



**NVTC WMATA COMMITTEE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020  
NVTC Conference Room – Suite #230  
2300 Wilson Blvd. – Arlington, VA 22201**

**6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

1. Review of December 18, 2019 NVTC WMATA Committee Meeting Summary
2. Introduction to the NVTC WMATA Committee
3. Proposed FY2021 WMATA Budget Discussion and Committee Letter
4. Bus Transformation Project Endorsement Resolution
5. Other Items of Jurisdictional Importance

**Members**

Matt Letourneau (Chairman)  
Paul Smedberg  
David Meyer  
David Snyder  
Christian Dorsey  
Canek Aguirre  
Walter Alcorn



**NVTC WMATA COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY  
NVTC Conference Room, Suite #230  
2300 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, Virginia  
December 18, 2019**

**NVTC WMATA Committee Members Present:**

Canek Aguirre  
Christian Dorsey  
Matt Letourneau  
David Meyer  
Paul Smedberg  
David Snyder

**NVTC WMATA Committee Members Absent:**

Cathy Hudgins, Chair

**Other NVTC Commissioners Present:**

Jennifer Mitchell, DRPT (phone)

**Others Present:**

Kate Mattice, Executive Director  
Matt Cheng  
Andrew D'huyvetter  
Allan Fye  
Zach Smith

Todd Horsley  
Greg Potts  
Chloe Ritter  
Tim Roseboom  
Jen Slesinger  
Brent Riddle  
Penny Newquist

Since NVTC WMATA Committee Chair Cathy Hudgins could not attend, Mr. Letourneau chaired the meeting. He called the WMATA Committee meeting to order at 8:44 A.M. Committee members accepted the summary of the September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting with no changes.

Mr. Snyder discussed the need for WMATA to provide more justification for the planned station closures on the Orange Line in 2020 during the next phase of the Platform Improvement Project.

Mr. D'huyvetter provided an overview of the WMATA General Manager/CEO's proposed FY2021 operating and capital budget including Metrobus service changes, fare policy changes, and new ridership initiatives.

Mr. Letourneau inquired about the maximum peak fares to which Mr. D'huyvetter replied with the proposed increase and comments he received from jurisdictional staff, which is reflected in a draft NVTC letter. Mr. Snyder agreed with how the letter addresses the proposed increase in the maximum peak fare.

Mr. Dorsey asked if WMATA sent data on SmarTrip riders in the region. Mr. D'huyvetter responded that they sent some data on SmarTrip riders in the region, but he would ask WMATA for additional information.

Mr. Snyder asked about the impact on Metrorail and Metrobus ridership due to fare increases and the transfer discount. Mr. D'huyvetter responded with information provided by WMATA and how the letter will address this. Mr. D'huyvetter also discussed how fare passes will be included in the letter and their potential impact on WMATA's ridership and revenue. Mr. Snyder stated that any changes to late-night Metrorail service hours should be cost-effective, supported by data and not impede safety.

Mr. D'huyvetter gave an overview of the planned Metrobus service changes and stated that jurisdictional staff are still reviewing the routes. Ms. Mattice discussed the need for WMATA to work closely with jurisdictional staff during the decision-making process on any service changes. Mr. Potts detailed the process WMATA used to engage jurisdictional staff on changes to Metrobus service. Mr. Dorsey added that there should be a consistent philosophy and mutually understood principles to determine service changes.

Mr. Letourneau asked about the relationship between proposed bus service changes and the Bus Transformation Project. Mr. D'huyvetter responded that the letter discussed certain elements of the Bus Transformation Project that were included in the GM/CEO's proposed FY2021 budget like the bus-to-rail transfer discount and potential local takeover of Metrobus service.

Mr. Snyder left the meeting at 9:12 A.M.

Mr. Letourneau discussed WMATA's announcement of the mobile fare app. Mr. Smedberg added that WMATA General Manager Wiedefeld indicated at a previous WMATA Board meeting that more details about the app would be provided. Mr. D'huyvetter said that NVTC is working on the best way for WMATA to provide more details to the Commission and that the WMATA Finance and Capital Committee is expected to receive an update on the mobile fare app in January 2020.

Mr. Letourneau asked if DRPT Director Mitchell had any comments on the letter to WMATA. Director Mitchell responded that she had no additional comments.

