

Combined  
Blue Items/Handouts  
for  
July 7, 2022  
NVTC Meeting

# **WMATA Yellow Line Tunnel/Bridge and Potomac Yard Projects**

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission  
July 7, 2022



# Background

- WMATA announced preview of major capital investments for 2022 on March 8 including:
  - **Potomac Yard Station (Sep 10-Oct 22)** Six-week shutdown of rail service south of National Airport Station for “cutover” work and testing
  - **Yellow Line Tunnel and Bridge Rehab (Sep 10-May 2023)** No rail service across the Potomac River between Pentagon and L’Enfant Plaza Stations; project originally announced on March 5, 2021

## Connecting Station to Mainline: Cutover

- Purpose: To connect new Potomac Yard Station to existing Metrorail system
- Total duration: 6 weeks, September 10 - October 22
- Complete shutdown of all stations south of National Airport Station
- Reasons for shutdown:
  - Earthwork required to create lower grade needed for new track installation/alignment
  - Testing of all systems from National Airport to Braddock Road stations
  - Access to turnouts at National Airport and Braddock Road stations



Potomac Yard Station, looking North – as of February 2022



# Yellow Line Tunnel and Bridge Rehabilitation

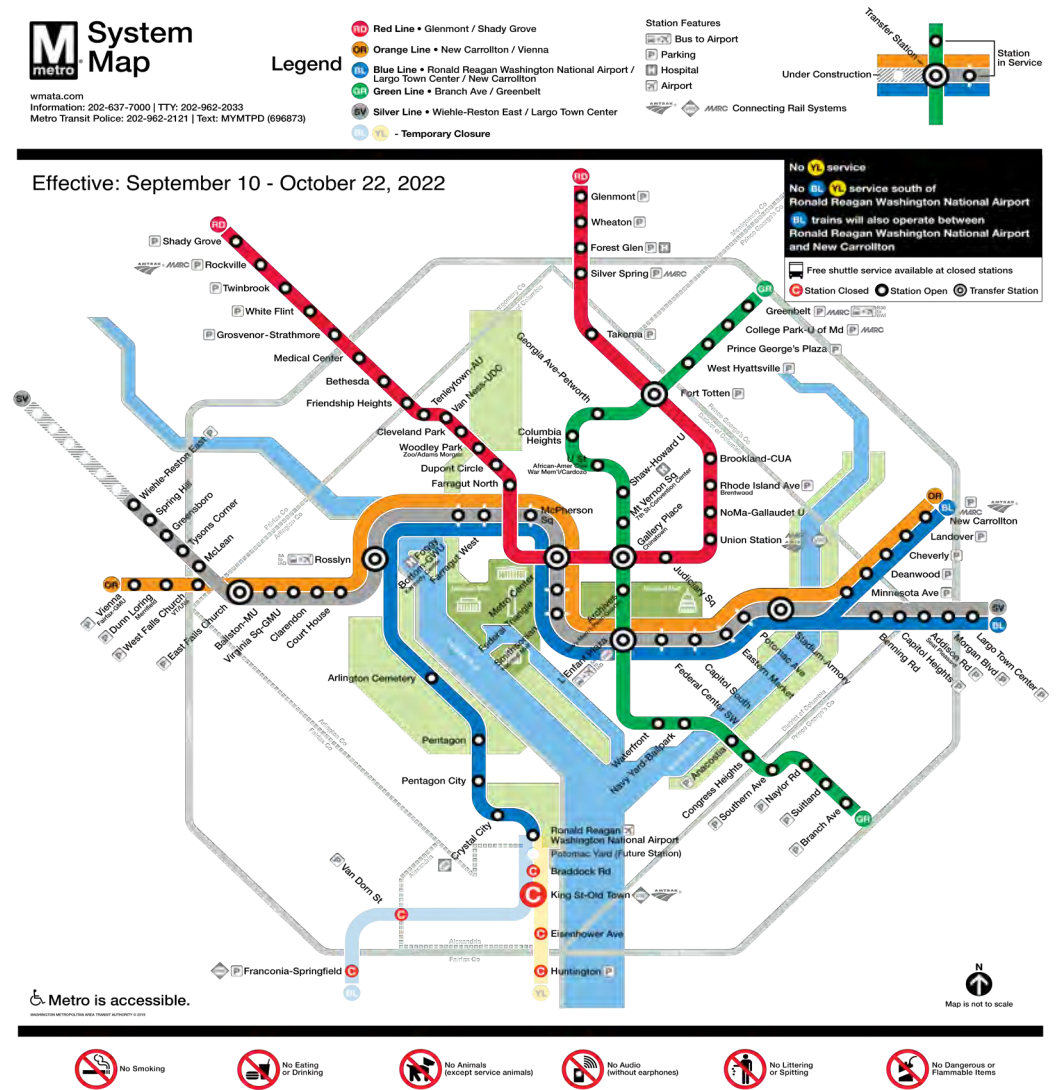
- Scope of Work:
  - Repair steel lined sections of the tunnel to extend effective life a minimum of 50 years
  - Curtain grouting of steel lined tunnel
  - Crack repair in concrete lined tunnel sections
  - Bridge bearing & expansion joint replacement
  - Dry standpipe replacement
  
