



Commission Staff Reports

February 2022



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Overview

NVTC's February 3, 2022 meeting is canceled. However, to maximize future meeting agendas, staff prepared February Staff Reports on NVTC activities at both the committee and staff levels.

Upcoming committee meetings are listed in the Executive Director Report. The next NVTC Commission meeting will be held on March 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Table of Contents

NVTC February 2022 Staff Reports	3
Staff Report 1 Commuter Choice Program	4
Staff Report 2 Transit Technology Program	7
Staff Report 3 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	10
Staff Report 4 Virginia Railway Express (VRE).....	16
Staff Report 5 Executive Director Report	63

NVTC STAFF REPORTS FEBRUARY 2022

Although the February 3, 2022 meeting has been canceled, NVTC staff would like to provide information to the Commission to keep communication active on ongoing programs and projects. This will help NVTC continue to move ahead to maximize future Commission meeting agendas.

1. Commuter Choice Program
2. Transit Technology Program
3. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
4. Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
5. Executive Director Report

TO: Chair Aguirre and NVTC Commissioners
FROM: Kate Mattice, Ben Owen and Adam Hager
DATE: February 3, 2022
SUBJECT: Commuter Choice Program

A. Applications for Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor FY 2023-2024 Funding

The application period for the Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor FY 2023-2024 (previously referenced as “Round Five”) call for projects closed at the end of the day on Friday, January 28. In total, NVTC received 11 project applications from six applicants. The 11 applications total approximately \$23.1 million in funding requests and include two rail capital enhancements, three strategies to improve access to transit, five bus service improvements and one transportation demand management strategy. Table 1 below identifies the applications.

Table 1: Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor FY 2023-2024 Applications

Applicant	Application Title	Funding Requested
Arlington County	Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance	\$4,500,000
City of Falls Church	Renewal of City of Falls Church Bike Share Operations	\$250,000
Fairfax County	Trail Access to Vienna Metrorail Station	\$3,000,000
Fairfax County	Renewal of Bus Service from Vienna Metrorail Station to Pentagon	\$1,232,850
Fairfax County	Enhanced Bus Service from Stringfellow Park-and-Ride to Pentagon	\$2,876,812
Fairfax County	Trail Access to Monument Drive Commuter Garage	\$4,361,458
City of Manassas Park	Manassas Park VRE Station Parking Garage	\$2,500,000
OmniRide	Renewal of Enhanced Bus Service from Gainesville to D.C.	\$213,621
OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Haymarket to Rosslyn	\$947,554
OmniRide	Renewal of Bus Service from Gainesville to Pentagon and Navy Yard	\$2,560,449
Prince William County	TDM Strategy - Fare Buy-Down on I-66 Commuter Bus Service	\$650,000
Total Funding Request		\$23,092,744

Staff currently and conservatively anticipate that approximately \$12 million will be available for the FY 2023-2024 program. Additional funding may become available later depending on how much and how durably I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues rebound over the next two years.

B. Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor FY 2023-2024 Program Development Process

Staff anticipate approval of the Program of Projects by the Commission and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) this June. Key steps in the process are shown in Table 2. Staff have already commenced the eligibility review to ensure that project applications meet requirements of the [I-66 Corridor Memorandum of Agreement](#) and program policy, as outlined in the [Commuter Choice Recipient Handbook](#).

**Table 2: Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor
FY 2023-2024 Program Development Steps**

Month	Activity
February	<p><u>Eligibility Review</u></p> <p>Mid-month, staff will contact applicants to resolve application eligibility questions and other needed clarifications. Towards the end of the month, staff will notify applicants of any ineligible applications.</p> <p>The Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet at 4 p.m. on February 23 to identify a high-level programming approach to inform FY 2023-2024 programming given the conservative current revenue estimate and possibility that more revenue becomes available later.</p>
March	<p><u>Scoring</u></p> <p>On March 3, staff will present the set of eligible applications to the Commission. Later in March, draft scores for all eligible applications will be shared with applicants to ensure projects' proposed anticipated benefits have been accurately captured.</p>
April	<p><u>Public Comment</u></p> <p>The public comment period will open mid-month. The public comment process, including public engagement, will be wholly online and applicants will be asked to help spread the word about the comment opportunity.</p> <p>The PAC will reconvene to identify and endorse a draft (possibly initial, pending revenue availability) program of projects, pending the public comments received, that will also be shared with the full Commission and the CTB in May to help inform their decision-making.</p>
May	<p><u>Program Development</u></p> <p>The public comment period will conclude mid-month.</p> <p>Staff will brief the Commission in early May on the technical evaluation results and PAC-endorsed draft program of projects. Staff will also inform the CTB of the proposed projects and their scores. Following input from the public, Commission and CTB, staff will identify the specific set of projects that will be brought forward for adoption in June.</p>
June	<p><u>Program Approval</u></p> <p>On June 2, the Commission will consider and adopt a program of projects and refer it to the CTB for final approval.</p> <p>In mid-June, the CTB will consider the program of projects approved by NVTC. Once the program is approved, staff will begin executing Standard Project Agreements for funded projects.</p>

C. Upcoming Program Advisory Committee Meetings – February and April

As noted above, the PAC will meet at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 23 to consider how to approach programming for the FY 2023-2024 program given continued revenue constraints and unpredictability. The PAC's establishment of a guiding programming approach will simplify the committee's work to identify and endorse a draft Program of Projects at a further meeting in April, which will take place after the scoring of all eligible proposals is complete. The April meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 14 at 4:00 p.m.

TO: Chair Aguirre and NVTC Commissioners
FROM: Kate Mattice, Patricia Happ, Sophie Spiliotopoulos and Ronnetta Zack-Williams
DATE: February 3, 2022
SUBJECT: Transit Technology Program

NVTC's Transit Technology Program staff engage with regional partners and industry stakeholders to improve transit through innovative and emerging transit technology. Since last reporting to the Commission in November 2021, NVTC staff completed major milestones on our fare collection effort, launched work on zero-emission bus technologies, and continued our commitment to regional partner support for the National Transit Database.

A. Fare Collection

NVTC's Regional Fare Collection Program manages technology and policy initiatives to maintain and upgrade programs and infrastructure designed to provide a quality customer fare payment experience while keeping pace with technological innovation. Since 2000, NVTC has worked with Northern Virginia transit systems to ensure current and future needs for regional fare collection are met and coordinate with WMATA and other regional partners on the SmarTrip fare payment system.

In January 2021, NVTC published the [2021 Northern Virginia Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan](#) to serve as a guiding document for NVTC's work in this area. The Strategic Plan included 13 actions aimed at creating an enhanced regionally-integrated fare collection system with local flexibility to meet evolving customer expectations. To date, NVTC has completed all of the Immediate Actions laid out in the plan and is on target to complete the Near-Term Actions (see Table 1).

Regional Fare Collection Vision Statement:

Northern Virginia transit systems envision an enhanced regionally-integrated fare collection system with local flexibility to meet evolving customer expectations.

Staff continue to coordinate with regional partners on regional fare collection activities, including farebox upgrades and next generation fare collection. NVTC continues to support WMATA and regional partners on procuring new farebox, garage equipment and driver control unit (DCU) installation upgrades, as well as working with WMATA to install and configure the technology. To date, partners have ordered 77 new fareboxes and 121 DCU upgrades with the help of NVTC. In addition, NVTC participates in WMATA's regional working groups for the SmarTrip regional coordination and Next Generation Bus Farebox System project.

Table 1: NVTC Actions from the 2021 Fare Collection Strategic Plan

NVTC Strategic Plan Actions to Support Fare Collection Needs		In Progress	Completed
<u>Immediate Action (Through Calendar Year 2021)</u>			
A. Continue Farebox State of Good Repair			✓
B. Support Immediate Mobile Payment Needs			✓
C. Facilitate Information Exchange on Installation of Bus Operator Safety Barriers			✓
<u>Near-Term Actions (Through Calendar Year 2022)</u>			
D. Coordinate and Support New Farebox Procurement and Implementation (Including Rear-Door Payment and All-Door Boarding)		✓	
E. Coordinate and Support Procurement of Off-Board Fare Collection System		✓	
F. Coordinate and Support Fare Capping Implementation Analysis		✓	
G. Monitor Mobile Payment Trends		✓	
H. Coordinate, Support and Market New Fare Products and Programs		✓	
<u>Long-Term Actions (Beyond Calendar Year 2022)</u>			
I. Coordinate and Support Expansion of Retail Network		✓	
J. Coordinate and Support Planning for Contactless Open Payments		✓	
K. Coordinate and Support Upgrades to WMATA's Back Office System		✓	
L. Coordinate and Support Integration of VRE with SmarTrip		✓	
M. Coordinate and Support SmarTrip App Enhancements		✓	



NVTC also leads Regional Fare Collection and Off-Board/All-Door Fare Collection working groups assisting partners with coordinating upcoming projects including the Transitway extension to Pentagon City, DASH all-door boarding, and Transitway projects in Alexandria. Staff also monitor ongoing regional fare collection initiatives, including regional pass expansions and zero-fare and reduced-fare policies.

NVTC documents validator placement options during a Fairfax Connector onsite survey for the new farebox procurement.

NVTC is also transitioning to a new phase of support for the local jurisdictions and transit agencies. At the end of June 2022, NVTC will close out a long-running contract for consultant technical support and transition to a NVTC-led support model that builds on NVTC's reputation and success as a regional convener. NVTC staff will continue to engage with all partners to implement the 2021 Strategic Plan as the Transit Technology Program expands into other key policy areas, such as zero-emission bus.

B. Zero-Emission Bus

In 2021, NVTC held a Zero-Emission Bus Symposium and a Commission Roundtable designed to educate and inform the Commission and partners about zero-emission bus (ZEB) opportunities and technologies. In response to interest and guidance provided by Commissioners, NVTC plans to seek Commission approval at the March 2022 Commission meeting to submit a FY 2023

technical assistance application for funding to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to develop a Northern Virginia Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan.

The goals of the Strategic Plan are to:

- Identify regional zero-emission strategic goals and objectives with a focus on realizing economies of scale;
- Leverage individual agency goals and plans as well as stakeholder input;
- Document strategies and priorities to achieve those strategic goals and objectives;
- Identify and leverage local, state, and federal funding to accomplish the goals laid out in the strategic plan; and
- Identify short, medium, and long-term action items for NVTC to achieve the plan's strategic goals and objectives.

The Strategic Plan will include an implementation study with deployment guidance specific to each regional partner, including regionally aligned agency transition planning and coordination for Northern Virginia transit agencies.

NVTC partner agencies have all expressed interest in ZEB deployment, and several have initiated individual ZEB planning studies, procurements or pilots. By employing strategic analysis at the regional level, transit agencies can achieve economies of scale and realize the benefits of ZEBs.

C. National Transit Database Support

NVTC Transit Technology staff also oversee the contract for National Transit Database (NTD) reporting for transit agencies. The transit systems in the Northern Virginia service area are continuously evolving as they upgrade and expand their fleets, including embracing Automated People Counter (APC) technology for automated counts of passengers and passenger miles. As some NVTC partners consider fare free operations, the role of the APC systems will become more critical as historical passenger volumes have been reported via the fare collection systems. NVTC is working with Alexandria's transit provider, DASH, to support APC validation for a portion of their fleet as they are in the process of retrofitting and expanding their APC coverage. The contractor is planning field work for DASH to be carried out in the spring of 2022. The project also supports the City of Fairfax and Fairfax Connector in gathering field data to be used for the benchmarking and validation of their APC systems.

Each year, NTD performance data collected and reported with NVTC support are used to apportion FTA funds to transit agencies. It is estimated that data reported by NVTC member jurisdictions generates approximately \$8 million under Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program, \$1 million from Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Program, and up to an additional \$ 1.25 million from the bus incentive program, all of which is allocated to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

TO: Chair Aguirre and NVTC Commissioners
FROM: Kate Mattice, Andrew D’huyvetter and Ronnetta Zack-Williams
DATE: February 3, 2022
SUBJECT: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Blue Line Derailment Update

On October 12, 2021 a 7000-series Blue Line train derailed between the Arlington Cemetery and Rosslyn Stations. On October 13, 2021 WMATA, the National Transportation Safety Board (NSTB), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) launched an investigation into the derailment. The wheel assembly on the 7000-series railcar is suspected to be a factor in the derailment. On October 17, 2021 the [WMSC ordered WMATA](#) to remove the 7000-series railcars from service, and the reduction in the active railcar fleet caused WMATA to run reduced service. After developing a Return to Service plan, WMATA returned some 7000-series trains to service. After finding that some railcars that did not meet the inspection criteria were returned to service, the [WMSC ordered all 7000-series again removed from service](#) until additional steps were met.

On January 13, 2022 WMATA announced that the [7000-series trains would remain out of passenger service for about 90 days](#) to allow WMATA’s engineers and mechanics focus on the root cause analysis and acquire technology to measure 7000-series wheelsets. During this period, WMATA plans to restore additional 6000-series railcars to increase the fleet of newer cars and improve reliability.

WMATA has created a [web page on the derailment investigation and related service impacts](#).

A. Report from the Virginia WMATA Board Members

▪ FY 2023 Operating Budget Work Session

On January 13, 2022 WMATA staff [presented additional details on the FY 2023 Proposed Operating Budget](#). The proposed budget is intended to continue investment in daily, all-day service that prioritizes safe, affordable and reliable transit service as the region gradually recovers from the pandemic. The proposed budget funds service adjustments and fare proposals adopted by the Board in September 2021, as well as new fare reductions to encourage ridership through the pandemic (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Fare Initiatives and Discounts Proposed for FY 2023

Proposed FY 2023 Fare Initiatives	Potential FY2023 Revenue Impact
Late Night Rail \$2 Flat Fare Reduces the price of Metrorail to a flat \$2 rate after 9:30 p.m.	(\$1.0)
Discount Monthly Passes Reduces the price range from \$72 to \$216 to \$64 to \$192 depending on distance selected.	(\$1.7)
Discount 7-Day Unlimited Pass (for a six-month promotional period) Discounts the price of the 7-day unlimited pass from \$58 to \$29.	(\$0.3)
Add Value Bonus (for a six-month promotional period) For every \$25 placed on a SmarTrip card, an additional \$5 would be added.	(\$7.9)

[Source: WMATA January 13, 2021 Finance and Capital Committee Meeting](#)

Note: Figure generated by NVTC staff utilizing information from WMATA

The Proposed FY 2023 Budget reflects the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and projects a gradual recovery of 53% of pre-pandemic ridership. In FY 2023 the total operating expense is projected to be \$2.282 billion. This projected expense is an increase of \$182 million from FY 2022 and is estimated at \$212.2 million more from pre-pandemic levels. Operating expenses are largely the result of personnel costs which account for 68% of total expenses in FY 2023 or \$1,545.4 million (Figure 2).

