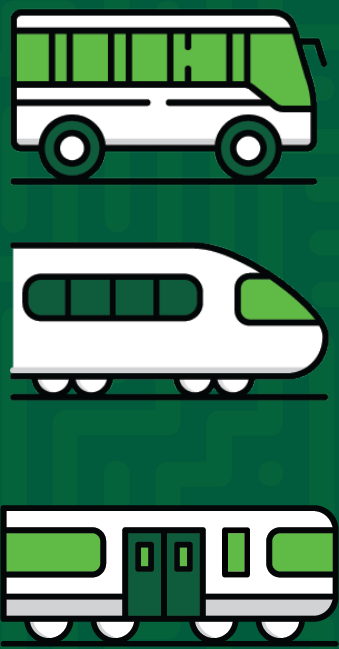
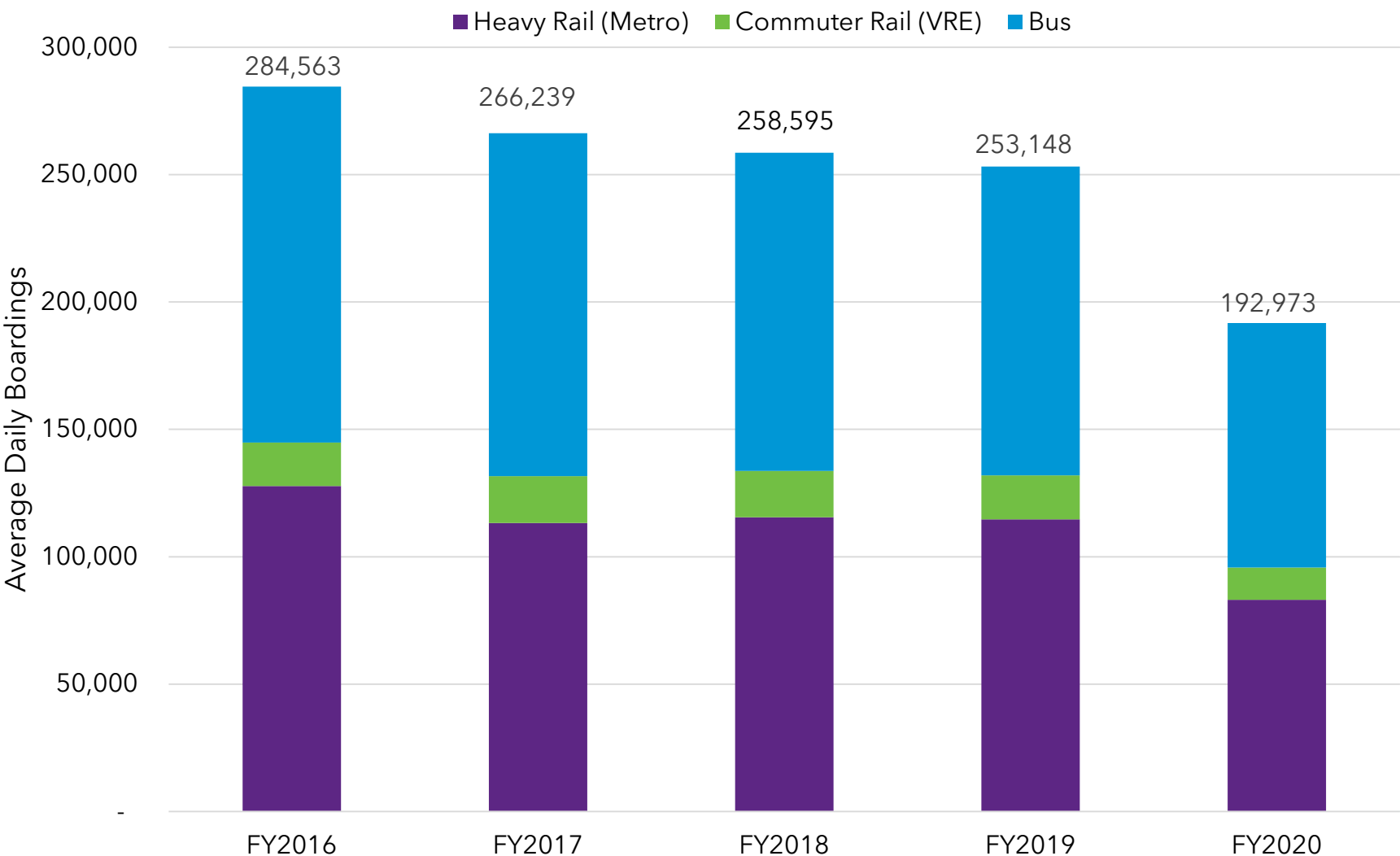


Figure 2: Northern Virginia Average Daily Transit Boardings (All Modes), FY 2016 - FY 2020



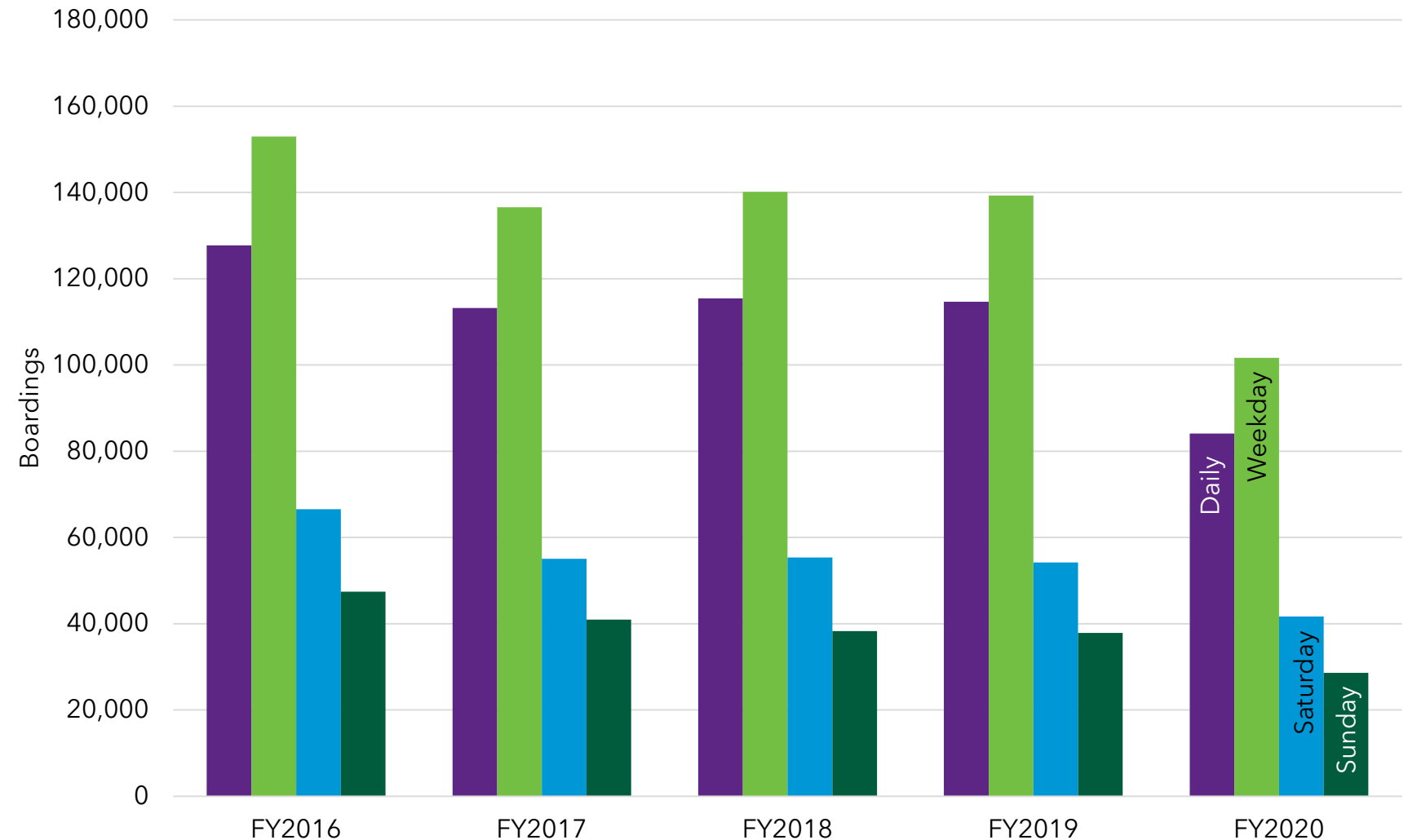
Source: DRPT OLGA System and WMATA



Weekday ridership is influenced greatly by commuter travel. The weekday average ridership is greater than twice the Saturday or Sunday average ridership. Prior to COVID-19, ridership showed a slight increase of 2%. Since COVID-19, weekday ridership has dropped close to 40%, likely due to the increase in telework, and weekend ridership has significantly decreased as well.

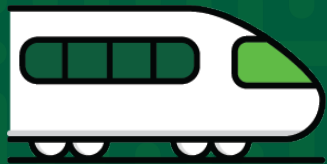


Figure 3: Northern Virginia Metrorail, Average Transit Boardings (Daily/Weekday/Saturday/Sunday), FY 2016 - FY 2020



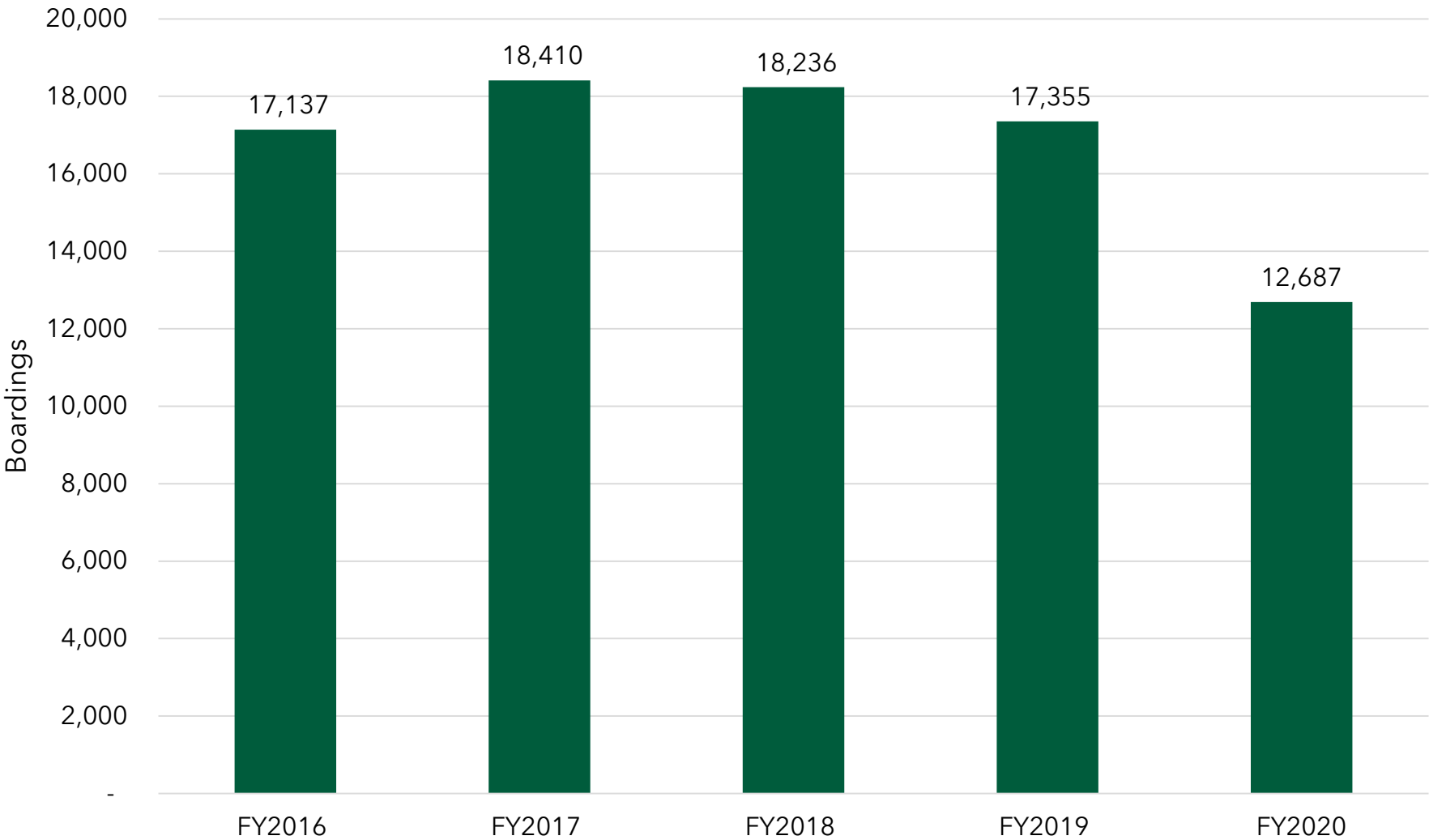


Prior to COVID-19, Virginia Railway Express experienced strong ridership and train utilization. The service - which operates on weekdays, primarily in the morning and evening commuter periods - carries close to 10% of the transit riders in Northern Virginia. Since COVID-19, VRE ridership decreased by over 90%.



Source: DRPT OLGA System

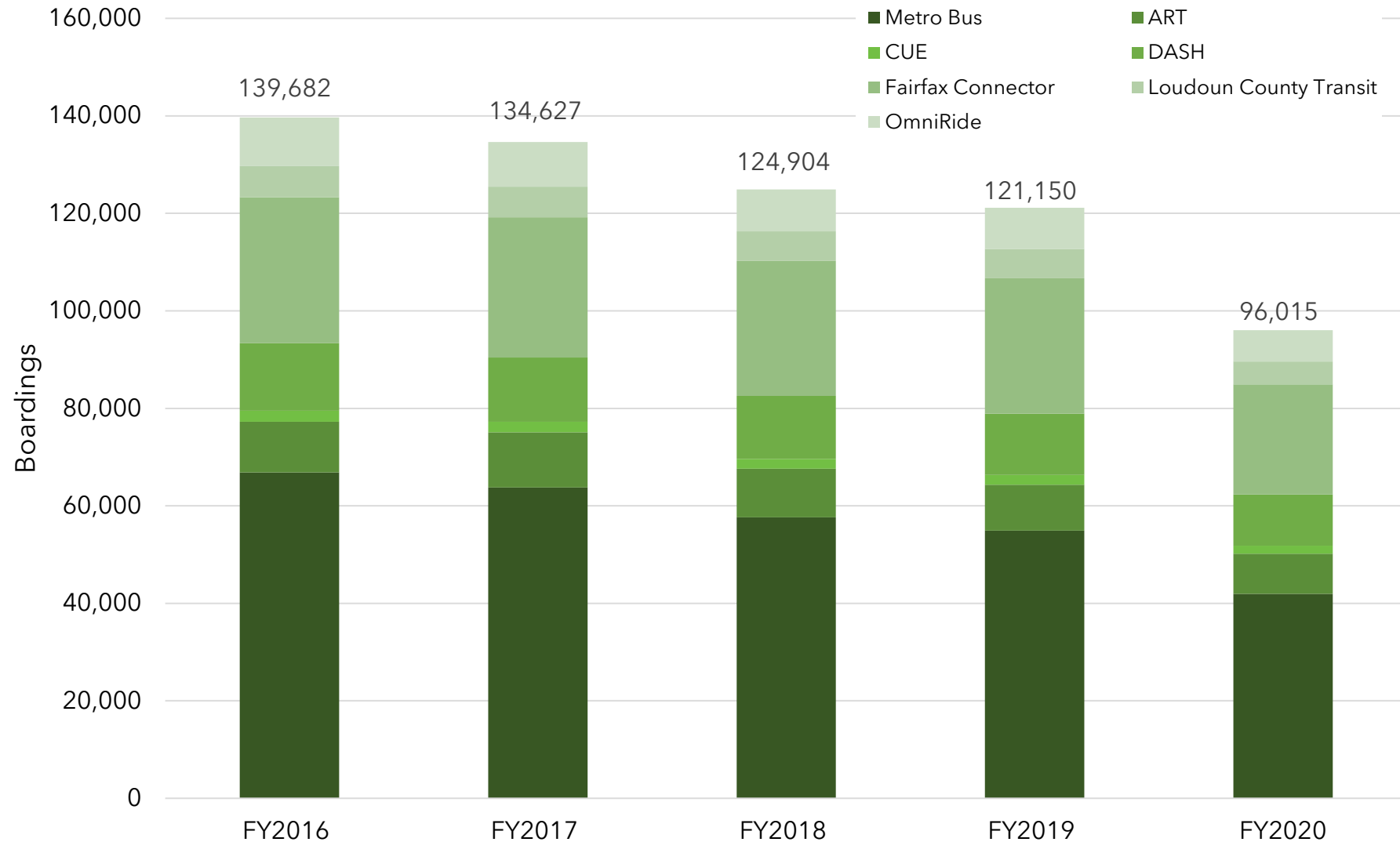
Figure 4: Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Average Daily Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020





Metrobus carries the majority of bus riders in Northern Virginia. Service and ridership have declined since FY 2016, but recent trends show ridership stabilizing. Prior to COVID-19, ridership in FY 2020 was holding steady at FY 2019 levels. Since COVID-19, overall Metrobus has experienced a 24% decrease in FY 2020 ridership in Virginia, when compared to FY 2019.

Figure 5: Northern Virginia Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020



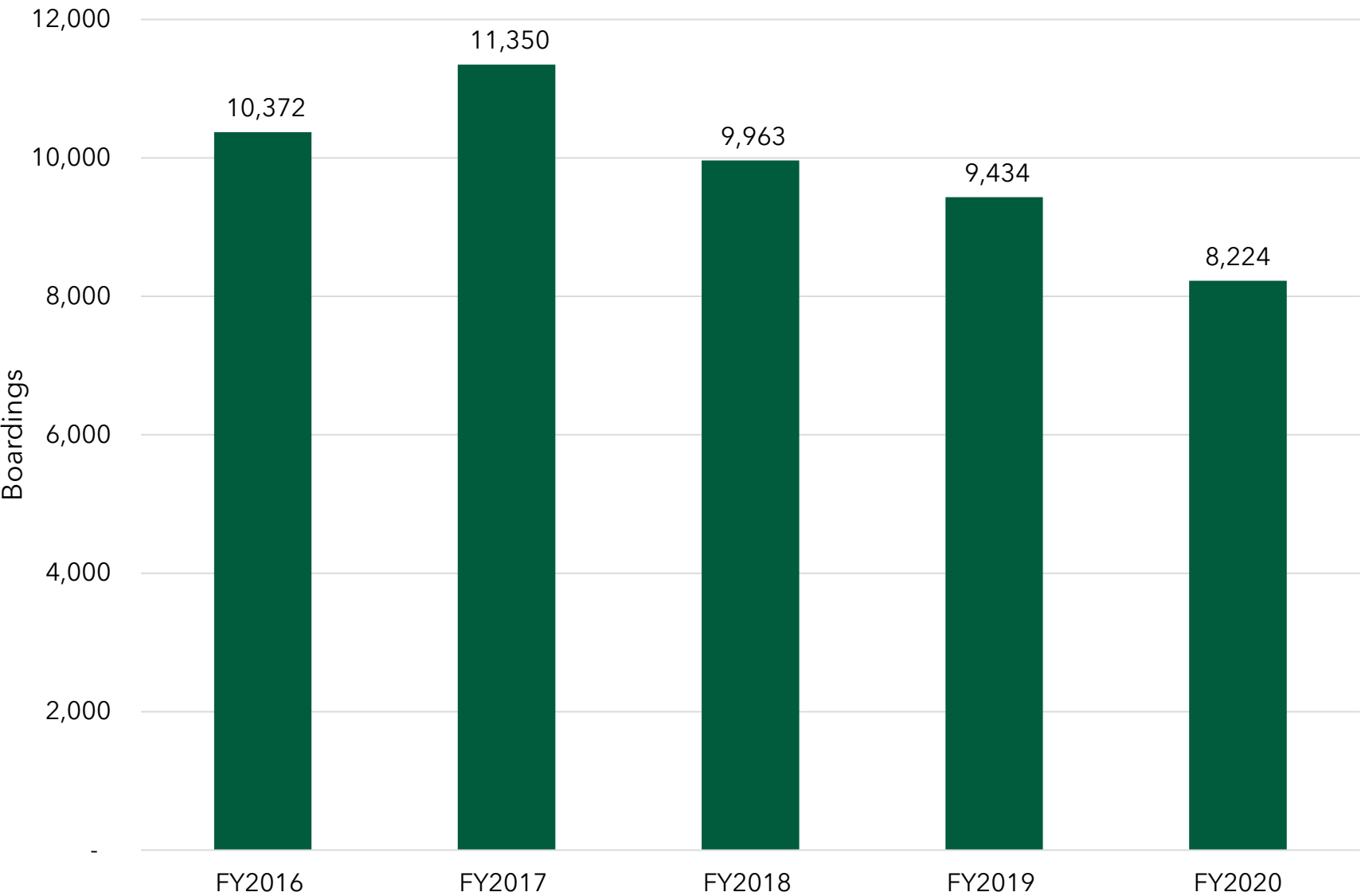


Unlike other bus systems in Northern Virginia, ART ridership peaked in FY 2017. Recent ridership levels started to show a return to higher levels. Prior to COVID-19, ART showed a greater than 10% increase in ridership. Since COVID-19 there has been over 50% drop in ridership.



Source: DRPT OLGA System

Figure 6: ART Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020

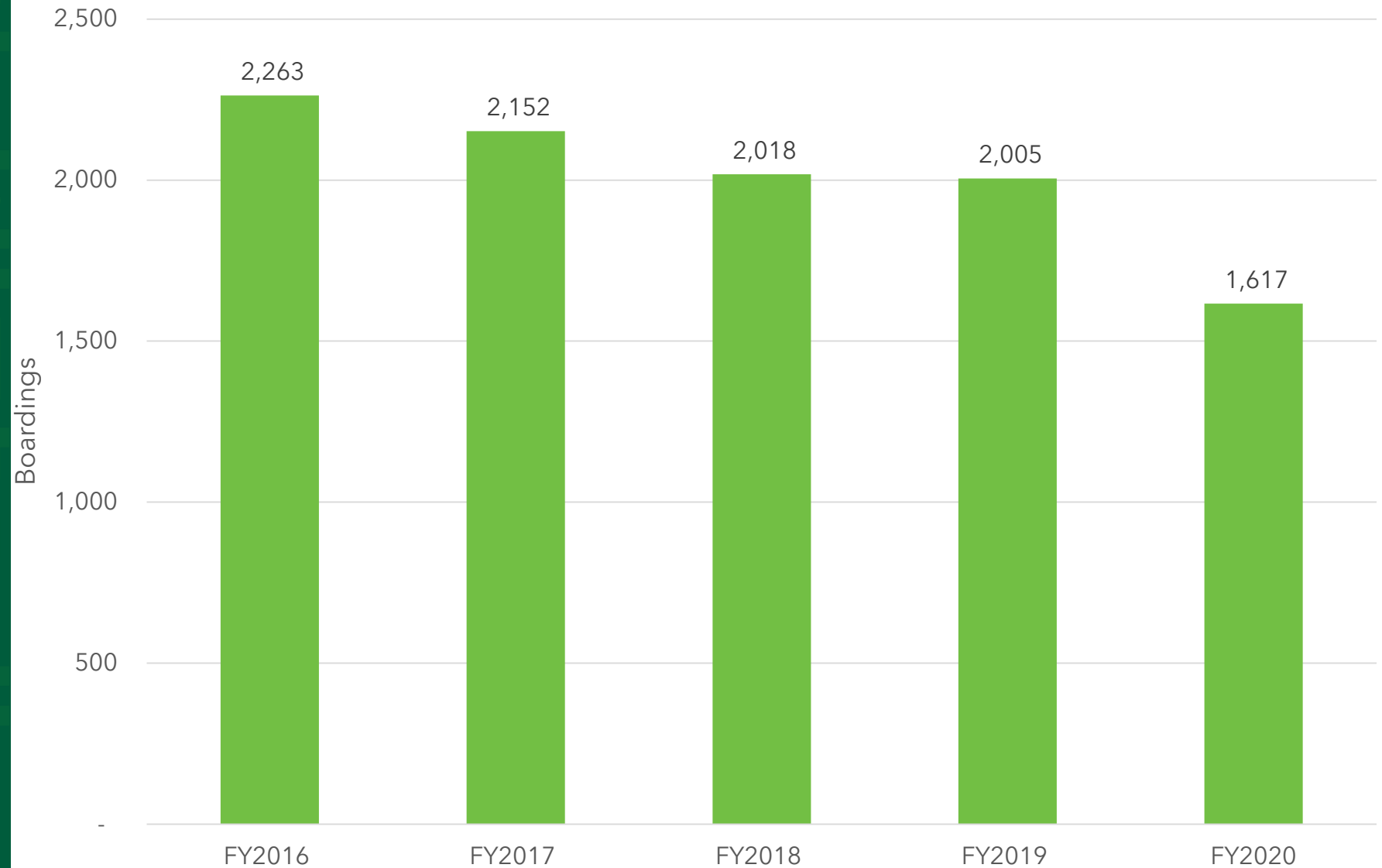




CUE ridership had been stabilizing since a high in 2015. Prior to COVID-19, CUE was holding steady with ridership similar to FY 2019. Since COVID-19, CUE saw a 60% decline in ridership. CUE has maintained the same level of service during this period in anticipation of ridership returning.