- Construction Duration
  - 8-month continuous shutdown of the Yellow Line between Pentagon and L'Enfant Plaza Stations
  - September 10, 2022 – through May 2023



## Phase 1: Sep 10 – Oct 22

### ■ Rail Service

- No rail service south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station
- No Yellow Line service, but Yellow Line stations north of National Airport Station will be served by the Blue or Green lines
- Additional Blue Line service, with trains departing every seven to nine minutes from National Airport
- Customers traveling between Pentagon and L'Enfant Plaza stations should plan on approximately 15 minutes of extra travel time



## Phase 1: Sep 10 – Oct 22

### ■ Seven Free Bus Shuttles Provided

- **Two Express Shuttles (4:30AM-9:00PM weekdays, 6:30AM-9:00PM weekends)**
  - Blue Line Express between Franconia-Springfield and Pentagon
  - Yellow Line Express between Huntington and Pentagon
- **Two Local Shuttles (Metrail operating hours)**
  - Blue Line Local Between Franconia-Springfield and National Airport
  - Yellow Line Local between Huntington and Crystal City
- **Three Limited Shuttles (Weekday Rush Hours Only)**
  - VA-DC Shuttle 1: Crystal City-L'Enfant Plaza
  - VA-DC Shuttle 2: Pentagon-Archives
  - VA-DC Shuttle 3: Mt Vernon-Potomac Park (11Y Route)

### Free Shuttle Service

Effective: September 10 - October 22, 2022

#### EXPRESS SHUTTLES

- Blue Line Express: Franconia - Pentagon  
Between Franconia-Springfield & Pentagon
- Yellow Line Express: Huntington - Pentagon  
Between Huntington & Pentagon

#### LOCAL SHUTTLES

- Blue Line Shuttle: Franconia-Springfield - National Airport  
Between Franconia-Springfield, Van Dorn St, King St-Old Town, Braddock Rd, & National Airport
- Yellow Line Shuttle: Huntington - Crystal City  
Between Huntington, Eisenhower Ave, King St-Old Town, Braddock Rd, & Crystal City

#### DC SHUTTLES (Weekday Rush Hour Only)

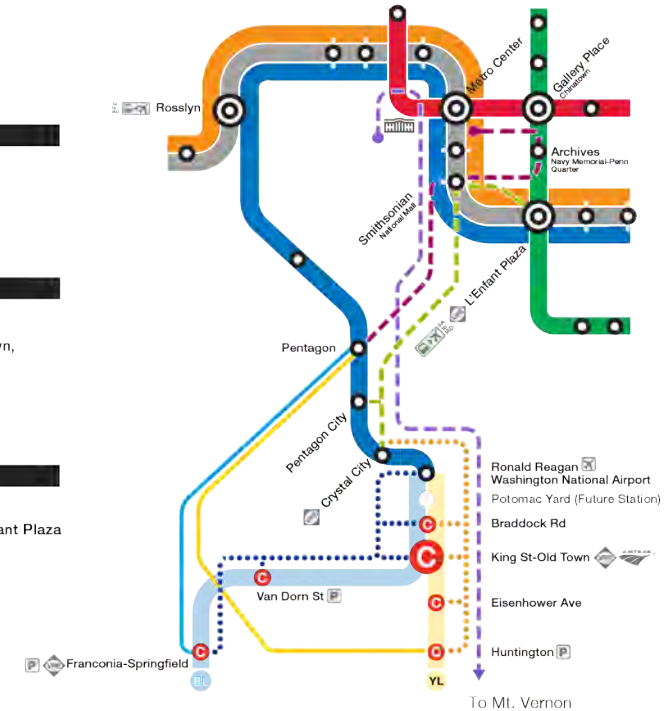
- VA-DC Shuttle 1: Crystal City - L'Enfant  
Between Crystal City, Pentagon City, Smithsonian, & L'Enfant Plaza
- VA-DC Shuttle 2: Pentagon - Archives  
Between Pentagon, Smithsonian, & Archives
- VA-DC Shuttle 3: Mt. Vernon - Potomac Park (11Y Route)  
Between Mt. Vernon, Alexandria, & Potomac Park (Peak Direction Only)