Figure 2: WMATA's Operating Budget

<i>\$ in millions</i>	FY2023 Proposed	Percent
Personnel	\$1,545.4	67.7%
Services	\$416.9	18.3%
Energy & Utilities	\$130.6	5.7%
Materials & Supplies	\$125.3	5.5%
Casualty & Liability	\$43.6	1.9%
Leases & Rental	\$11.0	0.5%
Miscellaneous	\$9.5	0.4%
Total Expenses	\$2,282.3	100%

[Source: WMATA January 13, 2021 Finance and Capital Committee Meeting](#)

Specific expenses include Silver Line Phase 2 service launch, the addition of the Potomac Yard Station, union contract agreements/non-represented employee pay performance, general Consumer Price Index/inflation, restoring positions from the Voluntary Separation Program, additional support costs, and additional positions for Safety and Environmental Management and operations to coordinate with WMSC (Figure 3).

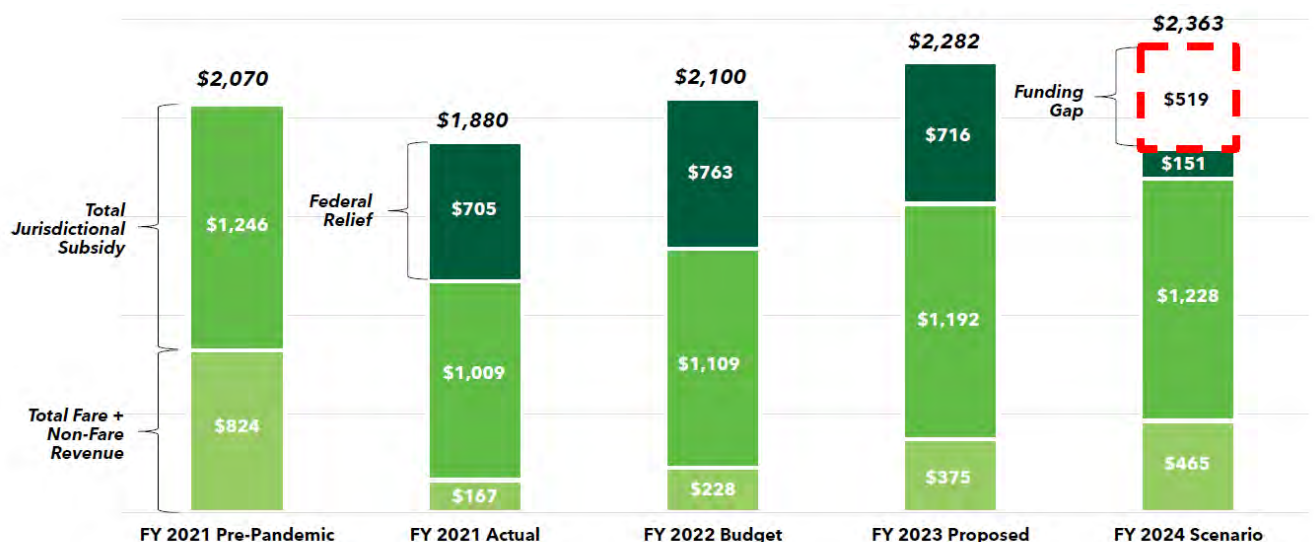
Figure 3: WMATA's Operating Cost and Subsidy Driver Details

Contractually Obligated		\$55.60
Union COLA	\$25.00	
Union CPI – incremental for potential CPI increase	\$22.40	
NRP Pay for Performance	\$8.20	
New Service and Facilities		\$47.70
Incremental Silver Line Phase 2	\$45.80	
Potomac Yard	\$1.90	
CPI/Inflation		
Inflation – general increases to goods and services	\$36.30	\$39.60
Pension – impact of CPI increase to pension funding	\$3.30	
Additional Support Costs		\$20.80
Cybersecurity resources	\$20.00	
Annualized FY22 Bus & Rail Service Cost	\$0.80	
VSP/Position Restoration		\$23.40
Vacant/frozen positions related to service restoration	\$20.00	
Safety Mandates		
21 new positions - WMSC safety mandates	\$3.40	
Management Efficiencies		(\$5.00)
TBD	(\$5.00)	
Total		\$182.10

Source: WMATA January 13, 2021 Finance and Capital Committee Meeting

As ridership gradually recovers, operating revenue remains weak while operating expenses continue to grow. The \$2.282 billion projected operating expense results in an operating deficit of \$1.91 billion after total fare and non-fare revenues are included. This requires \$1.19 billion, excluding debt service, in subsidy from the funding jurisdictions and \$715.8 million in federal relief to balance the FY 2023 operating budget. The federal relief funding will only partially support the operating budget in FY2024 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: WMATA Operating Expenses for FY 2021-2024 (In millions)



Source: WMATA December 9 Board of Directors Meeting

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

Note: Figure generated by NVTC staff utilizing information from WMATA

The public comment period is currently open and closes on February 15 at 5:00 p.m. WMATA staff will develop and undertake extensive outreach that will includes public hearings. The public hearing in Virginia will take place on February 7 in Arlington, while the hearings in the District and Maryland will take place on February 8 and February 9, respectively (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Jurisdictional Public Hearings

Virginia	DC	Maryland
February 7, 2022 (6 p.m.) Ellen M. Bozman Government Center County Board Room 2100 Clarendon Blvd #307 Arlington, VA	February 8, 2022 (6 p.m.) WMATA Headquarters (Jackson Graham Building) 600 5th St NW Washington, DC	February 9, 2022 (6 p.m.) City of College Park 7401 Baltimore Ave Suite 201 College Park, MD

Source: [Fiscal Year 2023 Budget and Proposed Fare and Service Changes](#)

The ambiguity of revenue and funding, COVID-19 variants and long-term vaccine effectiveness, in-person vs. remote work trends in the region, Silver Line Phase 2 acceptance and readiness, potential federal shutdowns, and changes to federal funding all pose uncertainty. In terms of expenses, ambiguity exists around the potential for high inflation as well as growing maintenance and operating costs associated with completed capital projects.

▪ Silver Line Phase 2 Update

On January 13, 2022 the Safety and Operations Committee received an [update on the Silver Line Phase 2](#). WMATA continues to review outstanding issues on the project with seven issues that are in the process of being remediated and a new open issue, heat tape failures, which was determined during the operational readiness testing. With the substantial completion designation announced on Package A (mainline and stations) on October 25, 2021 and package B (the rail yard) on December 1, 2021, the project remains in the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority's (MWAA) custody while WMATA continues to conduct operational readiness testing (ORT). Following the determination of operational readiness, the operational readiness date (ORD) will be set (Figure 6), and WMATA will accept provisional care, custody and control of the project and performs activities in preparation for revenue service.

Figure 6: Schedule: Operational Readiness Testing



Source: [WMATA January 13, 2021 Safety and Operations Committee Meeting](#)

- Safety Management System Update

On January 13, 2022 the Safety and Operations Committee received a [progress update on the strategy for developing and implementing Metro's Safety Management System \(SMS\) in accordance with the Agency Safety Plan \(ASP\)](#). The SMS Strategic Roadmap, which was introduced to the Board in February 2021 and used to report SMS progress in July 2021, has been incorporated into the ASP. In 2021, WMATA made several strides with the SMS including the approval of the ASP, the completion of Organizational Study and Safety Risk Management Pilot, the establishment of the operating practices team and the partnership with MITRE (a federally funded, non-profit organization that specializes in applying data sciences to advance safety in the transportation industry). The next steps for the SMS are to apply a project management approach where each roadmap milestone has an owner and action plan, progress is tracked, the Executive Safety Committee provides oversight, and progress is reported to the Safety and Operations Committee.

B. Other WMATA News

- Regular Weekday Metrobus Service to Return February 7

On January 27 WMATA announced that [Metrobus will return to regular weekday service on Monday, February 7](#). Metrobus has been operating on a modified Saturday schedule, offering approximately 75% of weekday service, since January 10 due to covid-related staffing shortages. While WMATA is still experiencing above-average absenteeism, case rates have been declining and employees are returning to work following their quarantine requirements.

- WMATA General Manager Announces Retirement

On January 18, 2022 WMATA Board Chairman Smedberg announced that General Manager and Chief Executive Officer [Paul Wiedefeld gave notice that he will retire](#) from WMATA in six months, after more than six years in the position. The WMATA Board will conduct a national search for a new GM/CEO and will begin to discuss succession planning in February.

- Largo Town Center Renamed Downtown Largo

On January 27, 2022 the WMATA Board is anticipated to take action on the [Largo Town Center station name change to Downtown Largo](#). The station is located in Largo, Maryland and is serviced on the Blue and Silver Lines. The name change request was submitted by the County Executive for Prince George's County and aligns with efforts to rebrand the station and encourage transit-oriented development. WMATA and the county conducted public outreach on the three name options: Largo, Downtown PGC and Downtown Largo. The consensus of the new station name from WMATA's outreach was Largo, while the consensus from the county's outreach was Downtown Largo. The county will provide the funding necessary for signage changes to Downtown Largo.

C. Report from the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee

The NVTC WMATA Committee met on January 20 to discuss its work plan for 2022 and to provide staff with comments and guidance on a letter regarding WMATA's FY 2023 Proposed budget.

Proposed 2022 Committee Workplan

WMATA Committee members supported staff's recommended areas of focus for the WMATA Committee on the following:

- Providing comments on the WMATA budget
- Providing guidance to NVTC staff on the update to the *Annual Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA*
- Receiving updates on initiatives related to the Bus Transformation Project or other studies at WMATA

Committee members expressed a strong interest in discussing and engaging early and frequently on WMATA's projected FY 2024 operating gap.

Comments on WMATA's Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget and FY 2023-2028 Capital Improvement Program

NVTC staff provided the WMATA Committee with an [overview](#) of WMATA's Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget and FY 2023-2028 Capital Improvement Program. After discussion and feedback from the committee, staff will include the following major themes in a letter of comment that will be submitted to WMATA as part of the public comment period:

- Where possible, right-sizing service to demand and find savings in FY 2023 to reduce the projected operating funding gap in FY 2024
- Urging the safe and timely return of the 7000-series railcars to service, improving safety culture, and rebuilding customer confidence after a long period of reduced service
- Permanently adopting piloted fare and service initiatives that were implemented in September 2021
- Opening and implementing full revenue service for the Silver Line Phase 2 and Potomac Yard Stations
- Implementing temporary and permanent fare changes that balance ridership and revenue, accommodate increased telework, and don't lose significant revenues.
- Continuing the acceleration of the capital program and CIP to advance goals of safety, reliability, and state of good repair

NVTC staff are working with WMATA Committee Chair Alcorn on drafting the letter and will make it available to Commissioners prior to its submission.

The next two NVTC WMATA Committee meetings are scheduled for April 21 at 6:00 p.m. and June 16 at 6:00 p.m. More information will be provided closer to the meetings.

TO: Chair Aguirre and NVTC Commissioners
FROM: Kate Mattice
DATE: February 3, 2022
SUBJECT: Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

A. VRE CEO Report and Annual Report

The [VRE CEO Report](#) is attached, which provides information on VRE on-time performance, average daily ridership, train and parking utilization, and facilities update.

The [VRE 2021 Annual Report](#) is attached, which provides an overview of VRE service during 2021, including operation highlights and an overview of capital projects.

B. VRE Minutes

The [Minutes of the January 21, 2022 VRE Operations Board Meeting](#) are attached.

C. VRE 2022 Meeting Schedule

At its January 21 meeting, the Operations Board approved the [VRE 2022 Meeting Schedule](#), which is attached as information.

CEO REPORT

JANUARY 2022



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 | JANUARY 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

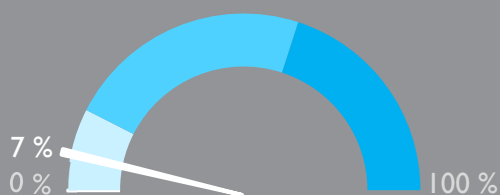
PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE	3
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE	4
AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP	6
SUMMONSES ISSUED	7
TRAIN UTILIZATION	8
PARKING UTILIZATION	9
FACILITIES UPDATE.....	10
UPCOMING PROCUREMENTS	11
CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATES	12



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
A better way. A better life.

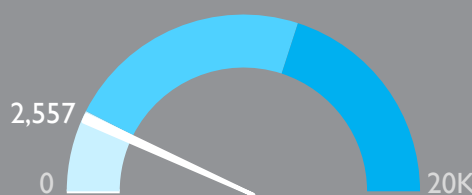


PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE



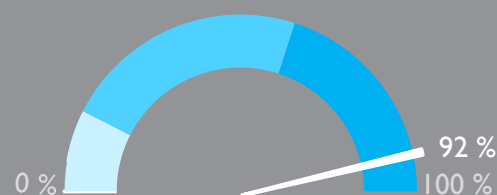
PARKING UTILIZATION

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



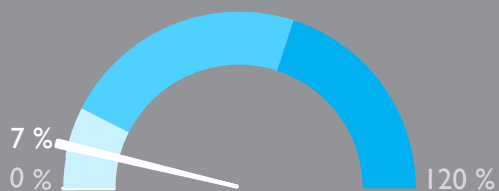
AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP

The average number of boardings each operating day inclusive of Amtrak Step-Up boardings and reduced, "S" schedule, service.
Same month, previous year: 1,057



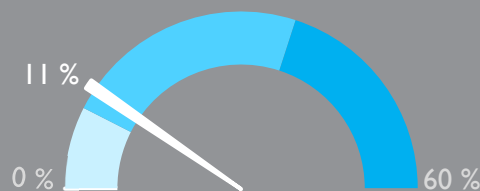
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

Percent of trains arriving at their destination within 5 minutes of the schedule.
Same month, previous year: 96%



SYSTEM CAPACITY

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



OPERATING RATIO

Through November 2021

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%

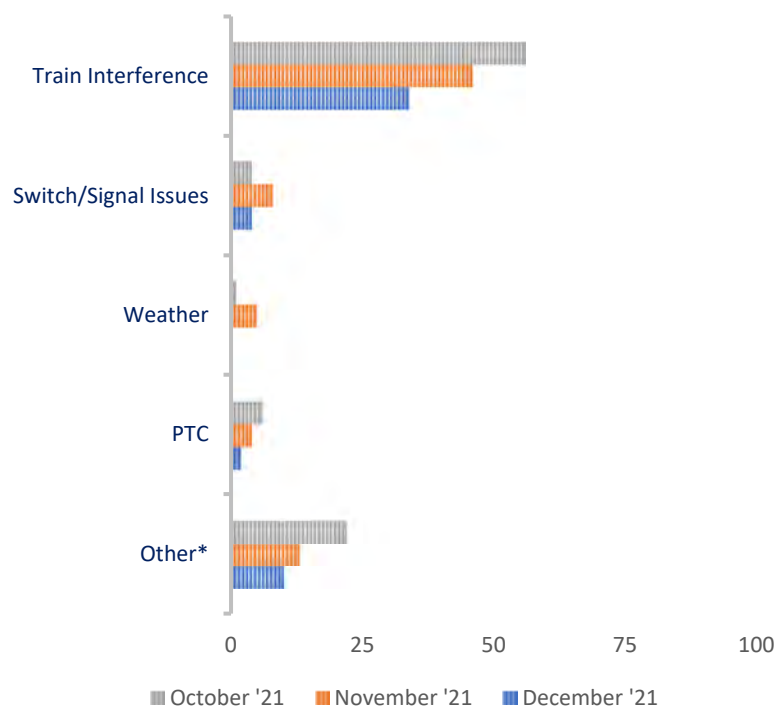
December 2021

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

OUR RECORD

	December 2021	November 2021	December 2020
Manassas Line	91%	83%	97%
Fredericksburg Line	92%	92%	96%
Systemwide	92%	88%	96%

PRIMARY REASON FOR DELAY



VRE operated 608 trains in December. The on-time rate for December was 92 percent.