Mr. D'huyvetter provided the committee with an overview of the Bus Transformation Project (BTP) process and how the Commission would engage with the project team. Mr. D'huyvetter also stated that the WMATA Board is tentatively scheduled to receive a presentation on the BTP in January, and Ms. Mattice added that the Transportation Planning Board would receive a presentation today. Ms. Mattice also discussed the need to have all stakeholders engaged in the BTP study including VDOT. Mr. Meyer added that the BTP recommendations affect funding for localities. The committee discussed addressing BTP at the next WMATA Committee meeting in February.

Mr. D'huyvetter introduced the 2020 NVTC WMATA Committee work plan. Mr. Letourneau asked committee members to provide their official schedules to begin planning meeting dates. Ms. Mattice said that the proposed meeting date of February 6<sup>th</sup> is on the same day as the VACo/VML (Virginia Association of Counties/Virginia Municipal League) Legislative Day.

Mr. Smedberg asked if the Governor's proposed budget impacts WMATA. Director Mitchell responded with a brief overview of the Governor's proposed budget and that there may be potential changes to the WMATA funding structure.

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 A.M.

DRAFT

## Commission Meetings

### *Occur Monthly*

- Discuss and inform Commissioners through the WMATA portion of the agenda
- Written report from the WMATA Committee and WMATA Board Members
- Take formal action on NVTC policy positions on WMATA

## NVTC WMATA Committee

### *Occur Bimonthly*

- Provides a forum for consensus based recommendations to the Commission on WMATA policy positions
- Provides strategic guidance to staff on WMATA related policy matters and NVTC's responsibilities from HB1539