**Figure 7: CUE Average Daily Bus Boardings,
FY 2016 - FY 2020**



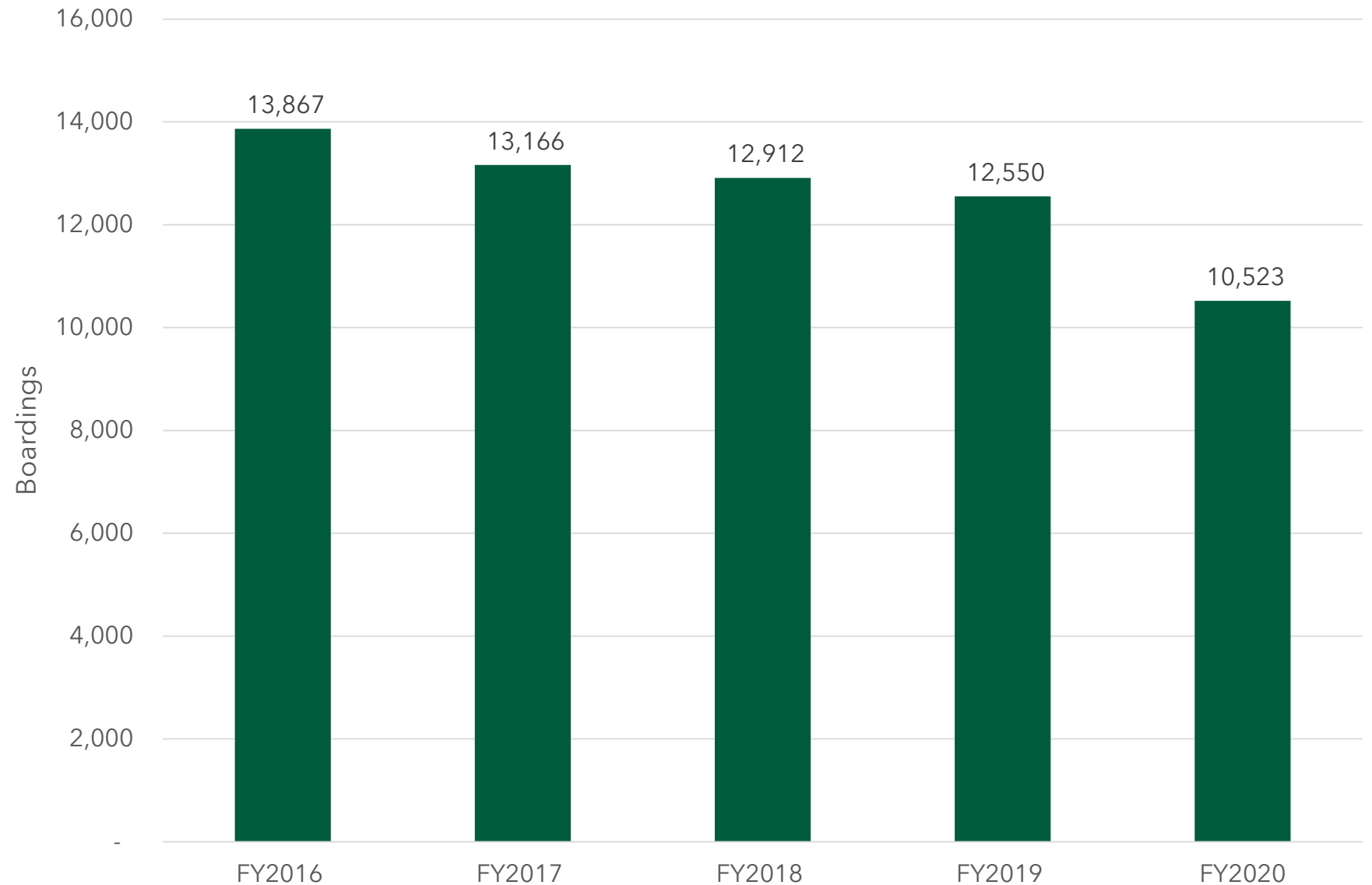


DASH has the third largest bus ridership in Northern Virginia. Prior to COVID-19, DASH showed over a 10% increase in ridership compared to the same period in FY 2019. Since COVID-19, FY 2020 showed an approximately 70% decline in ridership.



Source: DRPT OLGA System

Figure 8: DASH Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020





Fairfax Connector carries the second highest number of bus riders in Northern Virginia. Prior to COVID-19, Fairfax Connector showed stable ridership to the same period in FY 2019. Since COVID-19, Fairfax Connector showed the lowest percent reduction in ridership compared to other systems.



Source: DRPT OLGA System

Figure 9: Fairfax Connector Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020

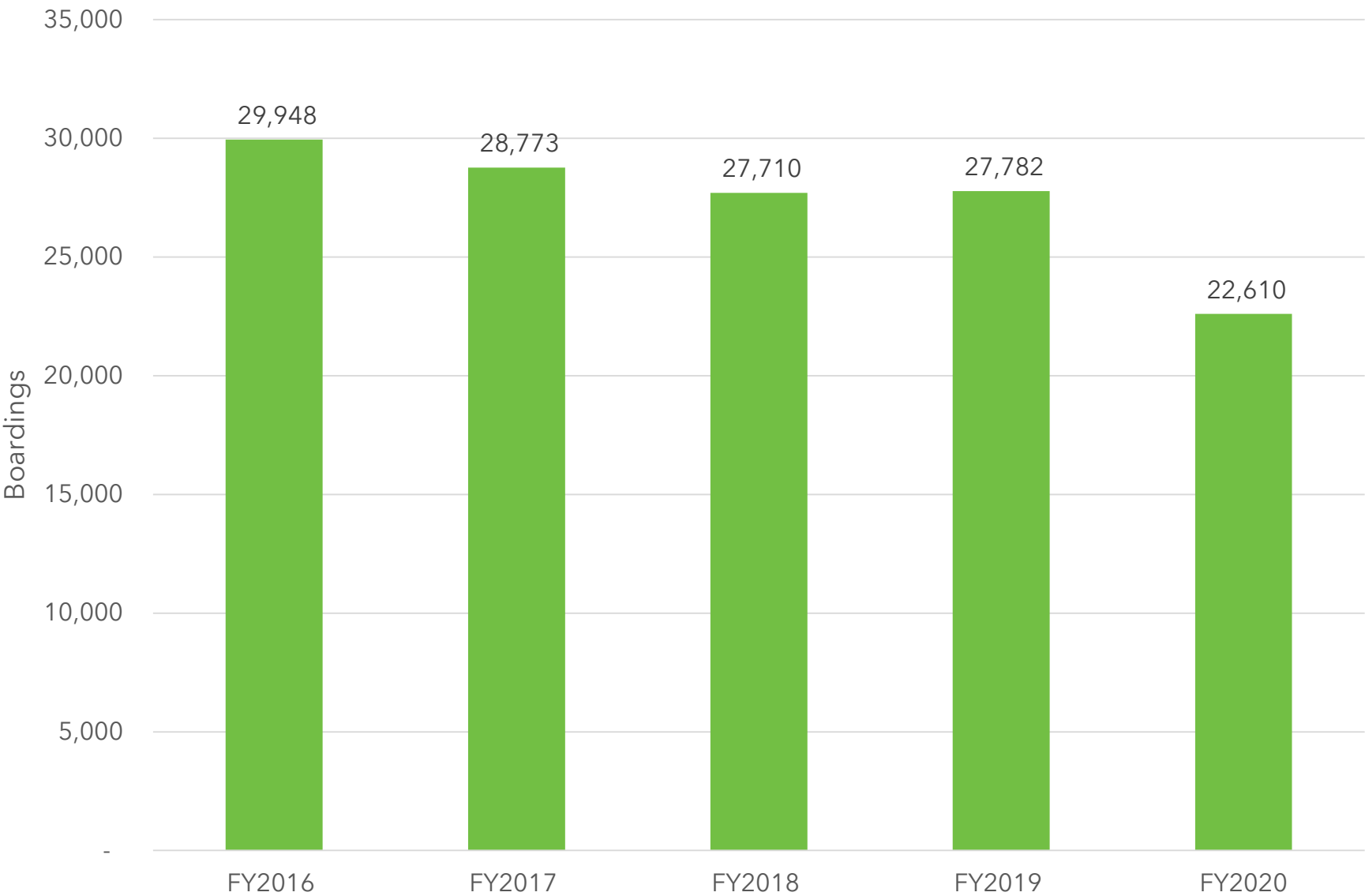
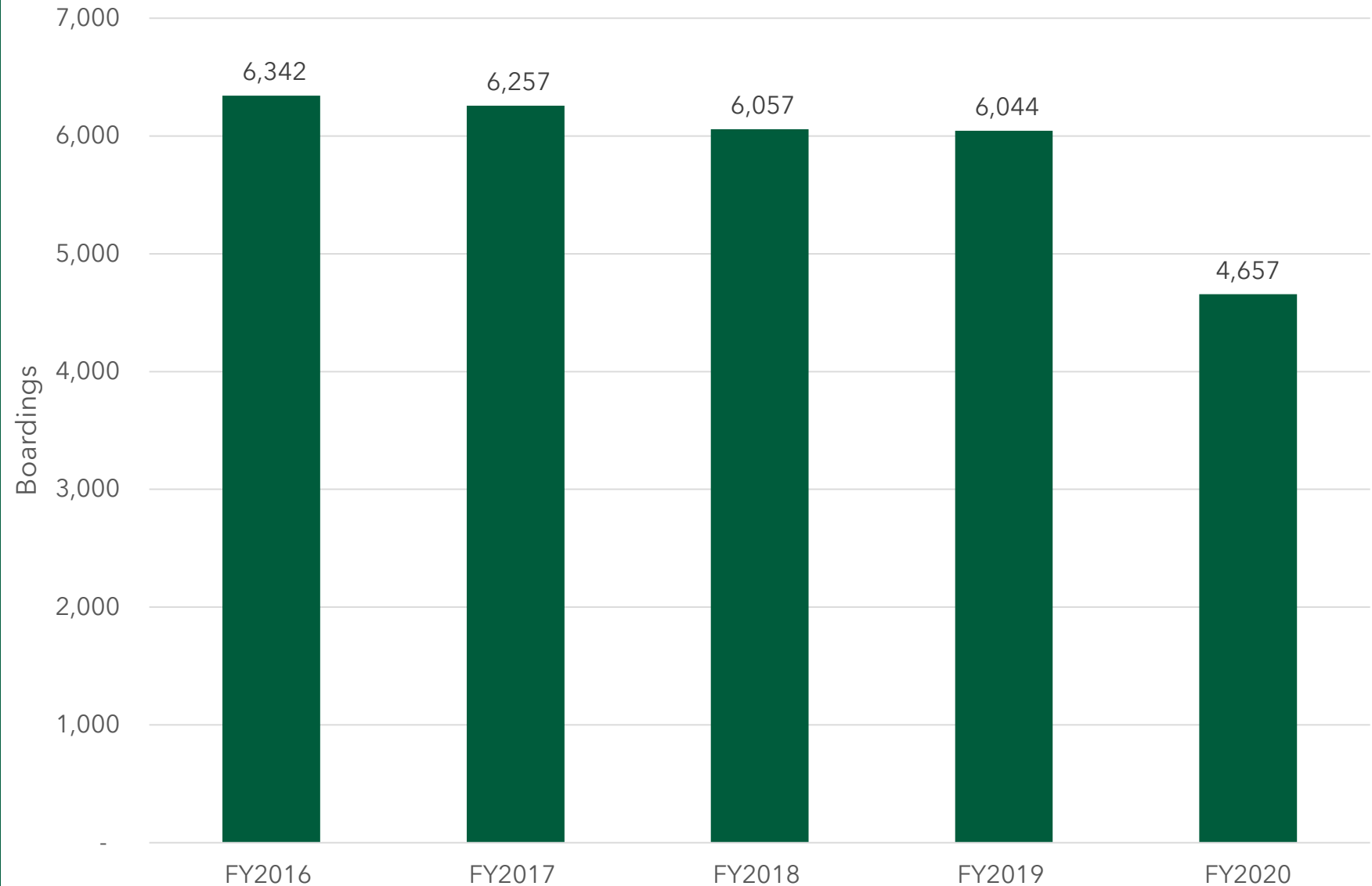


Figure 10: Loudoun County Transit Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020



Loudoun County Transit had experienced consistent ridership levels with only modest variation over the past five years. Prior to COVID-19, Loudoun County Transit showed an approximately 10% increase in ridership for FY 2020. Since COVID-19, Loudoun County Transit has had one of the highest drops in ridership, likely a function of increased telework and similar to other commuter-based services.

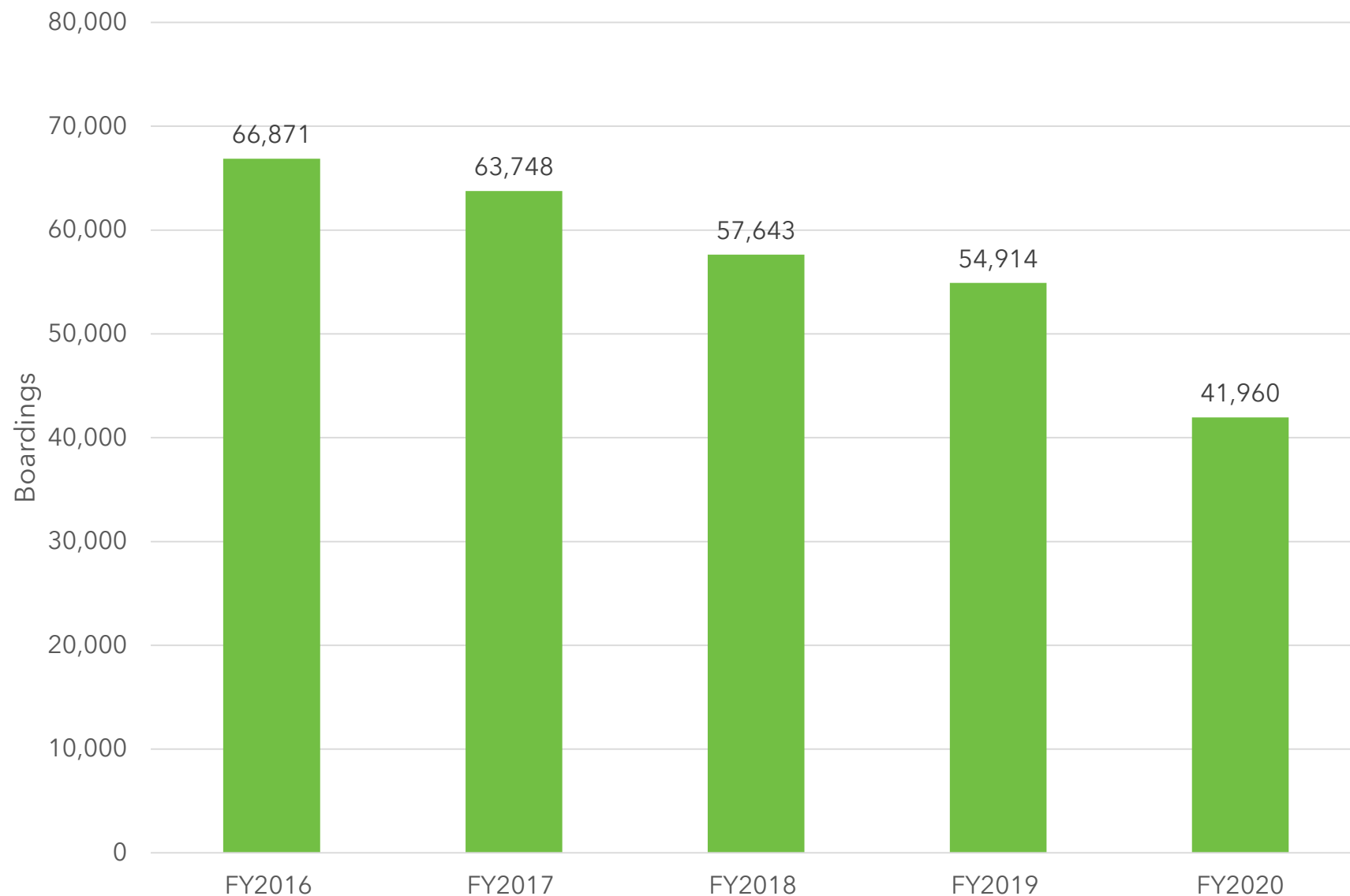




Metrobus carries the majority of bus riders in Northern Virginia. Service and ridership have declined since FY 2016, but recent trends show ridership stabilizing. Prior to COVID-19, ridership in FY 2020 was holding steady at FY 2019 levels. Since COVID-19, overall Metrobus has experienced a 24% decrease in FY 2020 ridership in Virginia, when compared to FY 2019.



Figure 11: Northern Virginia Metrobus Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020





In the past OmniRide showed a decline in riders, much of that is due to local service versus long haul commuter bus service. Prior to COVID-19, ridership showed an increase of 4% for FY 2020. Since COVID-19, OmniRide showed one of the highest decreases in ridership, likely a function of increased telework similar to other commuter-based services.



Source: DRPT OLGA System

Figure 12: OmniRide Average Daily Bus Boardings, FY 2016 - FY 2020

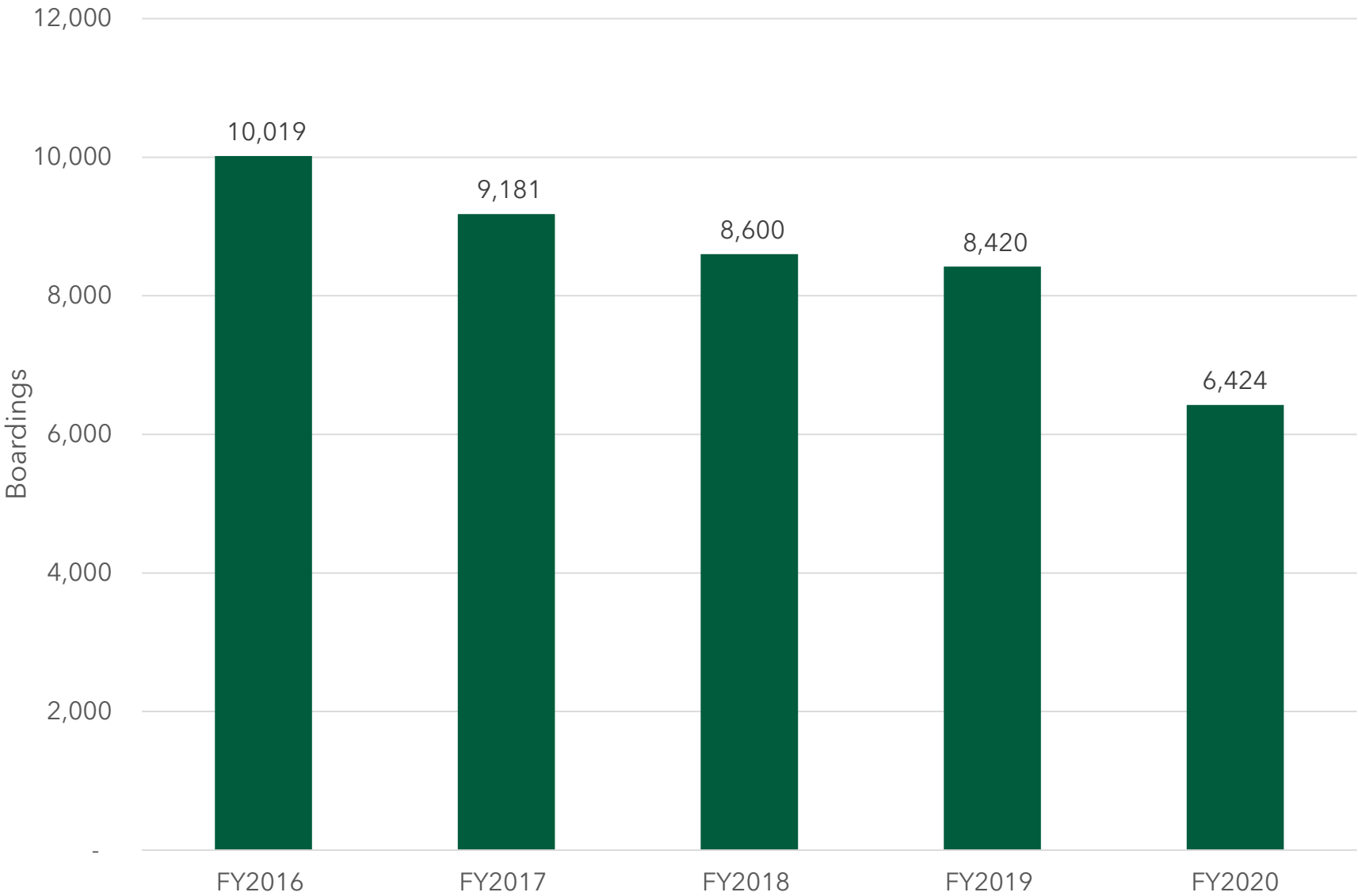


Figure 13: Northern Virginia Metrorail Average Transit Boardings by Station, FY 2019 - FY 2020

		FY 2019			FY 2020		
Station		Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Stations in Alexandria							
	Blue/Yellow Line Stations						
	Braddock Road	3,826	1,401	899	2,201	823	517
	Van Dorn Street	2,265	777	456	1,199	469	256
	Eisenhower Avenue	1,585	612	368	876	395	220
	King Street	5,679	2,700	1,915	3,094	1,728	1,121
	Total Alexandria:	13,355	5,490	3,638	7,370	3,415	2,114
Stations in Arlington							
	Orange/Silver Line Stations						
	East Falls Church	3,813	1,594	1,004	2,775	1,283	785
	Ballston	9,232	3,276	1,957	7,506	2,910	1,742
	Virginia Square	3,793	1,279	784	2,836	1,052	641
	Clarendon	4,478	2,051	1,283	3,365	1,706	1,069
	Courthouse	6,349	2,283	1,396	4,828	1,960	1,202
	Rosslyn	13,059	4,487	3,597	10,025	3,743	3,044
	Blue/Yellow Line Stations						
	Arlington Cemetery	1,086	1,699	1,407	624	1,130	787
	Pentagon	13,785	1,230	989	10,766	1,074	925
	Pentagon City	12,133	7,069	4,572	9,161	5,563	3,580
	Crystal City	10,847	3,634	2,605	8,327	3,056	2,080
	National Airport	5,715	3,865	4,944	4,379	3,105	3,732
Total Arlington:		84,290	32,468	24,537	64,592	26,583	19,587

Figure 14: Northern Virginia Metrorail Average Transit Boardings by Station, FY 2019 – FY 2020 (continued)

		FY 2019			FY 2020		
Station		Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Stations in Fairfax County							
	Orange Line Stations						
	Vienna	8,686	3,393	1,918	6,329	2,374	1,294
	Dunn Loring	3,720	1,316	760	2,795	947	521
	West Falls Church	2,463	773	435	1,902	678	393
	Blue/Yellow Line Stations						
	Huntington (Yellow)	5,832	1,872	1,188	3,318	1,169	739
	Franconia-Springfield (Blue)	5,172	2,237	1,269	3,199	1,423	824
	Silver Line Stations						
	Wiehle Reston East	7,650	3,100	2,009	5,670	2,171	1,371
	Spring Hill	1,139	547	348	868	520	329
	Greensboro	1,415	372	211	1,205	347	202
	Tysons Corner	3,507	2,154	1,296	2,602	1,655	1,034
	McLean	2,081	478	265	1,794	389	209
Total Fairfax County:		41,664	16,243	9,700	29,681	11,673	6,916

Definition of Metrics



Average Weekday Boardings:

The sum of the times a person enters a transit vehicle or station during a non-holiday weekday throughout the year divided by the number of non-holiday weekdays during the year.

Average Saturday or Sunday Boardings:

The sum of the times a person enters a transit vehicle or station during a Saturday or Sunday service level day throughout the year divided by the number of Saturday or Sunday service level days during the year.

Average Daily Boardings:

The sum of the times a person enters a transit vehicle or station during the year divided by a weighted average of service days during that year.

The mathematical equation used for this analysis was:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Average Daily Boardings} = & (\text{number of weekdays}) \times (\text{annual weekday boardings}) \\ & + (\text{number of Saturdays}) \times (\text{annual Saturday boardings}) \times 0.5 \\ & + (\text{number of Sundays \& holidays}) \times (\text{annual Sunday \& holiday boardings}) \times 0.3 \end{aligned}$$

0.5 represent the difference in weekday to Saturday service levels

0.3 represents the difference in weekday to Sunday and Holiday service levels

Agenda Item #8: Virginia Railway Express (VRE)



TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic setting forth a series of actions at the federal, state, and local levels to combat and contain the spread of the virus during this public health emergency. Since that time, NVTC jurisdictional transit agencies, including WMATA and VRE, have implemented substantial changes to transit operations, many of which are being updated daily. The information provided in these staff reports reflect decisions as of the publication date and are subject to change.

At the October meeting VRE CEO Rich Dalton will update the Commission on VRE's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and other activities. The Commission will be asked to take to action to refer the FY 2022 VRE preliminary operating and capital budget to the jurisdictions.

A. VRE COVID-19 Response

On Tuesday, March 17, VRE began operating on an "S" schedule, which is traditionally used on holidays and during inclement weather, due to the significant drop in ridership as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. An [update from VRE Chief Executive Officer Rich Dalton](#) is attached that highlights VRE service changes, ridership and the steps VRE is implementing to help contain the spread of the coronavirus.

B. VRE CEO Report and Minutes

At the October 1 meeting VRE CEO Rich Dalton will provide his report. The [Minutes of the September 18, 2020 VRE Operations Board meeting](#) and the [VRE CEO Report for September 2020](#) are attached.

C. ACTION ITEM: Approve [Resolution #2421](#): Authorize the Referral of the Preliminary FY2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Jurisdictions

At the October meeting the Commission will be asked to approve [Resolution #2421](#) to refer the Preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Jurisdictions. The key budget issues

were provided as information for the NVTC September 3 meeting. The VRE Operations Board met on September 18 and authorized the VRE CEO to refer the preliminary FY 2022 budget to the Commissions for their consideration, so the Commissions, in turn, can refer their preliminary budget recommendations to the jurisdictions for review and comment.

VRE's preliminary FY 2022 operating budget totals \$91.9 million, which includes operations, maintenance, and existing debt service. This preliminary budget amount is nearly flat to the approved FY 2021 budget of \$91.4 million (an increase of 0.5%), and VRE staff are continuing to review departmental budgets to identify further expense reductions. In light of the reduced ridership and ongoing economic challenges from the COVID-19 public health emergency, the preliminary operating budget includes no changes to passenger fares and no increase to jurisdictional subsidy. Before the application of any available emergency funding, the preliminary operating budget has a net unfunded amount of \$25.7 million. However, VRE's federal CARES Act funding will be available to backfill lost passenger revenue and ensure that no additional jurisdictional contribution is required.