 Station Closed  
VRE Still Available

 Station Open

 Transfer Station

 No BL or YL service south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport  
ADA shuttles available upon request between impacted stations





## Phase 2: Oct 23 – May 2023

### ■ Rail Service

- All stations will reopen and service will resume south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station
- Yellow Line stations served by Blue or Green Lines (no service across Potomac River between Pentagon and L'Enfant Plaza stations)
- Blue Line trains operate every 12 minutes from Franconia-Springfield and Huntington stations

### ■ Free Bus Shuttle Service

- **Three Limited Shuttles (Weekday Rush Hours Only)**
  - VA-DC Shuttle 1: Crystal City-L'Enfant Plaza
  - VA-DC Shuttle 2: Pentagon – Archives
  - VA-DC Shuttle 3: Mt Vernon-Potomac Park (11Y Route)





# Ongoing Regional Coordination Throughout Projects



# Communications and Outreach Timeline

- **3 months before closures** (June 15) ✓
  - Announced detailed service alternatives – [travel alternatives map](#), [web page launch](#)
- **2 months before closures** (July)
  - Community/stakeholder outreach – [HOA/business outreach](#), [stakeholder coordination](#)
- **1 month before closures** (early August)
  - Reminders about upcoming service changes – [paid media and digital](#)
- **2 weeks before** (late August)
  - In-person customer notification – [street teams](#), [in-station signage](#)
- **During shutdown** (September '22 – Spring '23)
  - Customer service & project updates – [street teams](#), [blog posts](#), [e-blasts](#)

# Thank you!

- For more information on projects, please visit:
  - [www.wmata.com/majorconstruction](http://www.wmata.com/majorconstruction)
- Customers, stakeholders, and the media are encouraged to sign up to receive the latest project updates at the website







# NVTC Post-Shutdown Marketing

- NVTC will seek a grant from DRPT and a local match to conduct a “return to ridership” marketing campaign
- If awarded, NVTC will lead a collaborative marketing effort on-air and online targeted to potential Northern Virginia riders
- The marketing campaign would complement efforts by Metro and NoVa providers



# BL YL Major Construction

## Project Overview

Metro is undertaking major construction on the Blue and Yellow lines to rehabilitate the Yellow Line tunnel and bridge between L'Enfant Plaza and Pentagon stations and connect the future Potomac Yard Station to the Metrorail system.

### Potomac Yard Prep Work

During the Potomac Yard prep work, six stations south of Reagan National Airport on the Yellow and Blue lines will be closed from Sept. 10 – Oct. 22, 2022. During the station closures, construction crews will connect new rail track to the mainline system and perform brake safety testing.

### Yellow Line Tunnel and Bridge Rehabilitation

The Yellow Line tunnel and bridge rehabilitation work will require both structures that cross the Potomac River to close from Sept. 10, 2022 – May 2023. The structures date back to Metro's original construction and are nearing the end of their useful life expectancy. This rehabilitation work is necessary to ensure that both structures continue to function safely for years to come.

## Capital Improvement Program

Metro is investing in system safety, reliability and the region's economy through its 10-year, \$15 billion capital program. For the first time in Metro's history, the capital program is bolstered by dedicated funding from Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia to improve the customer experience and keep the region's infrastructure in a state of good repair.








## Station Closures

The following Blue and Yellow line stations will be closed Sept. 10 – Oct. 22, 2022:






-   Braddock Rd
-   King St-Old Town
-  Van Dorn St
-  Franconia-Springfield
-  Eisenhower Ave
-  Huntington

## Rail Service Information

### Sept. 10 – Oct. 22, 2022

- No rail service south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station
- No  service, but  stations north of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station will be served by the  or  lines
- Additional  service, with trains departing every seven to nine minutes from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and New Carrollton stations (every 15 minutes after 9:30 p.m.)
-  customers traveling between Pentagon and L'Enfant Plaza stations should plan on approximately 15 minutes of extra travel time
-  trains will operate every eight minutes (every 10 minutes after 9:30 p.m.)

### Oct. 23, 2022 – May 2023

- All stations are open
- No  service, stations will be served by the  or  lines
-  trains will operate every 12 minutes between Largo Town Center and Franconia-Springfield stations and between Huntington and New Carrollton stations (every 15 minutes after 9:30 p.m.)
- Additional  service, with trains operating every eight minutes (every 10 minutes after 9:30 p.m.)