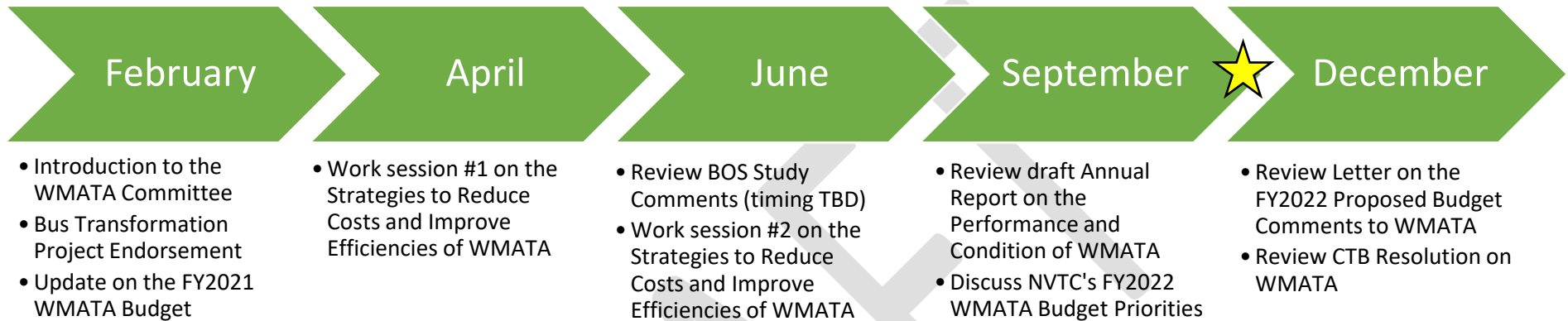
## Regional Staffing Structure

### *Occur Biweekly*

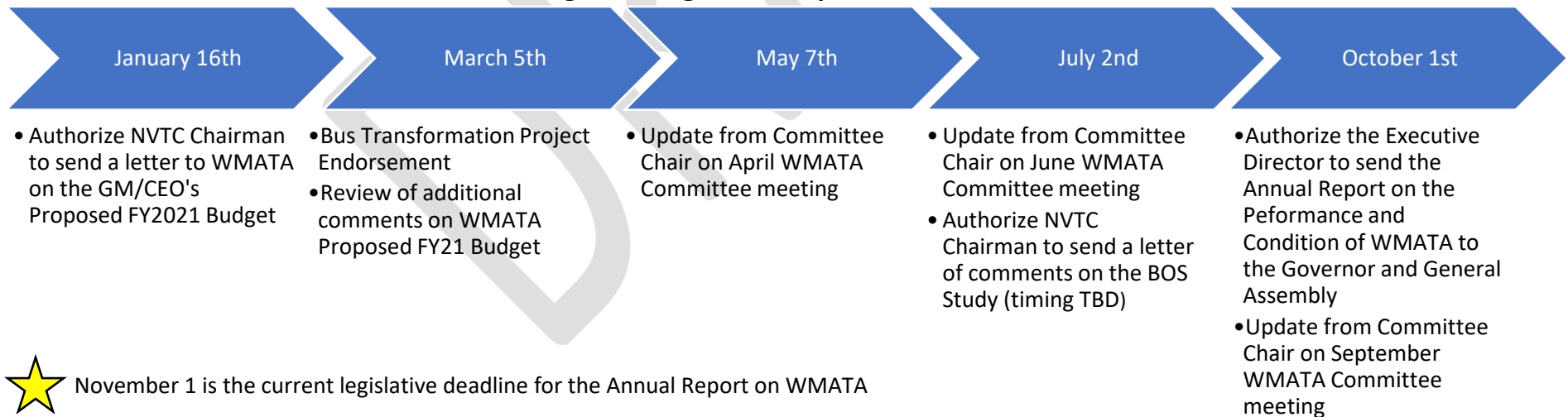
- NVTC staff coordinate a regional staffing structure that includes DRPT and jurisdictional staff
- Prepares Virginia WMATA Board members for WMATA Board meetings
- Builds consensus on Virginia issues related to WMATA and facilitates multi-jurisdictional representation

## WMATA Committee – DRAFT 2020 Work Plan and Meeting Schedule

### NVTC WMATA Committee Meetings



### NVTC Commission Meetings with significant updates from WMATA Committee Chair



Note: DRPT Director invited to July and December Committee Meetings

# Discussion on WMATA GM/CEO's FY2021 Proposed Budget

NVTC WMATA COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 19, 2020

# Recent Ridership Trends

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2020 Year to Date** *(July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019)*

## Ridership Trends

	FY20 FYTD Actual (million)	Variance from Budget Forecast	FY20 FYTD Average Weekday	Change from Prior Year	FY20 FYTD Average Weekend	Change from Prior Year
<b>Metrorail</b>	92.5	7.9%	634,000	6.5%	217,000	11.0%
<b>Metrobus*</b>	63.2	-5.4%	349,000	-4.2%	157,000	-1.3%
<b>MetroAccess</b>	1.2	-1.5%	7,746	-2.9%		
	<b>156.8</b>	<b>2.1%</b>				

- Rail ridership is increasing, especially on weekends
- Bus ridership is weak

\*Includes APC data and shuttles to accommodate station shutdowns

## Revenue Trends

(\$ in millions)	Variance from Budget	
Revenue Source	Amount	Percent
<b>Metrorail</b>	\$10.30	4%
<b>Metrobus</b>	-\$12.20	-17%
<b>MetroAccess</b>	-\$0.60	-13%
<b>Parking</b>	-\$0.70	-3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-\$3.20</b>	<b>-1%</b>

- Rail Revenue is increasing
- Bus revenue is decreasing faster than decline in bus ridership

Source: WMATA 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2020 Financial Report and WMATA 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2020 Metro Performance Report



# Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget

(\$ in millions)	FY2020	FY2021	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$1,125.5</b>	<b>\$1,167.7</b>	<b>\$42.2</b>	<b>3.7%</b>

**3% Capped Operating  
Subsidy Increase**

**\$33.8 m**

**Operating  
Budget Gap**

**(\$8.4 m)**

Source: WMATA FY2021 Proposed Operating Budget on November 7, 2019

# Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget

## Service Changes

	Decreased Subsidy from Service Reductions	Millions	Increased Subsidy from Service Increases	Millions
Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rail Right-Sizing</li> </ul>	<b>+ \$3.6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better Sunday Rail Service</li> <li>Restore Late Night Rail Service</li> </ul>	<b>- \$6.3</b>
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus Service Eliminations or Reductions</li> </ul>	<b>+ \$26.6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements to Bus Service</li> </ul>	<b>- \$5.7</b>
Other			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve Customer Service</li> <li>Extra Services Fund</li> </ul>	<b>- \$5.5</b>
		<b>+ \$30.2</b>		<b>- \$17.5</b>

 Area of Key Policy Discussion

Source: WMATA GM/CEO Proposed FY2021 Budget, November 7, 2019 and Operating Work Session January 16, 2020.

# Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget

## Fare and Non-Fare Revenue Changes

	Revenue Gain	Millions	Revenue Loss	Millions
Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fare Increase (Base + Distance)</li> </ul>	<b>+ \$15.1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekend Flat Fare</li> </ul>	<b>- \$11.3</b>
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surcharge for Cash + onboard Cash Loading</li> </ul>	<b>+ \$0.8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full Transfer Discount</li> <li>Lower 7-day regional bus pass price</li> </ul>	<b>- \$20.4</b>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming Rights</li> <li>Increased Advertising</li> </ul>	<b>+ \$11.3</b>		
		<b>+ \$27.2</b>		<b>- \$31.7</b>

**+ \$30.2 - \$17.5**

**=**

**Total Fare and Service Changes  
are net positive \$8.2 million  
and close the budget gap**

**+ \$27.2 - \$31.7**

 **Area of Key Policy Discussion**

Source: WMATA GM/CEO Proposed FY2021 Budget, November 7, 2019 and Operating Work Session January 16, 2020.

# Summary Virginia Staff Discussions

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- 1) **Prioritize the preservation of bus routes** over fare changes that lose revenue
- 2) Support for ***incremental* increase** in the **transfer discount**
  - GM proposed increase from \$0.50 to \$2.00
- 3) Concern about magnitude of **peak distance based rail fare increase** and lack of benefits to this group in the budget.
- 4) **Do not support rail service decreases** but **support phasing in all 8 car trains**
- 5) Service improvement initiatives are not evenly distributed across the system
- 6) Rail fare increases and non-fare revenue increases are needed to offset revenue losses from bus
- 7) A return to **traditional formula** would reduce budget friction

# Draft Letter for Committee Review

## Advertised Bus & Rail Fares

### *Current Policy*

### *Advertised Changes*

<b>Peak</b>	\$2.25 - \$6.00	Up to \$2.50 – Up to \$7.00
<b>Off-Peak</b>	\$2.00 - \$3.85	No Change
<b>Weekends</b>	considered off-peak	Weekend Flat Fare Between \$2.00 - \$3.85
<b>Station Surcharge</b>	None	\$1 Surcharge at Dulles
<b>Late-Night</b>	Prior to FY17 charged peak fares after midnight	Charge peak fares after midnight
<b>MetroExtra</b>	\$2.00	\$3.00

Source: WMATA FY2021 Operating Budget Work Session and Authorization for Public Hearing on Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget and FY2021-2026 CIP, January 16, 2020

# Draft Letter for Committee Review

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## **Rail & Bus Fares - Letter Highlights**

- Concerned about magnitude of rail peak max fare increase. Disproportionate burden on long-distance riders with little benefit to this group
- Also concerned a drastic increase in rail peak base fare would cause significant loss in ridership
- Consider a fare increase consistent with WMATA adopted fare policy principles and consistent with increases in CPI
- Strenuously oppose any station surcharge (Dulles)
- MetroExtra should cost the same as regular Metrobus

# Proposed & Advertised Fare Policy

## Weekend Fare Options

### Current Policy

*\$2.00 - \$3.85*

*Other budget proposals  
increase Sunday Rail  
service to match  
Saturday service*

### Flat Fare

**\$2.00** (GM proposed)

*-\$11.3 million*

*Ridership increase*

*or*

**\$2.50** (MD proposed)

*-\$6.3 million*

*Ridership decrease*

*or*

**\$2.75** (MD proposed)

*-\$4.8 million*

*Ridership decrease*

### Weekend Passes

*Complete the suite of  
pass products by  
adding **1 and 3 day**  
**Short-Trip Rail Pass***

*Matches passes to  
ridership markets.*

*Market as visitor and  
weekend passes and  
integrate into Mobile  
App*

*Explore family pass  
products*

Source: WMATA FY2021 Operating Budget Work Session and Authorization for Public Hearing on Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget and FY2021-2026 CIP, January 16, 2020

# Draft Letter for Committee Review

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## **Weekend Fares - Letter Highlights**

- Do not support weekend flat fare approach since it loses significant revenue and maintaining bus routes is a higher priority in this budget.
- Encourage WMATA to evaluate the ridership and revenue implications of the 1 and 3-day short trip rail pass aimed at visitors and the weekend market and to explore improved communications and marketing strategies
- Rather than develop fare policy incrementally through the budget, we encourage a more comprehensive, strategic approach.



