

Combined
Blue Items/Handouts
and Presentation Slides
for
October 5, 2023
NVTC Meeting



I-495 SOUTHSIDE EXPRESS LANES STUDY

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)

| Virginia Department of Transportation

October 5, 2023

- More than 90-mile Express Lanes network in Northern Virginia
- 94 miles in service
 - I-95, I-395, I-495, I-66 Inside the Beltway, I-66 Outside the Beltway
- 3 miles under construction
 - I-495 Northern Extension (2.5 miles to be in service late 2025)
 - I-95 Express Lanes/Opitz Boulevard Ramp (to be in service Fall 2024)
- Under study
 - I-495 Southside Express Lanes
 - I-95 Bi-Directional Study
- Three independent operators



Study Overview

- The I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study (495 Southside Study) is an environmental study to potentially extend the Express Lanes system on the southern section of I-495 (Capital Beltway)
- VDOT is coordinating the study with
 - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 - Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
 - Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
 - Other federal, state, regional, and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland



Study Area

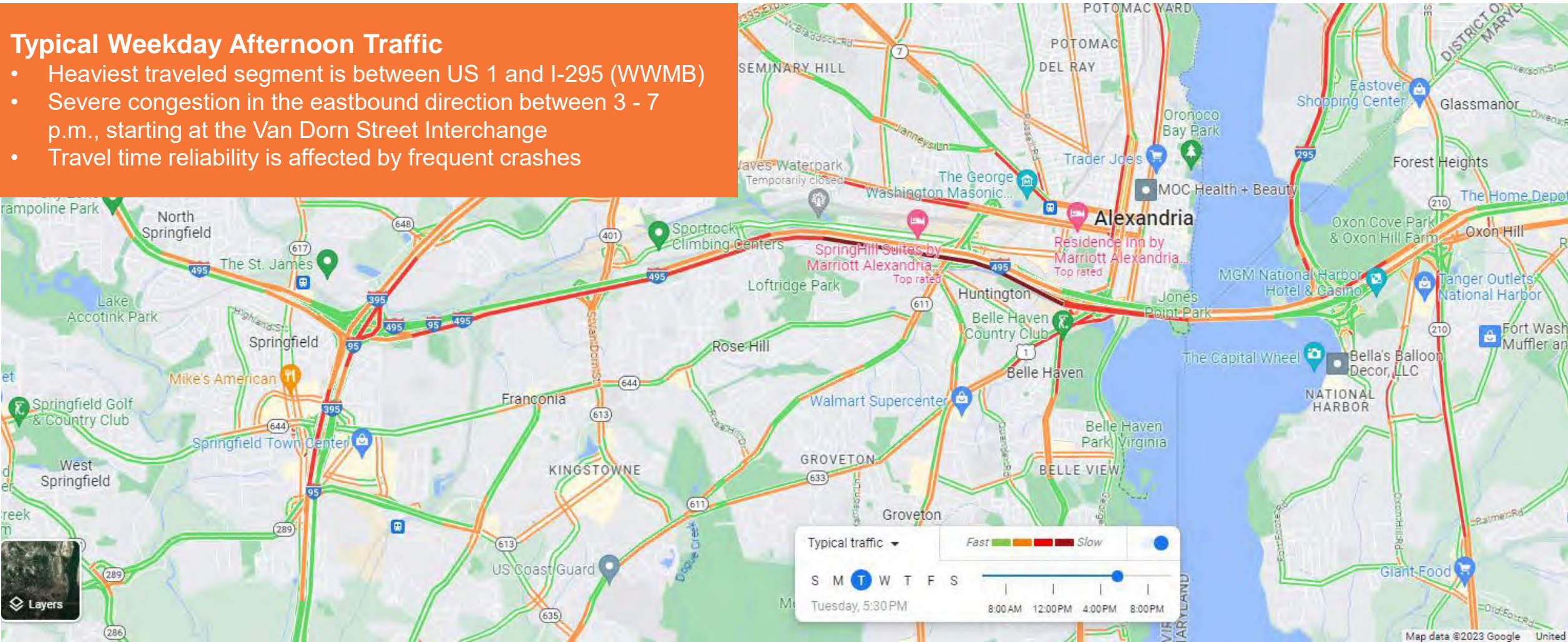
- 11 miles of the southern section of I-495 (Capital Beltway)
- Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, VA to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George's County, MD
- The study area is the last section of I-495 in Virginia where Express Lanes have not been implemented