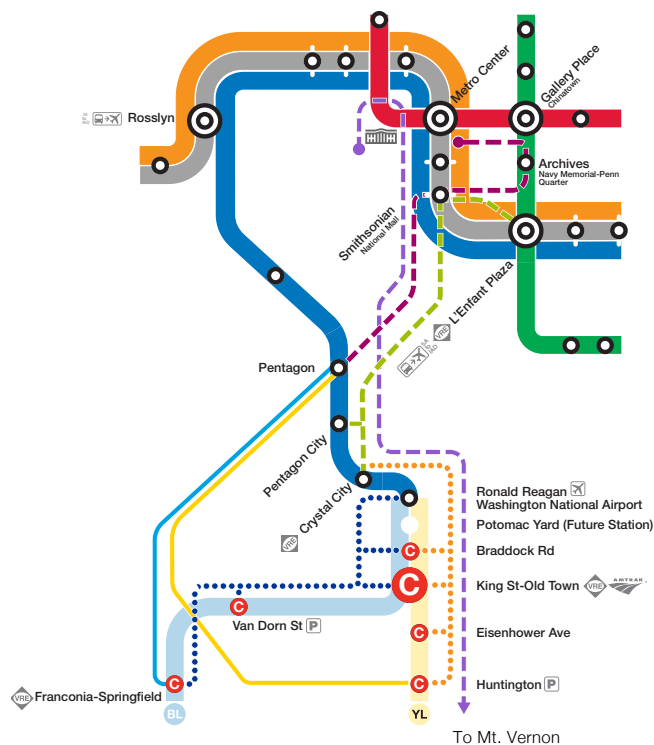
*Travel alternatives listed on pg. 2*



# BL YL Major Construction

## Free Shuttle Service

Sept. 10 – Oct. 22, 2022



**C** Station Closed | **O** Station Open | **⊕** Transfer Station  
VRE Still Available

**BL** **YL** No **BL** **YL** service south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport  
ADA shuttles available upon request between impacted stations

### EXPRESS SHUTTLES

**Blue Line Express: Franconia - Pentagon**  
Between Franconia-Springfield & Pentagon

**Yellow Line Express: Huntington - Pentagon**  
Between Huntington & Pentagon

### LOCAL SHUTTLES

**Blue Line Shuttle: Franconia-Springfield - National Airport**  
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### DC SHUTTLES (Weekday Rush Hour Only)

**VA-DC Shuttle 1: Crystal City - L'Enfant**  
Between Crystal City, Pentagon City, Smithsonian, & L'Enfant Plaza

**VA-DC Shuttle 2: Pentagon - Archives**  
Between Pentagon, Smithsonian, & Archives

**VA-DC Shuttle 3: Mt. Vernon - Potomac Park (former 11Y Route)**  
Between Mt. Vernon, Alexandria, & Potomac Park  
(Peak Direction Only)

Oct. 23, 2022 – May 2023

Metro will continue to provide VA-DC Shuttles 1, 2, and 3 during weekday rush hours only.  
(Rush hours are 5 a.m. until 9:30 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.)

## Convenient Travel Options

In addition to free shuttle service, other travel options are available.

- **16Y Columbia Pike-Farragut Square Line** – Service between Barcroft and McPherson Square with additional trips during rush hour
- **Metroway** – Service between the Braddock Rd and Pentagon City stations

- **Virginia Railway Express (VRE)** – Service is available at Franconia-Springfield, King St-Old Town (VRE Station Alexandria), Crystal City, and L'Enfant Plaza stations

Find travel alternatives, maps, and sign up for email updates at [wmata.com/majorconstruction](http://wmata.com/majorconstruction).





# Changes to Northern Virginia Transit through the Pandemic

**Xavier Harmony**  
*Senior Program Manager,  
Transit Resource Center*

**Sophie Spiliotopoulos**  
*Program Analyst*

# Overview

Transit is an important aspect of Northern Virginia life. 11% of Northern Virginia residents use public transit for commuting, more than double the national average.