# Next Steps

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- WMATA Public Comment period on the Proposed Budget: February 8 to March 2.
- Public Hearings
  - **VA – Arlington County, February 24**
  - MD – Prince George's County, February 25
  - DC – WMATA HQ, February 26
- February and March: Budget Deliberations
- April: Board adoption of Operating and Capital Budgets



**Chairman**  
Hon. Katie Cristol

February XX, 2020

**Vice Chair**  
Hon. Canek Aguirre

**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay

**City of Alexandria**  
Hon. Canek Aguirre  
Hon. Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker

**Arlington County**  
Hon. Katie Cristol  
Hon. Christian Dorsey  
Hon. Libby Garvey

**Fairfax County**  
Hon. Walter L. Alcorn  
Hon. John Foust  
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay  
Hon. Dalia A. Palchik  
Hon. James R. Walkinshaw

**City of Fairfax**  
Hon. David Meyer

**City of Falls Church**  
Hon. David F. Snyder

**Loudoun County**  
Hon. Matthew Letourneau  
Hon. Michael R. Turner

**Commonwealth of Virginia**  
Hon. Paul C. Smedberg

**Virginia General Assembly**

**Senate**  
Hon. Adam Ebbin  
vacant

**House of Delegates**  
vacant  
vacant  
vacant  
vacant

**Executive Director**  
Katherine A. Mattice

Ms. Jennifer Ellison  
Board Corporate Secretary  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)  
600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Additional Comments on Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 WMATA Budget

Dear Ms. Ellison:

The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission's (NVTC) Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Committee wishes to convey additional comments on several new fare changes that were authorized for advertisement by the WMATA Board in January. This letter is intended as a supplement to the comments authorized by the full Commission at its January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Advertised Rail Fare Changes

A fare proposal added for advertisement by a WMATA Board member would raise the rail peak base fare from \$2.25 to \$2.50 and lower the proposed rail peak max fare from \$7.00 to \$6.50. As previously indicated by the Commission, we are concerned that a proposed \$7.00 peak max fare places a disproportionate burden on long-distance riders - especially when the broader budget packaged provides these riders with little benefit. Nonetheless, we are concerned that such a drastic increase in the base rail fare would cause a dramatic loss in rail ridership. We urge WMATA to follow its own adopted fare policy principles and consider a rail peak base and max fare increase that is consistent with recent increases to the Consumer Price Index.

We are strenuously opposed to the proposed \$1.00 surcharge at Dulles Airport Station. We do not believe that any station should be singled out for a surcharge, as this violates WMATAs adopted fare policy principle of establishing equitable fares. Furthermore, the proposal adds complexity to fares for visitors – who are an important part of the system.

Lastly, Metrorail operated late-night rail hours and charged peak fares after midnight prior to Fiscal Year 2017. We encourage WMATA to consider returning to this historic fare policy.

### Advertised Weekend Fares

This budget offers a multitude of options to incentivize weekend rail ridership – a goal we strongly support. However, we are not supportive of the weekend flat fare approach since it loses significant revenue. We believe that maintaining bus routes is higher priority in this budget.

To improve weekend ridership, the Virginia WMATA Board members included the advertisement of a 1 and 3-day short-trip rail pass aimed at visitors and weekend riders. These passes 1) would complete WMATA's suite of 1, 3, and 7-day unlimited and short-trip pass products and 2) are essentially weekend passes that would incentivize ridership, maintain equity between short and long-distance riders, and avoid sacrificing revenue. We encourage WMATA to evaluate the ridership and revenue implications of these passes and seriously explore the communications, marketing, and renaming of these passes as part of a larger integrated fare pass strategy.

### Bus Fare Changes

We are opposed to the advertised increase in fare for MetroExtra bus routes. MetroExtra is limited-stop Metrobus service that currently costs the same (\$2.00) as regular Metrobus routes. Any fare increases to MetroExtra routes while regular Metrobus fares remain the same could push price sensitive riders to slower bus services. We believe that MetroExtra routes should be the same price as regular Metrobus routes.