VRE's preliminary FY 2022 capital budget includes commitments of \$101.8 million from federal, state, regional, and local funding sources towards the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). VRE's CIP is undergoing substantial revisions as a result of the Transforming Rail in Virginia program being pursued by the Commonwealth, and the scopes, funding sources, and timelines of many projects are being modified in coordination with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

VRE staff will submit a final FY 2022 VRE operating and capital budget in December for the Operations Board's consideration and referral to the Commissions for their final approval at their January 2021 meetings. Projections of revenues and expenses are still under review by VRE staff and may change materially as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. The final FY 2022 budget (which will include an amended FY 2021 budget) will ensure VRE can continue to provide safe and reliable commuter rail service as Virginians return to work while equitably and strategically sharing the cost of that service across riders, local jurisdictions, and the available federal CARES Act funds. Further information about the budget, including key budget assumptions, is provided in the [attached VRE memorandum](#), as well as in the [VRE budget presentation](#) given at the Operations Board meeting

D. VRE CEO Delegated Spending Authority Increased

At its September 18 meeting, the VRE Operations Board approved increasing the VRE CEO's delegated spending authority to award contracts up to \$200,000 and procurement authorizations up to \$1,000,000 without requiring Operations Board approval. Periodically the CEO delegation of authority limits have been raised. The key points in support of these changes are outlined in the [attached VRE memorandum](#). The VRE CEO will provide an expanded Spending Authority Report to the Operations Board incorporating a summary of all actions that would have previously gone to the Operations Board for approval. The Operations Board had authority to approve this amendment to the CEO spending authority based on the [delegation of authority plan approved by the Commissions](#).



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

TO: Northern Virginia Transportation Commission Chair Cristol and Commissioners

FROM: Rich Dalton, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: September 23, 2020

SUBJECT: VRE Monthly Update

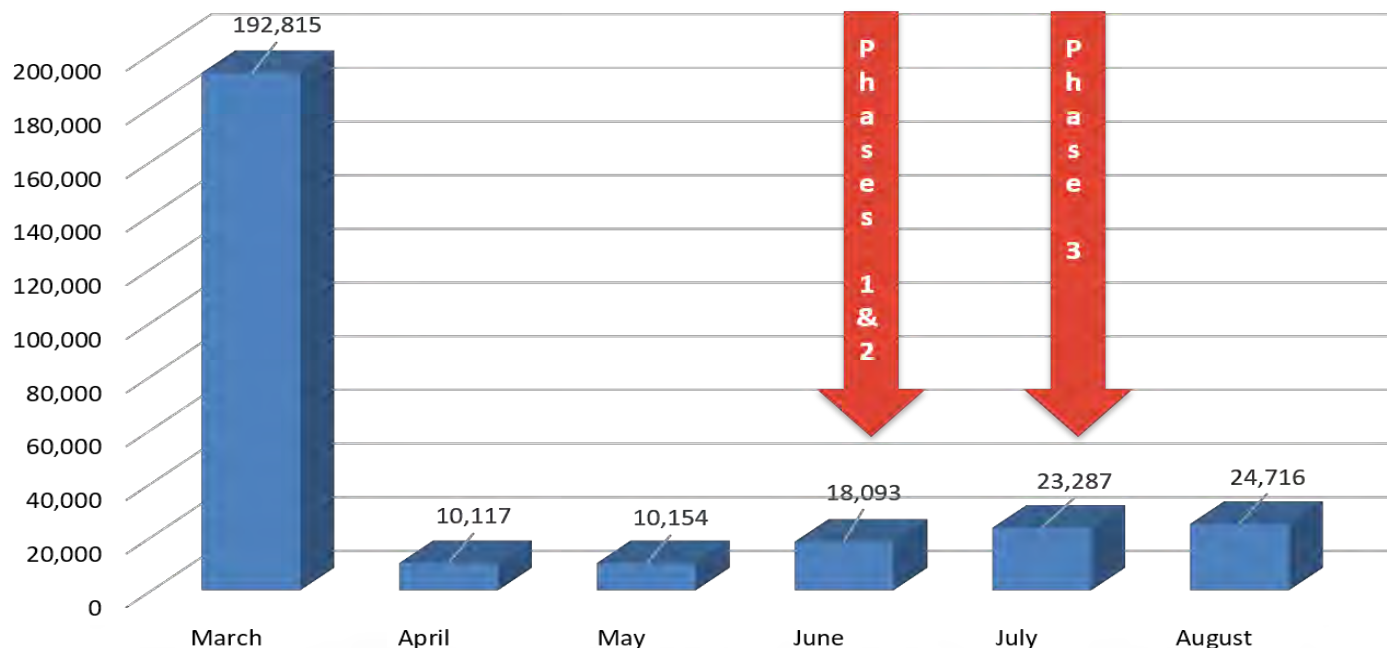
Ridership continues to trend upward, albeit slowly. On September 15, we came close to hitting 1,500 daily riders, the highest level since March 19, two days after we reduced service. It's hard to compare actual ridership for the first two weeks of September in 2019 and 2020, as Labor Day fell during different weeks of service. Here's what ridership looks like over the past four weeks compared to the same weeks in 2019.

Week Ending	2020 Ridership	2020 Average Daily Ridership	2019 Ridership	Numeric Difference	Percentage Difference
Aug. 28	6,329	1,266	89,316	-82,987	-92.9%
Sept. 4	6,114	1,223	75,378*	-69,264	-91.9%
Sept. 11	5,251*	1,313	93,998	-88,747	-94.4%
Sept. 18	6,554	1,311	93,802	-87,248	-93.0%

*Four days of service

MONTHLY RIDERSHIP

March - August 2020



Our multi-pronged ridership recovery campaign continues to evolve, as we emphasize the precautions, which go beyond industry norms, that VRE is taking to protect the health and safety of our riders and train crews. We recently premiered a series of videos, on our website and [social media channels](#), that are designed to reassure passengers by demonstrating our [commitment to their health and safety](#) and [showing them what to expect](#) when they are ready to ride. The next phase of our campaign will take a more regional approach to messaging. Staff will be approaching VRE jurisdictions and their elected officials to collaborate on ways to spread the word about how we are making commutes as healthy and safe as possible.

We are monitoring ridership to accommodate social distancing on our platforms and trains. Under our current distancing plan, roughly a third of our seats are available to passengers. While we have three different railcar configurations, the average car holds 130 passengers, 45 of which are “available” to riders. To date, only two trains have exceeded 50 percent of “available” seating.

As ridership grows, we can lengthen and add trains. On July 27, we added an additional roundtrip – train 300 northbound in the morning and train 307 southbound in the evening – on the Fredericksburg Line.

Our [train utilization trends web page](#) has been updated to reflect total seats, maximum capacity to support social distancing, and current daily ridership. This information serves as a decision-making tool for passengers who want the greatest amount of distancing. We also are exploring ways to notify passengers when trains are near or at capacity.

Our Continuity of Operations team meets virtually each day and is in constant contact. VRE’s supply chain, staffing, business processes, and other functional areas of the organization remain in good shape.



MINUTES

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING

September 18, 2020

14700 Potomac Mills Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192

Members Present

*Walter Alcorn (NVTC)
*Andrea Bailey (PRTC)
*Preston Banks (PRTC)
*Elizabeth Bennet-Parker (NVTC)
*Meg Bohmke (PRTC)
*Katie Cristol (NVTC)
*Margaret Franklin (PRTC)
*Matt Kelly (PRTC)
*Jeanine Lawson (PRTC)
*Ralph Smith (PRTC)
*Dan Storck (NVTC)
*James Walkinshaw (NVTC)

Jurisdiction

Fairfax County
Prince William County
City of Manassas Park
City of Alexandria
Stafford County
Arlington County
Prince William County
City of Fredericksburg
Prince William County
City of Manassas
Fairfax County
Fairfax County

Members Absent

Jennifer Mitchell (DPRT)
Gary Skinner (PRTC)

Commonwealth of Virginia
Spotsylvania County

Alternates Present

Michael McLaughlin (DRPT)

Commonwealth of Virginia

Alternates Absent

Canek Aguirre (NVTC)
Victor Angry (PRTC)
Pete Candland (PRTC)
Hector Cendejas (PRTC)
Deborah Frazier (PRTC)
Libby Garvey (NVTC)
Jason Graham (PRTC)
Jeff McKay (NVTC)
Pam Sebesky (PRTC)

City of Alexandria
Prince William County
Prince William County
City of Manassas Park
Spotsylvania County
Arlington County
City of Fredericksburg
Fairfax County
City of Manassas

*Voting Member

**Delineates arrival/departure following the commencement of the Operations Board Meeting. Notation of exact arrival/departure time is included in the body of the minutes.

Staff and General Public

Rich Dalton – VRE
Christine Hoeffner – VRE
Lezlie Lamb – VRE
Steve MacIsaac – VRE Legal Counsel
Kate Mattice - NVTC

Kristin Nutter – VRE
Dallas Richards - VRE
Mark Schofield – VRE
Joe Swartz – VRE

Call to Order – 1

Vice-Chair Bennett-Parker called the meeting to order at 9:12 A. M.

Roll Call – 2

Resolution Finding Need to Conduct September 18, 2020 Meeting Electronically – 3

Mr. Dalton briefed the Operations Board on Agenda Item 3, a Resolution Finding Need to Conduct September 18, 2020 Meeting Electronically.

Ms. Cristol moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, approve Resolution #03-09-2020, Finding Need to Conduct September 18, 2020 Meeting Electronically. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, Shelton, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw. Mr. McLaughlin did not respond to roll call vote.

Approval of the Agenda – 4

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Smith, to approve the agenda as presented. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Shelton, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Approval of the Minutes of the July 17, 2020 VRE Operations Board Meeting – 5

Ms. Cristol moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, to approve the Minutes from July 17. The vote in favor was cast by Members Bailey, Bennett-Parker, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, Shelton, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw. Members Alcorn, Banks, Bohmke, and McLaughlin abstained.

Vice -Chair's Comments – 6

- Vice-Chair Bennett-Parker congratulated Rich Dalton on being named the VRE Chief Executive Officer. He thanked the members of the New CEO Search Committee and it's Chair, Katie Cristol for the thorough search and evaluation of candidates.
- Vice-Chair reminded Members of the Legislative Committee that they would hold a meeting following the adjournment of the VRE Operations Board meeting.

Chief Executive Officer's Report – 7

Mr. Dalton briefed the Operations Board on the following items of interest:

- Safety/ COVID-19 update
- Ridership
- Performance
- Train Utilization
- "Welcome Back" efforts

- Project Spotlight
 - Potomac Shores
 - Long Bridge

Public Comment Time – 8

Vice-Chair Bennett-Parker announced that public comments were being accepted electronically through the Public Comments Form. A link to the form can be found at vre.org and the link would remain active through the end of the meeting. The Clerk will read the comments into the record prior to adjournment.

Action Items – 9

Referral of the Preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions – 9A

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Alcorn, to refer the Preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Approval of Increases to Chief Executive Officer Procurement Authorization and Contract Award Authorities – 9B

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Ms. Shelton, to approve increases to two delegations of authority to the Chief Executive Officer: contract award authority to \$200,000, and procurement authorization authority to \$1,000,000. Mr. Kelly asked the CEO to advise the Operations Board of significant procurements prior to their issue.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Execute a Contract for Construction of the Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade Facility – 9C

Ms. Cristol moved, with a second by Ms. Cristol, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Clark Construction Group, for the construction of the VRE Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade facility.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Execute a Contract for Safety and Security Consulting Services – 9D

Ms. Shelton moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with ADS System Safety Consulting, LLC for safety and security consulting services for one base year, and four option years.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Execute a Contract for Construction of Quantico Station Improvements – 9E

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Ms. Bohmke, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Archer Western Construction, LLC for the construction of Quantico Station improvements.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Execute a Contract for Construction Management Services for the Quantico Station Improvements – 9F

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Ms. Cristol, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Dewberry Engineers, Inc. for construction management services for the Quantico Station improvements.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, and Walkinshaw. Members Smith and Storck did not respond to the roll call vote.

Authorization to Execute General Engineering Consulting Services Contracts for Project Design and Construction Management – 9G

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Banks, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute contract with HDR Engineering, Inc. for project design services; and STV Incorporated for construction management services for a base year and four option years.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Issue a General Planning Consulting Services Task Order for Surveying Services to Support Real Estate Acquisition Activities for the Broad Run Expansion Project – 9H

Ms. Lawson moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to issue a GPC Task Order to Vanasse Hangen Burstlin, Inc. for surveying services to support real estate acquisition activities for the Broad Run Expansion Project.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Amend the GEC VII Task Order for Final Design Services for the Fredericksburg Station Rehabilitation Project – 9I

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Ms. Bohmke, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to amend the current Task Order for Final Design Services for the Fredericksburg Station Rehabilitation Project, executed with STV Incorporated under the GEC VII contract.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Authorization to Amend the GEC VII Task Order for Design Services for VRE Suite 202 Phase 2 Renovations – 9J

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Alcorn, to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to amend the current Task Order for Design Services for VRE Suite 202 Phase 2 Renovations executed with STV Incorporated under the GEC VII contract.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, and Walkinshaw.

Information Items – 10

Spending Authority Report – 10A

In July and August, the following purchases greater than \$50,000 but less than \$100,000 were made:

- On July 8, 2020, VRE issued a Blanket Purchase Order in an amount not to exceed \$60,000 to Fairmont Supply Company to acquire crimper hoses and fittings on an as needed basis for VRE's fleet of locomotives.
- On July 17, 2020, VRE issued a Task Order in the amount of \$99,295 to STV Incorporated under the Mechanical Engineering Consulting Services VII contract to provide monitoring and support for Positive Train Control.
- On July 22, 2020, VRE issued a Task Order in the amount of \$96,525 to STV Incorporated under the Mechanical Engineering Consulting Services VII contract to provide procurement support for the acquisition of new railcars.
- On August 12, 2020, VRE issued a Sole Source Blanket Purchase Order in an amount not to exceed \$70,000 to Carter Machinery (Alban CAT) to acquire Head End Power (HEP) filters and thermostat components on an as needed basis for the Caterpillar engines utilized by VRE's fleet of locomotives.
- On August 29, 2020, VRE issued a Task Order in the amount of \$64,605 to STV Incorporated under the General Engineering Consulting Services VII contract to design the communications and power infrastructure for the security camera system at Broad Run and Crossroads.
- On August 29, 2020, VRE issued a Blanket Purchase Order in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 to CDWG to acquire IT hardware and maintenance services on an as needed basis.

Equipment Storage Update – 10B

Manager of Project Development, Christine Hoeffner and VRE Chief Engineer, Dallas Richards briefed the Operations Board on several storage facility projects at various stages of development.

Closed Session – 11

A Closed Session was not necessary.

Vice-Chair Bennett-Parker asked if there was any other business. There was none.

Mr. Alcorn moved, with a second by Ms. Lawson, to adjourn the meeting.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Bennett-Parker, Bohmke, Cristol, Franklin, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Smith, and Walkinshaw.

Approved this 16th day of October 2020

Gary Skinner
Chair

Jeanine Lawson

Secretary

CERTIFICATION

This certification hereby acknowledges the minutes for the September 18, 2020 Virginia Railway Express Operations Board Meeting have been recorded to the best of my ability.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie M. Lamb".

Leslie M. Lamb

DRAFT

CEO REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2020



OUR MISSION

The Virginia Railway Express, a joint project of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission, will provide safe, cost-effective, accessible, reliable, convenient, and customer responsive commuter-oriented rail passenger service. VRE contributes to the economic vitality of its member jurisdictions as an integral part of a balanced, intermodal regional transportation system.



CEO REPORT | SEPTEMBER 2020

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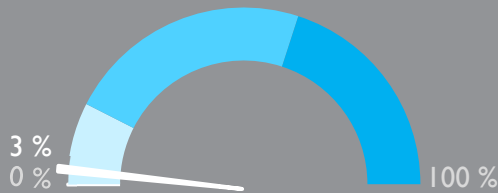
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VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
A better way. A better life.

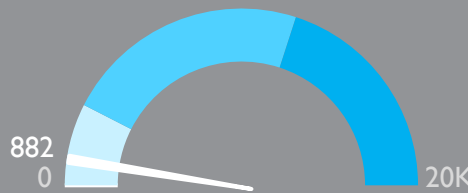


SUCCESS AT A GLANCE



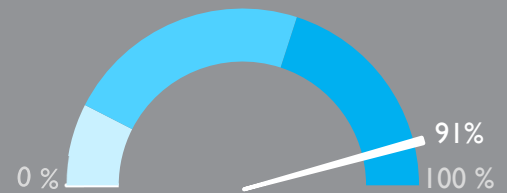
PARKING UTILIZATION

The total number of parking spaces used in the VRE system during the month, divided by the total number of parking spaces available.



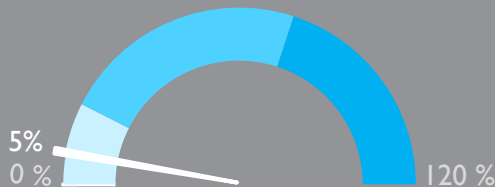
AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP

The average number of boardings each operating day inclusive of Amtrak Step-Up boardings and reduced, "S" schedule, service.
Same month, previous year: 18,665



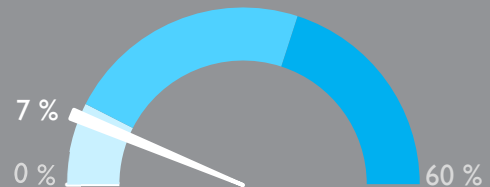
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

Percent of trains arriving at their destination within five minutes of the schedule.
Same month, previous year: 79%



SYSTEM CAPACITY

The percent of peak hour train seats occupied. The calculation excludes reverse flow and non-peak hour trains.



OPERATING RATIO

Through July 2020

Year-to-date operating revenues divided by year-to-date operating expenses, which represents the share of operating costs paid by the riders.
Board-approved goal: 52%

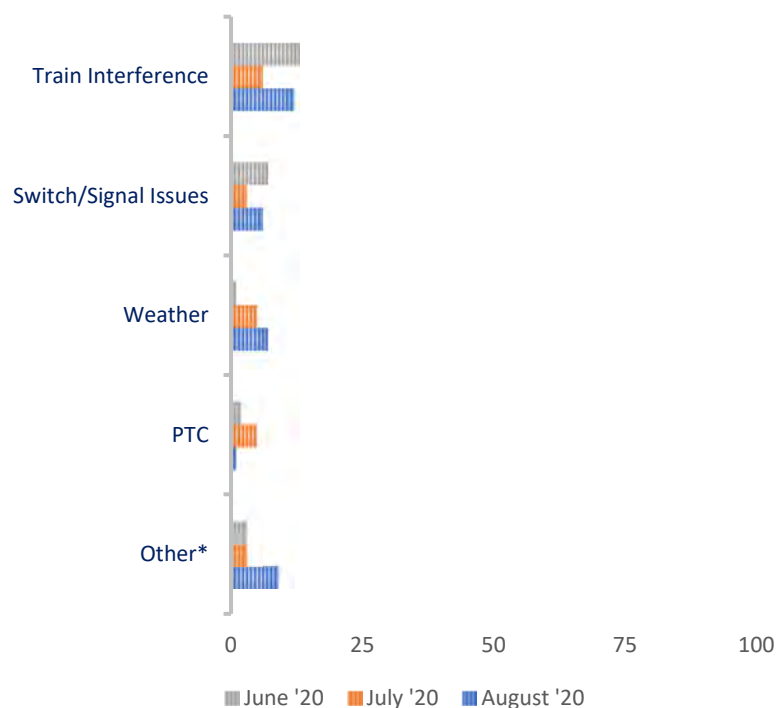
August 2020

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

OUR RECORD

	August 2020	July 2020	August 2019
Manassas Line	90%	95%	82%
Fredericksburg Line	91%	93%	76%
Systemwide	91%	94%	79%

PRIMARY REASON FOR DELAY



VRE operated 375 trains in August. Our on-time rate for August was 91 percent.

Thirty-six trains arrived more than 5 minutes late to their final destinations. Of those late trains, 17 were on the Manassas Line (47 percent), and 19 were on the Fredericksburg Line (53 percent).

Categories of delay in August were up across the board, except for PTC. Train interference and “other” issues accounted for the largest jumps this month.

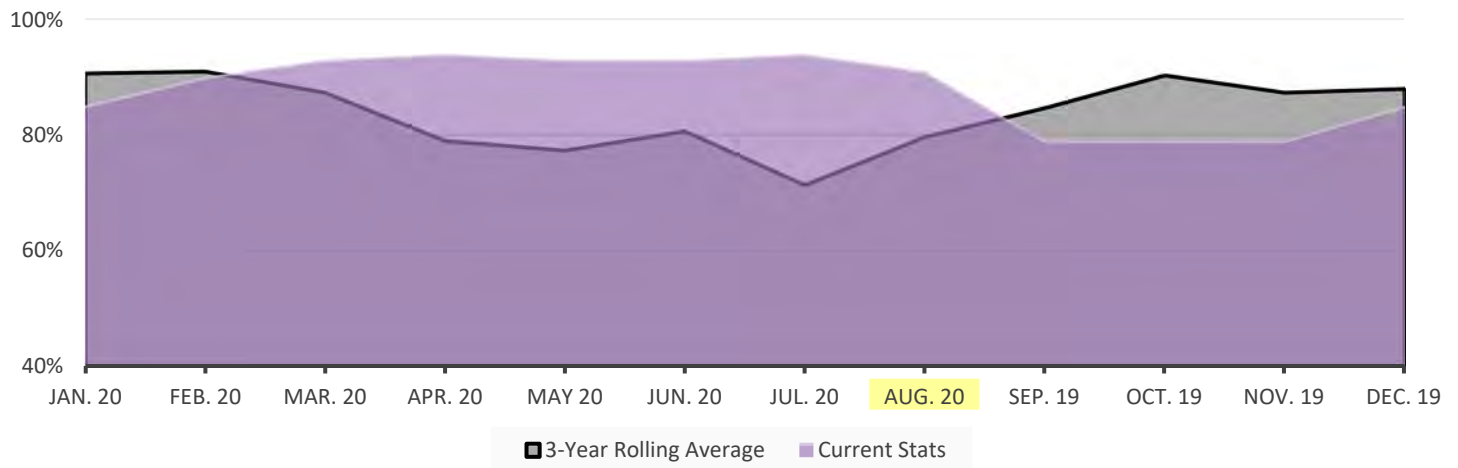
*Includes trains that were delayed due to operational testing and passenger handling.

LATE TRAINS

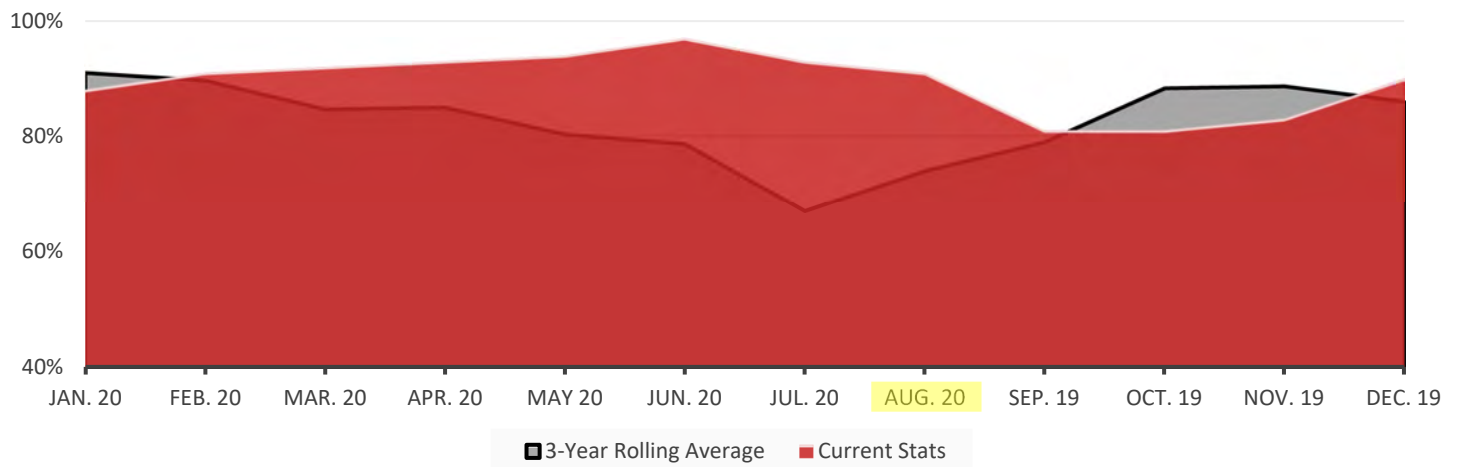
	System Wide			Fredericksburg Line			Manassas Line		
	June	July	August	June	July	August	June	July	August
Total late trains	25	22	37	6	13	20	19	9	17
Average minutes late	14	16	26	21	18	17	11	12	36
Number over 30 minutes	2	3	8	2	2	3	0	1	5
Heat restrictions	15	20	8	15	20	8	0	0	0