Current Traffic Conditions

Typical Weekday Afternoon Traffic

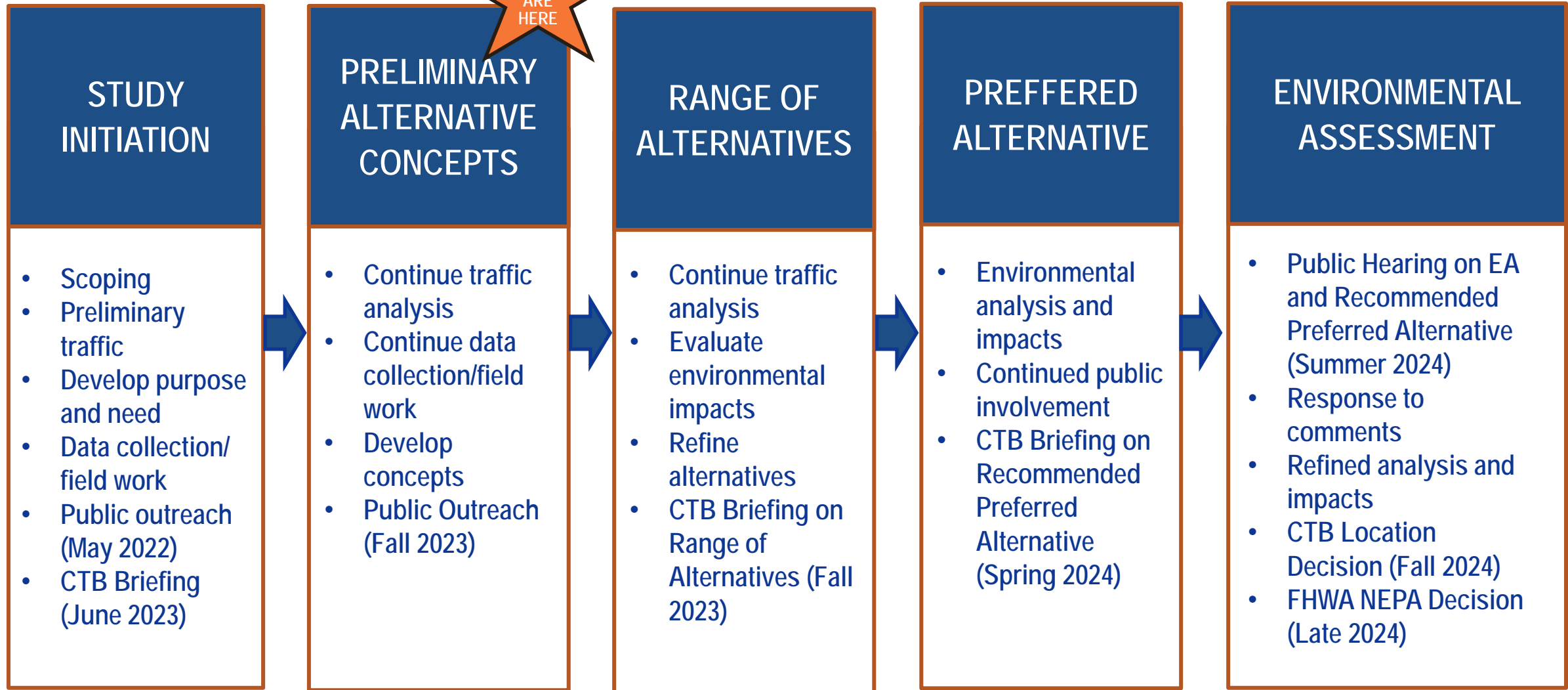
- Heaviest traveled segment is between US 1 and I-295 (WWMB)
- Severe congestion in the eastbound direction between 3 - 7 p.m., starting at the Van Dorn Street Interchange
- Travel time reliability is affected by frequent crashes



Source: Google Maps (September 2023)

Study Process & Schedule

WE
ARE
HERE



Purpose and Need

The **Purpose** of the I-495 Southside Study is to evaluate transportation improvements that would extend and provide continuity of the Express Lanes system on the I-495 Capital Beltway from the I-95 / I-395 / I-495 Springfield Interchange in Fairfax County, VA to the I-495 / MD 210 Interchange in Prince George's County, MD.

The following **Needs** have been identified for this Study:



**Provide Express Lanes
System Continuity**



**Provide Additional
Travel Choices**



**Reduce Congestion &
Improve Travel Reliability**



**Improve
Safety**



**Provide Consistency with
Local and Regional Plans**

Preliminary Alternative Concepts

Alternative Concept	Description
No-Build	Existing conditions; required by NEPA
Transportation System Management/ Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)	Potential solutions include ramp metering, extension of acceleration/deceleration lanes, and active traffic management
Part-Time Shoulder Use	Use of existing shoulder as a travel lane during peak periods
Standalone Transit	New dedicated transit alignment
Transit TSM/TDM	New bus routes, adjacent park and ride lots
1 General Purpose Lane	Add one general purpose lane in each direction on I-495
2 General Purpose Lanes	Add two general purpose lanes in each direction on I-495
1 Express Lane	Add one buffer-separated express lane in each direction on I-495
2 Express Lanes	Add two buffer-separated express lanes in each direction on I-495
2 Reversible Express Lanes	Add two barrier-separated reversible express lanes in median of I-495