Fifty trains arrived more than 5 minutes late to their final destinations. Of those late trains, 27 were on the Manassas Line (53 percent), and 23 were on the Fredericksburg Line (47 percent).

We met our goal on both lines this month due to reductions in all categories of delay.

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

LATE TRAINS

	System Wide			Fredericksburg Line			Manassas Line		
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Total late trains	89	76	50	36	24	23	53	52	27
Average minutes late	25	12	14	27	12	18	24	11	11
Number over 30 minutes	23	3	6	10	2	5	13	1	1
Heat restrictions	0	0	0	0	0	0	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 in December was 2,557. December had 21 service days. VRE operated 17 full-service and four S Schedule days the week following Christmas. Ridership levels fell from previous months, which is typical for December.

	December 2021	November 2021	December 2020
Monthly Ridership	53,692	57,688	22,190
Average Daily Ridership	2,557	3,036	1,057
Full Service Days	17	19	17
"S" Service Days	4	0	4

SUMMONSES ISSUED

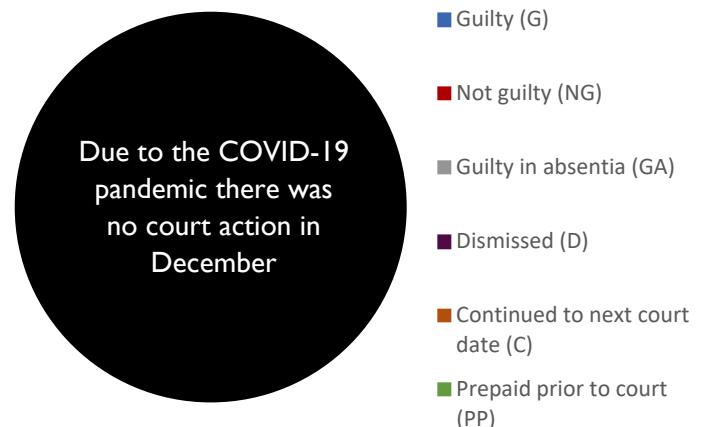
VRE SYSTEM



SUMMONSES WAIVED OUTSIDE OF COURT

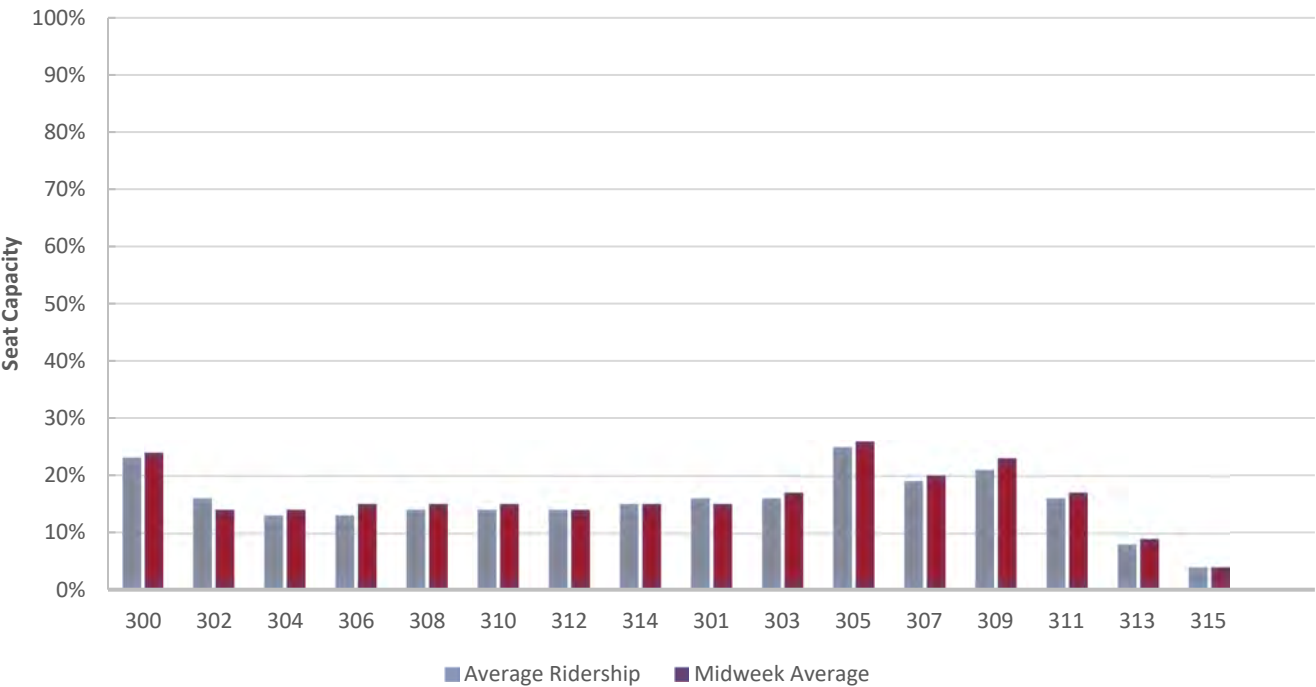
Reason for Dismissal	Occurrences
Passenger showed proof of a monthly ticket	0
One-time courtesy	0
Per the request of the conductor	0
Defective ticket	0
Per ops manager	0
Unique circumstances	0
Insufficient information	0
Lost and found ticket	0
Other	0
Total Waived	0

MONTHLY SUMMONSES COURT ACTION

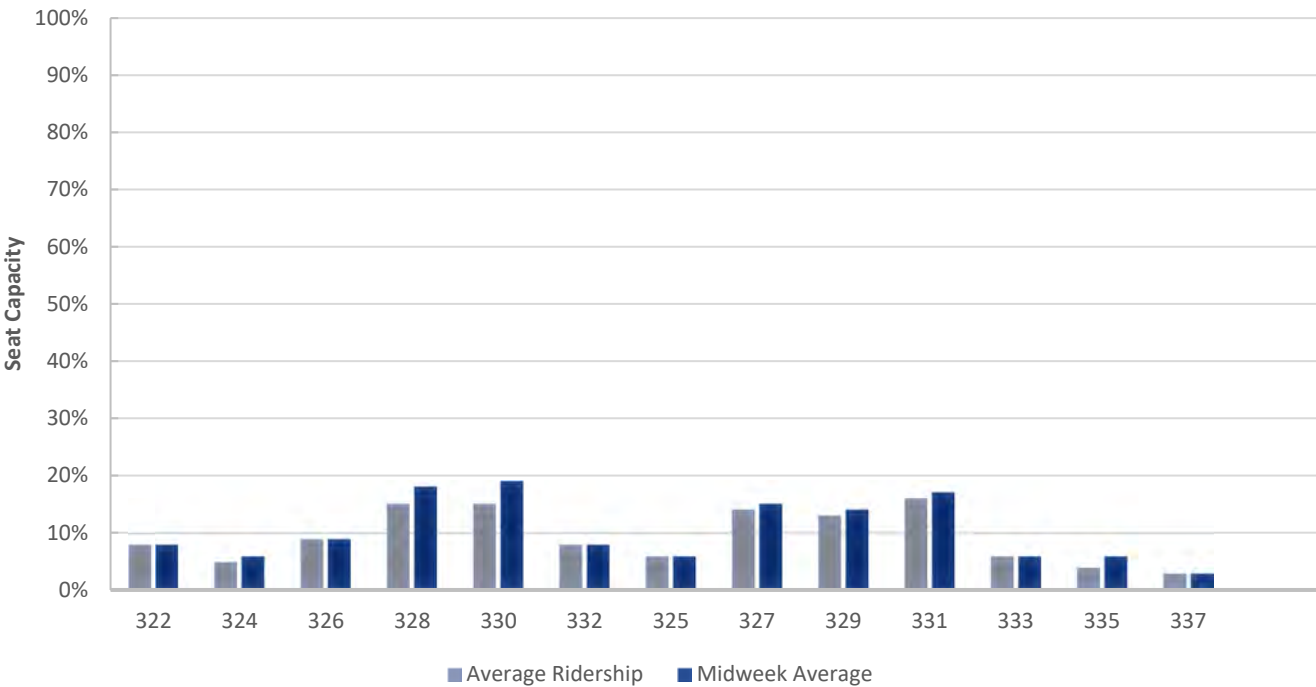


TRAIN UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE

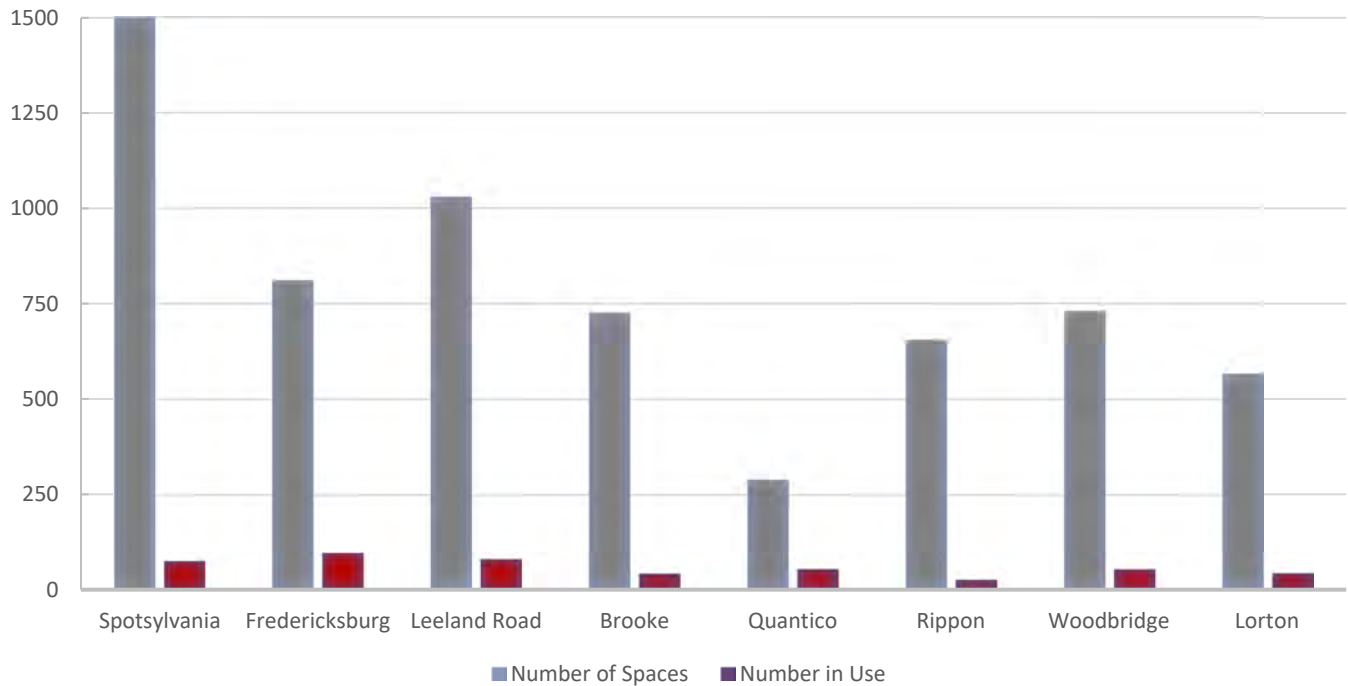


MANASSAS LINE

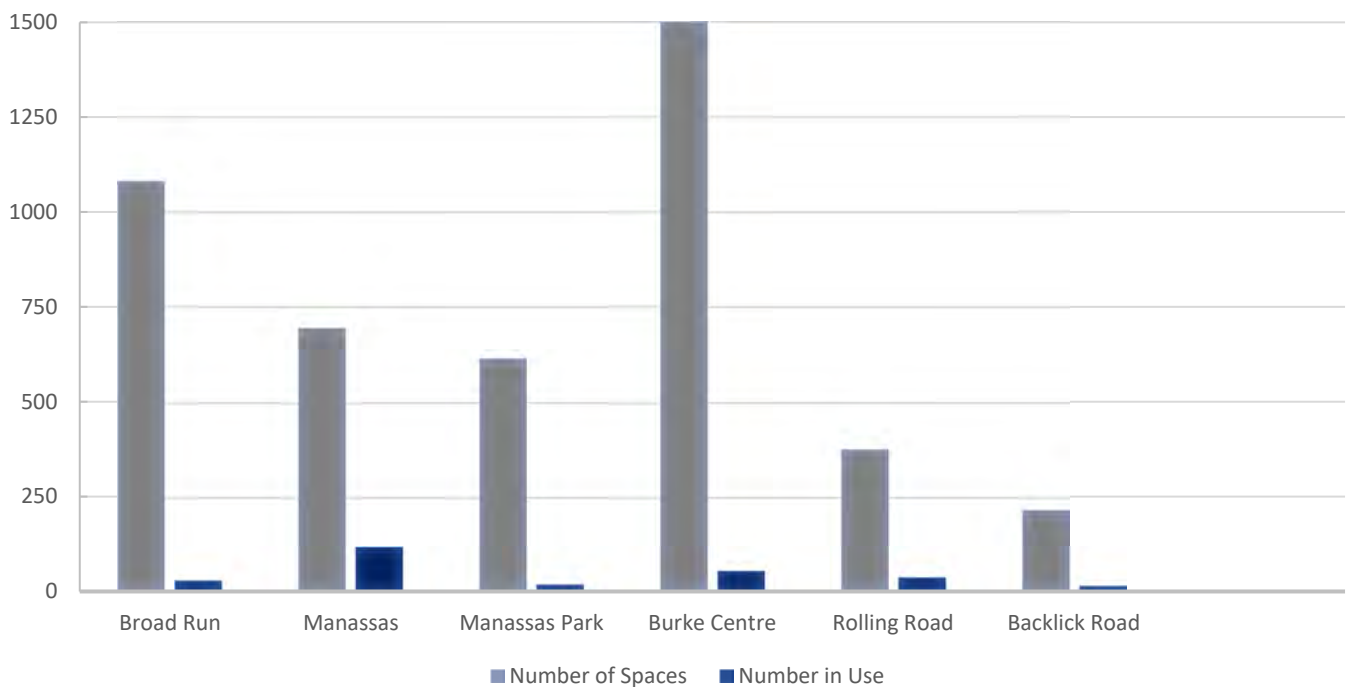


PARKING UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE



MANASSAS LINE



FACILITIES UPDATE

The following is a status update of VRE facilities projects.