- NVTC recently conducted an analysis of ridership and service trends from 2019 to 2022
- There were four goals of this analysis:
  - a. Provide an overview of the major transit trends in Northern Virginia for the past three years
  - b. Explore how Northern Virginia travel patterns or habits might have changed
  - c. Explore how Northern Virginia transit services have changed
  - d. Summarize the analysis and findings to provide transit takeaways for the region

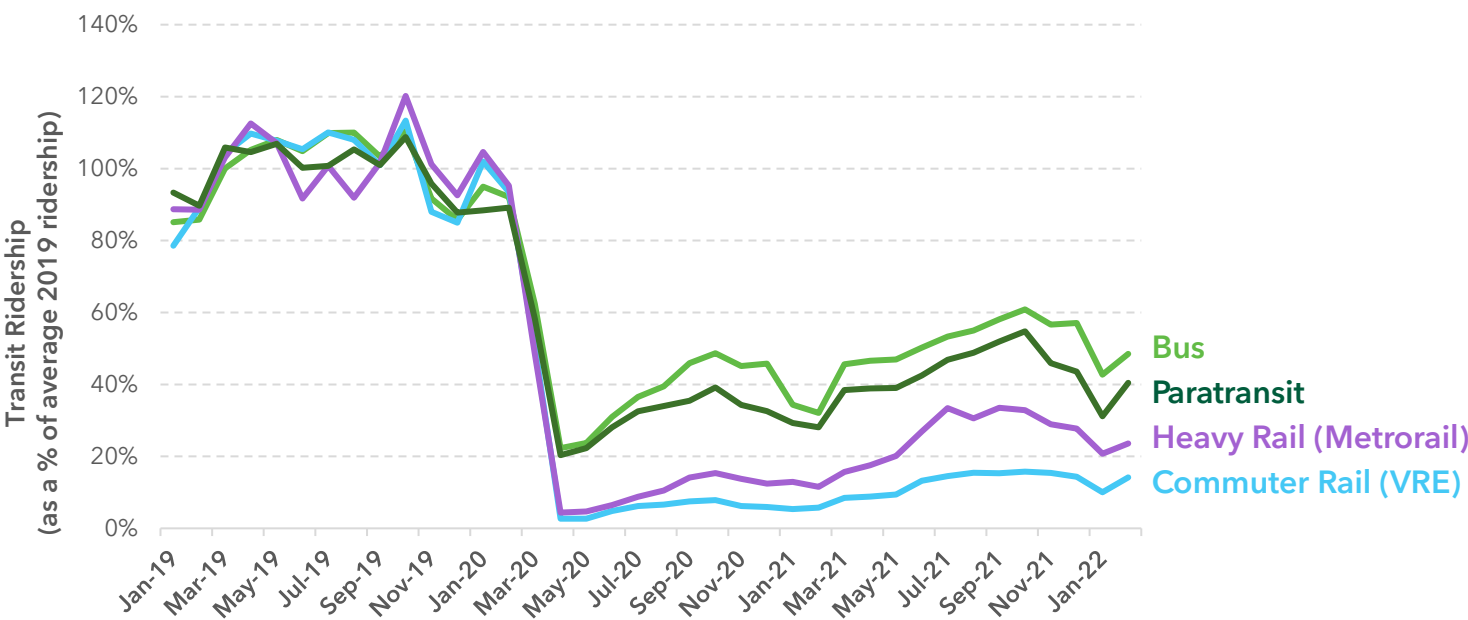




# Ridership Trends

## How people travel has changed.

- **Bus** and **Paratransit** have nearly reached **50%** of pre-pandemic levels
- **Heavy Rail** and **Commuter Rail** are below **25%** of pre-pandemic levels
- Pre-pandemic, rail had twice the ridership of bus, today they have nearly an even share of ridership
- Differing recovery rates may reflect which transit populations have more access to alternative travel options, like telework or cars

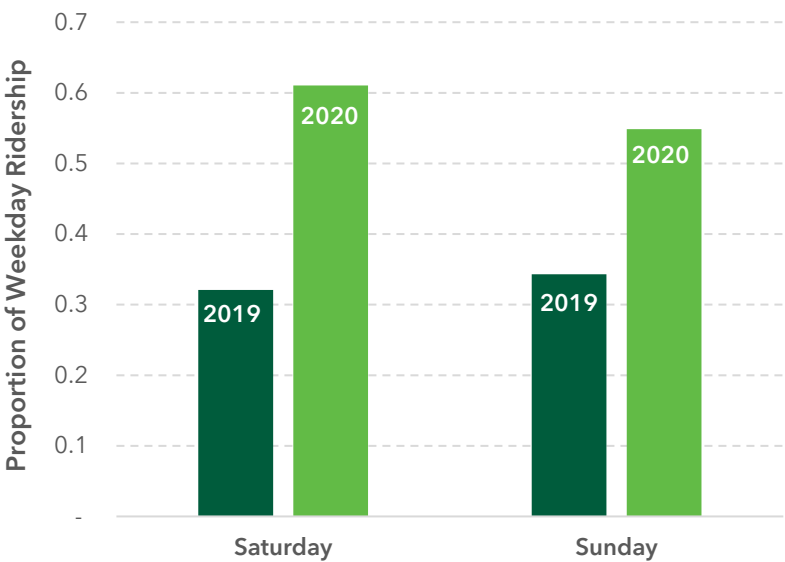


Source: DRPT OLGA data

## Riders are moving away from classic weekday travel.

Pre-pandemic, weekend trips were **35%** of weekday trips.