Evaluation of Preliminary Alternative Concepts

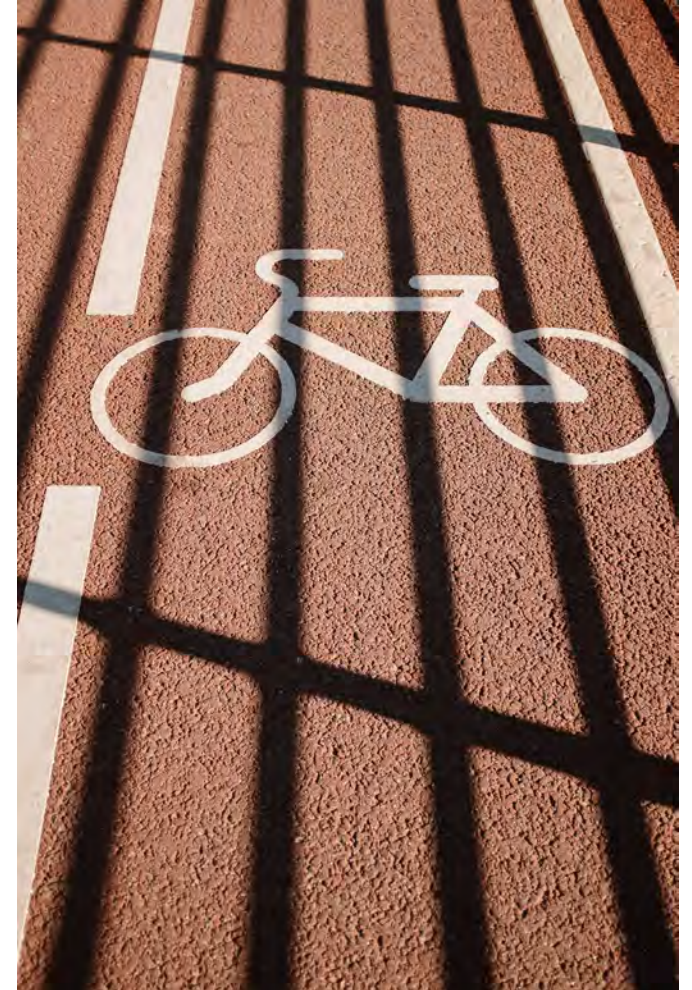
Criteria to be used to qualitatively evaluate Preliminary Alternative Concepts

Need Element	Screening Criteria
System Continuity	Does the alternative concept result in a consistent network of Express Lanes?
Travel Choices	Would the alternative concept provide additional choices beyond General Purpose lanes?
Reduce Congestion and Improve Travel Reliability	Is the alternative concept likely to reduce congestion and improve travel reliability as a stand-alone improvement?
Improve Safety	Is the alternative concept likely to result in a reduction in crashes? Would the alternative concept impede incident management?
Consistency and/or Compatibility with Regional Plans	Is the alternative concept consistent with multimodal plans along I-495?

Bike and Pedestrian facilities would be considered in combination with any of the alternatives that are carried forward for detailed evaluation in the Environmental Assessment.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Considerations

- VDOT is coordinating with state and local agencies to identify planned pedestrian/bike facilities in the Study Area and to identify gaps in the existing network
- Input has been provided by Fairfax County, the City of Alexandria, Prince George's County, and the Maryland State Highway Administration
- Pedestrian and bike facilities will be considered with the Build Alternatives that are carried forward for detailed evaluation in the EA



Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge Considerations

Background Information

- Record of Decision (2000)
 - All commitments satisfied
 - Preserve space for transit (HOV/express bus/transit lane) in the future
- WWMB Operating Agreement (2001) (USDOT/MD/VA/District)
 - Preserve space for transit (HOV/express bus/rail transit lane) in the future