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

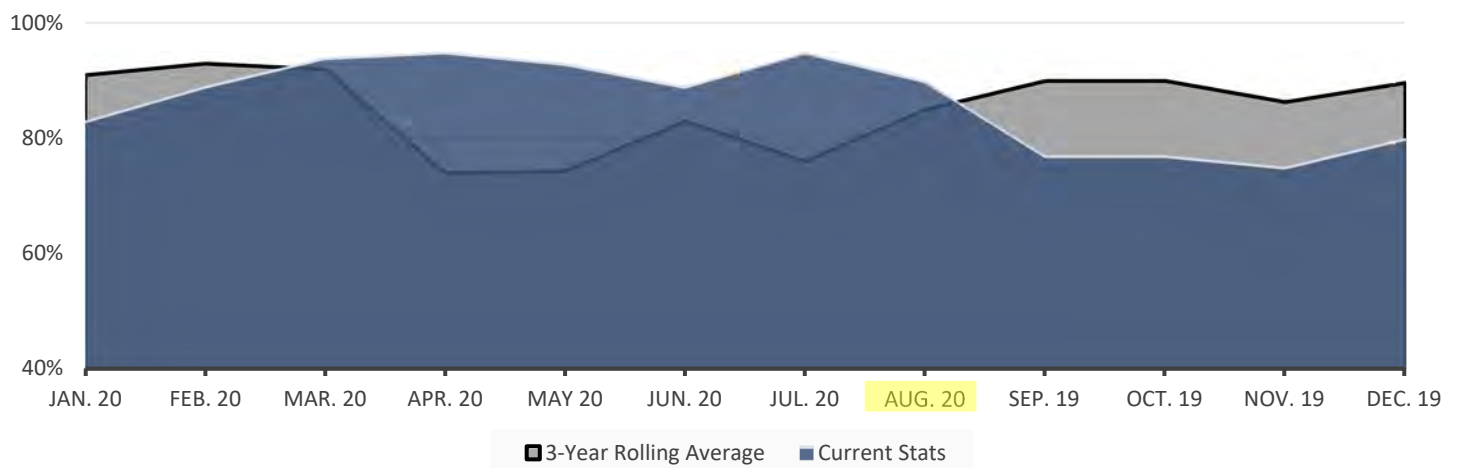
VRE SYSTEM



FREDERICKSBURG LINE

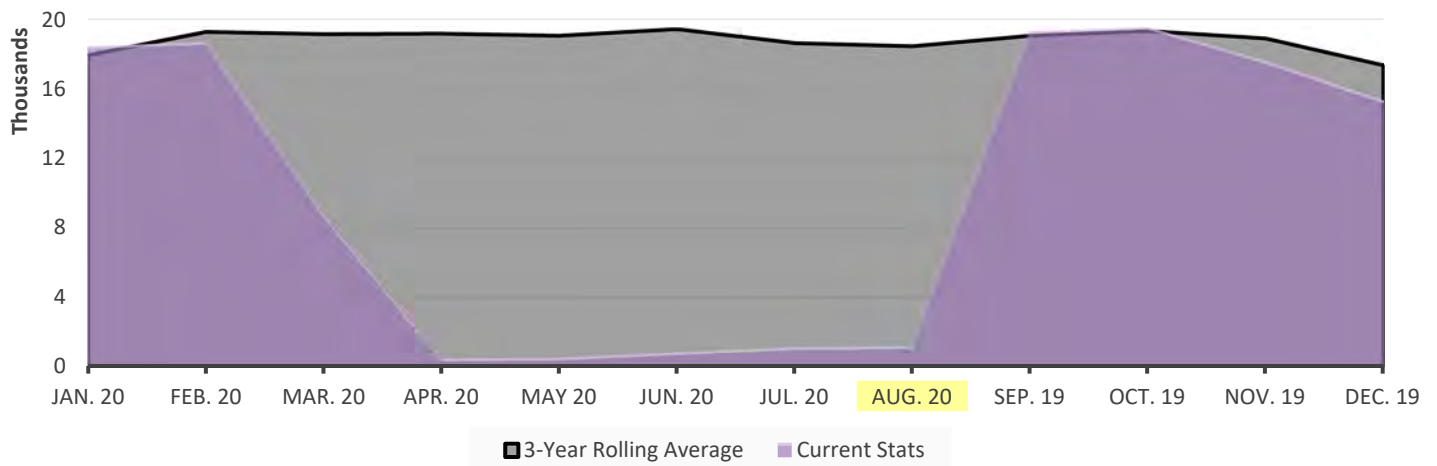


MANASSAS LINE

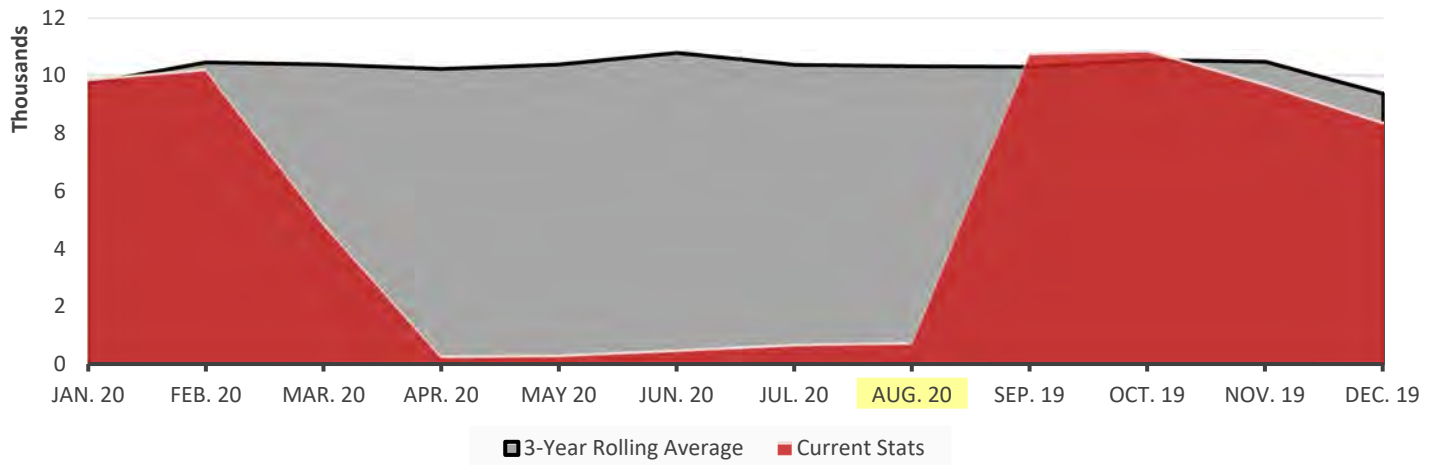


AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP

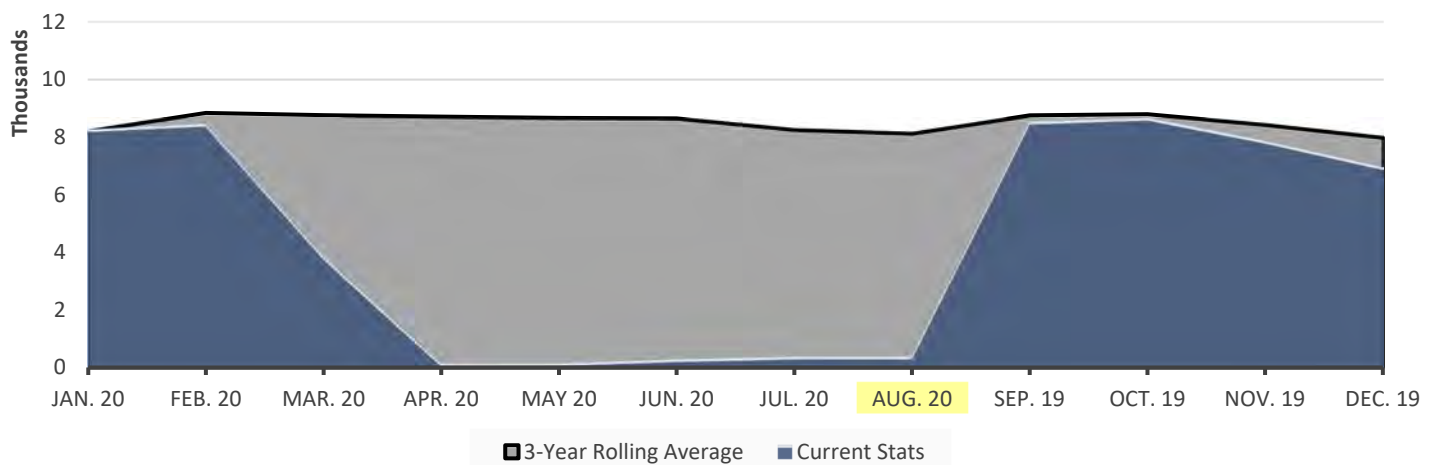
VRE SYSTEM



FREDERICKSBURG LINE



MANASSAS LINE



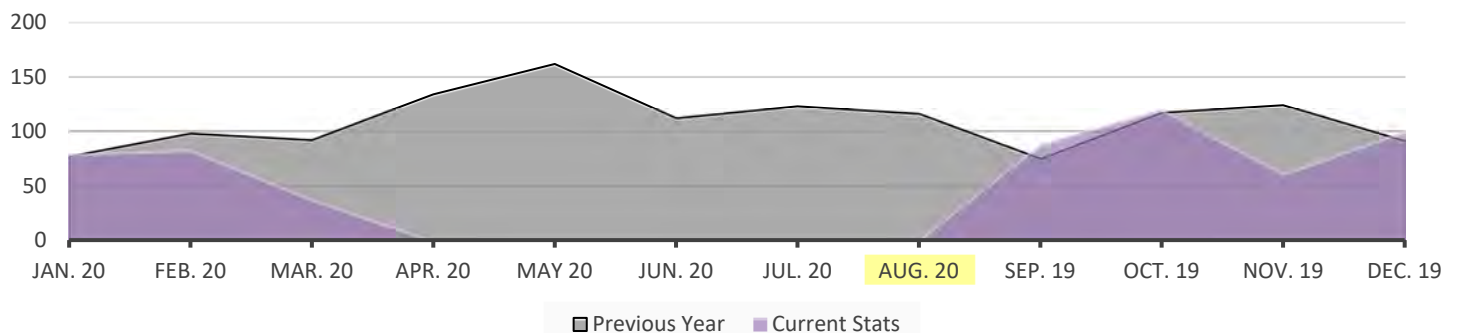
RIDERSHIP UPDATES

Average daily ridership (ADR) in August was nearly 1,200. ADR for the month was up from July, as we now run on the “S” Schedule Plus (which adds trains 300 and 307 to service) necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

	August 2020	July 2020	August 2019
Monthly Ridership	24,716	23,287	410,631
Average Daily Ridership	1,177	1,109	18,665
Full Service Days	0	0	22
“S” Service Days	21	21	0

SUMMONSES ISSUED

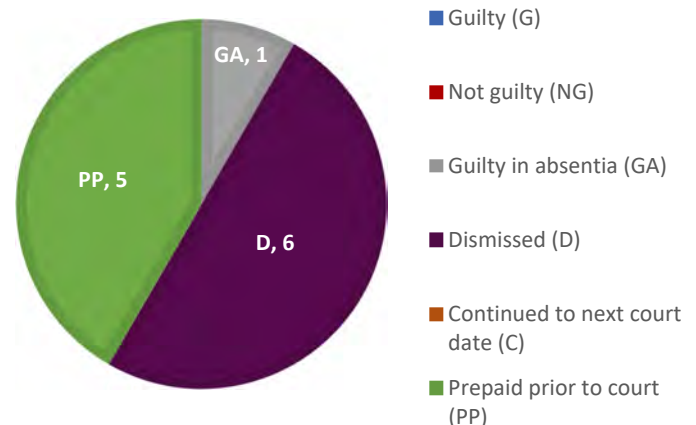
VRE SYSTEM



SUMMONSES WAIVED OUTSIDE OF COURT

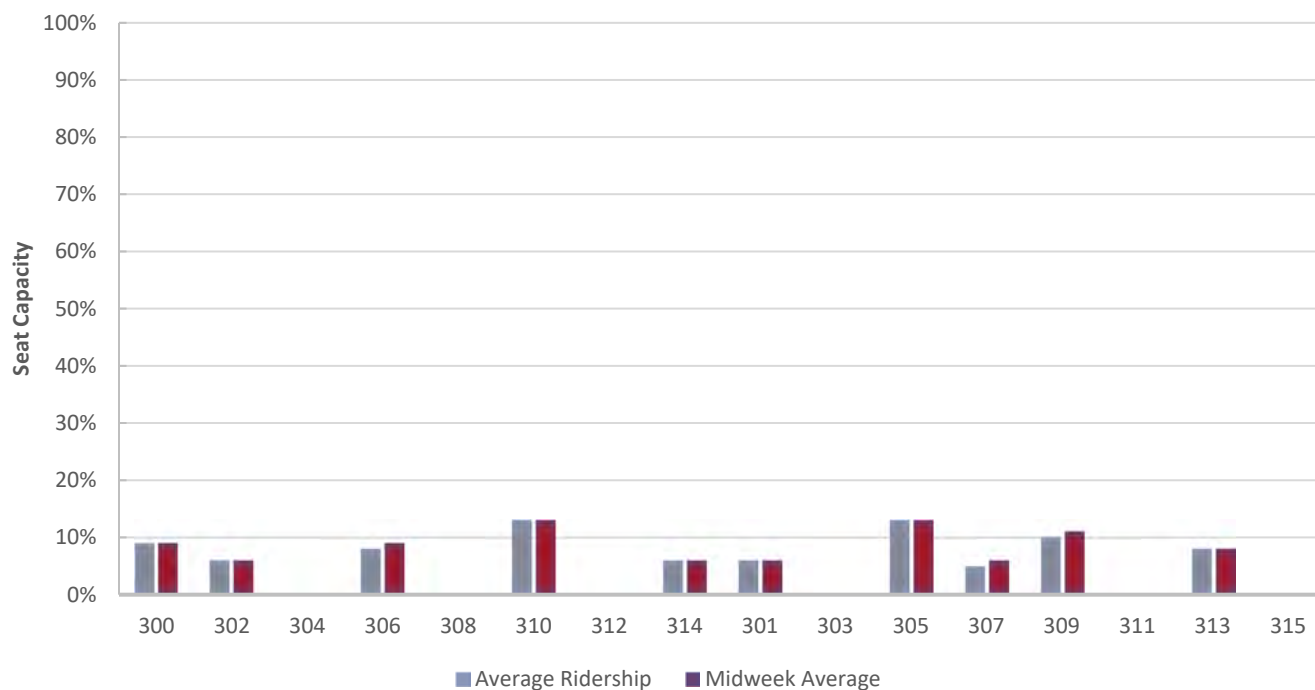
Reason for Dismissal	Occurrences
Passenger showed proof of a monthly ticket	0
One-time courtesy	0
Per the request of the conductor	0
Defective ticket	0
Per ops manager	0
Unique circumstances	0
Insufficient information	0
Lost and found ticket	0
Other	0
Total Waived	0

MONTHLY SUMMONSES COURT ACTION

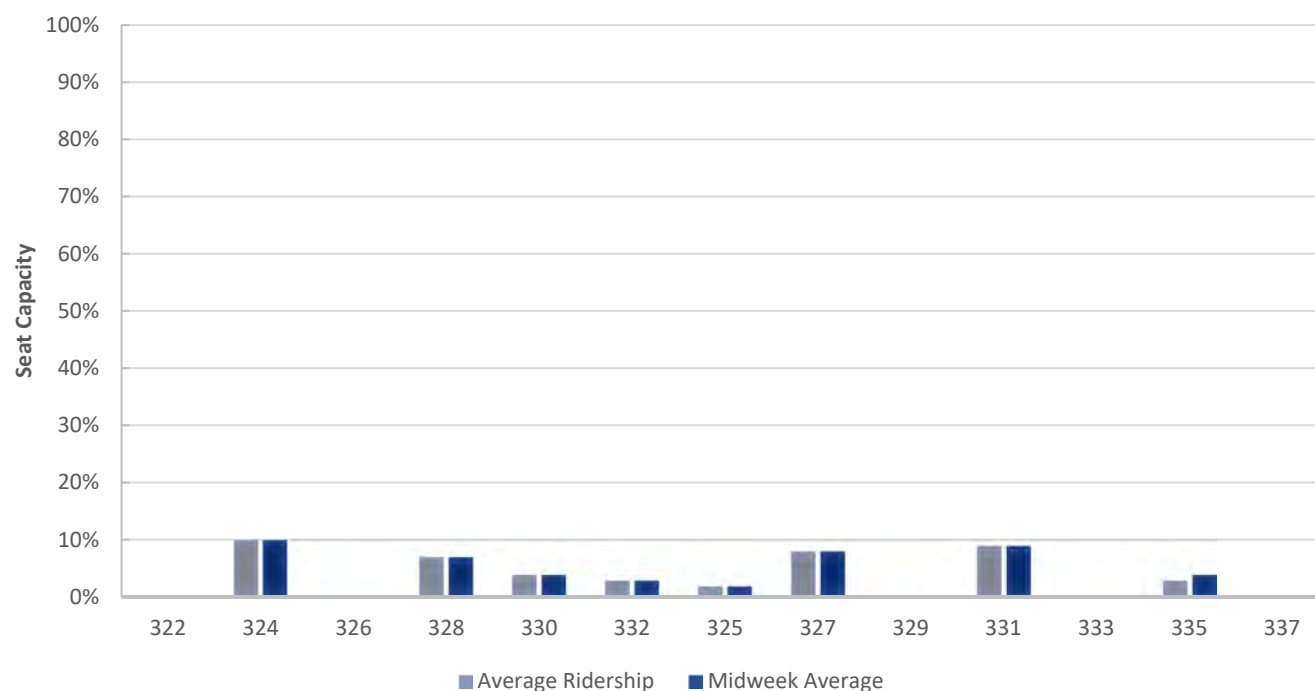


TRAIN UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE

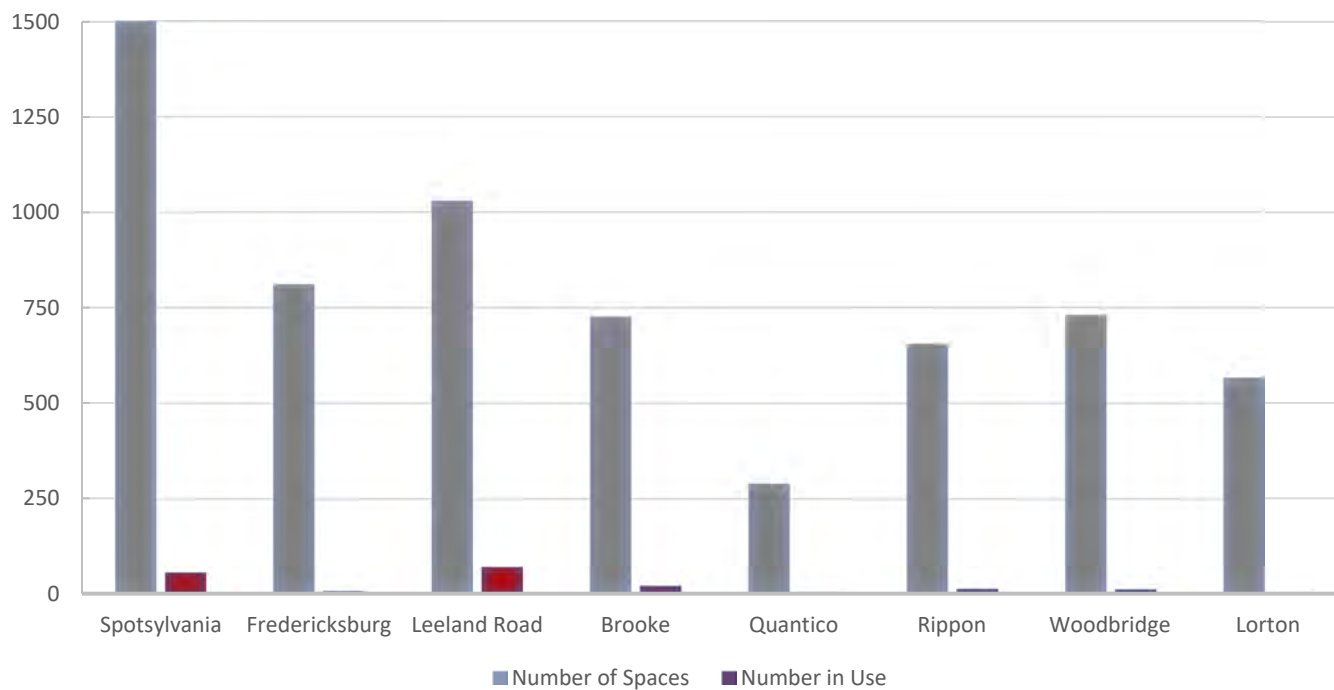


MANASSAS LINE

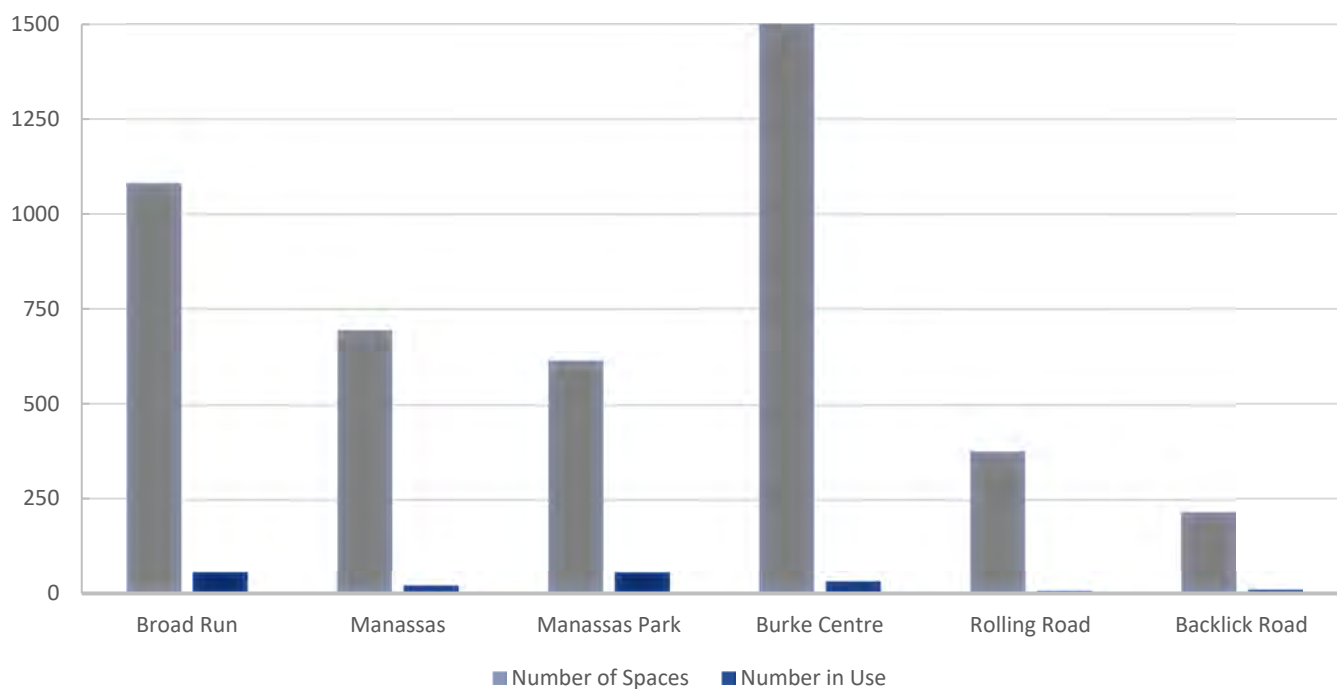


PARKING UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE



MANASSAS LINE



FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JULY 2020

Fare revenue for the first month of FY 2021 is approximately \$3.0 million below budget (an unfavorable variance of -78%) and is also 78% below the same period in FY 2020.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to have a material negative impact on VRE ridership. Average daily ridership in July 2020 was 1,109 trips per day, as compared to 18,692 per day in February 2020 (the last full month not affected by the pandemic). We expect to report significant impacts related to the pandemic throughout FY 2021.

As in past years, VRE's annual liability insurance premium was accounted for in full in July, resulting in higher total monthly expense and a year-to-date operating ratio of 7%. Absent this insurance premium, the operating ratio would have been 15%. VRE's budgeted operating ratio for FY 2021 is 52%, in accordance with the 50% minimum requirement in the Master Agreement. The actual operating ratio for the full year will depend heavily on whether and when ridership rebounds, but it is unlikely that the 50% threshold will be reached.

A summary of the FY 2021 financial results for July follows, including information on major revenue and expense categories. Please note that these figures are preliminary and unaudited.

FY 2020 Operating Budget Report							
Month Ended July 31, 2020							
	CURR. MO. ACTUAL	CURR. MO. BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD \$ VARIANCE	YTD % VARIANCE	TOTAL FY19 BUDGET
Operating Revenue							
Passenger Ticket Revenue	845,137	3,864,462	845,137	3,864,462	(3,019,325)	-78.1%	44,090,000
Other Operating Revenue	42,208	26,295	42,208	26,295	15,913	60.5%	300,000
Subtotal Operating Revenue	887,346	3,890,757	887,346	3,890,757	(3,003,411)	-77.2%	44,390,000
Jurisdictional Subsidy (1)	9,334,076	9,334,075	9,334,076	9,334,075	1	0.0%	13,817,632
Federal/State/Other Jurisdictional Subsidy	2,622,193	2,680,145	2,622,193	2,680,145	(57,952)	-2.2%	31,879,656
Appropriation from Reserve/Other Income	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Interest Income	9,403	113,944	9,403	113,944	(104,542)	-91.7%	1,300,000
Total Operating Revenue	12,853,017	16,018,921	12,853,017	16,018,921	(3,165,904)	-19.8%	91,387,287
Operating Expenses							
Departmental Operating Expenses	12,523,434	11,038,778	12,523,434	11,038,778	(1,484,656)	-13.4%	85,137,449
Debt Service	518,403	518,403	518,403	518,403	-	0.0%	6,220,838
Other Non-Departmental Expenses	-	2,542	-	2,542	2,542	0.0%	29,000
Total Operating Expenses	13,041,837	11,559,723	13,041,837	11,559,723	(1,482,114)	-12.8%	91,387,287
Net income (loss) from Operations	(188,820)	4,459,198	(188,820)	4,459,198	(4,648,018)		-
Operating Ratio			7%	35%	Budgeted Goal	52%	50%

(1) Total jurisdictional subsidy is \$18,300,780. Portion shown as budgeted is attributed to Operating Fund only.

FACILITIES UPDATE

The following is a status update of VRE facilities projects.

Completed projects:

1. Replacement of fire-damaged timber pedestrian crossing at Quantico Station
2. Submission of IFB package for overhaul of emergency generators at Woodbridge and Manassas Stations, Alexandria Headquarters and Fredericksburg office



Fire-damaged timber pedestrian crossing



Repaired timber pedestrian crossing

Projects scheduled to be completed this quarter:

1. Submission of IFB package for canopy roof replacement at Backlick Road Station
2. Submission of IFB package for replacement of tactile warning strips at various stations

Projects scheduled to be initiated this quarter:

1. Issuance of GEC Task Orders for design of minor structural repairs at Franconia-Springfield, Woodbridge, Rippon, Brooke and Manassas Stations
2. Minor steel repairs, caulking and partial painting of stairs at Franconia-Springfield Station
3. Repair of minor cracks in west platform at Woodbridge Station
4. Minor steel repairs, caulking and painting of stairs at Rippon Station
5. Repair of platform sealer delamination at Spotsylvania Station
6. Cleaning of storm drainage systems in Woodbridge and Manassas parking garages

Ongoing projects:

1. Design of waiting area at L'Enfant Station
2. Replacement of signage at Franconia-Springfield, Woodbridge and Leeland Road stations
3. Replacement of waste and recycling receptacles at various stations
4. Design of renovations to Alexandria headquarters

UPCOMING PROCUREMENTS

- Program management services
- Canopy roof replacement at the Backlick Road Station
- Modernization of VRE Woodbridge Station east elevator
- Passenger car wheelchair lift assemblies
- Purchase of LED light fixtures
- Construction of L'Enfant south storage track wayside power
- Variable Messaging System replacement
- Tactile strip replacements
- Pavement repairs and striping at the Rippon and Leeland Road stations and Fredericksburg Lot G
- Franconia-Springfield Station painting services
- Purchase of forklift trucks
- Final design services for VRE Broad Run expansion
- Renewal of locomotive head end power engine systems
- Overhaul of emergency generators
- Headquarters renovations

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATES

The following is a status update of VRE capital projects.