Completed projects:

1. Replacement of ceiling tiles at Alexandria headquarters Suite 201
2. Delivery of air purifiers to Alexandria headquarters
3. Reposting of RFQ for waste and recycling receptacles for station platforms



Installation of cubicle furniture at headquarters

Projects scheduled to be completed this quarter:

1. Design of waiting area at L'Enfant station
2. Replacement of existing west platform and canopy lighting with LED lighting at Woodbridge station
3. Replacement of fluorescent lighting with LED lighting at Alexandria headquarters and Fredericksburg office
4. Overhaul of emergency generator at Fredericksburg office
5. Replacement of vertical blinds with window shades at Alexandria headquarters
6. Delivery of air purifiers to Fredericksburg office, Crossroads MASF buildings and Broad Run MASF buildings
7. Installation of VRE station-themed wall graphics in Alexandria headquarters elevator lobby
8. Issuance of sole source contract for continued Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) railroad safety training services



Air purifiers for offices and maintenance and storage facilities

Projects scheduled to be initiated this quarter:

1. Submission of invitation for bids package for waiting area at L'Enfant station
2. Minor structural concrete repairs at Woodbridge station parking garage
3. Modernization of east elevator at Woodbridge station
4. Minor structural concrete bridge repairs at Rippon and Brooke stations
5. Repair of platform sealer delamination at Spotsylvania station
6. Repair of concrete stairs at Burke Centre station
7. Replacement of existing lighting with LED lighting at Manassas station parking garage

Projects scheduled to be initiated this quarter (*continued*)

8. Replacement of existing yard lighting with LED lighting at Crossroads MASF and Broad Run MASF
9. Issuance of general signage services request for quotes

Ongoing projects:

1. Overhaul of emergency generators at Woodbridge and Manassas stations, Alexandria headquarters and Fredericksburg office
2. Procurement of waste and recycling receptacles for station platforms
3. Procurement of benches for station platforms

UPCOMING PROCUREMENTS

1. Locomotive Master Controller
2. Renewal of locomotive head end power engine systems
3. Program management consulting services
4. Modernization of VRE Woodbridge Station east elevator
5. Forklift trucks
6. Passenger car wheelchair lift assemblies
7. Purchase of LED light fixtures
8. Variable Messaging System replacement
9. Tactile strip replacements
10. Construction of Fredericksburg Station platform rehabilitation
11. Construction Manager / General Contractor for the Alexandria Station improvements project
12. Broad Run and Crossroads security camera system power and network infrastructure upgrade

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Project Name	Project Description	Current Phase	Budget	Project Notes
Alexandria Station Improvements	Passenger safety will be improved by replacing an at-grade pedestrian track crossing with elevators to connect the two platforms. The elevators, along with the current and proposed stairs, will connect to the existing tunnel between the two platforms. Adjustments to platform elevation will eliminate the need for step-boxes to access VRE and Amtrak trains. The center platform will be widened and lengthened to accommodate trains on both tracks.	Final Design	\$ 30,975,014.00	Permit coordination ongoing with the City of Alexandria.
Broad Run Expansion	To accommodate forecasted ridership growth and increase service reliability, improvements are needed at both the Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) and station. The MSF will be enlarged to store longer trains and additional equipment. That will require shifting the existing platform to the east and adding a pedestrian tunnel between the platform and the existing and proposed parking lots. A second, 600-space parking lot and third main track will also be constructed.	Final Design	\$ 137,230,000.00	Final design in progress. Norfolk Southern right of entry completed.
Brooke Station Improvements	Design and construction of a platform extension up to 700 feet to accommodate full-length VRE trains.	Development	\$ 9,284,208.00	VRE has reengaged this project and returned it to the CIP Budget for future years. Project schedule updates pending input from various stakeholders
Crossroads MSF - Storage Expansion, Short-term	The project constructs additional storage tracks at the Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) adjacent to the existing facility.	Development	\$ 8,365,765.00	SMART SCALE funding for this project is allocated in FY 2022 and 2023. A funding ageement is pending.
Crystal City Station Improvements	Improved station access and service reliability will result from construction of a new, expanded station. The platform at the relocated station will allow for the simultaneous boarding of two full-length trains. The station's design will accommodate a future pedestrian/bicycle connection between the station and Ronald Reagan National Airport.	Development	\$ 50,114,624.00	On December 9, 2021 the Federal Transit Administration determined the Crystal City Station Replacement Project meets the criteria of a Class II listed Categorical Exclusion. Notice to proceed for final design was issued in early January.
Facilities Design Guidelines Update	Update to the 2019 VRE Facility Design Guidelines.	Final Design	\$ 80,000.00	Reviewing consultant's initial draft drawing submission
Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements	Extended platforms will be able to accommodate eight-car trains, eliminating the need for passengers near the rear to move to a different railcar when disembarking. Enhanced passenger safety and reduced station dwell times will result. The longer platforms will increase operational flexibility and capacity. The design will allow for a future third mainline track.	Final Design	\$ 13,000,000.00	VRE is performing an underground utility investigation for the pedestrian tunnel. The platform design is on hold pending tunnel investigation.

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CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Project Name	Project Description	Current Phase	Budget		Project Notes
Fredericksburg Station Rehabilitation	The rehabilitation of platforms, stairs and bridges will improve passenger safety and better accommodate the boarding and disembarking of riders from VRE and Amtrak trains. New stairs will allow passengers to move between the platform and a parking lot without crossing the street at grade level. New signage, sidewalks, lighting and paint are included, as is installation of a low-clearance warning sign to a bridge that has experienced numerous vehicle strikes.	Final Design	\$	3,000,000.00	Invitation for bids package complete; finalizing agreements
HQ Office Renovations	The project will improve employee safety and security and maximize workspace efficiency at VRE Headquarters, and will include modifications to kitchen, supply room, mail room, bathroom/shower, office and cubicle areas in the north and south wings. The east wing will be modified to include additional offices.	Construction	\$	250,000.00	Replacement of ceiling tiles 90 percent complete. LED ceiling light fixtures on order.
Leeland Road Parking Improvements	This project will expand the surface parking lot at the Leeland Road station by approximately 225 spaces to accommodate future demand.	Development	\$	5,519,178.00	The project is funded through Virginia SMART SCALE. Funding is allocated for FY20 and 22. A funding agreement is pending.
Leeland Road Station Improvements	Design and construction of a platform extension to accommodate full-length VRE trains.	Development	\$	6,736,091.00	VRE has reengaged this project and returned it to the CIP budget for future years. Project schedule updates pending input from various stakeholders.
L'Enfant Station Waiting Area	The existing platform at the L'Enfant station experiences overcrowding during the evening service period. The proposed project will create an additional paved area behind the existing platform, currently landscaped with shrubs and grass, for riders to wait for trains or to bypass riders waiting on the platform.	Final Design	\$	350,000.00	Sediment control and stormwater permit applications remain under review by the District Department of Energy and Environment. VRE paid review fees the week of January 10, 2022.
L'Enfant Track and Station Improvements	Expansion of the VRE L'Enfant Station to provide two platform edges and serve full-length trains. Add a new mainline track between LE and VA interlockings.	Development	\$	79,980,000.00	A property boundary and topographical survey is underway. Alternatives analysis and concept design to define a preferred alternative initiated.

- continued next page -

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Project Name	Project Description	Current Phase	Budget	Project Notes
Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade (LOU) Facility	Featuring 33,000 square feet of maintenance space, the LOU will allow VRE to cost-effectively maintain rolling stock, as well as systems and components, in a state of good repair. It will optimize maintenance and reduce costs by allowing the in-house replacement of items before they fail. The LOU will house two tracks that can hold up to four cars at one time and be equipped with a drop table and wheel truing machine. To maintain storage capacity within Crossroads Yard three new tracks are being constructed to provide enhanced flexibility to our operations crews for train movements and storage.	Construction	\$ 52,183,632.00	Deep foundation and lower level building construction activities continue as we celebrated one year of construction in mid-December.
Manassas Park Parking Expansion	A new garage will nearly double the 600 spaces currently available in the existing surface lot. A pedestrian bridge will provide grade-separated access to the existing platform and lot. The VRE station and garage are an integral part of the City Center Redevelopment District, the proposed transit-accessible high-density mixed-use town center of Manassas Park.	Final Design	\$ 25,983,000.00	Site plan submitted to the city for review. Building plan review planned for end of January.
Manassas Station Improvements	The project expands the VRE Manassas Station platform to serve full length trains and enhances pedestrian access to the station. Alternatives to increase the platform length to enable boarding and alighting from all passenger cars will be evaluated.	Development	\$ 9,125,000.00	This project is funded with I-66 OTB funding. Initiation of project planning pending completion of a Force Account Addendum with Norfolk Southern Railway.
New York Avenue Midday Storage Facility	This new facility will store trains currently located in Amtrak's Ivy City coach yard, as Amtrak now has need for the storage tracks. The New York Avenue site, which is proximate to Washington Union Station, will be able to accommodate additional VRE trains.	Development	\$ 89,666,508.00	Attended site visit on December 8, 2021 with design team to revisit original concept design and review potential alternatives.
Potomac Shores Station	This new station, in a master-planned community in Prince William County, is being funded, designed, and constructed by the developer of Potomac Shores in consultation with VRE and other stakeholders. The station will be just a short walk from the town center. A new side platform will be constructed which is designed to be converted into an island platform in the future when the 3rd track is added to corridor operations.	Final Design	\$ -	Final design plans submitted to Prince William County for approval and permits and for VRE and CSX review and approval.

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CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Project Name	Project Description	Current Phase	Budget		Project Notes
Quantico Station Improvements	Service and safety will be enhanced through the construction of a new center platform, ADA-compliant pedestrian bridges, existing platform extension, and third track. These improvements will allow the station to accommodate additional passengers and more frequent and longer trains and operations flexibility with three boardable platform edges.	Construction	\$	23,973,061.00	Jack and bore for island platform drainage completed. Manhole installations and corresponding drainage lines proceeding.
Rippon Station Improvements	Extend existing platform with a second pedestrian overpass.	Development	\$	16,634,794.00	VRE has reengaged this project and returned it to the CIP budget for future years. Project schedule updates pending input from various stakeholders.
Rolling Road Station Improvements	An extended platform will accommodate eight-car trains, eliminating the need for passengers near the rear to move to a different railcar when disembarking. Enhanced passenger safety and reduced station dwell times will result. Rehabilitation and repair of the existing platform, replacement of stairs and the existing canopy roof, and an upgrade of the lighting and communication systems are planned.	Construction	\$	5,000,000.00	Existing platform rehabilitation in progress.

For more information about VRE capital projects, visit <https://projects.vre.org/list>



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2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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VRE is a transportation partnership of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	Joint Message from the CEO and Chair
5	VRE Operations Board
6	COVID-19 Response
10	Operations
11	Transforming Rail in Virginia
12	Rolling Stock Purchases and Capital Projects
13	Government Affairs
14	Information Technology
15	Safety
17	Sustainability
18	Awards
19	Special Events
20	Partnerships
21	VRE Staff



JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE CEO AND CHAIR

While COVID-19 had not been completely derailed by year's end, VRE had returned to some semblance of "normal" in our service and operations. Trains were again running on a regular schedule, our Operations Board was back to in-person meetings, and staff in several departments began returning to the office.

Our service looked a little different in 2021 than the year prior. Gone were the social distancing decals on platforms and railcars, though masks remained a requirement onboard. A new schedule, which took effect in October, was designed to reduce track congestion – the major cause of VRE train delays – and allow for the future addition of a round-trip train on both the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines.

Many of the adjustments we made in 2020 continued to serve us well and a few even came with a silver lining. While monthly board meetings were no longer virtual, we continued to stream them to VRE's YouTube channel, providing greater access and transparency to those we serve. The creativity demanded of staff to effectively respond to the pandemic led to several industry awards. And the reduction in staff working at headquarters allowed us to expedite renovations.

2021 saw VRE break ground on several capital projects – at the Quantico and Rolling Road stations and our Crossroads yard – to enhance passenger convenience, comfort and safety. We reached planning milestones on our Crystal City and L'Enfant station improvement projects, as well as Long Bridge, a critical state rail project that VRE will help fund. Twenty-one new, state-of-the-art railcars will eventually join our fleet following approval of the purchase by VRE's board and parent commissions. Despite all the progress, a few challenges remained. Ridership was rebounding, but slowly; and our budget was balanced, in part due to federal assistance.

That said, there is light at the end of the pandemic tunnel and VRE is well situated to regain its status as the travel mode of choice for some 18,000+ daily commuters in Central and Northern Virginia. A long history of strong financial management and stewardship by the Operations Board and partnerships with a range of stakeholders have laid the foundation for future success. We have navigated 2021 with aplomb and look forward to greater accomplishments moving forward.