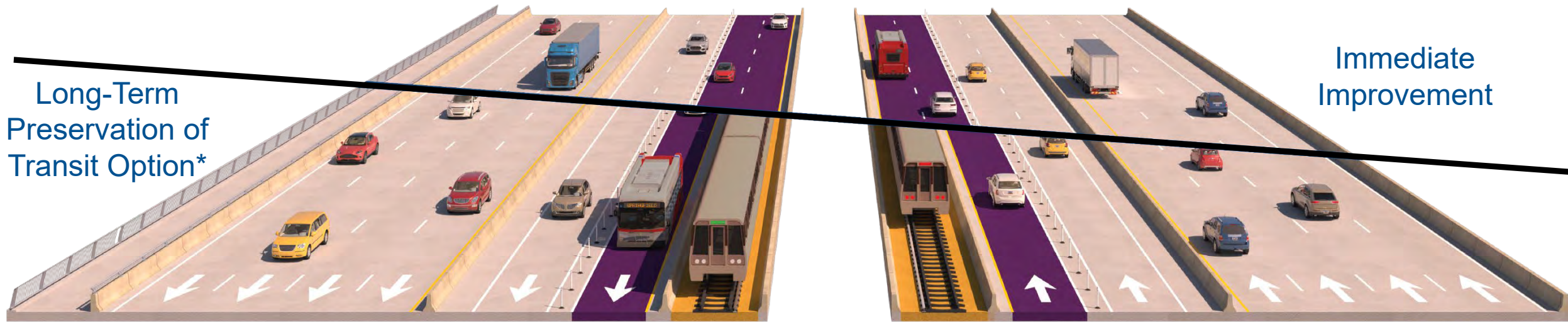
Physical Constraints

- Widening bridge is not under consideration
- Not feasible to relocate concrete barrier between thru and local lanes



2 Express Lanes Preliminary Alternative Concept

Long-term preservation of future transit (i.e. rail)



I-495: Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge

* Should Future Transit (i.e. rail) be Provided by Others

Representative typical sections for illustrative purposes only.

Next Steps

Activity	Timeframe
Public Involvement Meetings	Fall 2023
Identify Recommended Range of Alternatives for Further Study and Concurrence	Fall 2023
Agency Concurrence on Range of Alternatives	Fall 2023
CTB Briefing: Range of Alternatives	Late 2023
CTB Briefing: Recommend Preferred Alternative	Spring 2024
Public Hearing for EA and Preferred Alternative	Summer 2024
Agency Concurrence on Recommend Preferred Alternative	Fall 2024
CTB Location Decision on Preferred Alternative	Fall 2024
FHWA NEPA Decision	Late 2024

*Anticipated study schedule is subject to change and will be coordinated as the study progresses

Comments on Public Information Meeting Materials

Your input on the preliminary alternative concepts will inform the study



Complete a comment form at **www.viriniadot.org/495southside** or at the in-person public information meetings



Provide comments orally or in writing at the virtual or in-person public information meetings



Submit comments by email to: **495southsideexpresslanes@VDOT.Virginia.gov**



Submit comments by mail to:
Nick Nies, AICP
VDOT 495 Southside Express Lanes Study NEPA Project Manager
9030 Stony Point Parkway, Suite 220
Richmond, VA 23235



Call VDOT at: 703-259-3752

All comments received by
October 10, 2023 will be
included in public record.

THANK YOU

Study Resources:

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Michelle.Shropshire@VDOT.Virginia.gov

Nick Nies, AICP, VDOT 495 Southside NEPA Project Manager
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I-495 Southside Transit/TDM Study

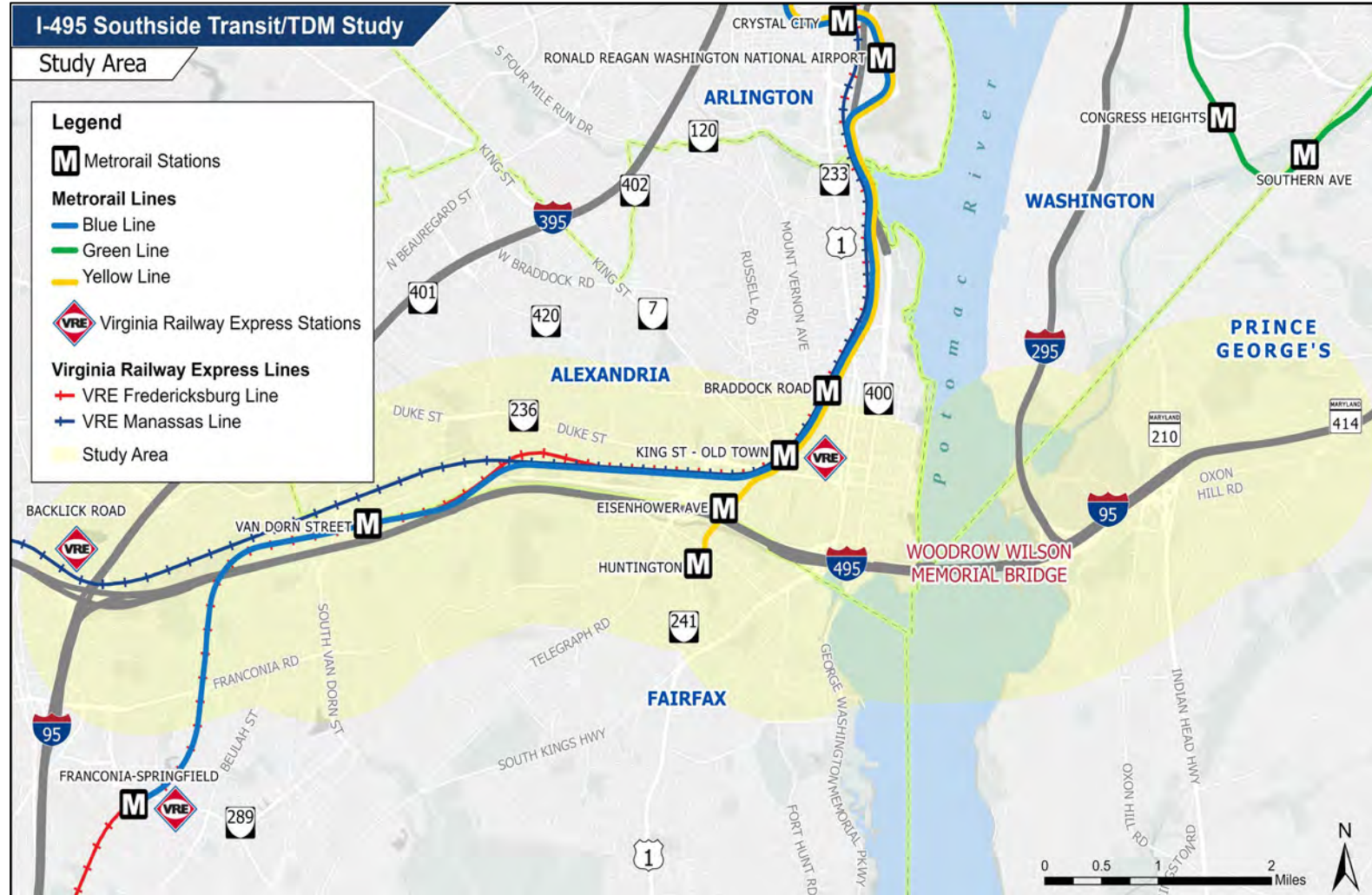
Northern Virginia Transportation
Commission