Completed projects or major project milestones:

1. Long Bridge Project (*study by others*) – Virginia and the District of Columbia have concluded the environmental planning process. DRPT is evaluating responses to its RFP for architectural/engineering consulting services.
2. New Washington Union Station Improvements (*study by others*) – FRA released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for comment from agencies and the public on June 4. Two telephonic public hearings took place on July 14.

Projects or project phases scheduled to be completed this quarter:

3. Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements draft 90% complete plans
4. Rippon Station Improvements revised preliminary design plans
5. Brooke Station Improvements revised preliminary design plans
6. Leeland Road Station Improvements revised preliminary design plans
7. Broad Run Expansion (BRX) Section 106 Consultation
8. Construction of Benchmark Road Slope Stabilization (Hamilton to Crossroads closeout)

Projects or project phases scheduled to be initiated this quarter:

9. IFB for construction of Quantico Station Improvements
10. IFB for construction of Lifecycle Overhaul & Upgrade Facility (LOU)
11. IFB for construction of Rolling Road Station Improvements
12. Request for proposals (RFP) advertised for LOU Construction Management

Ongoing projects:

13. Broad Run Expansion (BRX)
14. Manassas Park Parking Improvements
15. Rolling Road Station Improvements
16. Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) – land acquisition completed
17. Lifecycle Overhaul & Upgrade Facility (LOU)
18. Benchmark Road Slope Stabilization (Hamilton to Crossroads closeout)
19. Leeland Road Station Improvements
20. Brooke Station Improvements
21. Quantico Station Improvements
22. Rippon Station Improvements
23. Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements
24. Alexandria Station Improvements
25. Alexandria Station Track I Access (Slaters Lane)
26. Crystal City Station Improvements
27. L'Enfant Train Storage Track - South
28. L'Enfant Station Improvements
29. New York Avenue Midday Storage Facility
30. Potomac Shores VRE Station – *design by others*
31. Washington Union Station Improvements Environmental Impact Statement – *study by others*
32. DC2RVA Environmental Impact Statement – *study by others*
33. Long Bridge Project – *study by others*
34. Washington Union Station Improvements Environmental Impact Statement – *study by others*

Projects Progress Report Follows

PASSENGER

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	PHASE					
		CD	PE	EC	RW	FD	CN
Alexandria Station Improvements	Eliminate at-grade track crossing, add elevators, modify platforms.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
	Modify Slaters Lane Interlocking for passenger trains on Track #1.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
	Extend and widen East Platform and elevate West Platform.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements	Extend both platforms and widen East Platform for future third track. ▲	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Rippon Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. À	◆	●	●	N/A		
Potomac Shores Station Improvements	New VRE station and parking in Prince William County provided by private developer.	◆	●	◆	N/A		
Quantico Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Brooke Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. À	◆	●	●	N/A		
Leeland Road Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. À	◆	●	●	N/A		
Manassas Park Parking Improvements	Parking garage to increase parking capacity to 1,100 spaces.	◆	◆	●	N/A		
Rolling Road Station Improvements	Extend existing platform and rehabilitate existing station	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	●
Crystal City Station Improvements	Replace existing side platform with new, longer island platform.	◆	●	●	N/A		
L'Enfant Station Improvements	Replace existing platform with wider, longer island platform. Add fourth track (VA-LE)	◆			N/A		














PHASE: CD - Conceptual Design PE - Preliminary Engineering EC - Environment Clearance RW - Right of Way Acquisition
FD - Final Design CN - Construction

STATUS: u Completed I Underway n On Hold ▲ part of the "Penta-Platform" program

¹ Total project cost estimate in adopted FY2020 CIP Budget; percentage complete based on VRE Operations Board authorization

² Does not include minor (< \$50,000) operating expenditures

* \$2,181,630 authorization divided across five "Penta-Platform" program stations

ESTIMATED COSTS (\$)						STATUS		
Total ¹	Funded	Unfunded	Authorized	Expended ²	Percent Complete ¹	Project Completion Date		
31,875,014	31,875,014	-	2,382,759	2,193,257	90%	4th QTR 2020		Design underway. CSX and City of Alexandria review progressing.
7,000,000	7,000,000	-	467,500	270,487	60%	2nd QTR 2019		Materials continue to be delivered. Assembly of cross-over has begun.
2,400,000	400,000	2,000,000	-	-	5%	4th QTR 2020		Design work on east platform only; west platform improvements unfunded.
13,000,000	13,000,000	-	*	612,756	35%	4th QTR 2022		FD underway with anticipated completion 4th QTR 2020. Ongoing coordination with DRPT projects.
16,634,793	16,634,793	-	*	397,897	20%	4th QTR 2023		PE design/EC anticipated completion 4th QTR 2020. Ongoing coordination with DRPT projects.
No costs for VRE. Private developer providing station.					10%	TBD		Potomac Shores VRE Station design underway to include parking structure. 60% Re-Design Submittal received and under review by CSX and VRE.
18,372,949	18,372,949	0	830,833	683,892	60%	TBD		SMART SCALE grant agreement pending. FD completion and Construction Procurement anticipated 2nd Quarter 2020.
23,391,019	23,391,019	-	*	392,814	20%	4th QTR 2023		DRPT LONP received; REF grant pending. PE design/EC anticipated completion 4th QTR 2020. Ongoing coordination with DRPT projects.
15,527,090	15,527,090	-	*	365,142	20%	4th QTR 2023		DRPT LONP received; REF grant pending. PE design/EC anticipated completion 4th QTR 2020. Ongoing coordination with DRPT projects.
25,983,000	25,983,000	0	2,238,144	670,225	30%	4th QTR 2022		Evaluating City of Manassas Park relocation request.
5,000,000	2,000,000	3,000,000	640,503	418,887	70%	3rd QTR 2021		Invitation for Bids (IFB) issued on 8/14/2020.
49,940,000	19,098,463	30,841,537	1,584,619	397,848	30%	2nd QTR 2024		PE & EC initiated in Oct 2019 and anticipated completion 3rd QTR 2020.
70,650,000	62,465,721	8,184,279	130,501	65,150	50%	2nd QTR 2023		DRPT LONP received. Real estate research in progress under LONP.

TRACK AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	PHASE					
		CD	PE	EC	RW	FD	CN
Hamilton-to-Crossroads Third Track	2¼-miles of new third track with CSXT design and construction of signal and track tie-ins.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	◆	◆

MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE FACILITIES

L'Enfant Train Storage Track - South	Conversion of CSXT Temporary Track to VRE Storage Track (1,350 feet) and Associated Signal Work	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	●
Lifecycle Overhaul & Upgrade Facility	New LOU facility to be added to the Crossroads MSF.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	◆	■
Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility - Land Acquisition	Acquisition of 19.5 acres of land, construction of two storage tracks and related site improvements.	◆	N/A	N/A	●	N/A	N/A
New York Avenue Midday Storage Replacement Facility	Midday storage facility replacement for Ivy City storage facility.	◆	●	●	●		

ROLLING STOCK

Passenger Railcar Procurement	Acquisition of 29 new railcars.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	◆
Positive Train Control	Implement Positive Train Control for all VRE locomotives and control cars.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	●

PLANNING, COMMUNICATIONS AND IT










Broad Run Expansion (was Gainesville-Haymarket Extension)	NEPA and PE for expanding commuter rail service capacity in Western Prince William County	◆	●	●	-	-	-
Mobile Ticketing	Implementation of a new mobile ticketing system.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	●

PHASE: CD - Conceptual Design PE - Preliminary Engineering EC - Environment Clearance
RW - Right of Way Acquisition FD - Final Design CN - Construction

STATUS: ◆ Completed ● Underway ■ On Hold

¹ Total project cost estimate in adopted FY2020 CIP Budget; percentage complete based on VRE Operations Board authorization

² Does not include minor (< \$50,000) operating expenditures

Total ¹	ESTIMATED COSTS (\$)				Percent Complete ¹	Project Completion Date	STATUS	
	Funded	Unfunded	Authorized	Expended ²				
32,500,000	32,500,000	-	33,285,519	30,578,003	99%	3rd QTR 2018		Close-out pending repair of storm damage to embankment.
3,965,000	3,965,000	-	2,937,323	1,699,610	60%	4th QTR 2019		CSXT Construction Agreement received. CM underway.
38,183,632	38,183,632	-	3,176,039	2,143,583	70%	TBD		FD completion pending Final Electrical Design Coordination with REC. IFB anticipated 2nd Quarter 2020, upon
2,950,000	2,950,000	-	2,950,000	163,565	100%	1st QTR 2020		Land acquisition has been completed.
89,666,508	89,666,508	-	3,588,305	2,257,455	90%	4th QTR 2021		Preliminary design has been completed and continuing to collaborate with Amtrak on agreements.
75,264,693	75,264,693	-	69,457,809	47,915,644	99%	4th QTR 2020		All cars received. Completion date reflects end of warranty period.
14,191,833	14,191,833	-	10,294,079	7,984,451	95%	4th QTR 2018		Implementation Completed. Final stabilization and familiarization phase in process.
110,700,000	82,526,398	28,173,602	5,855,650	4,539,446	80%	4th QTR 2024		PE design and EC underway. Property acquisition due diligence underway.
3,510,307	3,510,307	-	3,510,627	2,282,853	70%	3rd QTR 2019		American Eagle working on redesign with uplift to new platform projected for late summer 2020.



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

1500 KING STREET, SUITE 202 • ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314 • 703.684.1001

VRE.ORG



**RESOLUTION #2421**

SUBJECT: Authorize the Referral of the Preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Jurisdictions

WHEREAS: The VRE Master Agreement requires the VRE Operations Board submit to the Commissions a preliminary fiscal year budget by September 30 each year;

WHEREAS: The VRE Chief Executive Officer has provided the VRE Operations Board with the preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget;

WHEREAS: The preliminary FY 2022 budget proposes no increase in the total or individual annual jurisdictional subsidy and no increase in passenger fares;

WHEREAS: The VRE Operations Board refers the preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions for their consideration;

WHEREAS: The VRE Operations Board recommends the following action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby authorizes the Preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget be forwarded to the jurisdictions for their formal review and comment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NVTC directs staff to consider and address comments by the jurisdictions and to forward a final recommended budget to the VRE Operations Board at its December 2020 meeting for consideration and referral to the Commissions for adoption in January 2021.

Approved this 1st day of October 2020.

Katie Cristol
Chair

Jeffrey C. McKay
Secretary-Treasurer



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
OPERATIONS BOARD

Agenda Item 9-A
Action Item

To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board

From: Rich Dalton

Date: September 18, 2020

Re: Referral of the Preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is asked to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to refer the preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions for their consideration, so the Commissions, in turn, can refer their preliminary budget recommendations to the jurisdictions for review and comment.

Summary:

VRE's preliminary FY 2022 operating budget totals \$91.9 million, which includes operations, maintenance, and existing debt service. This preliminary budget amount is nearly flat to the approved FY 2021 budget of \$91.4 million (an increase of one-half percent), and staff are continuing to review departmental budgets to identify further expense reductions.

In light of the reduced ridership and ongoing economic challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the preliminary operating budget includes no changes to passenger fares and no increase to jurisdictional subsidy. Before the application of any available emergency funding, the preliminary operating budget has a net unfunded amount of \$25.7 million. However, VRE's federal CARES Act funding will be available to backfill lost passenger revenue and ensure that no additional jurisdictional contribution is required.

VRE's preliminary FY 2022 capital budget includes commitments of \$101.8 million from federal, state, regional, and local funding sources towards the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). VRE's CIP is undergoing substantial revisions as a result of the *Transforming Rail in Virginia* program being pursued by the Commonwealth, and the



Northern Virginia
Transportation Commission
2300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 230
Arlington, VA 22201
703-524-3322



Virginia Railway Express
1500 King Street, Suite 202
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-1001
VRE.org



Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission
14700 Potomac Mills Road
Woodbridge, VA 22192
703-580-6121

scopes, funding sources, and timelines of many projects are being modified in coordination with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

A final FY 2022 budget will be submitted in December for the Operations Board's consideration and referral to the Commissions for final approval. Projections of revenues and expenses are still under review by VRE staff and may change materially as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. The final FY 2022 budget (which will include an amended FY 2021 budget) will ensure VRE can continue to provide safe and reliable commuter rail service as Virginians return to work while equitably and strategically sharing the cost of that service across riders, local jurisdictions, and the available federal CARES Act funds.

Background:

In accordance with the VRE Master Agreement, which outlines the process for annual budget approval, the preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget is attached for the Operations Board's review.

As noted during the discussion of "key issues" at the July 2020 Operations Board meeting, the budget adoption process for FY 2022 will be unlike any in recent years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its significant impacts on the economy and VRE's ridership. Broad economic and policy issues – rather than technical or methodological issues – will be paramount, and accurately forecasting ridership and revenue will be difficult. Amending the current (FY 2021) budget will also be a substantive part of this year's budget process.

Key Operating Budget Assumptions:

VRE's preliminary operating budget totals \$91.9 million. This includes \$85.7 million for daily operations and maintenance (as compared to \$85.1 million in the approved FY 2021 budget) and \$6.2 million for debt service (the same as FY 2021). As noted above, both revenues and expenses continue to be reviewed and may change materially before adoption of the final budget depending on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic over the next few months. The key assumptions used in preparing the preliminary operating budget are summarized below:

- 1. Service Levels:** Although VRE is currently running a modified "S" schedule in response to reduced ridership demand, the preliminary FY 2022 budget assumes a return to a full normal schedule of 32 daily revenue trains. Well before daily ridership returns to pre-pandemic levels, this level of service will be required to ensure convenient travel times for riders and also to provide adequate social spacing for riders if that remains necessary.
- 2. Subsidy and Fare Increases:** Under the Board's existing policy direction to consider fare and subsidy increases in alternating years, the starting point for a "normal" FY 2022 would be zero change to the total subsidy and consideration of a 3% fare increase. However, given the challenges faced by both riders and jurisdictions, other alternatives will be considered. This preliminary budget includes three key assumptions:

- The total subsidy amount for FY 2022 is \$18,300,780, the same amount as in FY 2021.
- The allocation of the subsidy (i.e., the percentage of the total assigned to each of the nine jurisdictions) for FY 2022 is unchanged from FY 2021, so that each jurisdiction contributes the same amount as in FY 2021. As discussed with the Finance Committee in July 2020, the usual Master Agreement survey in October – which determines the subsidy allocation for the upcoming fiscal year – would be difficult to administer in the current environment and would be unlikely to produce reliable results. Therefore, instead of performing the survey, the Committee recommended simply using the FY 2021 allocation percentages for FY 2022. The Federal Transit Administration has taken a similar approach in using prior year (pre-pandemic) data for the allocation of federal formula program funds this year.
- Passenger fares for FY 2022 are unchanged from FY 2021. Raising fares in the current environment is unlikely to have a materially positive impact on total revenue while potentially generating negative publicity and rider sentiment. At the same time, the primary factors driving the current low ridership are perceptions of safety and the ability to work at home rather than at the office, not the level of the fare (particularly given the availability of the transit benefit for many riders). Lowering fares is thus unlikely to drive significant new ridership in the short term and would only increase the operating deficit.

3. Ridership and Fare Revenue: Projecting ridership in the current environment is challenging given near-term uncertainty about the course of the pandemic (including any potential vaccine), the unknown medium-term impacts on businesses and schools, and potential long-term shifts in the number of employees working remotely rather than in an office. After increasing steadily during the early summer, ridership has plateaued in August and early September at 1300-1400 riders per day, and monthly fare revenue has been in the \$800,000-\$900,000 range.

For the purposes of the preliminary budget, we assume that fare revenue will stay in this range for the rest of FY 2021, which would result in total annual fare revenue of approximately \$10 million, or less than 25% of pre-pandemic revenue. Since March, some riders have continued to purchase monthly and other tickets while riding infrequently or not at all, and so the average fare paid per trip is currently abnormally high. As average daily ridership increases, some of it will come from people already purchasing a monthly ticket but riding infrequently, while other non-riders will eventually cancel their recurring purchases, thus reducing revenue even as other riders return.

For FY 2022, preliminary passenger revenue is budgeted at approximately \$18 million, or about 40% of pre-pandemic annual revenue. This figure is functioning essentially as a placeholder to represent a slow, steady increase in ridership that still falls well short of a return to normal. If a vaccine is widely available more quickly than expected, and offices and schools are able to fully reopen, then revenues could be higher.

- 4. Operating Expenses:** All discretionary expenses in the operating budget – particularly consulting, professional services, new non-critical initiatives, and replacement of existing items (furniture, equipment, etc.) – are being reviewed for potential deferral or elimination in order to reduce expenses and extend the availability of the federal CARES Act funds.

Department heads submitted their initial FY 2022 budgets earlier this summer with the direction to proactively identify discretionary expense reductions, and the preliminary budget reflects this, with only a \$0.5 million increase over the approved FY 2021 budget. Further expense reductions will be identified as the budget process continues as more deferrals are found, contingencies are reduced, and contracts are renegotiated.

- 5. State Operating Assistance and Access Fee Reimbursement:** As part of the Commonwealth’s response to the pandemic, DRPT has been reallocating funds to prioritize state operating assistance to transit agencies over capital matching grants. So far, it appears that VRE will receive the same amount of operating assistance in FY 2021 as it did in FY 2020 (less the one-time ‘transition assistance’), which was approximately \$9.7 million. However, the preliminary budget conservatively assumes that operating assistance in FY 2022 will decline to \$8.5 million in response to reduced tax collections.

The Commonwealth has also committed to maintaining the 84% reimbursement rate for the track access fees paid to VRE’s host railroads, which is critical to VRE’s financial sustainability. This arrangement will be evolving through FY 2021 as the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) is stood up and takes on responsibilities from DRPT. DRPT has advised that VPRA is likely to use entirely state funds (rather than a combination of federal STP and state funds) for the access fee reimbursements. This may have a positive impact for VRE on eligible federal CARES Act reimbursements of the remaining 16% of the cost.

Capital Funding:

After seeking and successfully securing a substantial amount of discretionary grant funding in recent years, VRE’s capital program is now focused on project delivery. As noted above, the *Transforming Rail in Virginia* program has impacted a number of projects, particularly planned station expansions on the Fredericksburg Line.

As a result of the new operating plan in the corridor, second/island platforms at four stations (Lorton, Rippon, Brooke, and Leeland Road) are no longer being pursued, though smaller expansions and rehabilitations are still planned. This in turn has freed up funding from various sources to complete the Quantico Station project and to support expansion of the Rolling Road platform on the Manassas Line. These significant changes to the CIP continue to evolve in coordination with DRPT, and a full review will occur later in the budget process.

The major capital funding that is expected to be obligated in FY 2022 includes:

- *Federal formula funds:* Federal funding allocations are lagged by one year relative to VRE's fiscal year, so the federal funding allocated in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021 will be available to be obligated and spent beginning in VRE's FY 2022. Based on funding received in FFY 2020, total projected formula funding for FFY 2021 is \$30.5 million (federal portion only), including both Section 5337 State of Good Repair funding and Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funding.

As in previous years, VRE's formula funds will be committed to debt service, asset management programs, and key CIP projects such as the midday storage facility and VRE's joint responsibilities at Washington Union Terminal. Staff continues to look at options for utilizing currently unprogrammed funding, including station expansions that also have a replacement component, but is also choosing to keep some funding uncommitted until updated cost estimates are received for various projects.

- *State capital match:* The preliminary budget assumes a continuation of the 16% state match on debt service and asset management, as well as the 34% state match on midday storage and Washington Union Terminal, but these figures may be modified as discussions with DRPT continue about how best to fit VRE into the state's MERIT program that is primarily oriented towards bus operators.
- *Discretionary state and regional funding:* The FY 2022 budget will obligate previously allocated funds for a number of important CIP projects. SMART SCALE funding totaling \$40.3 million will be obligated in FY 2022 for projects including Alexandria Station, Leeland Road Station, Leeland Road Parking, Quantico Station, Fredericksburg Line Expansion Coaches, and the Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF). CMAQ funding of \$4.6 million will be obligated in FY 2022 for projects including the Broad Run Expansion, Brooke Station, Leeland Road Station, and Woodbridge Station.

Commuter Rail Operating and Capital (C-ROC) Fund:

As noted in the "key issues" discussion, VRE staff are continuing discussions with DRPT about a contribution to the *Transforming Rail in Virginia* program from VRE's Commuter Rail Operating and Capital (C-ROC) funds. These discussions – which contemplate a combination of debt issuance proceeds and pay-as-you-go cash – will occur separately from, but in parallel with, the budget adoption process. We do not expect to recommend any further C-ROC commitments to specific VRE capital projects (currently \$15 million is committed to the Crystal City Station and \$30 million to the L'Enfant Station and Fourth Track, covering FY2019-2021 C-ROC funds) until these negotiations are resolved.

Next Steps:

VRE staff will continue to update and modify the FY 2022 budget throughout the Fall as the current fiscal year progresses and as more information is received about the pandemic and economic conditions that may affect projections of revenues and expenses. VRE staff will review the budget with the Finance Committee and with jurisdictional staff and ultimately provide a balanced budget to the Operations Board in December for consideration and approval.

**Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board**

**Resolution
9A-09-2020**

**Referral of the Preliminary FY 2022 VRE Operating and
Capital Budget to the Commissions**

WHEREAS, the VRE Master Agreement requires the VRE Operations Board submit to the Commissions a preliminary fiscal year budget by September 30 each year; and,

WHEREAS, the VRE Chief Executive Officer has provided the VRE Operations Board with the preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget; and,

WHEREAS, the preliminary FY 2022 budget proposes no increase in the total or individual annual jurisdictional subsidy and no increase in passenger fares;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby find that, in accordance with amendments adopted on April 22, 2020 to budget bills HB 29 and 30, meeting by electronic means is authorized because the nature of the declared emergency makes it both impracticable and unsafe for the Operations Board to assemble in a single location on September 18, 2020, and that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the September 18, 2020 Operations Board Meeting Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Operations Board and the discharge of the Operations Board's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities; and further find that meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the September 18, 2020 Operations Board Meeting Agenda are encompassed within the continuity of operations ordinances adopted by member localities of the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board to assure the continued operation of the government during the disaster posed by the public health emergency resulting from COVID-19; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board refers the preliminary FY 2022 Operating and Capital Budget to the Commissions for their consideration; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board recommends the budget be forwarded to the jurisdictions for further formal review and comment; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, VRE staff is directed to consider and address comments by the jurisdictions and to forward a final recommended budget to the VRE Operations Board at the December 2020 meeting for consideration and referral to the Commissions for adoption in January 2021.