Rich Dalton
VRE CEO



Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
VRE Operations Board Chair

VRE OPERATIONS BOARD

A new executive committee, with a fresh agenda, took the helm of the VRE Operations Board in January. The board, chaired by Alexandria Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, navigated a return to in-person meetings and advanced numerous projects and initiatives, detailed in the pages that follow, to ensure VRE's sustainability and growth.



Walter Alcorn
Fairfax County



Andrea Bailey
Prince William County



Preston Banks
Manassas Park



Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
Alexandria



Meg Bohmke
Stafford County



Katie Cristol
Arlington County



Margaret Franklin
Prince William County



Matt Kelly
Fredericksburg



Cindy Lamb
Stafford County



Jeanine Lawson
Prince William County



Jennifer Mitchell
Virginia DRPT



Gary Skinner
Spotsylvania County



Ralph Smith
Manassas



Dan Storck
Fairfax County



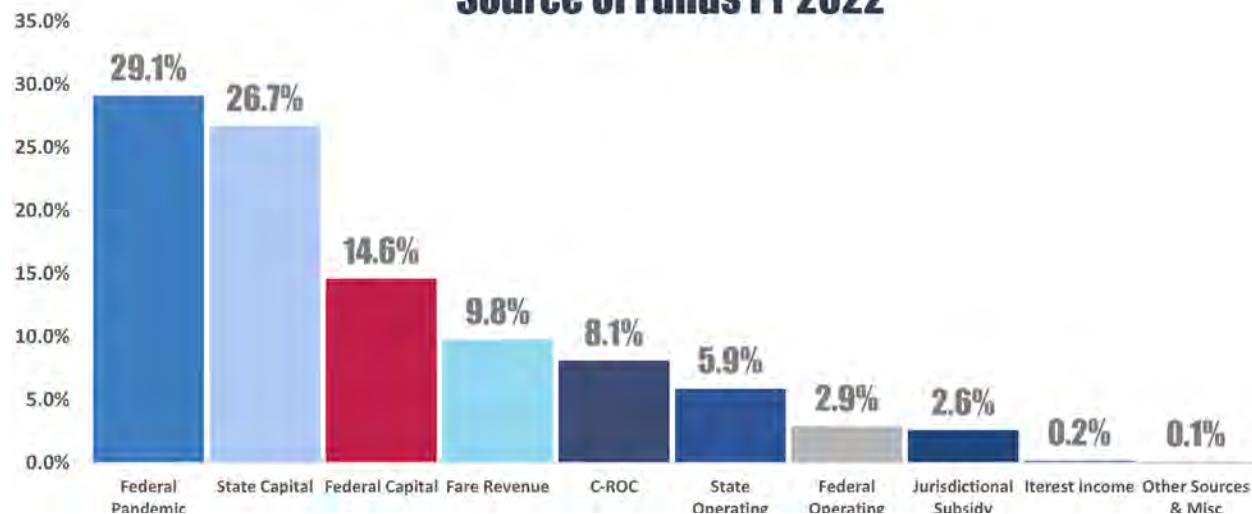
James Walkinshaw
Fairfax County

COVID-19 RESPONSE

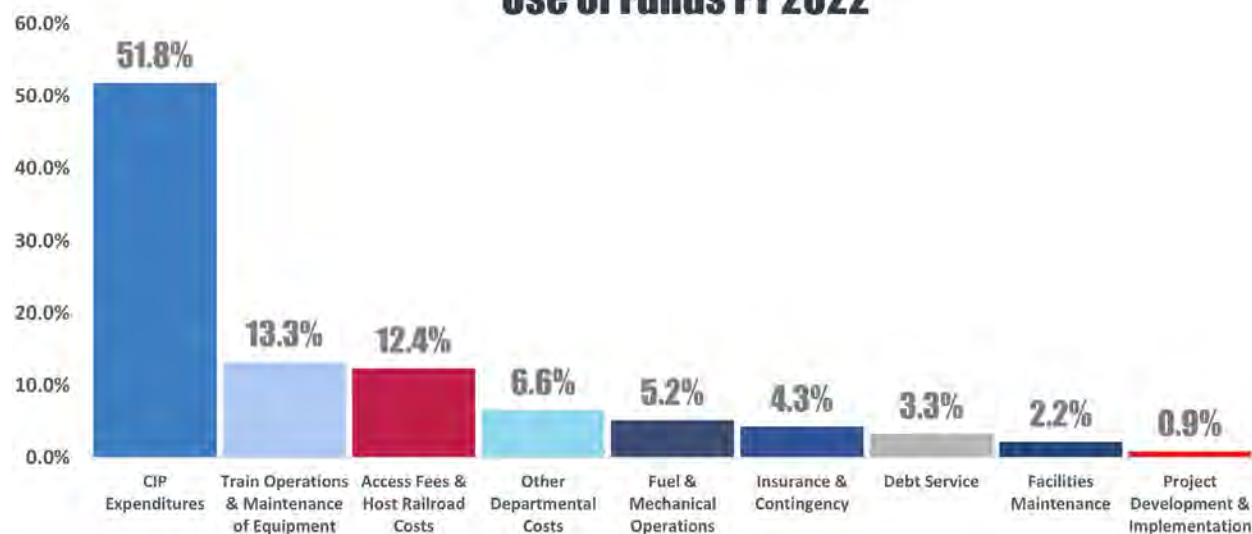
The allocation of federal pandemic relief funds has allowed VRE to achieve a balanced budget for fiscal year 2022, which began July 1, 2021. Within the \$185.9 operating and capital budget, as approved by VRE's parent commissions, those federal funds were being used in three ways:

- ✓ Providing relief to VRE member jurisdictions through a reduction of roughly \$13.5 million, or 74 percent, in their annual subsidies
- ✓ Replacing the 84 percent state track access fee reimbursement, totaling \$15.6 million
- ✓ Covering a 75-80 percent decline in farebox revenue over pre-pandemic times.

Source of Funds FY 2022



Use of Funds FY 2022



Despite the pandemic's challenges, VRE received an unmodified opinion for an audit of its fiscal year 2021 financial statements from PBMares LLP in December. The opinion letter states that VRE's statements, in all material respects, fairly and accurately present the financial position of the organization. This opinion is the best outcome of a financial audit.

Federal pandemic recognition

In one of his first appearances as U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg invited leaders from VRE, Amtrak, Metro and MARC – as well as their frontline workers – to an event at Union Station where he expressed his gratitude to them for placing themselves at risk to ensure the safe and healthy travels of essential personnel.

Prior to the event, he met privately with transportation leaders from the four agencies to discuss their legislative priorities and reiterated the Biden Administration's support for a second COVID-19 relief package.



U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg (front) thanks CEO Rich Dalton and Keolis conductors for keeping VRE trains moving during the pandemic.

Additional federal COVID-19 relief funds

The need for additional federal public transportation funding brought together industry leaders, including CEO Rich Dalton and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, who was involved in negotiating details of the second COVID-19 relief package. The senator shared details of the legislation, which ultimately passed, and spoke to the possibility of an additional bill focused exclusively on infrastructure.

VRE CEO Rich Dalton (left) joined U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (right) and other Northern Virginia transportation leaders to discuss the need for additional federal public transportation funding



CEO Rich Dalton (rear) and U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman (near) discussed COVID-19 protocols and future plans during a ride on train 309.

COVID-19 protocols and future plans

U.S. Representative Rob Wittman, from Virginia's 1st Congressional District, joined CEO Rich Dalton aboard Fredericksburg train 309 in March to discuss COVID-19 protocols and future plans. He was impressed with the measures VRE had implemented, such as social distancing decals on railcars and platforms and deep cleaning measures, to protect passenger health and safety.

COVID-19 vaccinations available March 2021

COVID-19 vaccinations were made available to staff in March through a partnership with the Health Department in the City of Alexandria, where VRE's headquarters is located. Staff received an invitation for the two-dose Pfizer or single-dose Johnson & Johnson and, later in the year, for a booster.



Christine Hoeffner, VRE's manager of project development, and Robert Hostelka, director of information technology, were among the first VRE staff members to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.



FULL SERVICE RETURNS JUNE 1

VRE returned to a full-service schedule on June 1.

After running a reduced-service schedule for nearly 15 months, VRE resumed full-service operations - 32 daily trains on its two lines - on June 1, increasing commuting options as people slowly returned to offices. The more convenient schedule allowed passengers to maintain social distancing, even as ridership began to increase.



FEDERAL MASK ORDERS



*"...must be followed by all passengers
on public conveyances..."*

LEARN MORE.



Capacity limits and social distancing relaxed. Onboard mask requirements remained in place.

Following changes to federal guidelines, VRE relaxed capacity limits on platforms and railcars in June. While social distancing was no longer required, it was easily observed as ridership remained low. None of VRE's trains operated above 35 percent capacity. VRE also relaxed facemask requirements outdoors on station platforms. Facemasks continued to be required inside stations and onboard VRE trains, as the federal government extended its mandate to March 2022.



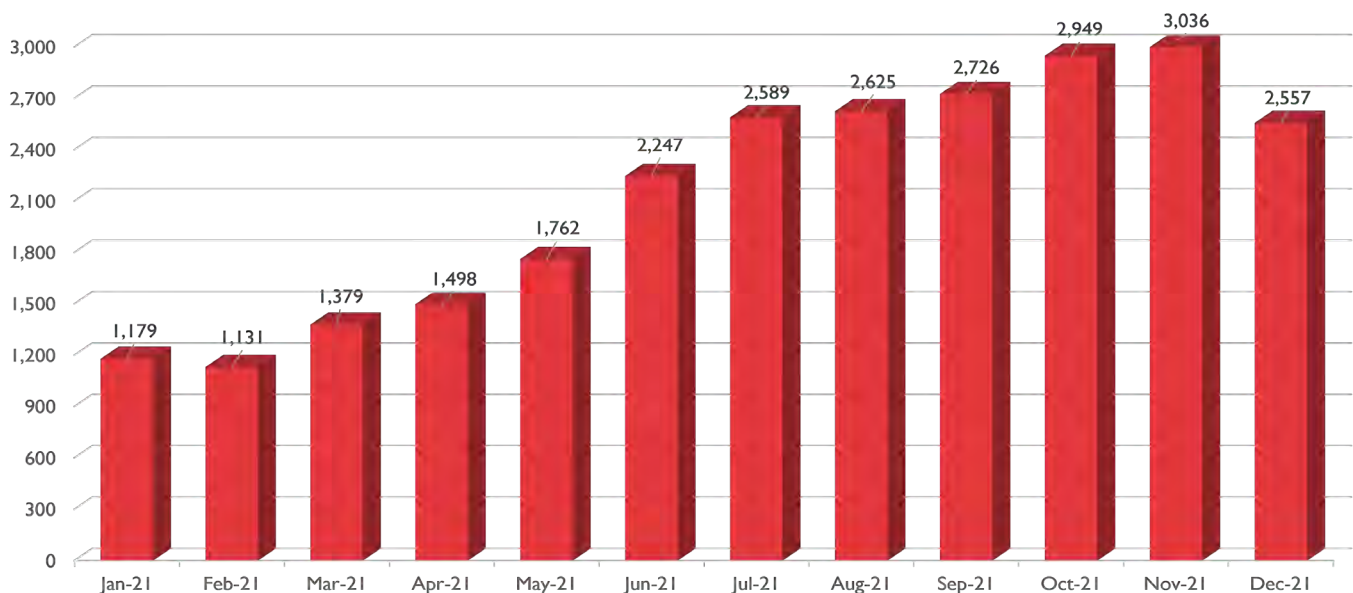


OPERATIONS

Ridership began to recover, albeit slowly, in 2021. Average daily ridership (ADR) grew from 1,179 in January to a high of 3,036 in November. While far from the pre-pandemic ADR of +18,000, it was markedly better than April 2020's ADR of 460.

As the number of daily trains increased from 16 to 32 in June, track congestion worsened, reducing VRE's on-time performance to a low of 80 percent in August. A schedule change in October, designed to improve fluidity in the rail corridors, pushed reliability to 92 percent in December. It also laid the foundation for a future round-trip train on each line as part of the Transforming Rail in Virginia program.

2021 AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP



TRANSFORMING RAIL IN VIRGINIA

Operations Board Chair Elizabeth Bennett-Parker and CEO Rich Dalton joined a host of federal, state and industry leaders in March to celebrate the official launch of the Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) initiative. Governor Ralph Northam, the CEOs of Amtrak, CSX Transportation and VRE participated in a symbolic signing ceremony at Alexandria's Union Station.

As a major beneficiary of TRV, VRE's Operations Board had committed to provide significant financial support for the \$3.7 billion program. In March 2021, VRE executed both an operating/access and funding agreement with the commonwealth. Under the funding agreement, VRE committed to utilizing its dedicated Commuter Rail Operating and Capital (C-ROC) funds to support TRV infrastructure improvements.

Using C-ROC funds to support TRV through a bond issuance was the subject of an October Operations Board briefing. The bond issuance will be backed by half of the \$15 million in C-ROC funds received annually from the regional fuels tax. Based on market conditions at year's end, this planned issuance would allow for an upfront contribution of roughly \$130 million. The remaining \$7.5 million each year would go toward planned infrastructure improvements on a "pay-go" basis for 10 years, bringing the total contribution to \$205 million. That, combined with more than \$800 million in improvements spelled out in VRE's six-year Capital Improvement Program, would bring VRE's contribution to rail improvements in Virginia to over \$1 billion.

The Technical Advisory Committee for the commonwealth's \$1.9 billion Long Bridge project, a second crossing over the Potomac River dedicated primarily to passenger rail, launched in June with VRE at the table. The consultant shared an animated flyover with participants demonstrating the project's complexities.



CEO Rich Dalton (seated left) and Operations Board Chair Elizabeth Bennett-Parker (standing left) joined a host of dignitaries for a ceremonial signing of the Transforming Rail in Virginia agreement.

A bypass near Franconia that would separate passenger and freight trains is one of many planned state infrastructure investments to which VRE will contribute financially.

ROLLING STOCK PURCHASES AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

VRE's parent commissions authorized the purchase of 21 state-of-the-art railcars in June for an amount not to exceed \$84.6 million. These multilevel 148-seat passenger railcars with restrooms are 100 percent compatible and interoperable with VRE's existing fleet and include enhanced passenger amenities.