October 5, 2023

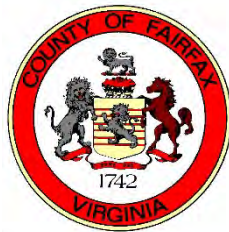


Study Background

- Study completed April 2023
- Input into VDOT NEPA study
- Study area same as VDOT Southside Express Lanes Study
- Two rounds public outreach in July & December 2022
 - Two virtual public meetings
 - Two public surveys
 - Pop up events
 - VDOT public meetings
- Four Stakeholder Group meetings

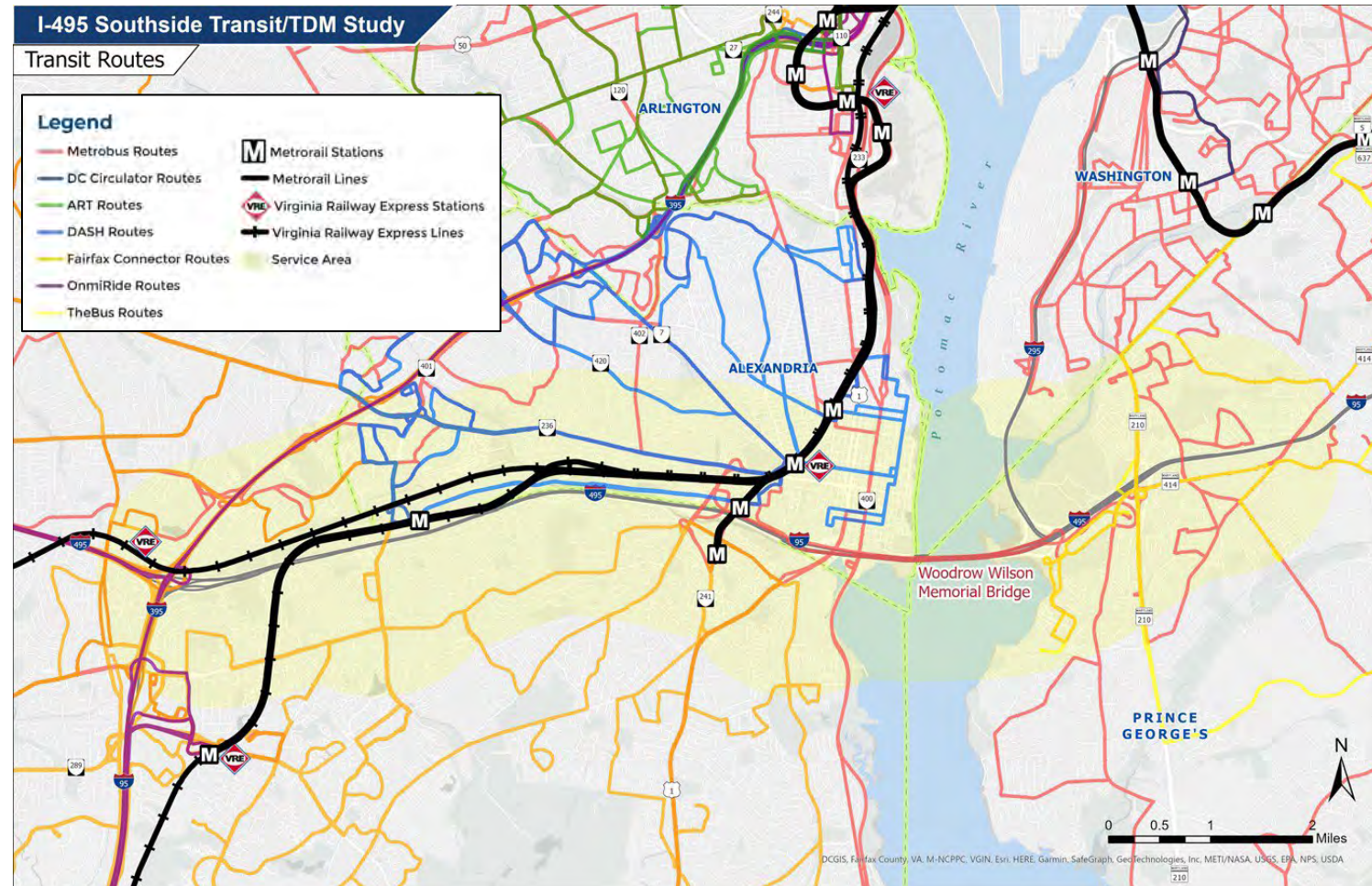


Who was Involved? Study Stakeholders Included...