### Addressing Fare Policy through the Annual Budget Process

WMATA's fare structure is complex because of the competing demands for service between short and long-distance riders. WMATA's recent progress with pass products and the pending low-income fare pass pilot with the District of Columbia provides an encouraging direction for the agency. Rather than tackle fare policy incrementally through the budget, we encourage the General Manager to revisit WMATA's fare policy principles and engage the WMATA Board and jurisdictions on a comprehensive and strategic fare policy that is equitable, generates adequate revenue while maximizing ridership, and balances the often competing needs of short and long-distance riders and WMATA's individual funding jurisdictions.

The NVTC WMATA Committee includes members of the WMATA Board and services as a forum to provide the Virginia members of the WMATA Board with guidance from across the NVTC region. We appreciate the opportunity to provide additional comments during this budget's public period.

Sincerely,

NVTC WMATA Committee Chairman



For consideration by the  
NVTC WMATA Committee  
Staff draft 2-13-20

**RESOLUTION #XXXX**

**SUBJECT:** Endorsement of the Bus Transformation Project vision, goals, strategy, and recommendations

**WHEREAS:** A steering committee of regional civic and business leaders led a project on behalf of WMATA for the region, with the ambitious vision that buses will be the transportation mode of choice on the region's roads in the future, serving as the backbone of a strong and inclusive regional mobility system (the "Bus Transformation Project");

**WHEREAS:** The Bus Transformation Project has engaged elected officials and staff of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun;

**WHEREAS:** NVTC serves as the appointing authority for the Virginia members of the WMATA Board, co-owns the Virginia Railway Express, and coordinates transit data, funding, and policy, administers the Commuter Choice Program, and serves as Northern Virginia's voice for transit,

**WHEREAS:** NVTC's jurisdictions operate five bus systems that work in close coordination with WMATA to integrate Metrobus and Metrorail into Northern Virginia's transportation network;

**WHEREAS:** The Bus Transformation Strategy includes key recommendations to provide frequent and convenient bus service, give buses priority on roadways, create an excellent customer experience, and establish ongoing stewardship to transform bus regionally;

**WHEREAS:** NVTC and its component jurisdictions are already engaged in advancing bus in Northern Virginia through the 2018 Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan and policy recommendations contained in its Annual Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA, and through projects such as Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit, the Crystal City-Potomac Yard transitway extension to Pentagon City, Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit, and the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan;

**WHEREAS:** On January 16, 2020, the WMATA Board endorsed (Resolution #2020-01) in broad terms the high-level strategy recommendations of the Bus Transformation Project as the direction required to transform bus in the region:

- 1) Provide frequent and convenient bus service that connects communities
- 2) Give buses priority on roadways to move people quickly and reliably
- 3) Create an excellent customer experience to retain and increase ridership,

**WHEREAS:** The WMATA Board recognized that capital and operating impacts on the local providers will have to be determined, evaluated and agreed upon before specific funding commitments, projects, and agreements are secured from the stakeholders throughout the region and through WMATA's annual budget process;

**WHEREAS:** Recommendation H of The Bus Transformation Project Action Plan would create a bus capital priority program using jurisdictional funds reserved for WMATA's capital expenditures to issue a call for projects to make roadway improvements that prioritize buses;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission believes strongly in investing in the region's bus network in a financially responsible way to improve mobility, reduce congestion, promote regional competitiveness, promote a more livable region, and fight climate change; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** NVTC supports a bus program that focuses on state of good repair but is opposed to the establishment of a bus priority capital program that would divert jurisdictional capital contributions meant for system improvements to bus priority projects that are the responsibility of state or local jurisdictions and are outside of WMATA's purview; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission encourages staff to incorporate the Bus Transformation Project's Strategy recommendations, where feasible and consistent with WMATA Board endorsement, into policy and coordination activities to ensure progress in transforming the region's bus network; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commission supports leveraging the expertise of NVTC staff to facilitate and support efforts to implement the Bus Transformation Project Strategy Recommendations in Northern Virginia and to periodically provide updates to the Commission on the status of the Action Plan.

Approved this 5<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020.

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Katie Cristol  
Chair

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Jeffrey C. McKay  
Secretary-Treasurer

Attachment: WMATA Board Resolution #2020-01