Ground was broken on three major capital projects in 2021. Featuring 33,000 square feet of maintenance space, the Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade Facility will allow VRE to cost-effectively maintain rolling stock, as well as systems and components, in a state of good repair. It will optimize maintenance and reduce costs by allowing the in-house replacement of items before they fail. Construction should be complete by March 2023.

Service and safety will be enhanced through the construction of a new center platform, ADA-compliant pedestrian bridges, existing platform extension, and third track at VRE's Quantico station. These improvements will allow the station to accommodate additional passengers and more frequent and longer trains. Construction should be complete by December 2023.

A platform extension will accommodate eight-car trains at the Rolling Road station. Rehabilitation and repair of the existing platform, replacement of stairs and the existing canopy roof, and an upgrade of the lighting and communication systems should be complete by May 2022.

Four other capital projects reached milestones. In December VRE's Crystal City station replacement project received a class II categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Protection Act from the Federal Transit Administration, meaning the project appears to pose no significant social, economic, or environmental impacts and may move to the next stage in final design.

The L'Enfant station fourth track project alternatives analysis for VRE's busiest station, which serves 45 percent of passengers, launched in April. The end result will be a preferred alternative to enhance rail operations and increase capacity at the station.

A contract with TranSystems for final design at Broad Run was signed in September. The project, which will accommodate ridership growth and increase service reliability, includes improvements to the Maintenance and Storage Facility, station platform, parking lot, as well as the addition of a third main track.

VRE's Alexandria headquarters renovation wrapped up in December. The redesigned reception area is evocative of a VRE railcar. The rearrangement of office space and cubicles will accommodate existing staff and allow for growth.

A City of Manassas project that would complete a missing link for safe and direct bicycle and pedestrian access between the city and VRE's Broad Run station received a \$74,000 grant from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Transportation Planning Board in September.



VRE ordered 21 new state-of-the-art passenger railcars with enhanced passenger amenities.



Ground was broken and significant progress made on VRE's Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade Facility at Crossroads.



The platform extension at Rolling Road will accommodate eight-car trains when complete in mid-2022.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

A federally mandated adjustment to the excess insurance liability cap for commuter and passenger railroads left VRE and other rail systems scrambling to identify insurers to provide the additional \$28.6 million in annual coverage by the end of March. Due to a confluence of factors in the insurance marketplace, this type of liability protection can be expensive and difficult to secure. VRE partnered with several industry associations to provide federal policy makers with a foundational understanding of this complex issue and options to stem the crisis. CEO Rich Dalton joined colleagues from the Commuter Rail Coalition on Capitol Hill in December to urge Congress to resolve the matter.

With a federal infrastructure package languishing in Congress, Operations Board Chair Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, CEO Rich Dalton and Chief of Staff Joe Swartz joined U.S. Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine for a September roundtable to draw attention to ways in which the legislation could improve the region's transportation network. The chair noted the additional funds for discretionary grant programs included in the bipartisan bill would give VRE an opportunity to advance the commonwealth's \$3.7 billion Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative, allowing VRE to eventually operate more frequent daily trains and weekend service. President Biden signed the \$1 trillion bill in November.

The General Assembly approved a two-year state budget in February that included significant funding for commuter rail. The HB1800 Conference Report contained a provision allowing for the transfer of up to \$83,500,000 to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, acting on behalf of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, "to improve commuter rail service on the Virginia Railway Express Manassas Line."

VRE shared its legislative priorities with newly elected members of the General Assembly and others in the business community during a briefing hosted by its two parent commissions in December. CEO Rich Dalton stressed the success of the Transforming Rail in Virginia program is contingent on continued state funding for the Long Bridge expansion project and several dozen associated projects. He also noted the importance of safeguarding the Commuter Rail Operating and Capital Fund and diversifying its revenue sources.



CEO Rich Dalton (second from left) joined representatives from the Commuter Rail Coalition on Capitol Hill.



CEO Rich Dalton spoke to VRE's legislative priorities at a briefing for new state lawmakers.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

VRE introduced a new version of VRE Mobile, a ticketing app, in January with AmericanEagle.com as the developer. Work on an updated website, which will launch in 2022, began in the fall. The intent is to integrate the app, website, and other technologies to provide more real-time information about VRE service and improve the passenger experience.

With installation of the new automatic passenger count system complete, VRE staff began exploring ways to make the data available internally and share it with passengers through VRE Mobile and platform monitors. As ridership returns, VRE will certify the system with the National Transit Database so the data can be used for ridership reporting.

Perhaps the most significant accomplishment of 2021 was the September launch of a new enterprise resource planning system, allowing VRE to better track and report expenditures, enhancing accountability and saving valuable staff resources. Once the financials went live, staff began work on the equipment asset management phase, to integrate inventory and warehouse into the system, with a targeted implementation date of spring 2022.

A new enterprise resource planning system, allowed VRE to better track and report expenditures, enhancing accountability and saving valuable staff resources.





VRE's Rail Safety Week video, aimed at teenagers, was viewed nearly 376,000 times on streaming services.



VRE System Safety & Security Administrator Charlotte Nourse shared rail safety tips with Boy Scout Troop 2016



SCAN ME



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Rail Safety Education

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#RAILSAFETY

SAFETY

Rail safety was the topic of a May workshop with members of Boy Scout Troop 2016 from Chantilly. VRE staff helped scouts check off several requirements for the Railroading Merit Badge. The scouts observed the arrival and departure of train 335 at Burke Centre and a fire extinguisher demonstration before breaking for some pizza.

September's Rail Safety Week focus was teenagers. The message – the only thing that belongs on the tracks is a train – was communicated through 15- and 30-second public service announcements (PSA) created in partnership with Operation Lifesaver. The PSA, which was placed as a non-skippable ad on streaming services, received nearly 376,000 views. School districts within VRE's nine jurisdictions amplified the message on their social media platforms.

VRE works regularly with first responders in each of its jurisdictions to enhance their understanding of the rail system so they can effectively respond to an emergency. In September VRE partnered with the City of Manassas Fire Department, engaging them in a morning educational session and an afternoon hands-on practice session. In November VRE hosted Prince William County emergency dispatchers for a safety coordination event. Incident command protocols, communication practices, host railroad coordination, railroad terminology, and rescue tactics were among the topics covered.

VRE also works with law-enforcement partners to familiarize them with the most important elements of the railroad and rail equipment to perform their jobs safely should an emergency occur. More than 100 teams – dogs and handlers – from federal, state and local government agencies throughout the National Capital region participated in a K-9 training at Broad Run in October. The K-9 teams completed a simulated search for explosives onboard VRE locomotives and railcars and throughout the storage facility. A similar but smaller event occurred at the Crossroads Yard in December.

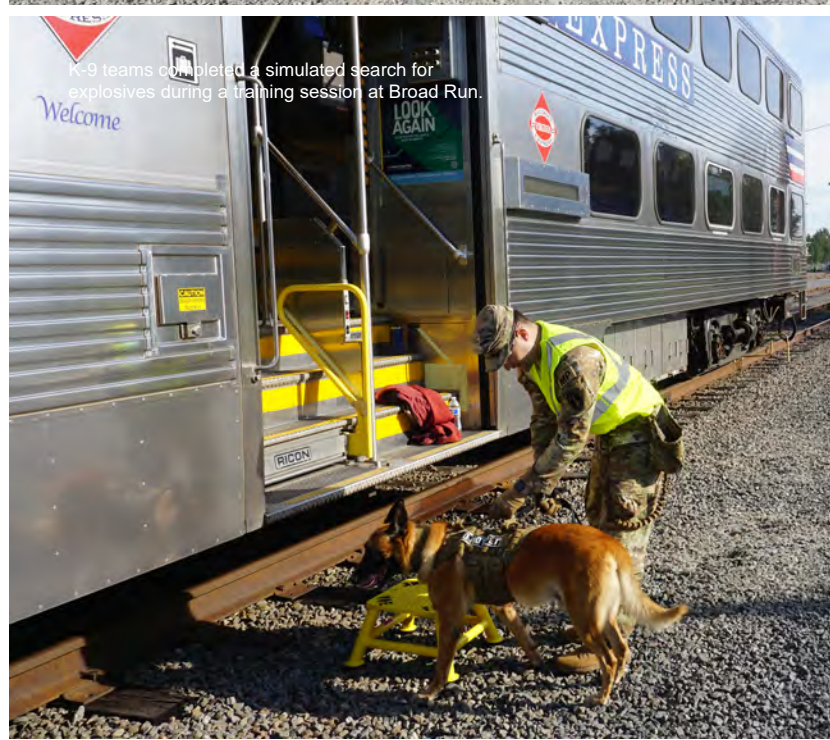
VRE's Keolis mechanical team celebrated a safety milestone, six injury-free years at Broad Run, in October. It was a significant accomplishment given that over the last decade an average of 4,250 U.S. railroad workers were injured on the job each year. VRE managers honored the accomplishment with an award ceremony and food-truck dinner at the yard.



VRE worked with first responders to enhance their understanding of the rail system.



K-9 teams completed a simulated search for explosives during a training session at Broad Run.



K-9 teams completed a simulated search for explosives during a training session at Broad Run.

SUSTAINABILITY

VRE initiated several projects to help achieve its goal of identifying and incorporating opportunities to enhance sustainability. Analyses, launched in 2021, allowed staff to move ahead with projects resulting in the conservation and preservation of resources.

Upgrades to LED lighting at stations continued and, in December, the Operations Board approved the purchase of LED emergency lights for VRE's fleet of passenger railcars. The change from fluorescent to LED will improve lighting, promote longer tube life, and reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. Plans were undertaken to make similar lighting changes at VRE's headquarters and Fredericksburg office, and in yard lights at the Broad Run and Crossroads maintenance and storage facilities.

Updates to a 2012 study, due next year, will incorporate current and emerging technologies and identify opportunities for converting to alternative energy sources to power stations and other facilities.





CEO Rich Dalton (second from right) accepts an award from the Virginia Green Travel Alliance for VRE's environmentally friendly railcar disinfectant system.



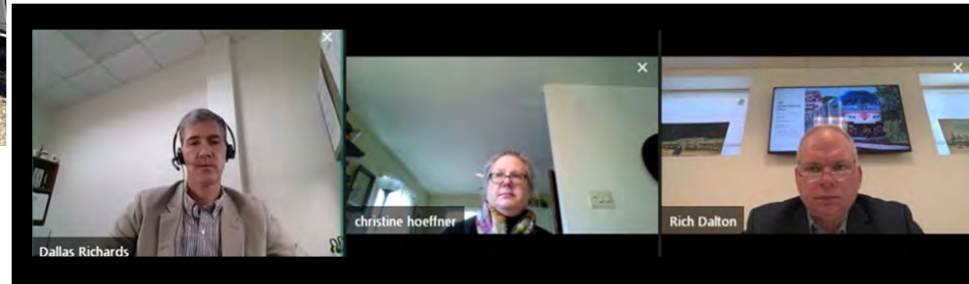
VRE's 3-D train tour received an AdWheel Award from APTA.

AWARDS

VRE was honored with three prestigious awards, two related to the pandemic. The American Public Transportation Association recognized VRE for its 3-D Train Tour in the "Shoestring Tactic: Best Marketing and Communications on COVID-19" category. The idea was to increase the comfort level of former and prospective riders by letting them know what they can expect from the moment they arrive on the platform and then board the train.

VRE was the recipient of an award from the Virginia Green Travel Alliance for its environmentally friendly railcar disinfectant system. Acidic electrolyzed water, a potent yet nonirritating disinfectant, is now used to clean our railcars overnight. Produced on demand, this product uses only salt, tap water, and electricity and eliminates the environmental impact from the distribution and disposal of hazardous conventional chemicals.

For the 14th consecutive year, VRE earned a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The certificate, awarded by the Government Finance Officers Association, is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting and given to agencies whose reports demonstrate a spirit of transparency and full disclosure.



VRE staff answer questions from potential contractors and vendors during its annual Rail Industry Day.

SPECIAL EVENTS

VRE and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) joined forces in February to present Rail Industry Day, an opportunity for members of the contracting community to learn more about upcoming projects and procurements. Nearly 350 potential contractors attended the virtual event. The webinar included projects such as the Long Bridge expansion, track projects, station improvements, parking expansion, and a general planning consultant procurement. It also addressed DRPT and VRE's procurement policies and subcontractor utilization goals for firms qualifying under the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprises or state Small, Women-owned and Minority-owned programs.

After a year hiatus due to the pandemic, VRE participated in two popular special events. June's hot weather did not deter folks from attending the 26th Annual Manassas Heritage Railway Festival. While VRE did not operate excursion trains to Clifton, the locomotive and static display attracted many, including kids who knew a lot about locomotive generators and motors.

The return of the Clifton Day Festival, the first Saturday in October, saw VRE offer service to and from the event at stations between Manassas and Rolling Road. It is the only day of the year when trains stop in the historic town. Riding VRE has long been the best way to get to Clifton on festival day, as parking fills up quickly.

After much consideration, VRE opted not to run its Santa Trains in 2021, as the presence of yet another COVID-19 variant, omicron, and the lack of a vaccine for children under five, posed potential health risks. Santa Trains should resume in 2022.



PARTNERSHIPS

VRE has a long history of successful partnerships with a variety of organizations and agencies, many of which have strengthened over the last year. CEO Rich Dalton continues to represent the commuter rail service on the Northeast Corridor Commission as a non-voting representation and the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority as an ex-officio board member. With a voice at the table, VRE has been able to contribute to solutions and help advance rail projects in the commonwealth and as far north as Boston, Massachusetts.

Close coordination with Virginia's DRPT, whose director represented the commonwealth on the VRE Operations Board, led to VRE's participation as a funder of the Long Bridge project, which is critical to VRE's sustainability and growth.

Because VRE operates service in corridors used by both passenger and freight trains, VRE management and its operations team continued to collaborate with colleagues at Amtrak, CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. Together these organizations worked through VRE's return to full service in June and schedule change in October.

With its conductors and engineers supplied by Keolis Rail Services Virginia, VRE touched base with Keolis multiple times a day. Daily meetings, following the conclusion of morning service, allowed for the resolution of issues. The new "What's Up Wednesday" newsletter provided service- and passenger-related reminders in a rapidly changing environment.

The VRE Coordinating Committee, comprised of staff from its parent commissions, nine member jurisdictions and the commonwealth, continued to meet virtually in 2021. These monthly meetings allowed staff to gain a better understanding of agenda items and prepare their Operations Board members for upcoming meetings.