Approved this 18th day of September 2020

Jeanine Lawson
Secretary

Gary Skinner
Chairman

FY 2022 Sources and Uses

LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR FY 2021

Daily Trains 32 Avg. Daily Riders 6,000

Leases 18,792,000
-
Total Access Fees 18,792,000

Access and Lease Fees	
Amtrak	6,830,000
NS	3,418,000
CSX	8,544,000
Total	18,792,000

	USES OF FUNDS	SOURCES OF FUNDS													
								-----STATE-----			-----FEDERAL-----				
		FARE INCOME	INTEREST	MISC	LOCAL SUBSIDY	OTHER SOURCES	NVTA FUNDING	STATE CROC FUNDING	STATE OPERATING	STATE CAPITAL	STATE STP	5307/5337	New FY22 CARES ACT	OTHER	TOTAL
Operating Expenses	85,667,175	18,236,000	350,000	300,000	41,975,895	-	-	-	8,500,000	6,389,280	9,396,000	520,000	-	-	85,667,175
Non-Operating Expenses:															
Operating Reserve	-				-										-
Debt Service BTMU - Gallery IV - 11 Cabcars	1,931,357				77,254					309,017		1,545,086			1,931,357
Debt Service VRA - 60 Railcars (Local)	99,072				99,072										99,072
Debt Service VRA - 60 Railcars (Fed/State/Local)	4,191,769				167,671					670,683		3,353,415			4,191,769
Non-Operating Summary	6,222,198	-	-	-	343,997	-	-	-	-	979,700	-	4,898,501	-	-	6,222,198
Total Expenses (Subtotal)	91,889,373	18,236,000	350,000	300,000	42,319,892	-	-	-	8,500,000	7,368,980	9,396,000	5,418,501	-	-	91,889,373
Capital Projects:															
New York Avenue Midday Storage Facility	11,697,029				467,881					3,976,990		7,252,158			11,697,029
Equipment Asset Management Program	2,090,000				83,600					334,400		1,672,000			2,090,000
Security Enhancements	105,000				4,200					16,800		84,000			105,000
L'Enfant Station Improvements	2,438,707				97,548					390,193		1,950,966			2,438,707
Crystal City Station Improvements	13,018,750				520,750					2,083,000		10,415,000			13,018,750
Washington Union Station Improvements	5,000,000				200,000					1,700,000		3,100,000			5,000,000
Unprogramed Federal Formula Funds	7,522,585				300,903					1,203,614		6,018,068			7,522,585
Unprogramed CROC Funds	15,000,000				-			15,000,000		-		-			15,000,000
Capital Reserve Contribution	0				-										-
Capital Project Summary	56,872,071	-	-	-	1,674,883	-	-	15,000,000	-	9,704,997	-	30,492,192	-	-	56,872,071
CMAQ/REF/IPROC															
Broad Run Expansion (CMAQ)	2,000,000				-					400,000		-		1,600,000	2,000,000
Woodbridge Station Improvements (CMAQ)	2,000,000				-					400,000		-		1,600,000	2,000,000
Brooke Station Improvements (CMAQ)	313,394				-					62,679		-		250,715	313,394
Leeland Road Station Improvements (CMAQ)	313,394				-					62,679		-		250,715	313,394
Crossroads MSF Expansion (Smart Scale)	5,057,000				-					5,057,000		-		-	5,057,000
Leeland Road Parking Improvements (Smart Scale)	5,159,178				-					5,159,178		-		-	5,159,178
Alexandria Station Improvements (Smart Scale)	6,284,000				-					6,284,000		-		-	6,284,000
Brooke Station Improvements (Smart Scale)	4,300,000				-					4,300,000		-		-	4,300,000
Leeland Road Station Improvements (Smart Scale)	2,749,725				-					2,749,725		-		-	2,749,725
Quantico Station Improvements (Smart Scale)	850,700				-					850,700		-		-	850,700
Fleet Expansion Coaches (Smartscale)	15,855,000				-					15,855,000		-		-	15,855,000
Summary	44,882,391	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41,180,961	-	-	-	3,701,430	44,882,391
TOTAL	193,643,835	18,236,000	350,000	300,000	43,994,775	-	-	15,000,000	8,500,000	58,254,937	9,396,000	35,910,692	-	3,701,430	193,643,835

FY21 Subsidy surplus (deficit) 18,300,780 (25,693,995)

	Soft Capital Projects	Program	Funding	Federal Amt	State Amt
Debt Service 11 Cabcars	1,931,357	5337		1,545,086	309,017
Access lease funding (50%/34%)	18,792,000	SSTP/State		9,396,000	6,389,280
Local only Debt Service VRA - 60 Railcars	99,072			-	-
Fed/State/Local Debt Service VRA - 60 Railcars	2,445,198	5337		1,956,159	391,232
Fed/State/Local Debt Service VRA - 60 Railcars	1,746,570	5307		1,397,256	279,451
Grant & Project Management	650,000	5307		520,000	-
Subtotal	25,664,198				7,368,980
Capital Projects/Earmarks	101,754,462			34,193,622	50,885,957
Federal Cap Program	127,418,660			49,008,122	58,254,937

FY 2022 Summary Proposed Budget

Category	Approved FY 2021		Proposed FY 2022		Changes	% Change
	FY 2021 Operating	FY 2021 Capital	FY 2022 Operating	FY 2022 Capital		
Revenue:						
Fare Revenue	44,090,000		18,236,000		(25,854,000)	-58.6%
Miscellaneous Revenue	300,000		300,000		-	0.0%
Jurisdictional Subsidy	13,817,632	4,483,148	16,625,897	1,674,883	-	0.0%
Other Sources (Use of Prev. Surplus)	-	-	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
NVTA Grant Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-
State CROC Dedicated Funding	-	15,000,000	-	15,000,000	-	-
Federal/State Subsidy - Operating	31,879,656		30,683,481		(1,196,175)	-3.8%
Federal/State Subsidy - Capital		53,024,602		85,079,579	32,054,978	60.5%
Operating/Capital Reserves	-	-	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
Interest Income	1,300,000		350,000		(950,000)	-73.1%
Total Revenue	91,387,287	72,507,750	66,195,378	101,754,462	4,054,803	2.5%
Operating/Non-Operating Expenses:						
Non-Departmental Operating	5,800,514		7,215,000		1,414,486	24.4%
Executive Management	1,263,000		1,423,000		160,000	12.7%
Chief of Staff	683,600		653,850		(29,750)	-4.4%
Marketing	409,300		389,800		(19,500)	-4.8%
Finance and Human Resources	4,507,800		2,981,800		(1,526,000)	-33.9%
Purchasing and Contract Administration	745,850		758,600		12,750	1.7%
Project Development	956,900		1,303,255		346,355	36.2%
Project Implementation	1,117,500		1,074,500		(43,000)	-3.8%
Rail Operations	2,386,500		2,362,000		(24,500)	-1.0%
Information Technology	2,078,500		2,166,350		87,850	4.2%
Facilities Maintenance	4,527,300		4,048,200		(479,100)	-10.6%
Mechanical Operations	10,565,700		11,154,620		588,920	5.6%
System Safety & Security	1,488,200		1,349,200		(139,000)	-9.3%
PRTC	102,000		102,000		-	0.0%
NVTC	90,000		90,000		-	0.0%
Train Operations	16,591,500		17,239,500		648,000	3.9%
Maintenance of Equipment	7,832,285		8,113,500		281,215	3.6%
Amtrak	5,181,000		4,450,000		(731,000)	-14.1%
Amtrak Access Fees	6,879,000		6,830,000		(49,000)	-0.7%
Norfolk Southern Access Fees	3,442,000		3,418,000		(24,000)	-0.7%
CSX Access Fees	8,468,000		8,544,000		76,000	0.9%
					-	
Total Operating/Non-Operating Expenses	85,116,449	-	85,667,175	-	550,726	0.6%
CIP Expenditures		72,507,750		101,754,462	29,246,712	
Debt Service	6,270,838		6,222,198		(48,641)	
Total CIP and Other Expenditures	6,270,838	72,507,750	6,222,198	101,754,462	29,198,071	37.1%
Grand Total Expenses	91,387,287.14	72,507,750.00	91,889,373	101,754,462	29,748,798	18.2%
Difference by Fund	-	-	(25,693,995)	-	(25,693,995)	
Total Difference		-	(25,693,995)		(25,693,995)	

Referral of FY 2022 Preliminary Budget

1. Current financial position
2. Key operating budget assumptions
3. Use of CARES Act funding
4. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
5. Next steps



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

1

Current Financial Position

FY 2020

- Loss of \$9 million in fare revenue in Q4
- Year-end operating position before state/federal assistance of +\$900,000
- \$1.1 million in emergency state assistance
- Projected FY 2020 CARES Act assistance of \$2.7 million

Coronavirus
Aid,
Relief, and
Economic
Security
Act



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

2

Current Financial Position

FY 2021

- Daily ridership of 1300-1400
- July/August total fare revenue of \$1.5 million
- July monthly P&L of -\$4.7 million before any emergency assistance
 - Includes \$6.7 million annual expense for liability insurance (\$2.5 million above budget)
- Projected FY 2021 CARES Act reimbursement of \$33 million

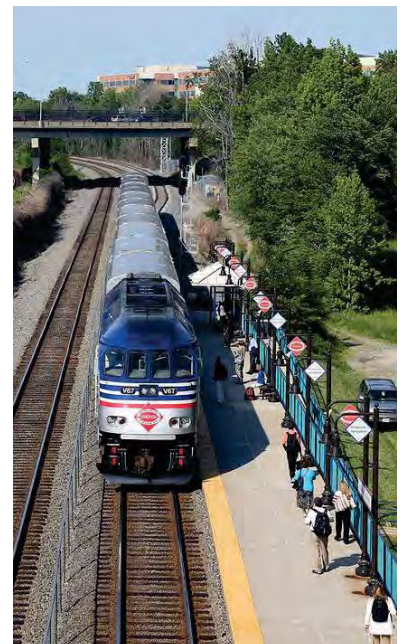


VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

3

FY 2022 Budget: Preliminary Assumptions

- 32 daily trains – return to full schedule of service
- No change to passenger fares
- No change to jurisdictional subsidy contribution
 - Total amount of \$18.30 million
 - Same allocation as FY 2021 (no October survey)



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

4

FY 2022 Budget: Preliminary Assumptions

- Preliminary revenue projections (subject to ongoing review and revision)
 - FY 2021: \$10 million (*20-25% of normal*)
 - FY 2022: \$18 million (*40% of normal*)
- State operating assistance of \$8.5 million
- Continued 84% state reimbursement of track access fees
- Ongoing review of departmental expenses for deferrals and eliminations



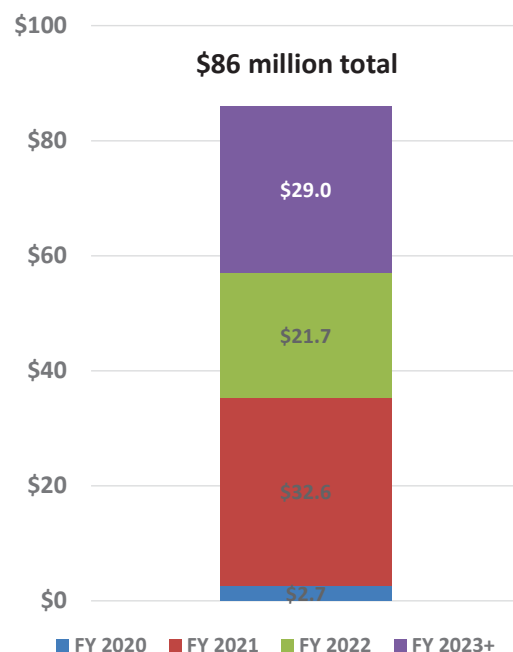
VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

5

Use of CARES Act Funding

- **How long will the CARES Act funding last?**
 - Partly out of our control – depends on return of ridership
 - But decisions about expenses, fares, and subsidy still have an impact

Projected CARES Act Funding



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

6

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

- Focus remains on project delivery
- *Transforming Rail in Virginia* program has impacted scope/schedule/funding of many projects, currently being updated
- No specific recommendations yet for C-ROC in FY 2022 – still in discussions with DRPT



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

7

Next Steps

- Continue to update expense/revenue forecasts as pandemic evolves
- Review with Finance Committee, jurisdictional staff, and Operations Board in Oct/ Nov
- Final budget for approval and referral in December



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

8



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
OPERATIONS BOARD

Agenda Item 9-B
Action Item

To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board

From: Rich Dalton

Date: September 18, 2020

Re: Approval of Increases to Chief Executive Officer Procurement Authorization and Contract Award Authorities

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is asked to approve increases to two delegations of authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO): contract award authority to \$200,000, and procurement authorization authority to \$1,000,000.

Summary:

The Operations Board has delegated to the CEO the authority to award contracts up to \$100,000 and to authorize procurements up to \$100,000 without requiring the Operations Board's approval. This policy change would increase the delegated limits to \$200,000 for contract award and \$1,000,000 for procurement authorization.

Background:

As VRE has grown and the number of procurements has increased, and as inflation has led to a general increase in costs over time, the CEO delegation of authority limits have been periodically raised.

Year	CEO Spending Limit
1991	\$15,000
2001	\$30,000
2006	\$50,000
2015	\$100,000



Northern Virginia
Transportation Commission
2300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 230
Arlington, VA 22201
703-524-3322



Virginia Railway Express
1500 King Street, Suite 202
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-1001
VRE.org



Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission
14700 Potomac Mills Road
Woodbridge, VA 22192
703-580-6121

The most recent increase to \$100,000 applies to both the procurement authorization limit (i.e., approving the issuance of a Request for Proposals or an Invitation for Bids) and the contract award limit. This increase was one of the recommendations from the 2015 Management Audit that was intended to streamline the approval process and allow the Operations Board to focus on procurements with greater budget and policy implications. The Management Audit also recommended consideration of a separate, higher delegation limit only for procurement authorizations – knowing the Operations Board would still get a “bite at the apple” with contract award – but that recommendation was not acted upon.

The Management Audit made two additional recommendations regarding delegation limits. First, it recommended that any purchase of over \$50,000 be communicated to the Board as an information item to ensure transparency. Second, it recommended the Board regularly revisit these delegations of authority to determine whether the approval levels should be adjusted for inflation or other factors. A ‘Spending Authority Report’ that summarizes these purchases is provided monthly to the Operations Board, and a reevaluation of the thresholds has resulted in this proposed policy change.

The proposed increases were presented to the VRE Finance Committee on July 17, 2020, for consideration. The key points in support of the changes included:

During the 24-month period of CY2018-2019, fourteen contract awards came before the Operations Board with a value between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Of those awards, only three were for new contracts, while the other eleven were task orders under existing contracts for which the Board had previously approved award of the contract, amendments to existing contracts or purchase orders, or extensions of existing leases.

During its 2020 session, the Virginia General Assembly enacted legislation (HB 452 / SB 650) that raises the state’s small purchase limit to \$200,000, which exempts such purchases from some of the competitive procurement requirements in the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA).

Procurement authorizations in the \$200,000 to \$1,000,000 range during the same CY2018-2019 period were primarily for items such as LED light fixtures, pavement repairs and striping, website management services, and forklift trucks. These procurement authorizations are almost always placed on the consent agenda and are not discussed by the Operations Board.

Examples of recent authorizations greater than \$1,000,000 that would still require two approvals by the Operations Board (i.e., for both solicitation and award) even under the proposed changes include final design for the Broad Run expansion; new passenger railcars; delivery of diesel fuel for VRE locomotives; and construction of Quantico Station improvements.

The Finance Committee expressed its support for these proposed increases and for incorporating a summary of all actions that would have previously gone to the Operations Board for approval into an expanded Spending Authority Report. Any

procurement authorization over \$1,000,000 or contract award over \$200,000 would continue to require Operations Board approval. The Operations Board has authority to approve this amendment to the CEO spending authority based on the delegation of authority plan approved by the Commissions in December 2005.

Fiscal Impact:

There are no direct funding implications associated with this policy change.

**Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board**

**Resolution
9B-09-2020**

**Approval of Increases to Chief Executive Officer Procurement
Authorization and Contract Award Authorities**

WHEREAS, the Operations Board has delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to authorize procurements and to award contracts below a certain value without requiring Operations Board approval; and,

WHEREAS, the last change to the Chief Executive Officer's delegated authority was in 2015, which raised the authority limit to \$100,000 for both procurement authorization and contract award; and,

WHEREAS, VRE staff, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2015 Management Audit and the desire to streamline approval processes, have reevaluated the current delegation limits in light of cost inflation, changes to Virginia procurement law, and the recent history of procurement actions coming before the Operations Board; and,

WHEREAS, the Operations Board may approve an amendment to the Chief Executive Officer spending authority based on the delegation of authority plan approved by the Commissions in December 2005;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby approve an increase in the Chief Executive Officer's procurement authorization authority to \$1,000,000 and an increase in the Chief Executive Officer's contract award authority to \$200,000; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, all procurement authorization and contract award actions that would have previously come before the Operations Board for approval will now be reported in the monthly Spending Authority Report; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Operations Board will revisit delegation thresholds regularly to determine whether approval levels should be adjusted to account for inflation or other factors.

Approved this 18th day of September 2020

Jeanine Lawson
Secretary

Gary Skinner
Chairman



**DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FROM COMMISSIONS
TO THE VRE OPERATIONS BOARD**

Effective July 1, 2008

(Updated with CEO spending authority limits effective September 2020)

- Full authority of spending, provided the amount is included in the annual budget and six-year financial plan
- Approval of fare changes (tariffs)
- All contractual agreements, provided funding is included in the approved budget, with the exception of any operation agreements (including CSX and NS) and Insurance Agreements.
- Responsibilities not delegated:
 - a. Amendments to the Master Agreement
 - b. Hiring and termination of the Chief Executive Officer
 - c. Statewide and federal grant applications
 - d. Approval of legislative agendas
 - e. Approval of strategic plan
 - f. Sale or purchase of real property and equipment in the Commissions' name
 - g. Other major policies such as terms for new entrants
 - h. Other actions reserved for the Commissions by the Master Agreement, such as approving annual budgets/six-year financial plans.

VRE Operations Board approved spending authority delegated to VRE CEO:

- VRE CEO's authorization limit to award contracts up to \$200,000 and procurement authorizations up to \$1,000,000 (effective September 2020)

Agenda Item #9: Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)



TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

At the October meeting DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell will give her report, including an update on the impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency on state transit funding.

A. Monthly DRPT Report

The [monthly DRPT Report](#), which provides updates on DRPT programs and initiatives, is attached.

B. Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board Member Appointments

As part of the transportation omnibus bill passed during the 2020 General Assembly, Speaker of the House Filler-Corn ([HB 1414, 2020](#)) and Senator Richard Saslaw ([SB 890, 2020](#)) sponsored legislation to establish the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority. On September 18 Governor Ralph Northam announced his 12-non legislative appointments to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority:

- **The Honorable Sharon Bulova** of Fairfax County, Former Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
- **Deborah H. Butler** of Norfolk, Retired Executive, Norfolk Southern Corporation
- **Victor O. Cardwell** of Salem, Principal, Woods Rogers PLC
- **Patricia Doersch** of Falls Church, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs
- **The Honorable Jay Fisette** of Arlington, Managing Principal, DMV Strategic Advisors, LLC
- **Roderick "Rod" D. Hall** of Woodbridge, Government Affairs Advisor, K&L Gates LLP
- **Charles Moorman** of Charlottesville, Retired Chairman and CEO, Norfolk Southern Corporation
- **Cynthia Moses-Nedd** of Prince William County, Chief of Staff, Office of Wildland Fire, United States Department of the Interior
- **The Honorable Paul F. Nichols** of Woodbridge, Principal, Nichols Zauzig
- **Hossein Sadid** of Richmond, CFO, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
- **Jim Spore** of Virginia Beach, President and CEO, Reinvent Hampton Roads
- **Mariia Zimmerman** of Richmond, Principal, MZ Strategies, LLC

The three remaining members of the 15-member board include:

- An Amtrak designee (non-voting);

- **Rich Dalton**, VRE Chief Executive Officer (non-voting); and
- **Jennifer Mitchell**, DRPT Director, who will serve as chair and only vote in the event of a tie.

Back in June, NVTC and PRTC had the opportunity to provide lists of recommended names to represent their jurisdictions (three who reside within the boundaries of NVTC and three who reside in the boundaries of PRTC) on the Authority for consideration by the Governor. Both Sharon Bulova and Jay Fissette are former NVTC Commissioners and Sharon Bulova also served on the VRE Operations Board from its inception until she retired as chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in December 2019.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority has the ability to own, construct, acquire, and lease track and rail facilities. It will also be able to collect track lease fees, issue debt, and borrow money for capital purposes. As mandated by an amendment to the budget, it will be required to provide initial oversight of the proposed terms of the Long Bridge project agreement as well as continuing oversight of its actions on bond issuance and the sale of any land to the Major Employment and Investment (MEI) Commission.

During the current Special Session, the General Assembly is considering a budget amendment that would allow the DRPT Director to conduct all the necessary business functions of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, while the Authority is being established.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Jennifer L. Mitchell
Director

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
600 E. Main Street, Suite 2102
Richmond, VA 23219

Ph: 804-786-4440
Fax: 804-225-3752
Virginia Relay Center
800-828-1120 (TDD)

TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Jennifer Mitchell, Director

DATE: September 21, 2020

SUBJECT: Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Update

The General Assembly special session convened on August 18 and is ongoing as of this writing. Amendments to the Commonwealth's 2020-2022 Biennial Budget are expected before adjournment. FY21 transportation revenues are projected to be down \$401 million, and FY22 revenues down \$349 million. The General Assembly is considering budget amendments that: i) provide flexibility to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to address revenue reductions; ii) allow DRPT to shift funding within the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund to the statewide transit operations program and NVTC WMATA allocation; iii) allow the DRPT Director to conduct all the necessary business functions of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority; and iv) set the DRPT agency budget at five percent of revenues or equal to the FY20 budget.

The CTB met virtually on September 16. At [the action meeting](#), the CTB authorized an extension of state transit operating assistance and the NVTC WMATA allocation for an additional quarter at FY 20 levels. The CTB also approved a Project Management and Engineering/Design Oversight Support contract for the Transforming Passenger Rail in Virginia project. The approved amount is \$9,975,000 for a one year contract with two one year renewal options. Also related to transit, the CTB approved a VDOT program transfer that included Innovation and Technology Transportation Fund (ITTF) funding for a \$48,000 DASH real time prediction project. The CTB has not yet approved an FY 21-26 SYIP, and the FY 20-25 SYIP remains in effect.

At the workshop, the CTB received [a briefing from DRPT](#) on WMATA's FY 20 compliance with the legislative and CTB policy requirements related to dedicated funding. DRPT is not recommending any enforcement actions or withholding of funding for FY 20. While the CTB policy is subject a biennial review, DRPT will not recommend any changes to the CTB policy until after the NVTC working group on the effectiveness of the 3% cap delivers its report in

DRPT.Virginia.gov

Improving the mobility of people and goods while expanding transportation choices.

November. At the next CTB meeting, scheduled for October 21, DRPT will request formal concurrence with its recommendations for FY 20 compliance by WMATA.

DRPT has awarded a task order to [KFH Group/Cambridge Systematics](#) for the Springfield to Quantico Enhanced Public Transportation Study. The General Assembly approved a [budget amendment](#) for this study during its 2020 session and directed DRPT to manage it. The scope of work calls for a twelve month schedule to complete a draft report, with delivery of a final report to the General Assembly by December 2021. DRPT has contacted transportation directors regarding jurisdictional participation in the study and anticipates kicking off the technical committee in October.

DRPT and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) continue to advance the I-495 American Legion Bridge Transit/TDM Study, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. Updates on the study will be presented at the [I-495 Northern Extension \(NEXT\) Public Hearing](#) on October 5 (virtual) and 8 (in-person, by appointment) and are available on the project page on DRPT's [website](#).

Additionally, [as I announced](#) at the September Commission meeting, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), DRPT, and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) have completed the combined Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Records of Decision (ROD) on the Long Bridge project, marking a major milestone for the new rail bridge and independent pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Potomac River.

Finally, the [Virginia Breeze](#) intercity bus program has been awarded the Commonwealth Connectors Award by the [Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association](#) (VAPA) at its October 12-16 virtual conference. The award ceremony is Tuesday, October 13 from 1-2 PM. The [2019 winner](#) was the Fairfax County urban design guidelines for Reston transit station areas.

TO: Chair Cristol and NVTC Commissioners

FROM: Kate Mattice

DATE: September 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Executive Director Report

A. Executive Director Newsletter

NVTC's [Executive Director Newsletter](#) provides updates on specific NVTC projects and programs and highlights items of interest at the federal and state levels and among partners such as the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA).

This month the Executive Director Newsletter discusses the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the regional transit systems and the Commuter Choice program. It also marks a milestone with the Platform Improvement Project and remembers a founding member of the Commission who left his mark on transit in Northern Virginia.

B. NVTC Financial Report

The [August 2020 Financial Report](#) is provided for your information.



Executive Director Newsletter

October 2020

We've reached the six-month milestone since the COVID-19 pandemic began to radically alter life as we know it. While a lot of uncertainty lies ahead, we have a clearer understanding of how the virus has impacted our region's transit systems. Metro, VRE and others rely on fare revenues to keep the trains and buses running, but continued low ridership has slowed that money to a trickle. We see that in Metro's proposed budget changes as the agency works to close a \$200 million budget gap.

Metro, VRE and transit systems across the country received \$25 billion from the CARES Act, but it's not enough. The American Public Transportation Association and others are asking Congress for additional relief. Virginia's Congressional delegation supports this effort, but Congress as a whole doesn't appear ready to act before Election Day.

At the same time, working from home has taken many cars off the roads. That has led to lower toll revenues, which help support our Commuter Choice program. In this month's Executive Director Newsletter, you'll read about proposed changes to adapt to this new reality.

We're also starting to think about what transit will look like as the pandemic eases. We know from other parts of the world that transit remains a safe way to travel when people take the right precautions, like wearing masks. We may see more workplaces reopening in the coming months, which should lead to more commuting. Our region's transit providers are working with the motto, "we're ready when you're ready," while maintaining high cleaning standards and providing train and a bus service at a level where riders can comfortably keep their distance.

Finally, mark your calendars for our annual NVTC-PRTC Joint Legislative briefing on Monday, December 7. The event will be online this year from 9 - 11 a.m. Our panel of experts will bring you up to date on the latest happenings at Metro, VRE and the state of transportation across Virginia. As always, you'll also have a chance to ask questions.

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Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 230
Arlington, VA 22201

NoVaTransit.org
NoVaRides.org
[@NoVaTransit](https://twitter.com/NoVaTransit)
[@NoVaTransit](https://www.facebook.com/NoVaTransit)



Executive Director

Key Dates

- Oct. 16 - VRE Operations Board
- Oct. 29 - NVTC WMATA Committee
- Nov. 5 - NVTC Executive Committee
- Nov. 5 - Commission meeting
- Nov. 20 - VRE Operations Board
- Dec. 4 - NVTC Executive Committee
- Dec. 3 - Commission Meeting
- Dec. 7 - NVTC-PRTC Joint Legislative Briefing

Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor projects on track



NVTC is on track for approval of an initial (FY 2021) [Commuter Choice](#) on the I-66 Corridor Round Four program of projects by the Commonwealth Transportation Board by the end of the year. The proposed \$4 million program includes three low-cost, low-risk capital projects that would enhance transit and access to transit in the I-66 Inside the Beltway corridor, as well as continued Commuter Choice funding for three express bus routes to provide predictability for corridor commuters as they begin to return to worksites.

Ben Owen of the Commuter Choice team recently led a virtual town hall meeting that provided members of the public with an overview of Commuter Choice and the six projects under consideration for funding. NVTC's Program Advisory Committee unanimously endorsed this proposed program in September. The full Commission will consider it on October 1 for adoption and referral to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for their subsequent consideration and final action later this year.

When the Round Four call for projects closed in January, NVTC anticipated a total of \$25 million to support new projects over the FY 2021-2022 period. However, the COVID-19 public health emergency forced the Commuter Choice team to find a creative way to handle Round Four programming: The I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues collected by the Virginia Department of Transportation that fund the I-66 corridor program dropped sharply this spring and have remained well below budgeted figures. Besides the \$4 million initial program, NVTC intends to fund an additional set of projects next spring with further revenue that may become available over the two-year period. This set of projects would include new transit services, new commuter incentives and larger capital projects that were submitted under the Round Four call for projects and remain under consideration for funding.