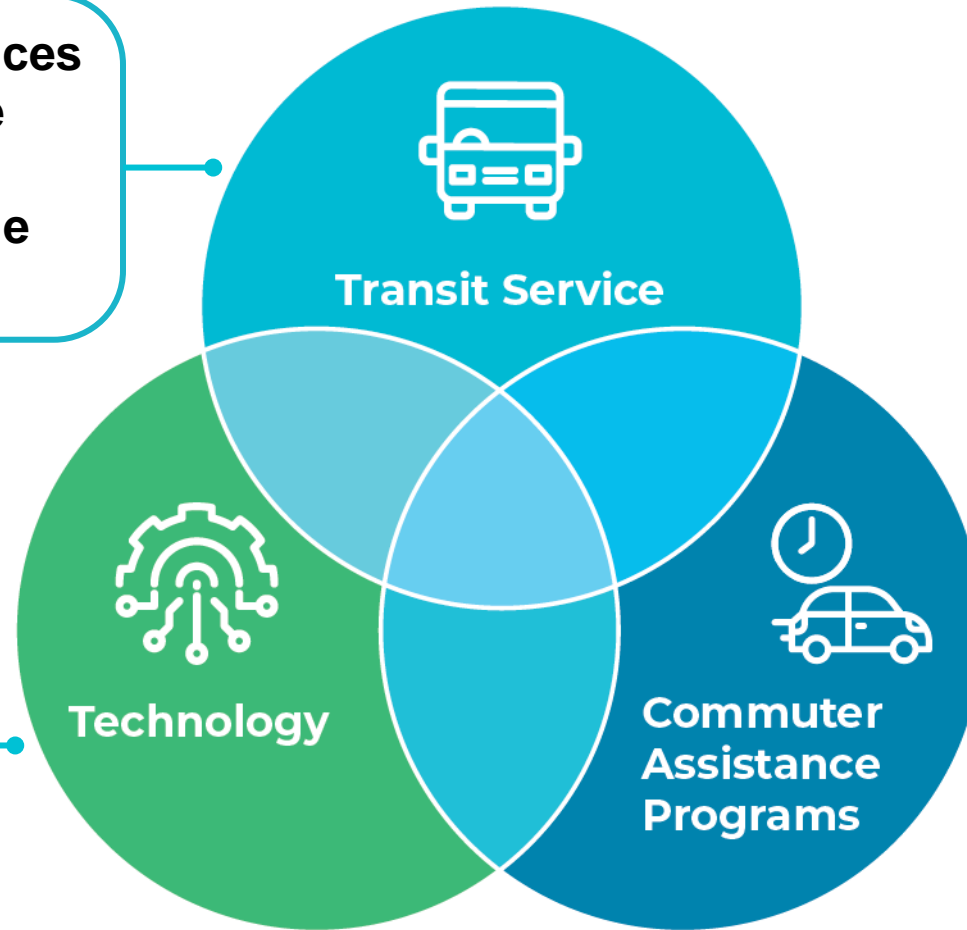
Baseline Conditions—Existing Transit Services

- Limited bus service along I-495 or over Woodrow Wilson Bridge
- Parallel and Metrorail feeder bus service in Alexandria and Fairfax County
- Bus service in Prince George's County in the vicinity of National Harbor with Metrorail connections
- Virginia Railway Express (VRE), Metrorail, and Amtrak parallel to corridor in Virginia
- Virginia, Maryland, Regional, and Local Commuter Assistance Programs