At the Commuter Rail Coalition (CRC) annual meeting in June, CEO Rich Dalton was elected to the board of directors as an at-large member for a two-year term. CRC represents the interests, needs and benefits of the nation's commuter railroads, which deliver half a billion passenger trips each year.

VRE again participated in the annual Northern Virginia Joint Transportation Meeting, which allows the public to learn more about projects designed to improve mobility in the region. During the December virtual meeting, CEO Rich Dalton updated attendees about VRE's planned improvements and financial support of Transforming Rail in Virginia.

VRE staff partnered with the Virginia Transit Association (VTA) in the development of its legislative agenda and determination of recipients of various awards. Several VRE staff members, as part of their continuing education, participated in VTA's September conference, which included a keynote speech by Governor Ralph Northam.



An animated flyover was shared with members of the Long Bridge project's technical advisory committee, including VRE staff, demonstrating the project's complexities.

VRE staff at one of two health-and-wellness check-ins at the Fredericksburg station.



VRE STAFF

An initiative to identify areas of opportunity and develop and execute informed strategies to enhance and sustain VRE as a diverse, equitable and inclusive employer launched in 2021. The project included an evaluation of current organizational policies, practices, and various aspects of the workforce, including employee experiences. Results and recommendations will be shared in 2022.

To help mitigate the pandemic's toll on connections between staff members, many of whom worked remotely, VRE held two health and wellness check-ins during 2021. The events gave new hires an opportunity to meet colleagues with whom they had only exchanged emails or spoken with via online platforms. Team-building exercises and tenure milestone recognitions were part of the events.

The inaugural Tour de VRE, a 75-mile bike ride to raise awareness and financial support for triple negative breast cancer, launched in October. The ride, which started at Washington, D.C. Union Station and concluded at VRE's Fredericksburg station, celebrated the life of Maria Bohigas Foster, the spouse of VRE Project Manager Kip Foster, who succumbed to the disease in August.



Efforts were undertaken to enhance and sustain VRE as a diverse, equitable and inclusive employer.

(Pictured here, right and below) The first annual Tour de VRE honored the spouse of a staff member who lost her battle against breast cancer.



VRE staff gathered twice at the Fredericksburg station for a health and wellness check in.



Virginia Railway Express
1500 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314



MINUTES

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING

January 21, 2022

14700 Potomac Mills Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192

Members Present

*Walter Alcorn (NVTC)
 *Sarah Bagley (NVTC)
 *Andrea Bailey (PRTC)
 *Preston Banks (PRTC) ‡
 *Margaret Franklin (PRTC)
 *Libby Garvey (NVTC)
 *Lori Hayes (PRTC)
 *Matt Kelly (PRTC)
 *Jeanine Lawson (PRTC) ‡
 Jennifer Mitchell (DRPT) **
 *Ralph Smith (PRTC)
 *Daniel G. Storck (NVTC) **
 *James Walkinshaw (NVTC)
 *Pamela Yeung (PRTC)

Jurisdiction

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

Members Absent

Meg Bohmke (PRTC)

Stafford County

Alternates Present

*Monica Garvey (PRTC)
 *Michael McLaughlin (DRPT)

Stafford County
 Commonwealth of Virginia

Alternates Absent

Canek Aguirre (NVTC)
 Victor Angry (PRTC)
 Pete Candland (PRTC)
 Katie Cristol (NVTC)
 Deborah Frazier (PRTC)
 Jason Graham (PRTC)
 Jeffrey C. McKay (NVTC)
 Alanna Mensing (PRTC)
 Pam Sebesky (PRTC)
 Ann Wheeler (PRTC)

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

*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.

‡ Indicates Member participated remotely

Staff and General Public

Cindy Bullock – VRE

Rich Dalton – VRE

Robert Hostetka - VRE

Lezlie Lamb – VRE

Steve MacIsaac – VRE Chief Counsel

Allan Fye - NVTC

Dr. Bob Schneider – PRTC

Mark Schofield – VRE

Joe Swartz – VRE

Chair Franklin called the meeting to order at 9:00 A. M. The Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call followed.

Chair Franklin announced that Member Banks requested remote participation due to being out of town on a personal matter, and Ms. Lawson requested remote participation due to illness. In accordance with the VRE Electronic Participation Policy, a physical quorum was present. Chair Franklin asked for a motion and a second to approve the requests.

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, to approve the remote participation by Mr. Banks and Ms. Lawson. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, McLaughlin, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

[Mr. Storck arrived at 9:02 a.m.]

Safety Briefing – 3

Mr. Dalton, VRE Chief Executive Officer (CEO), briefed attendees on safety procedures and assigned specific tasks to qualified staff members in case of an emergency.

Approval of the Agenda – 4

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Kelly, to approve the agenda as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Approval of the Minutes of the December 17, 2021 VRE Operations Board Meeting – 5

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Mr. Alcorn, to approve the Minutes from the December 17, 2021 Board Meeting. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Hayes, Kelly, Storck, and Walkinshaw. Members Garvey, Lawson, and Yeung abstained.

Chair's Comments – 6

Chair Franklin introduced and welcomed three new Board Members and one new Alternate. The Chair suggested going around the table for brief introductions of Board Members and asked VRE staff to do the same.

In other administrative business, Chair Franklin outlined the standing committees, indicating she would announce committee assignments at the February meeting. The Chair invited Board Members to speak with her if they were interested in serving on a committee. Chair Franklin then reviewed the VRE Electronic Participation Policy.

Chief Executive Officer's Report – 7

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

- Safety

- Ridership
- Performance
- State Legislative Update

Public Comment Time – 8

The Chair opened the floor for public comment. There were no speakers. Chair Franklin inquired if any electronic comments had been received; there were none.

Action Items – 9

Authorization to Issue a GEC VIII Task Order for Construction Management Services for the Fredericksburg Station Rehabilitation Project– 9A

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Ms. Garvey, to authorize the CEO to issue a General Engineering Consulting Services task order to STV, Incorporated of Fairfax, Virginia, for construction management services for the Fredericksburg Station rehabilitation project. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Authorization to Issue a GEC VIII Task Order for Design of Audio Video Infrastructure for the Variable Messaging Screen System – 9B

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Alcorn, to authorize the CEO to issue a General Engineering Consulting Services task order to HDR Engineering, Incorporated of Vienna, Virginia, for design of audio video infrastructure for the variable messaging screen system. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Resolution of Support for the Manassas Park Application to the I-66 Commuter Choice Program for the Manassas Park VRE Parking Expansion Project- 9C

Mr. Banks moved, with a second by Mr. Kelly, to support the application by the City of Manassas Park to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission Fiscal Year 2022 I-66 Commuter Choice program for the Manassas Park VRE Station parking expansion project. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

[Ms. Mitchell arrived at 10:07 a.m.]

Adoption of the 2022 VRE Operations Board Meeting Schedule – 9D

Ms. Bailey moved, with a second Mr. Alcorn, to adopt the 2022 VRE Operations Board meeting schedule. The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Information Items – 10

Spending Authority Report – 10A

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

- On December 7, 2021, VRE issued a Blanket Purchase Order in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00 to CDW-Government to purchase new workstations, Microsoft surface devices, and peripherals for VRE staff and interns. This Purchase Order is based upon cooperative contract pricing secured by Fairfax County for IT hardware and software.
- On December 13, 2021, VRE issued a Purchase Order in the amount of \$60,659.80 to JMA Rail Products to acquire a total of twenty (20) locomotive prime mover exhaust kits.
- On December 20, 2021, VRE amended an existing Task Order with Fresh Air Duct Cleaning, LLC, under the Custodial and Seasonal Services for VRE Facilities contract, for specialized cleaning services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at VRE's Alexandria Headquarters Office, Fredericksburg Office, and Crossroads warehouse. The amendment extended the term of this Task Order and increased the total commitment to an amount not to exceed \$161,727.20.
- On December 27, 2021, VRE issued a Task Order in the amount of \$60,540.22 to NVE, Inc. under the Maintenance Services for VRE Facilities contract to replace the existing fluorescent ceiling light fixtures in Suites 201 and 202 at VRE's Alexandria Headquarters Office with new LED fixtures.

Closed Session – 11

Mr. Walkinshaw moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, that pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Sections 2.2-3711.A (3), (6) and (8) of the Code of Virginia), the VRE Operations Board convene a closed meeting for the purpose of discussing (1) one matter involving the acquisition of real property for public purposes including rail operations and rail equipment storage where discussion in public would adversely affect the bargaining position and negotiating strategy of the Commissions; (2) the investment of public funds related to the provision of commuter rail service where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the Commissions would be adversely affected; and (3) consultation with legal counsel concerning the terms and conditions of an agreement for the investment of such public funds.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Mr. Walkinshaw moved, with a second by Ms. Bailey, to certify that to the best of each member's knowledge and with no individual member dissenting, at the just concluded Closed Session, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed; and, 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 in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Board Member Time – 12

Chair Franklin announced that it was Jennifer Mitchell's, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Director, last VRE Operations Board meeting and outlined Ms. Mitchell's

many accomplishments in her eight years as DRPT Director, including significant roles in establishing the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative and the Commuter Rail Operating and Capital Fund. Chair Franklin thanked Director Mitchell for her service on the Operations Board and in advocating for rail and public transit in Virginia. A plaque and model VRE coach was presented to her on behalf of the Board.

Several Board Members expressed their gratitude to Director Mitchell for her efforts on behalf of VRE and their jurisdictions.

Chair Franklin indicated the Board Secretary position remained open and a nomination would be made at the February meeting. The Chair then appointed Vice-Chair Walkinshaw as the interim Acting Secretary. Ms. Bailey moved, with a second by Mr. Alcorn, to adjourn the meeting.

The vote in favor was cast by Members Alcorn, Bagley, Bailey, Banks, Franklin, Garvey, Hayes, Kelly, Lawson, McLaughlin, Smith, Storck, Walkinshaw, and Yeung.

Approved this 18th day of February 2022.

Margaret Franklin
Chair

Secretary

CERTIFICATION

This certification hereby acknowledges the minutes for the January 21, 2022 Virginia Railway Express Operations Board Meeting have been recorded to the best of my ability.



Leslie M. Lamb

[illegible]

TO: Chair Aguirre and NVTC Commissioners
FROM: Kate Mattice
DATE: February 3, 2022
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](#) reports on our new Commission leadership and new Commissioner, NVTC's first-ever Annual Report video highlights and work of the NVTC WMATA Committee regarding Metro's proposed budget.

B. Upcoming Meetings

Even though the Commission does not meet in February, the Commission continues to move its programs and activities forward at the committee level. Upcoming committee meetings include:

- Legislative and Policy Committee – February 17 at 5:00 p.m.
- Program Advisory Committee – February 23 at 4:00 p.m. and April 14 at 4:00 p.m.
- WMATA Committee – April 21 and June 16, both at 6:00 p.m.



Executive Director Newsletter

A collage of five images related to transportation: a woman in a white blazer and a man in a suit and blue face mask; a woman in a patterned face mask; a hand holding a black steering wheel; a close-up of a train's front with "V59" and "VIRGINIA" visible; and a group of people in hard hats and safety vests participating in a ground-breaking ceremony.

2021
Year in Review

February 2022

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

NoVaTransit.org
NoVaRides.org

  @NoVaTransit





A Message from Kate Mattice

Welcome to February, the shortest month of the year, but one that can be particularly intense for those keeping an eye on what's happening down in Richmond. The 2022 General Assembly Session is well underway amid a shifting political environment. We look forward to learning more about Gov. Glenn Youngkin's transportation priorities and we continue to focus on the great strides in dedicated and sustainable transit funding and performance-based funding approaches enacted during the 2018 and 2020 sessions. In addition, we are pleased to see former NVTC policy analyst Jen Deci named as Virginia's deputy secretary of transportation, and we look forward to working with her and others in the administration.

Legislation typically moves quickly through the Virginia House and Senate and we actively monitor any proposed bills that may impact the work we do. We continue to watch for any legislation that changes regional or state taxes that fund transportation, changes priorities for state funding of public transportation or threatens the health of our transit systems. To that end, we partner with agencies around the Commonwealth with similar interests including the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission. We also work closely with the talented legislative staff who support our jurisdictions and engage with the Virginia Transit Association and other trade associations.

We have a brief overview of the bills we're tracking inside this issue. By the time we reach "crossover day" in the middle of the month, however, we'll have a better sense of any bills that have survived the legislative process as that is the deadline for each chamber to send bills to the opposite chamber.

Through all the ups and downs of the General Assembly session, we continue to be fortunate to have a Northern Virginia delegation committed to our priorities that advocates for them during this hectic process.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate A. Mattice".

Executive Director

In This Issue

- 4 New year, new chair, new commissioner
- 5 2021 NVTC year in review video
- 5 DRPT transit funding to jump from early forecasts
- 6 NoVa General Assembly delegation hosts transportation discussions
- 7 General Assembly gets to work in 2022 Session
- 7 Proposed Metro Budget aided by federal funding
- 8 NVTC WMATA Committee reviews proposed Metro budget
- 9 Commuter Choice team presents program performance framework
- 10 MAC advises regional staff of upcoming NVTC work
- 10 Supervisor Victor S. Angry to Lead PRTC Board in 2022
- 11 Staff attend Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting
- 12 NVTC team learns about core strengths at training
- 13 Amtrak locomotive marks 50 years of railroad safety

*Save
the
Date*

February 15-16

Commonwealth
Transportation Board

February 17

NVTC Legislative and Policy
Committee

February 18

VRE Operations Board

February 23

NVTC Program Advisory
Committee

March 3

Commission Meeting

Northern Virginia
Transportation
Commission

2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 230
Arlington, VA 22201

NoVaTransit.org
NoVaRides.org



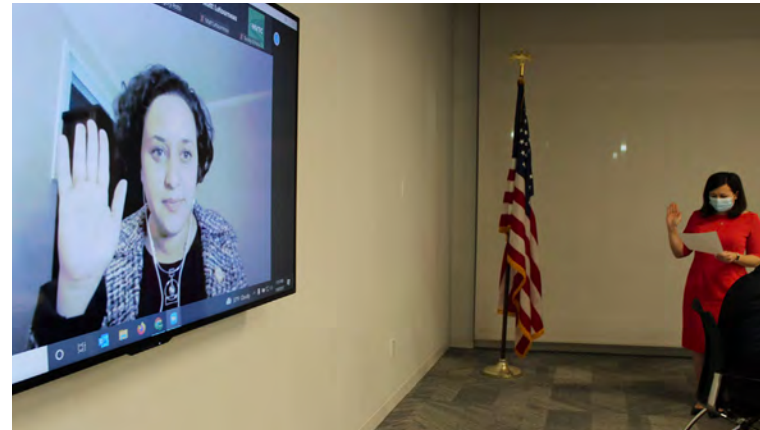
@NoVaTransit



New year, new chair, new commissioner

After two years at the helm, Immediate Past Chair Katie Cristol passed the gavel to Canek Aguirre at the January [Commission meeting](#). Mr. Aguirre of Alexandria has served on the Commission since 2019 and has also served as Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee. Dalia Palchik, who represents the Providence District in Fairfax County, was sworn in as Vice Chair. She has served on the Commission since 2020 and is also a member of the Executive Committee. The appointments mark the first time in NVTC history that the body has a Latino Chair and Latina Vice Chair.