As of December 2020, weekend trips are now **58%** of weekday trips.

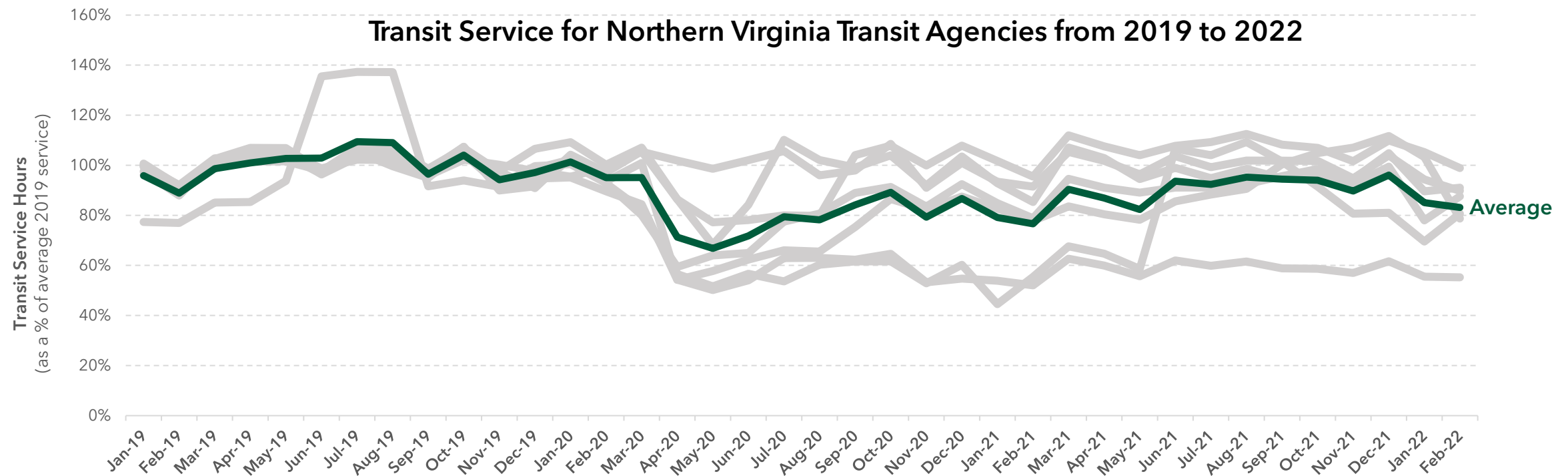


Source: Northern Virginia bus operator data

# Service Trends

**Transit service in the region still largely reflects the same type of service patterns as pre-pandemic.**

- Most transit in Northern Virginia has returned to pre-pandemic service levels
- Service patterns still mostly focus on weekday and peak period travel, though there is variability among specific agencies
- Transit agencies offering commuter-focused services have generally seen the biggest and most prolonged changes to their services



**Source:** DRPT OLGA data

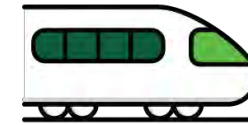
# Key points

What can this analysis tell us?

- Returning service has been correlated with ridership recovery
- One size doesn't fit all
- There is an opportunity for the region to re-evaluate what transit ridership looks like today
- There is also an opportunity for the region to redesign transit services for how people use transit today