Study Recommendations

New or enhanced transit services that could benefit from the reliability of an expanded express lanes network in the I-495 Southside corridor



Technology to encourage use of transit and alternative transportation modes, support a modern travel experience, and assist with travel decision-making

Programs to encourage use of alternative transportation modes besides single-occupancy vehicles (SOV)

Transit Recommendations



Potential transit modes:

- **Express bus** for services that would operate all-day with fewer stops
- **Commuter bus** for services that would operate during peak commuting times with fewer stops
- **Local bus** for services that would operate all-day with more stops

Rail was considered and tested as an option but would not be as cost-effective compared to bus options for moving a similar number of people in the corridor. Improvements in the I-495 Southside corridor should not preclude future rail.



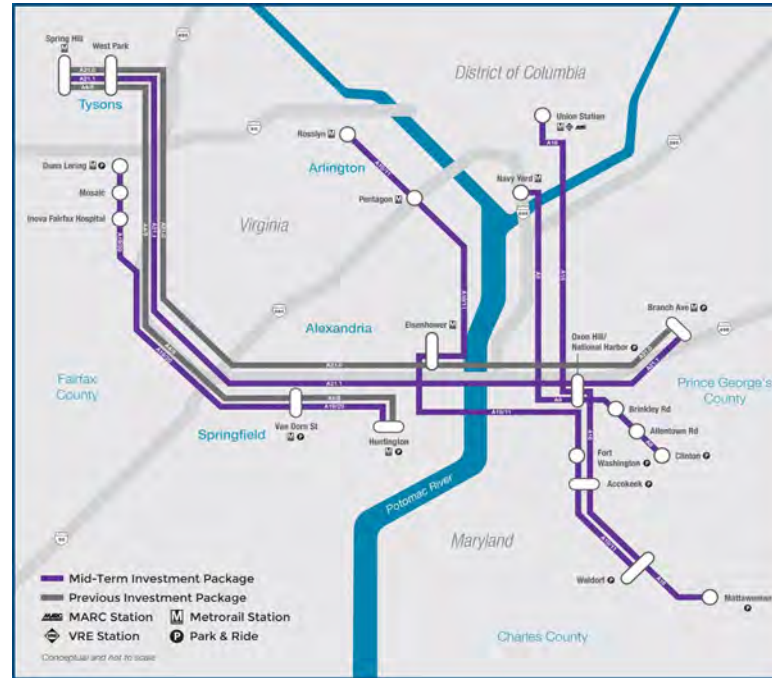
Image Credits: WMATA, VDOT, OmniRide, Fairfax Connector

Transit options that would operate throughout the day in both rush (peak) and non-rush (off-peak) times were prioritized

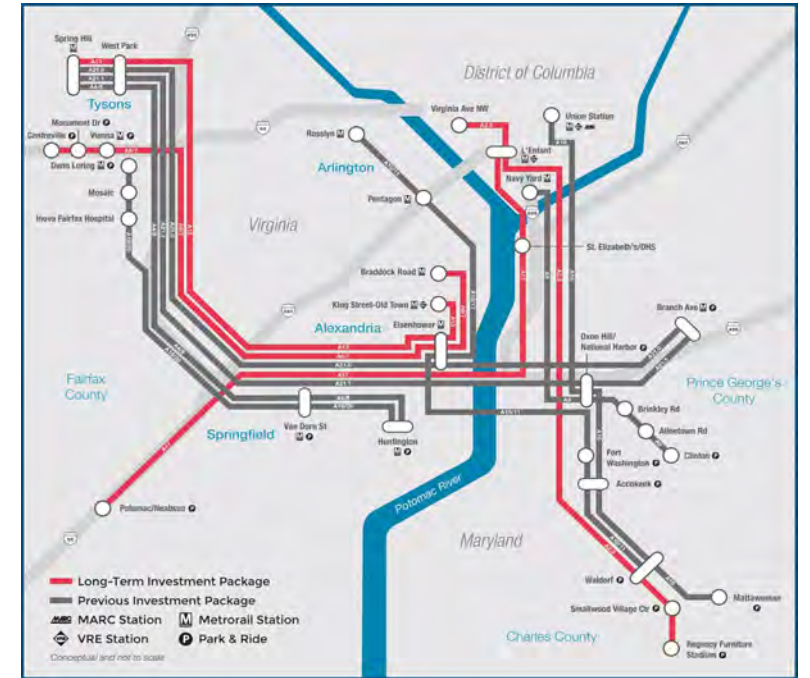
Transit Investment Packages



Near-Term Package
(prior to 2030)