Matt de Ferranti of Arlington has served on the Commission since 2020 and was sworn in as Secretary-Treasurer. He has also served on the NVTC WMATA and Executive Committees. The Commission also welcomed one new member. Sarah Bagley of Alexandria. NVTC thanks Katie Cristol for her steadfast leadership over the last two years as we navigated the ups and downs of the COVID-19 pandemic while keeping the work of NVTC moving forward.



Presenting our 2021 NVTC year in review video



For the first time we produced a [video](#) to showcase the work of NVTC in 2021. Marketing and Engagement Manager Monique Blyther conceived and produced the video, with an assist from Communications and Public Affairs Manager Matt Friedman.

 [WATCH NOW!](#)

DRPT transit funding to jump from early forecasts

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) presented updated revenue and recommended funding allocations in January that reflect a major increase in available funding compared to early projections. The revised FY 2022 Commonwealth Transportation Fund (CTF) revenues and recommended allocations were discussed as part of this week's [Commonwealth Transportation Board](#) meetings. An additional \$185.5 million will be allocated to DRPT transit

programs over what was included in the Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) that was approved in June 2021. This additional funding will be made available to grantees during the remainder of FY 2022. That includes state money for Metro that NVTC disburses and the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP), which Fairfax County and Alexandria are considering to be able to offer zero or reduced transit fares.

DRPT FY 2022 State-Wide Allocations

	Approved FY 2022 SYIP	Additional Funding	Total FY 2022
Transit Operating	\$103.6M	\$56.8M	\$160.4M
Transit Capital	\$97.8M	\$26.3M	\$124.1M
NVTC-WMATA Capital / Operating	\$177.1M	\$88M	\$265.1M
TRIP	\$20.9M	\$10M	\$30.9M
Special Programs	\$8M	\$4.4M	\$12.4M
Total	\$407.3M	\$185.5M	\$592.8M



NoVA General Assembly delegation hosts transportation discussions

Executive Director Kate Mattice traveled to Richmond January 25 to take part in meetings hosted by the General Assembly's Northern Virginia Delegation, with a special focus on transportation. Metro Board Chair Paul Smedberg briefed members of the Senate and House on agency issues.

Ms. Mattice also attended a meeting of a House transportation subcommittee where former Commissioner and now Del. [Elizabeth Bennett-Parker](#) presented [a bill](#) to update language

regarding NVTC and PRTC appointments to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority. Commissioner James Walkinshaw, who also serves as the Vice Chair of the VRE Operations Board testified on behalf of the bill.

Another bill which NVTC tracked concerns modernizing the law governing [electronic meetings](#) for government bodies. It passed out of committee with unanimous support. NVTC continued to monitor any legislation that changes regional or state taxes that fund transportation.



General Assembly gets to work in 2022 Session

The two-month General Assembly [Session](#) got underway January 12 with a change of control in the House of Delegates. Republican Todd Gilbert of Shenandoah became Speaker of the House where the GOP holds a two-seat majority. NVTC staff monitor each session for relevant legislation and have been reviewing bills related to the regional gas tax, the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and Freedom of Information Act/Open meetings.” We also await confirmation of Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s nominee for Secretary of Transportation W. Sheppard “Shep” Miller III and

other appointments for high level transportation posts in the Commonwealth. They include former NVTC staff member, Jen Deci, nominated as Deputy Secretary of Transportation. Ms. Deci worked as a policy analyst for NVTC in 2016 and 2017, tracking legislation, managing federal grants and engaging in Vanpool Alliance efforts. Both before and after her time at NVTC, she worked on public transit policy at the United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs.



Proposed Metro Budget aided by federal funding, which will run out next year

Metro’s Finance and Capital Committee conducted a work session January 13 on the proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget which relies on federal aid to offset declines in farebox revenue from reduced ridership and maintains current budgeted service levels on Metrorail and Metrobus. The proposed budget also includes several permanent and temporary fare discounts meant to drive ridership.

Board member Matt Letourneau also [highlighted](#) the looming problem facing the agency beyond FY 23. “As we’ve been discussing, as I think we should continue to discuss, the challenges will come for us in FY 24 when that federal support runs out, Letourneau said. “We are looking at roughly a \$500 million shortfall in funding when we expend all of that federal assistance we’ve been using.”

Metro has also set the [public comment](#) period on the FY 2023 budget, which includes a hearing in Virginia that Board Chair Paul Smedberg is scheduled to attend. It will include options for in-person and virtual participation:

February 7, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Ellen M. Bozman Government Center
County Board Room
2100 Clarendon Blvd #307
Arlington, Virginia

NVTC will submit a letter, based on NVTC WMATA Committee and Commissioner guidance, as part of the public comment period.



NVTC WMATA Committee reviews proposed 2023 Metro budget

NVTC's WMATA Committee met January 20 to discuss its work plan for 2022 and to provide staff with comments and guidance on the FY 2023 budget. Committee members supported proposed work plan areas on providing comments on the Metro budget, providing guidance to staff on the update to the Annual Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA, and receiving updates on initiatives related to the Bus Transformation Project and other studies at Metro. In light of Metro's anticipated exhaustion of federal coronavirus aid, committee members expressed a strong interest in discussing and engaging on Metro's projected FY 2024 operating gap as soon as possible.

NVTC staff provided an overview of Metro's proposed FY 2023 operating budget and FY 2023-2028 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and drafted comments for committee consideration to include in a letter to Metro.

Committee members supported staff's proposed comments including but not limited to:

- Implement temporary and permanent fare changes that balance ridership and revenue, accommodate increased telework and don't lose significant revenues
- Opening and implementing full revenue service for Silver Line Phase 2 and Potomac Yard Station
- Continuing the acceleration of the capital program and CIP to advance the goals of safety, reliability and state of good repair

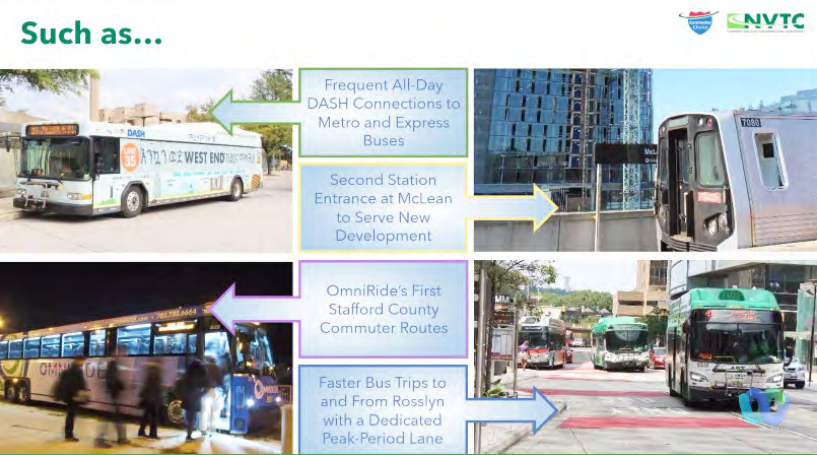
Committee members urged the safe and timely return of the 7000-series railcars to service and continued efforts to improve safety culture and rebuild customer confidence. Commissioners emphasized that – to the extent practical – Metro should look for budget savings in the FY 2023 budget that can preserve federal aid as long as possible and be carried over into FY 2024.

NVTC staff will work with committee Chair Walter Alcorn to generate a letter of comment which will be shared with Commissioners prior to its submission as part of Metro's [public comment](#) process on the FY 2023 budget.



Commuter Choice team presents program performance framework

Such as...



Commuter Choice Senior Program Manager Ben Owen presented the program's performance framework and 2021 annual report highlights to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' [Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee](#) January 25. The subcommittee aims to improve transit across the Washington region by coordinating planning and programming at the staff level among agencies and jurisdictions. Ben reviewed how Commuter Choice projects are evaluated and performance targets and measures established. He also highlighted Commuter Choice performance outcomes to date, how the program depicted 2021 performance in the context of significant disruptions to historical regional travel patterns and steps the program has taken to maximize the benefits that funded projects provide to I-66 and I-395/95 toll payers.

Meanwhile, applications for Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Five (FY 2023-FY 2024) funding were due January 28.

The Commuter Choice team conservatively anticipates that \$12 million will be available to fund new projects, with the possibility of more depending on how much and how durably I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues rebound over the next two years. NVTC's Program Advisory Committee will meet on February 23 at 4 p.m. to identify a high-level programming approach to inform FY 2023-FY 2024 programming in light of the revenue complexities. Staff will also review the submitted applications for eligibility during February before moving into technical evaluation of the eligible applications in March and opening public comment on these in April. The Commuter Choice team anticipates approval of a (potentially initial) program of projects by the Commission and Commonwealth Transportation Board in June.





POTOMAC & RAPPAHANNOCK
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Supervisor Victor S. Angry to Lead PRTC Board in 2022



Prince William County Supervisor Victor S. Angry has been elected Chairman of the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) Board for 2022. Supervisor Angry was elected in April 2019 to represent the Neabsco Magisterial District for the Prince William Board of County Supervisors and is the first African American to ever serve as a Supervisor on the Board of County Supervisors.

MAC advises regional staff of upcoming NVTC work

NVTC's Management Advisory Committee (MAC) met January 18 to advise local jurisdictional staff of upcoming Commission actions and discussion topics. These monthly gatherings give staff time to ask questions and helps them brief elected officials prior to Commission and NVTC committee meetings. While there will be no February Commission meeting, due to the ongoing General Assembly Session in Richmond, two key committees will meet in February, while the WMATA Committee met January 20.

The Legislative and Policy Committee meets Thursday, February 17 at 5 p.m. The meeting comes just after what's known as "crossover day" in Richmond, the last day for a bill to pass out of the chamber in which it was introduced and move forward for consideration in the opposite chamber.

The Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meets the following week, Wednesday, February 23 at 4 p.m. Staff will brief the PAC on the applications received for Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor Round Five (FY 2023-2024) funding. The PAC will also identify a high-level programming strategy for Round Five in light of the \$12 million currently and conservatively anticipated to be available and the possibility that more revenue will become available during the FY 2023-2024 period.



Staff attend Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting

Program Analysts Sophie Spiliotopoulos and Ronnetta Zack-Williams attended the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) [101st Annual Meeting](#) at the Washington Convention Center. The event, held in-person after a virtual event last year, brings together transportation professionals from across the country to connect and share research.

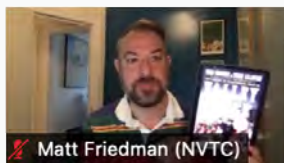
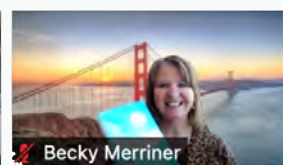
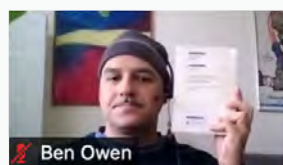
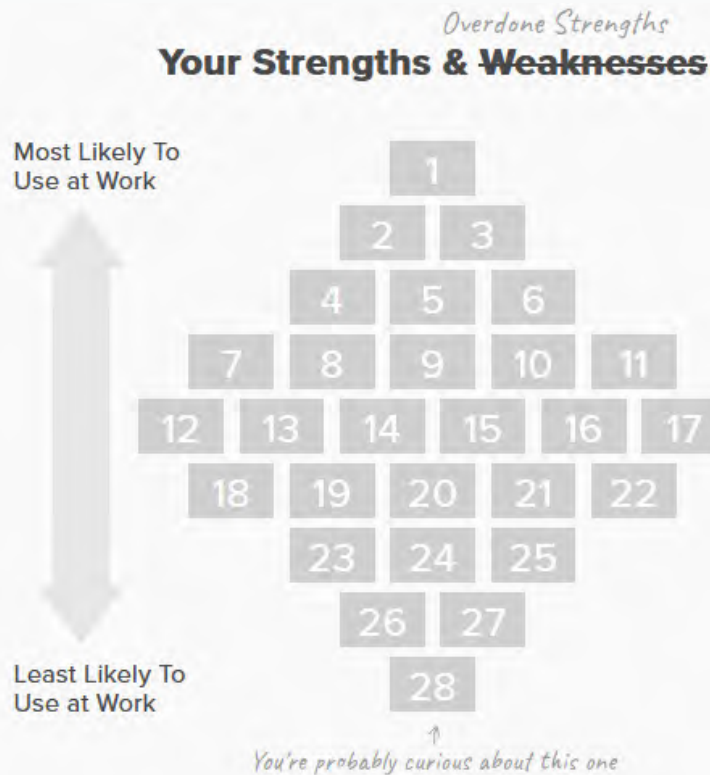
Secretary Pete Buttigieg, this conference is a forum for a wide range of transportation research. Sophie and Ronnetta heard about current research and planning efforts on topics such as micromobility, transportation demand management, big data and zero emission vehicles. It was great to start the year off at TRB learning and connecting.

Through posters, lectern sessions, and a keynote address and fireside chat by U.S. Transportation



NVTC team learns about core strengths at training

The entire NVTC staff gathered virtually January 10 to learn about our individual and team [core strengths](#). The all-day training gave us an opportunity to learn how we each work best and as a group. The analysis and discussion will allow our staff to work together more closely and understand our individual motivations.



Amtrak locomotive marks 50 years of railroad safety

A specially-painted Amtrak P-42 diesel locomotive, emblazoned on both sides with the message, "See Tracks? Think Train!" was released into service January 12, 2022 during a special ceremony at Washington Union Station. The black-and-yellow locomotive commemorates

the 50th anniversary of Operation Lifesaver, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing railroad safety education and awareness nationwide. Virginia Railway Express also maintains a strong partnership with Operation Lifesaver.





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