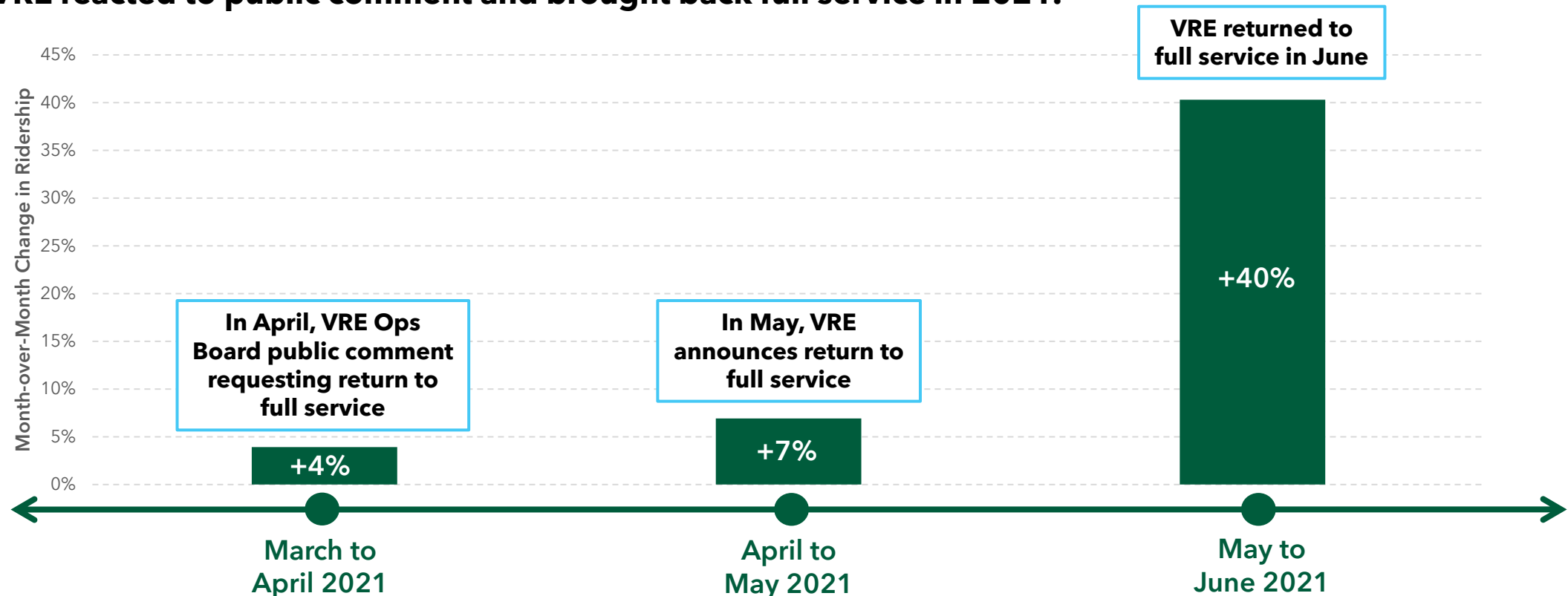


# Change in the Region



This is a moment to reevaluate and effect real change to better serve Northern Virginia. And not all transit modes are going to recover the same way. **VRE** and **DASH** both made changes to their service to meet rider's needs.