Ref. #	Applicant	Application Title	Application Score (max. 100 points)	Funding
1	Arlington County	Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance DEFERRED	97	\$10,000,000
2	Fairfax County	McLean Metrorail Station North Entrance	85	\$1,000,000
3	Loudoun County	Renewal of Metro Connection Route 88X Dulles South Extension DEFERRED	81	\$649,819
4	OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon/Navy Yard	80	\$461,100
5	City of Falls Church	Restoration of Peak-Period Metrobus Route 28X, Tysons Corner to Mark Center	73	\$3,305,967
6	OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn	71	\$137,100
7	OmniRide	New Bus Service from Gainesville to NoMa DEFERRED	63	\$3,886,200
8	OmniRide	TDM Strategy - I-66 Corridor Vanpool Parking Benefit	62	\$85,000
9	Fairfax County	New Bus Service from Reston South to Crystal City	59	\$5,110,800
10	City of Fairfax	City of Fairfax Bike Share Implementation	59	\$460,000
11	Arlington County	Lee Highway HOV and Bus-Only Lane in Rosslyn	57	\$710,000
12	Town of Vienna	New Park and Ride at Patrick Henry Library	56	\$5,050,000
13	Loudoun County	Renewal of Purcellville Metro Connection Bus Service	52	\$709,030
14	Fairfax County	TDM Strategy - Fare Buy-Down on Bus Service from Reston North to Crystal City	44	\$154,500
TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST				\$17,133,497



NVTC's Ben Owen leads the Commuter Choice virtual town hall

Virginia transportation revenues expected to drop significantly

Members of the General Assembly resumed work on legislation to deal with budget shortfalls and offer amendments to the Commonwealth's FY 2020 - FY 2022 biennial budget in September. Gov. Ralph Northam offered budget amendments to minimize the impact of lower transportation revenues and provide funding for transit. Deputy Secretary of Transportation Nick Donohue recently told members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board that the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to a projected revenue drop in state transportation funds of \$870 million through June 2022. The Virginia Department of Transportation has proposed budget amendments that give the CTB more flexibility in addressing revenue reductions. One measure would maintain funding for planned projects, but shift the spending to the later years of six-year projects.

"We want to preserve those six year windows, preserve our projects, keep everything moving, preserving infrastructure," said Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine, adding, "I also believe contributing in the most profound way to economic recovery by stabilizing our investments and stabilizing our workforce."

Another change would allow the CTB to use money allocated for transit capital or special projects to be used for transit operating expenses during FY 2021. NVTC will continue to monitor efforts to secure transit funding for our local transit operators including our jurisdiction's payments to WMATA. Additionally, NVTC is seeking flexibility in holding a required joint in-person meeting with CTB, NVTAA and VRE during the special session.

Metro Board advances budget changes due to COVID-19 pandemic

Metro's Board of Directors [voted](#) on potential service cuts, schedule changes, and other cost-cutting measures, including layoffs, that the authority says will be necessary to balance the budget if federal relief money runs out. Metro estimates that money provided under the CARES Act will be depleted at the end of the year. The agency says it needs cuts of about \$200 million to balance its budget, noting that ridership has dropped as much as 90% on some lines.

The Board previously authorized a return to front-door boarding and fare collection on Metrobus starting in January, and affirmed that the new extension of the Silver Line would not open during the current budget year - meaning July 2021 is the earliest possible opening date once the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority completes construction.

The Board action follows September's NVTC WMATA Committee meeting where Virginia's Board members discussed the proposed budget changes. Chair Paul Smedberg said, "We are looking at some difficult financial decisions coming up to adjust the budget, not only for fiscal year 21, but looking ahead to fiscal year 22." Mr. Smedberg also noted that Metro does not anticipate receiving any more financial relief from Congress.

Board member Matt Letourneau added, "As difficult as these cuts will be, 1700 WMATA employees are potentially looking at layoffs and that is potentially a very painful thing for the organization, and as difficult as it is to have to make cuts, if you look at this chart, I think this is still a very reasonable level of service."



Photo courtesy: Metro

2020 Platform Improvement Project wraps up

The final two Metrorail stations closed for rebuilding reopened the day after Labor Day as Metro's [Platform Improvement Project](#) hit a milestone. The agency says the multi-year project has reached 50% completion. Ten Metrorail stations in Northern Virginia have been rebuilt over the past two summers on the Blue/Yellow and Orange/Silver Lines. Metro says the new stations include slip-resistant tiles on the platforms and in the mezzanine areas, stainless-steel platform shelters with charging outlets/ports, additional Passenger Information Display (PIDS) screens, energy-efficient LED lighting throughout the stations and improved speakers for clearer public announcements and emergency notifications. Additional work will limit some sidewalk and parking at stations until next month. Rebuilding work at Reagan National Airport Station continues, but does not impact service.



East Falls Church (top); Vienna (bottom left); Dunn Loring (bottom right). Courtesy: Metro



PLATFORM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

SUMMER 2020 HIGHLIGHTS



118,000 FT²

OF SLIP-RESISTANT TILES

Enough to cover
42 tennis courts



73,000 FT

OF ELECTRICAL CONDUIT

Equal to the distance between the
US Capitol & Tysons Corner Mall



6,000 FT

OF PLATFORM EDGE REPAIRED

Long enough for most airplanes to
take off at Reagan National Airport



381,600 LBS

OF GRANITE EDGE PLACED

Heavier than the granite
used for the Lincoln
Memorial statue

**57 SHUTTLE
BUSES
USED IN RUSH HOUR
OPERATIONS**

Equal to seating for
as many people as
the Kennedy Center
Concert Hall



210,000

SHUTTLE BUS DEPARTURES

More than all departing flights at
Dulles International Airport in 2019



1,400 FT²

OF SCREENS INSTALLED

Equal to the size of a
movie theatre screen



**4,540 LIGHTBULBS
INSTALLED**

Enough to shine a light on every
seat at Wolf Trap National Park
for the Performing Arts in Virginia



Rich Dalton tapped to lead VRE

NVTC and sister Commission PRTC voted to appoint Rich Dalton as the CEO of Virginia Railway Express (VRE) at their separate meetings in September. Dalton had been serving as Acting CEO and has been with VRE since 2012, previously serving as deputy CEO, chief operating officer and other roles.

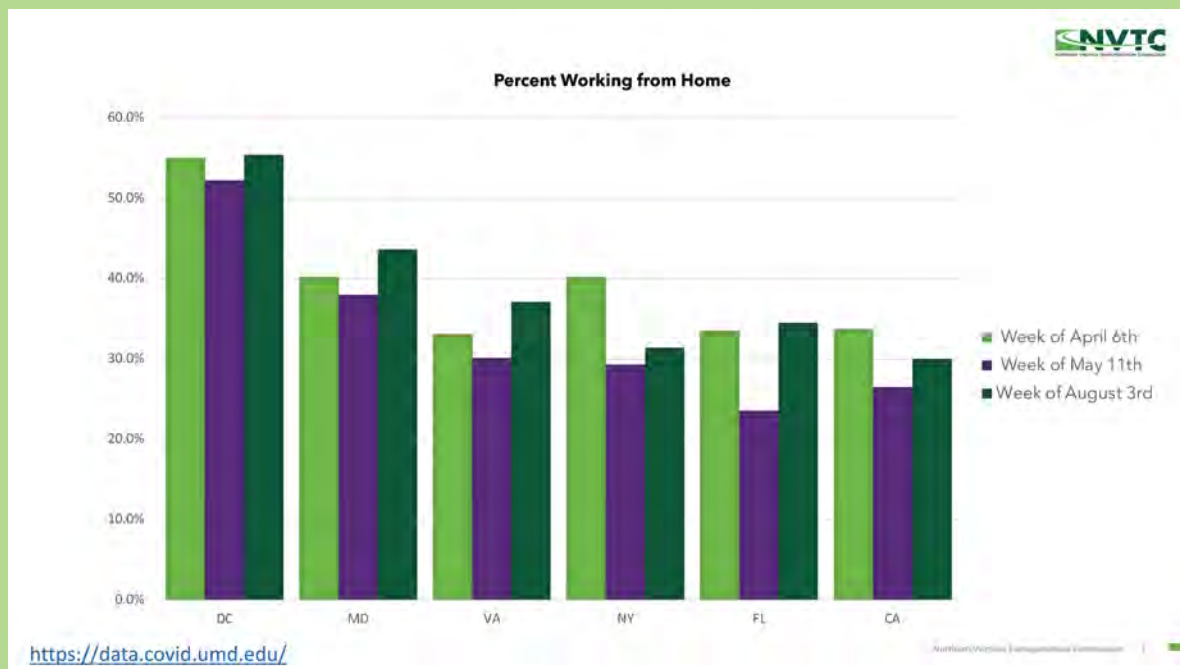
"The search for the next VRE CEO drew interest from rail professionals from across the United States," said Katie Cristol, NVTC Chair, who also chaired the CEO Search Committee. "In this national search, Rich stood out on the basis of his unparalleled expertise in the operations of VRE and its partner agencies and his vision for the future of the system."

The railroad noted in a news release that Dalton, "will lead VRE, navigating the current pandemic and ensuring future growth."



NVTC examines telework and transit demand during the pandemic

A new analysis by NVTC seeks to better understand the relationship between teleworking and the demand for riding transit in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Transit Resource Center Program Manager Dan Goldfarb presented his findings to the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) in September. Dan compared bus and rail ridership in April and May of this year and found a sharp

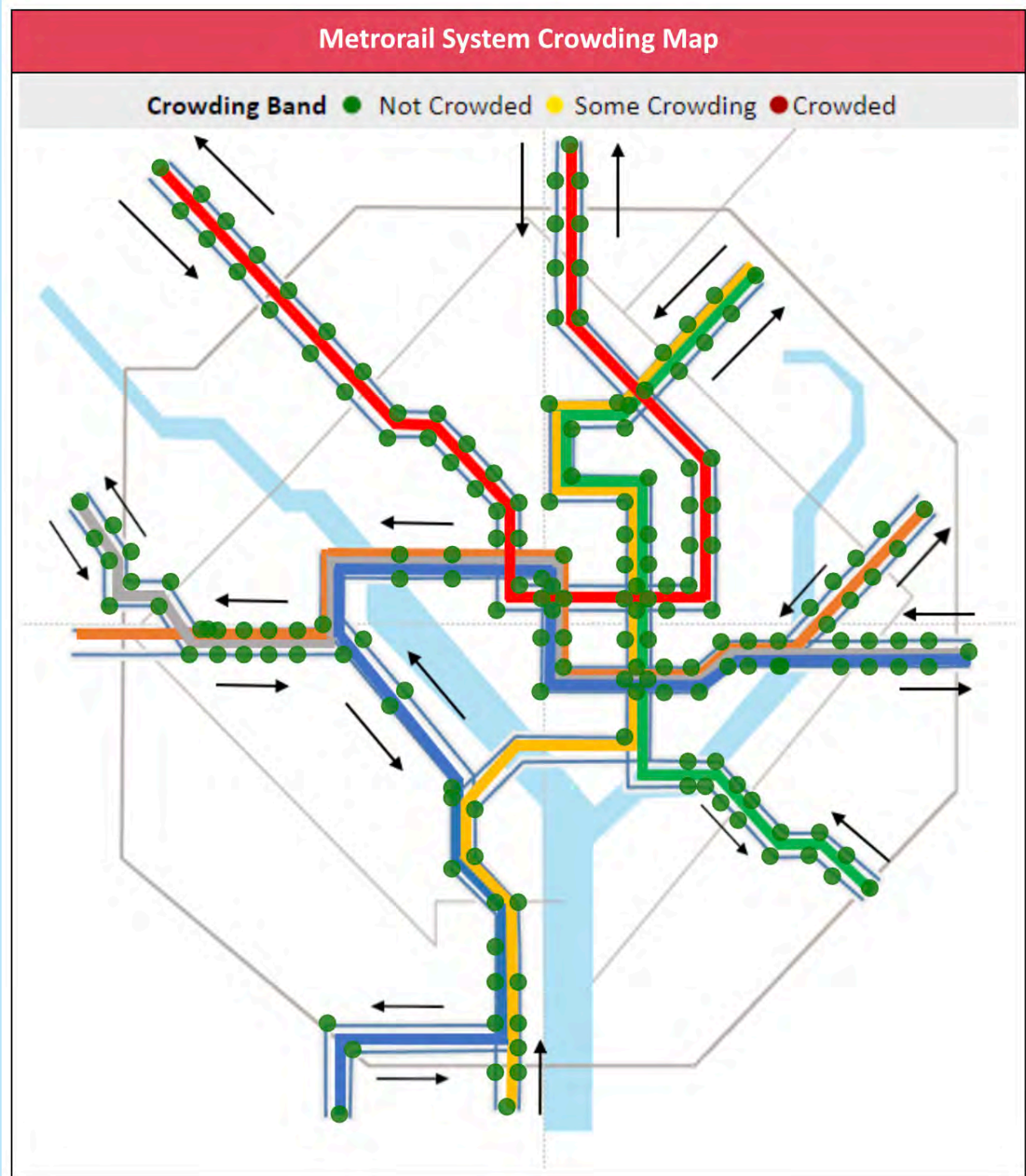


drop-off compared to last year. He also looked at the number of people working from home during key months of 2020. The analysis also considers the reopening of the region as service providers restore transit service and more people return to area roads. Will the rate of telework remain higher than normal and what factors do people consider when choosing to remain at home, drive to work or take transit to work?

Regional surveys find cautious approach to returning to work

Two surveys released in September show that employers remain cautious about bringing people back to work and that working from home may remain the norm well into next year, due to continued uncertainty about the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Greater Washington Partnership reports that more than 60% of employers planned for less than one third of employees returning to worksites post-Labor Day. Nearly 20% expected no employees returning. Of the employers with plans, just 72% of their employees are expected to return to the office by summer 2021. In conjunction with the survey results, the partnership also released a [Transit Tracker](#), which provides information on Metrorail crowd levels, enabling riders to gain a sense of how much space they'll have if they use the system.



Executive Director Newsletter

Separately, Commuter Connections found that 97% of worksites had at least some telework since the COVID-19 pandemic began. All employees were teleworking full-time at 55% of worksites. This survey also found that the average share of employees who teleworked grew from 36% to 82% at sites with telework.

Both surveys asked employers what measures they planned to take to bring people back on-site. Continued telework, staggered working hours and strategies to ensure distancing ranked high. We'll be watching these return to work trends closely as they have significant implications for transit ridership and toll road usage.

Long Bridge Project Reaches Critical Milestone

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) announced the conclusion of the environmental planning process for the [Long Bridge](#) rail project in September. This marks a major milestone in the planning process for the new rail bridge and independent pedestrian/bicycle bridge that will span the Potomac River and opens the door for the final engineering design, financing, and construction of Long Bridge.

"A new bridge across the Potomac River represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make the rail system work better for everyone along the entire East Coast," said Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam. "The project has passed an important milestone, thanks to close collaboration between Virginia, D.C., and the private sector. We are all excited about bringing easier and faster mobility to commuters and travelers."

Owned and operated by CSX, the existing Long Bridge is the only railroad bridge connecting Virginia to the District of Columbia and is one of the most significant passenger and freight rail choke points along the east coast. The bridge operates at 98% capacity during peak periods, preventing the District, Virginia, and Maryland from increasing passenger and commuter rail service for their communities.



Photo: LongBridgeProject.com

The expanded Long Bridge will enable Virginia to double its state-supported Amtrak passenger rail service, significantly increase Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter rail service by 2030, and make way for potential future run-through commuter rail service connecting Virginia and Maryland.

"The Long Bridge project, made possible through collaboration with private, state, and federal partners, will transform passenger and freight rail operations for generations to come," said Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine.

The new, Virginia-owned, two-track bridge will be built across the Potomac River adjacent to the CSX freight bridge and will be dedicated exclusively to passenger and commuter rail. Through the separation of passenger and freight rail, the new bridge will also reduce congestion and improve fluidity for CSX and its customers. In addition to rail congestion relief, the Long Bridge project will create a new, independent pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossing of the Potomac River between the Mount Vernon Trail, Crystal City, and the monumental core of the District of Columbia.

NVTC-PRTC Joint Legislative Briefing



***Monday, December 7
9 - 11 a.m.
Online Only***

***Watch your inbox for registration
information***

NVTC's legislative agenda for 2021 taking shape

The Legislative and Policy Committee met September 10 to discuss the General Assembly's Special Session and develop the Commission's priorities for the 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda. NVTC Legislative Liaison Aimee Perron Seibert and Sen. Adam Ebbin provided insight into the work the General Assembly is doing to support local transit operators while dealing with lower transportation revenues. NVTC Program Analyst Zach Smith also provided an overview of the proposed 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda. This year, NVTC's proposed state and federal legislative priorities are focused on protecting existing transit programs and revenues and making it easier to access transit. Following the Commission's approval, NVTC will share the 2021 Legislative and Policy Agenda and other federal and state issues affecting transit in Northern Virginia at the annual joint NVTC-PRTC Virtual Legislative Briefing on Monday, December 7.

NVTC remembers founding commissioner Joe Alexander

Members of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission honored one of their own at the September Commission meeting. Joseph Alexander, a founding member of NVTC, died August 30 at age 90.

Mr. Alexander served on NVTC from its inception in 1964 until 1995, serving as chair for a three-year period from 1970 through 1972. He served as the Lee District Supervisor on the Fairfax County Board for 32 years and he represented Fairfax County on NVTC for 31 of those years. He also represented NVTC on the WMATA Board of Directors for over 20 years, from 1971 - 1995, serving as chair four times. He was also a founding member of the VRE Operations Board and served from 1988 -1995. VRE named one of its locomotives after him, honoring him for his service to VRE.



"Joe was just a remarkable individual, a transformative character, really, in Fairfax County. I never met anyone in my life who loved transit more than Joe did," said Commissioner and Fairfax County Chair Jeff McKay, adding that Alexander was, "Someone who was so proud of Northern Virginia and all that we've been able to do for transit."

Throughout his long tenure on NVTC, Mr. Alexander was instrumental in helping establish the 90-mile Metro system and the Franconia/Springfield Transportation Center, the VRE commuter rail project, and many other transit related projects. Even after he retired from political service in 1995, he continued to be active in the Virginia Transit Association and the American Public Transportation Association. Joe Alexander truly was passionate about transit. As a life-long friend and supporter of NVTC, we would see him at many of our events, including last year's December Legislative Briefing.

FAIRFAX COUNTY

Joseph Alexander



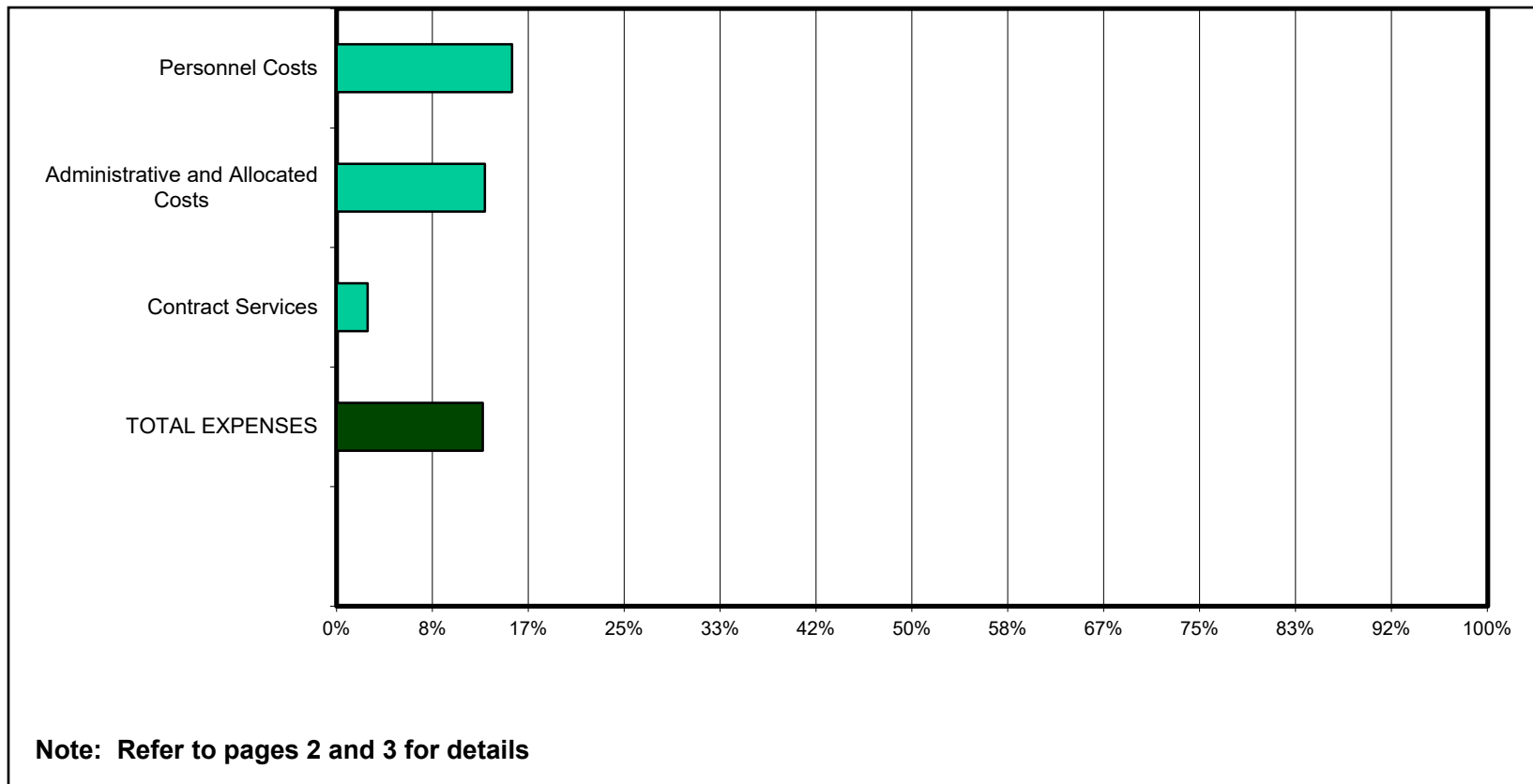
An artist's rendering of Joe Alexander from a 1971 NVTC publication (left); A 1965 photo of the Commission (below)



Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

Financial Reports
August 2020

Percentage of FY 2021 NVTC Administrative Budget Used
August 2020
(Target 16.7% or less)



NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
G&A BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT
August 2020

	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Balance Available</u>	<u>Balance %</u>
<u>Personnel Costs</u>					
Salaries and Wages	\$ 139,084.68	\$ 307,948.98	\$ 2,041,700.00	\$ 1,733,751.02	84.9%
Temporary Employee Services	-	-	-	-	
Total Personnel Costs	139,084.68	307,948.98	2,041,700.00	1,733,751.02	84.9%
<u>Benefits</u>					
Employer's Contributions:					
FICA	15,469.98	26,366.83	140,100.00	113,733.17	81.2%
Group Health Insurance	10,896.38	22,918.17	176,600.00	153,681.83	87.0%
Retirement	14,875.00	29,750.00	174,000.00	144,250.00	82.9%
Workmans & Unemployment Compensation	136.00	272.00	5,100.00	4,828.00	94.7%
Life Insurance	703.38	771.42	6,800.00	6,028.58	88.7%
Long Term Disability Insurance	813.62	1,627.24	10,000.00	8,372.76	83.7%
Total Benefit Costs	42,894.36	81,705.66	512,600.00	430,894.34	84.1%
<u>Administrative Costs</u>					
Commissioners Per Diem	-	1,400.00	14,600.00	13,200.00	90.4%
<i>Rents:</i>	30,374.63	60,747.26	393,400.00	332,652.74	84.6%
Office Rent	30,372.63	60,745.26	366,000.00	305,254.74	83.4%
Parking & Transit Benefits	2.00	2.00	27,400.00	27,398.00	100.0%
<i>Insurance:</i>	402.70	838.05	6,800.00	5,961.95	87.7%
Public Official Bonds	(100.00)	(100.00)	2,000.00	2,100.00	105.0%
Liability and Property	502.70	938.05	4,800.00	3,861.95	80.5%
<i>Travel:</i>	30.00	464.40	44,600.00	44,135.60	99.0%
Conference / Professional Development	30.00	343.80	27,100.00	26,756.20	98.7%
Non-Local Travel	-	-	3,100.00	3,100.00	100.0%
Local Travel, Meetings and Related Expenses	-	120.60	14,400.00	14,279.40	99.2%
<i>Communication:</i>	1,108.08	2,343.67	15,500.00	13,156.33	84.9%
Postage	-	137.26	1,400.00	1,262.74	90.2%
Telephone and Data	1,108.08	2,206.41	14,100.00	11,893.59	84.4%
<i>Publications & Supplies</i>	869.48	1,558.07	28,700.00	27,141.93	94.6%
Office Supplies	57.48	90.33	2,800.00	2,709.67	96.8%
Duplication and Paper	812.00	1,467.74	10,900.00	9,432.26	86.5%
Public Engagement	-	-	15,000.00	15,000.00	100.0%

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
G&A BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT
August 2020

	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Balance Available</u>	<u>Balance %</u>
<i>Operations:</i>	1,131.99	2,160.02	37,500.00	35,339.98	94.2%
Furniture and Equipment (Capital)	-	-	13,600.00	13,600.00	100.0%
Repairs and Maintenance	50.00	50.00	1,000.00	950.00	95.0%
Computer Operations	1,081.99	2,110.02	22,900.00	20,789.98	90.8%
 <i>Other General and Administrative:</i>	 716.62	 1,481.72	 9,600.00	 8,118.28	 84.6%
Memberships	178.67	307.34	1,600.00	1,292.66	80.8%
Fees and Miscellaneous	537.95	1,174.38	6,500.00	5,325.62	81.9%
Advertising (Personnel/Procurement)	-	-	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.0%
Total Administrative Costs	<u>34,633.50</u>	<u>70,993.19</u>	<u>550,700.00</u>	<u>479,706.81</u>	<u>87.1%</u>
 <u>Contracting Services</u>					
Auditing	-	-	24,500.00	24,500.00	100.0%
Contract Services and Support - Commuter Choice	575.00	575.00	479,000.00	478,425.00	99.9%
Contract Services and Support - Other	7,325.00	11,366.67	120,000.00	108,633.33	90.5%
Legal	2,916.67	5,833.34	35,000.00	29,166.66	83.3%
Total Contract Services	<u>10,816.67</u>	<u>17,775.01</u>	<u>658,500.00</u>	<u>640,724.99</u>	<u>97.3%</u>
 Total Gross G&A Expenses	<u>\$ 227,429.21</u>	<u>\$ 478,422.84</u>	<u>\$ 3,763,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 3,285,077.16</u>	<u>87.3%</u>