**VRE reacted to public comment and brought back full service in 2021.**



Source: DRPT OLGA data

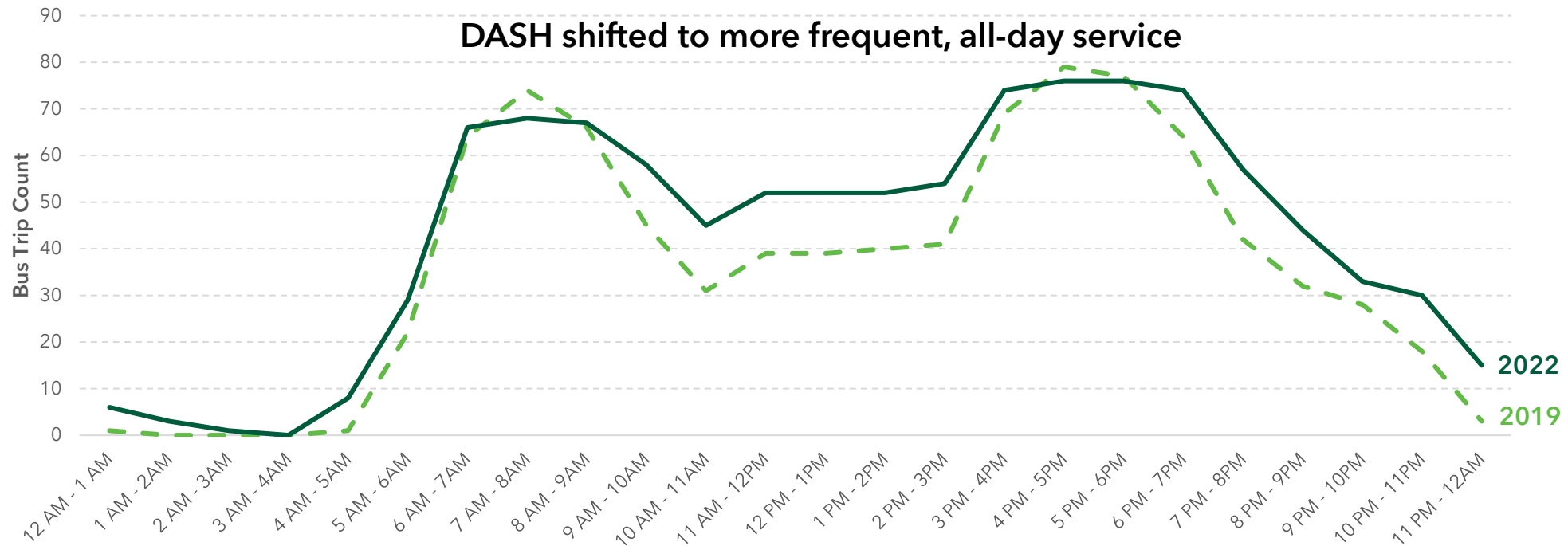
# Change in the Region



## DASH launched a complete bus network redesign in September 2021.

- Renewed focus on frequent (15-minute or less), all-day service, seven days a week
- Approximately 89% of low-income residents now have access to frequent, all-day transit (vs. 29% before the redesign)\*
- Service changes reflect some of the ridership changes we saw in the region

*After the redesign and elimination of fares, DASH ridership grew from less than 50% of average pre-pandemic levels, one of the lowest levels in the region, to more than 70% of average pre-pandemic level, one of the highest recovery rates in the region.*



**Source:** DASH GTFS data

\*Alexandria Transit Vision Plan <https://www.alexandriava.gov/transportation-planning/program/alexandria-transit-vision-plan>

# What do we do with this?

- Some of the negative impacts of COVID to transit will resolve themselves as more employers return to the office
- Bus is a flexible transit mode and can adapt to the changing travel patterns of the region
  - **Regional partners have already begun analyzing and adapting**
    - DASH has completed their redesign
    - Fairfax Connector is in the process of reviewing their bus service
    - WMATA Bus Network Redesign is underway
  - **NVTC's Regional Bus Plan**
    - Purpose is to connecting individual transit agency strategic plans with a regional plan
    - Identify regional transit gaps, potential cross-jurisdictional transit corridors, and opportunities to share infrastructure and resources between agencies
  - **Transit Marketing**
    - NVTC and other regional transit organizations are implementing marketing campaigns to further encourage ridership



# Thank You.

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# HJ 542 Virginia Transit Equity & Modernization Study

*NVTC: July 7, 2022*

Grant Sparks, Acting Chief of Public Transportation



# Study Background & Timeline

## HJ 542 (2021) Background

- Requires DRPT to study a variety of topics and develop recommendation for advancing transit equity and modernization effort
- WMATA not included in the study

## Study Timeline

- July 2021: Kickoff
- December 2021: Interim Report submitted to General Assembly
- August 2022: Final Report submitted to General Assembly



# Study Activities

## Completed

- ✓ Data Collection
- ✓ Transit Agency Survey
- ✓ Rider Focus Groups
- ✓ Baseline Conditions Assessment
- ✓ Interim Study Report
- ✓ Action Plan
- ✓ Transit Equity & Modernization Committee (TEMC)
- ✓ Technical Working Groups (TWGs)
- ✓ Stakeholder Meetings
- ✓ Agency Briefings
- ✓ Share Your Transit Story Campaign
- ✓ Virtual Forum

## Upcoming

- Final Study Report



# Key Study Findings



## Infrastructure

- Basic transit infrastructure (shelters, benches, lighting, etc.) is insufficient
- Many bus stops are poorly placed and not well-connected to sidewalks



## Accessibility

- Availability of transit in Virginia is high, but gaps do exist
- There is increasing interest in piloting zero-fare services to overcome barriers to transit accessibility
- More and better data is needed to make well-informed decisions



## Electrification

- There is a significant interest from Virginia's transit agencies to electrify fleets and adopt newer transit technologies, but additional resources are required



## System Engagement

- Some transit riders have limited opportunities to be part of the decision-making process
- Most transit agencies do not have rider advisory boards or committees

# Study Action Plan Summary

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## Recommendations

- Develop technical guidance on bus stop design elements, stakeholder coordination, permitting, and installation
- Update MERIT Capital scoring criteria to incentivize improvements to bus stop infrastructure
- Develop technical guidance for monitoring and reporting on infrastructure performance and condition
- Establish statewide goals for zero-emission transit vehicles and develop a statewide transition plan to meet those goals
- Implement recurring assessments of transit technology across the Commonwealth and identify specific needs at the local level
- Update and enhance DRPT's Transit Strategic Plan (TSP) guidelines to provide strategies for enhanced and more inclusive public engagement
- Create more Transit Advisory Councils within local transit agencies to advise policy boards on rider perspectives, concerns, and key issues

# Questions?

*Grant.Sparks @drpt.virginia.gov*

[www.vatransitmodernization.com](http://www.vatransitmodernization.com)