NVTC
RECEIPTS and DISBURSEMENTS
August 2020

August 2020			Virginia LGIP				
Date	Payer / Payee	Purpose	Wells Fargo Checking	Wells Fargo Savings	NVTC G&A / Project	Commuter Choice	Trusts
RECEIPTS							
5	VRE	Staff support		\$ 7,180.27			
5	CNA	Premium refund		100.00			
6	FTA	Grant receipt - Alexandria			189,285.00		
13	Loudoun	Local match - Fare collection project		5,086.93			
13	VRE	Local match - Fare collection project		4,022.74			
20	VDOT	Commuter Choice I-66 net toll revenue				793,392.00	
20	DRPT	Technical assistance receipt - Fare collection			11,284.00		
20	DRPT	Capital grants receipts - Arlington					66,066.00
20	DRPT	Capital grants receipts					29,764.00
20	DRPT	Capital grants receipts - Alexandria					2,655,027.00
21	DRPT	Capital and operating assistance - WMATA					13,251,467.00
21	DRPT	Capital grants receipts - Arlington					2,069,270.00
24	DRPT	Capital grant receipt - Fare collection project			106,053.00		
24	DRPT	Capital grants receipts - Alexandria			80,806.00		
25	DRPT	Capital grant receipt - City of Fairfax					12,240.00
27	DRPT	Capital grant receipt - Alexandria			1,365.00		
31	Banks	Investment earnings		10.12	20.28	8,068.92	37,054.77
			-	16,400.06	388,813.28	801,460.92	18,120,888.77
DISBURSEMENTS							
1-31	Various	G&A expenses	(217,115.09)				
4	Alexandria	Commuter Choice I-395/95 projects reimbursement				(755,241.00)	
5	Kimley-Horn	Consulting - Commuter Choice I-66	(11,385.54)				
5	Stantec	Consulting - NTD project	(984.12)				
5	Kimley-Horn	Consulting - Commuter Choice I-395 / 95	(1,940.92)				
6	Alexandria	Costs incurred			(189,285.00)		
6	Arlington	Commuter Choice I-66 project reimbursement				(72,895.00)	
20	Kimley-Horn	Consulting - Fare collection project	(11,217.98)				
24	City of Fairfax	Costs incurred			(41,343.00)		
24	Arlington	Costs incurred			(64,711.00)		
24	Alexandria	Costs incurred			(80,806.00)		
25	City of Fairfax	Other capital					(12,240.00)
31	Banks	Service charges	(58.63)	(90.34)			
			(242,702.28)	(90.34)	(376,145.00)	(828,136.00)	(12,240.00)
TRANSFERS							
5	Transfer	From LGIP to LGIP (NTD project)			984.12		(984.12)
5	Transfer	From LGIP to checking	185,000.00		(185,000.00)		
31	Transfer	From savings to checking	70,000.00	(70,000.00)			
			255,000.00	(70,000.00)	(184,015.88)	-	(984.12)
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) FOR MONTH			\$ 12,297.72	\$ (53,690.28)	\$ (171,347.60)	\$ (26,675.08)	\$ 18,107,664.65

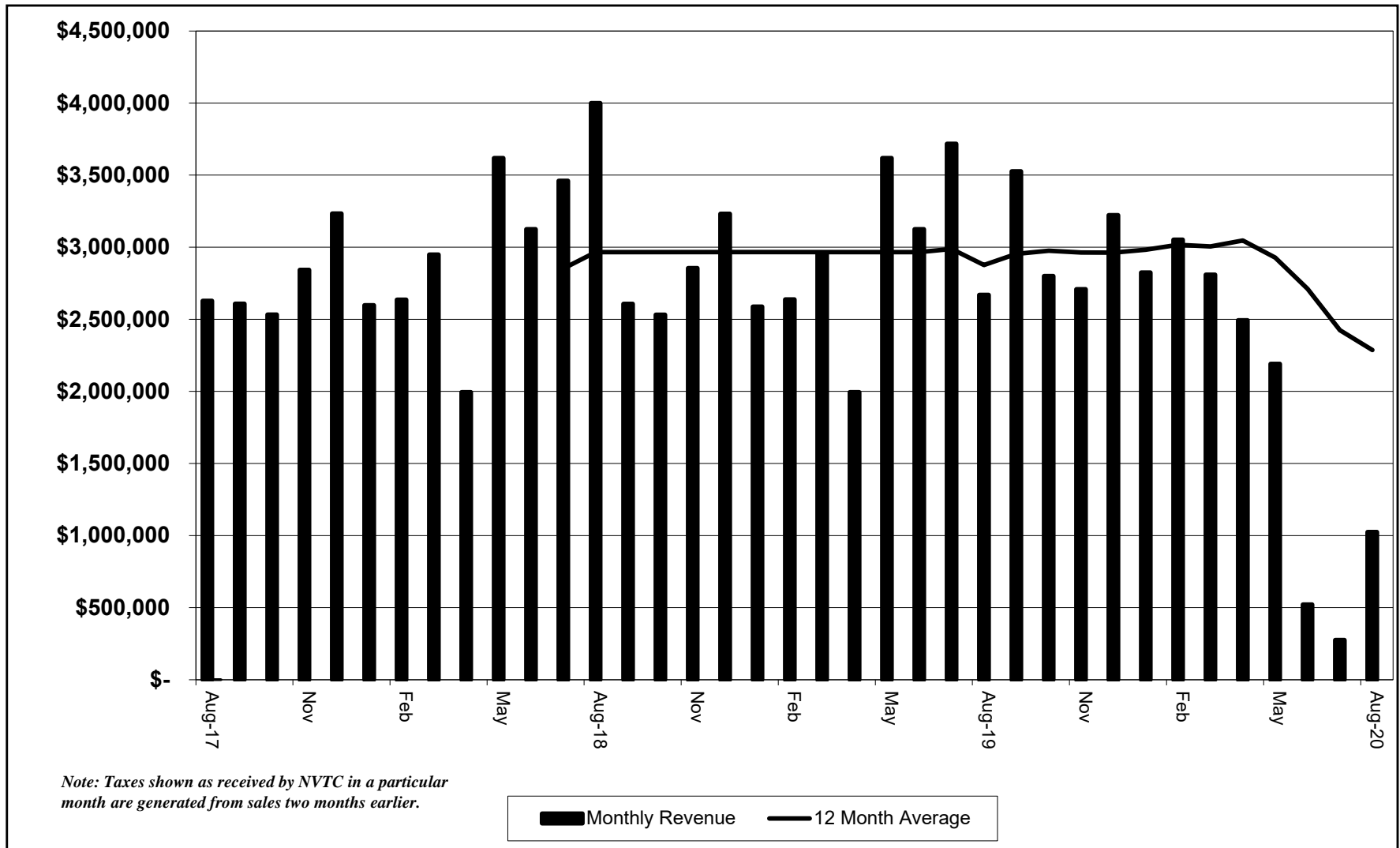
**NVTC
INVESTMENT REPORT
August 2020**

Type	Rate	Balance 7/31/2020	Increase (Decrease)	Balance 8/31/2020	Balance				
					NVTC G&A/Project	Commuter Choice	Jurisdictions Trust Fund	Loudoun Trust Fund	
<u>Cash Deposits</u>									
Wells Fargo: NVTC Checking	N/A	\$ 74,635.45	\$ 12,297.72	\$ 86,933.17	\$ 86,933.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Wells Fargo: NVTC Savings	0.160%	65,416.49	(53,690.28)	11,726.21	11,726.21	-	-	-	
<u>Investments</u>									
Bank of America: Virginia Local Government Investment Pool	0.258%	201,182,094.10	17,909,641.97	219,091,736.07	56,082.47	37,324,832.42	141,537,640.03	40,173,181.15	
		<u>\$ 201,322,146.04</u>	<u>\$ 17,868,249.41</u>	<u>\$ 219,190,395.45</u>	<u>\$ 154,741.85</u>	<u>\$ 37,324,832.42</u>	<u>\$ 141,537,640.03</u>	<u>\$ 40,173,181.15</u>	

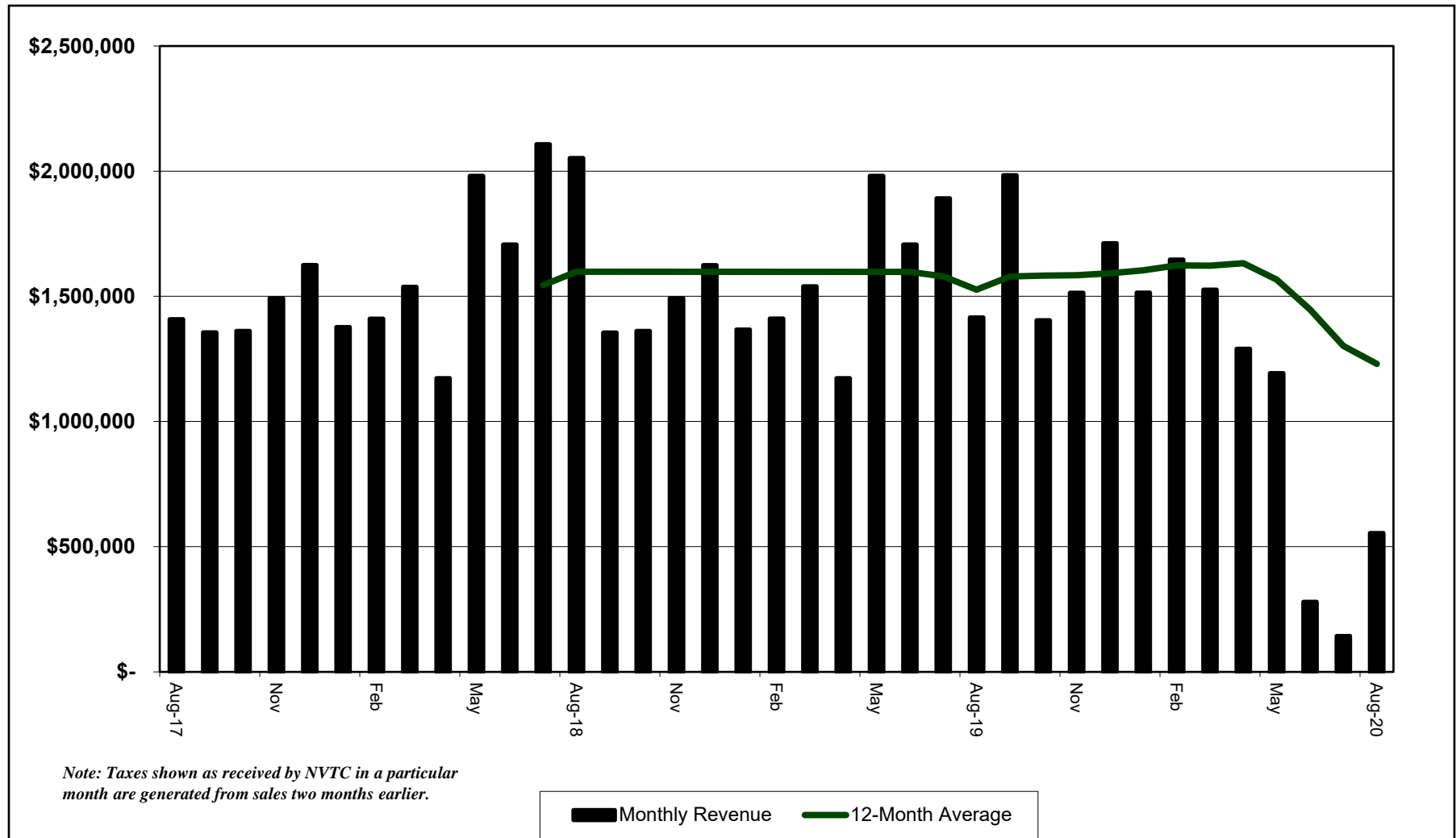
NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE

ALL JURISDICTIONS

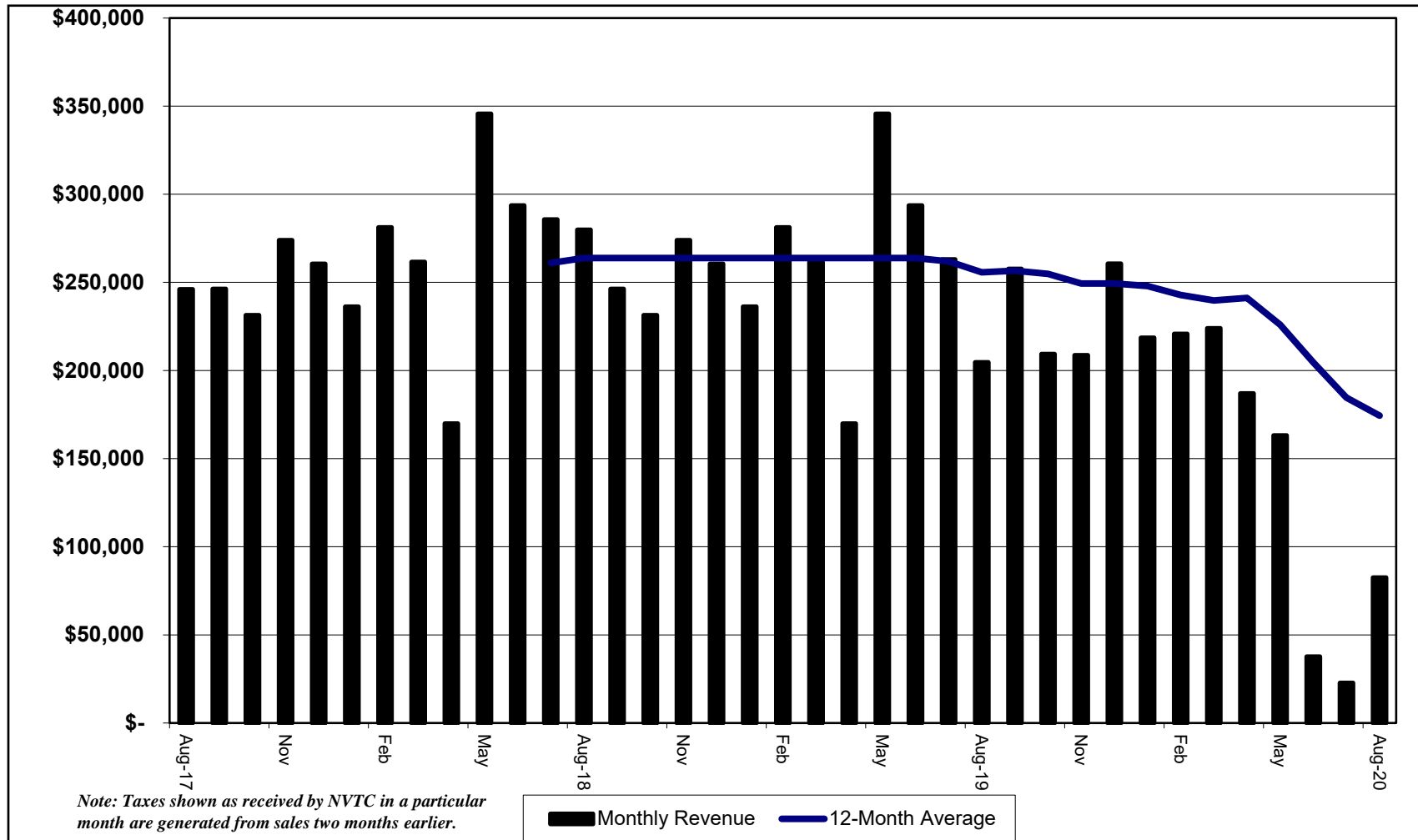
FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE FAIRFAX COUNTY FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



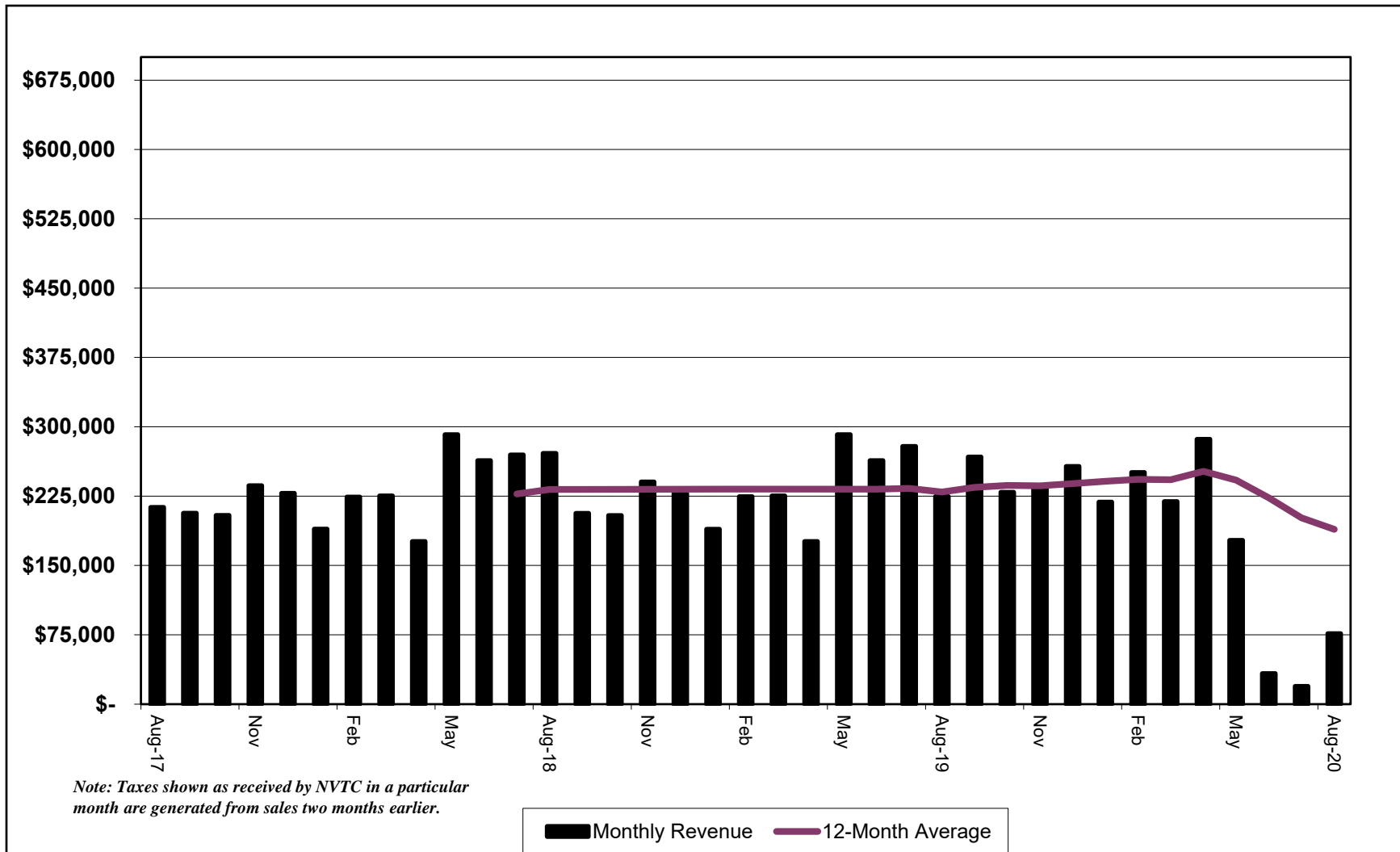
NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE

ARLINGTON COUNTY

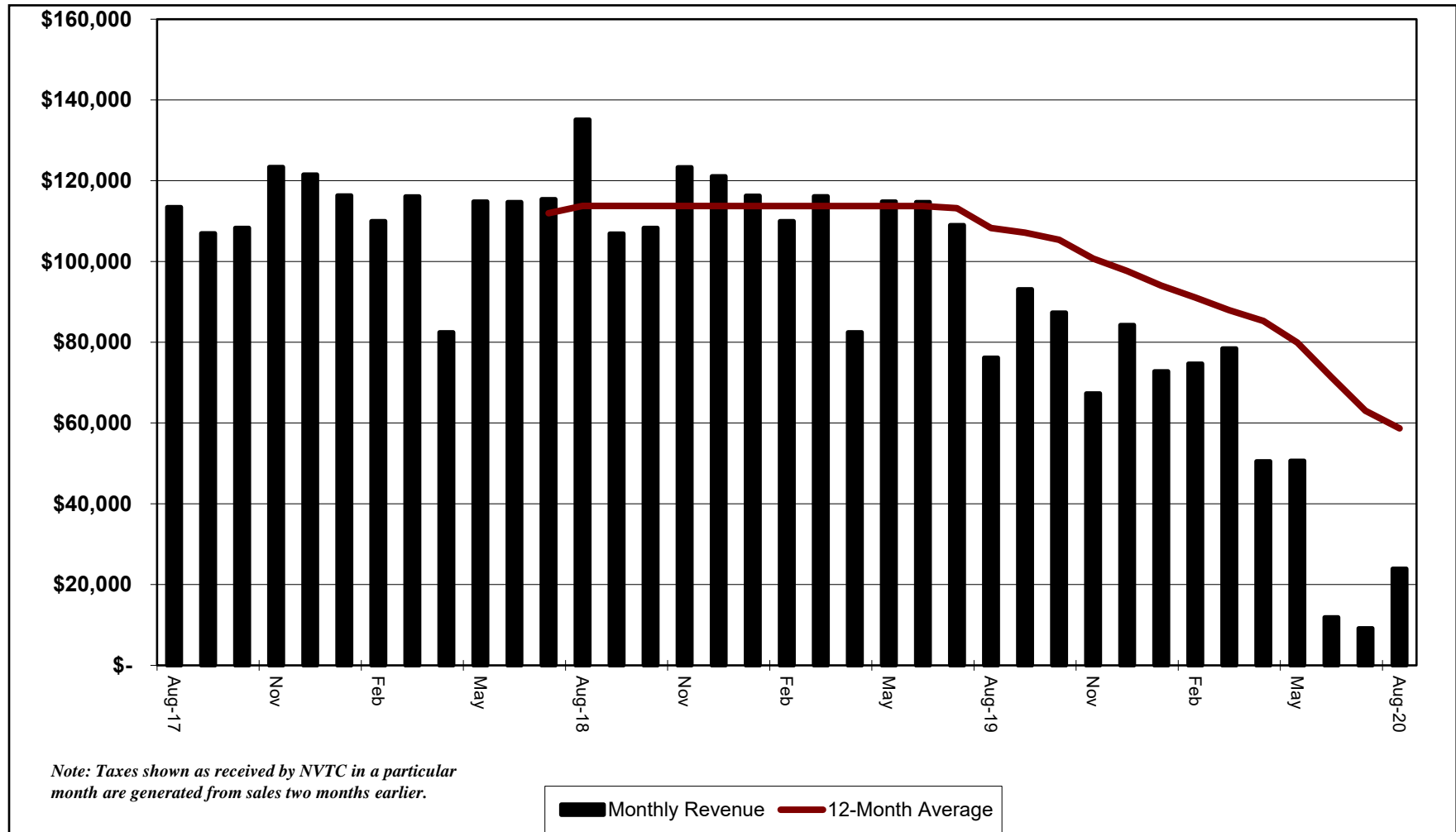
FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



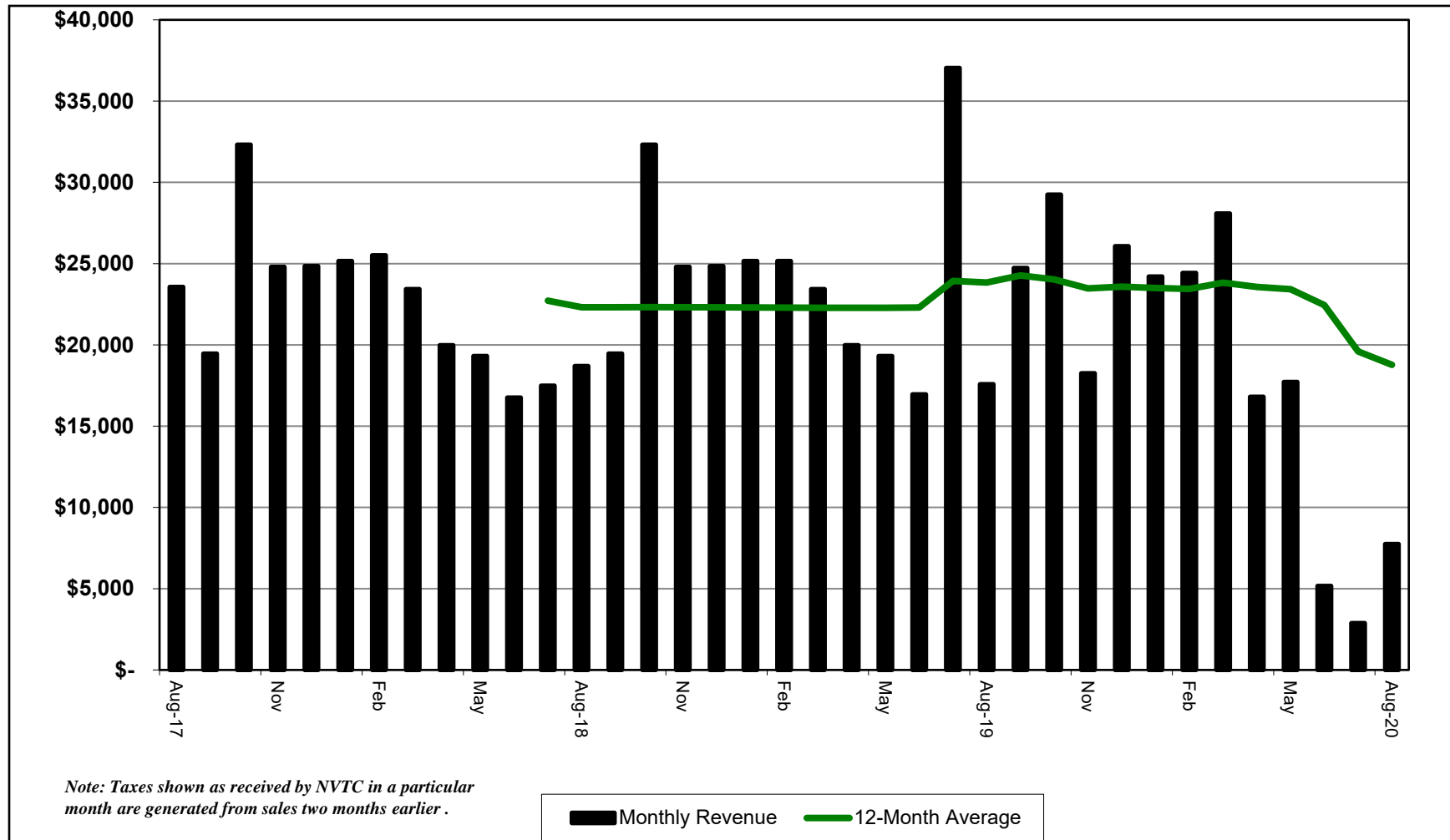
NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE

CITY OF FAIRFAX

FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021



NVTC MONTHLY GAS TAX REVENUE LOUDOUN COUNTY FISCAL YEARS 2018-2021