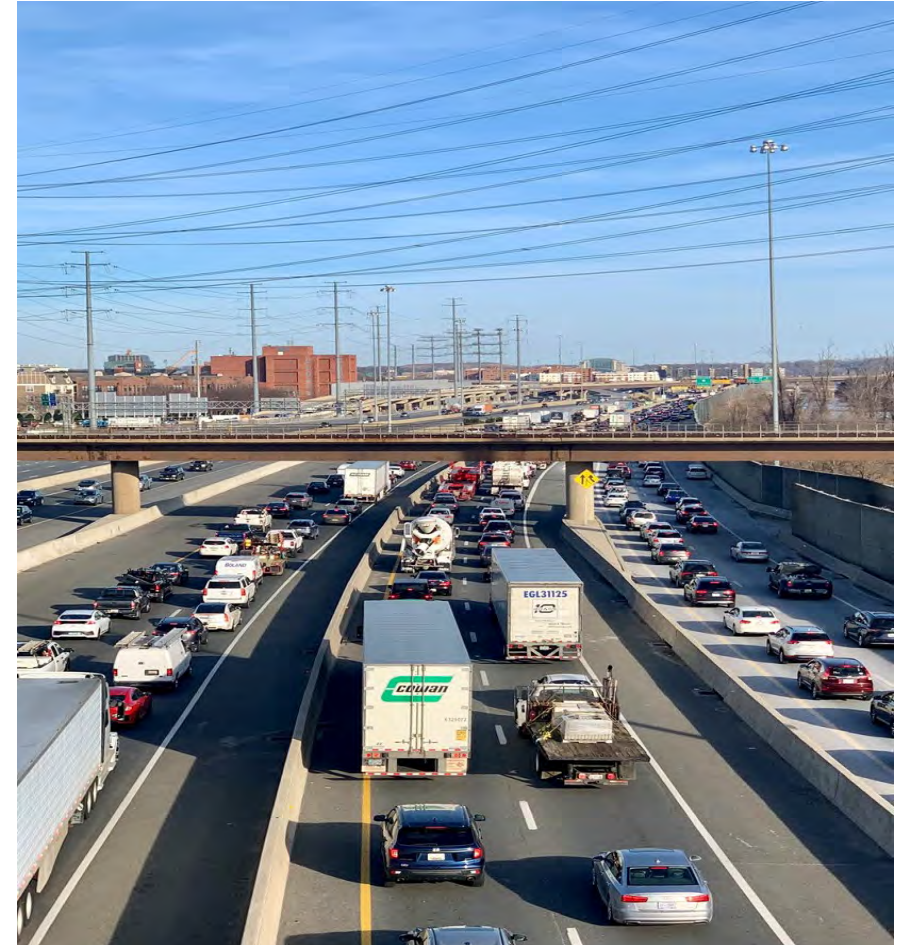
Mid-Term Package
(2030-2045)



Long-Term Package
(beyond 2045)

I-495 Southside Transit/TDM Study

The study document can be found at:
<https://drpt.virginia.gov/studies-and-reports/i-495-southside-transit-tdm-study/>





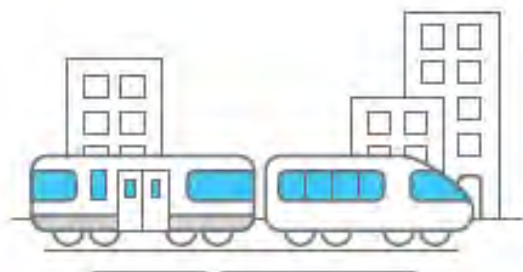
Commuter Choice: FY 2023 Annual Report and I-66 FY 2025-2026 Call for Projects

October 5, 2023

Ben Owen
Commuter Choice
Senior Program Manager

Adam Hager
Commuter Choice
Senior Program Analyst

FY 2023 Annual Report



6,000

passenger trips each weekday on
Commuter Choice-funded projects

Each weekday in FY 2023, Commuter Choice
projects saved travelers a total of



1,000 hours

of travel time



84,000 miles

of vehicle travel



\$11,000

in fuel expenditures

*Since 2017, Commuter Choice's \$108 million investment
in transit and other transportation projects has improved
travel and overall quality of life for Northern Virginians.*

104M

fewer vehicle miles
traveled



69%

greenhouse gas
emission reduction
relative to
single-occupancy
vehicle trips



\$31M

in regional
economic benefit
from reduced
travel delay



\$14.5M

in fuel cost savings
for commuters



5M

Commuter Choice-
supported trips
on the I-66 and
I-395/95 corridors



130

automobile crashes
avoided



1.1M

hours of travel
time savings



FY 2023 Annual Report





ACTION ITEM: Authorize the Executive Director to Submit the NVTC Commuter Choice Program FY 2023 Annual Report to the Commonwealth Transportation Board



I-66 FY 2025-2026 Funding Cycle

\$40-50M

available for new projects

First (more than) full I-66 funding round since FY 2020!

No significant policy changes from prior rounds, though earlier application window

Getting From a Set of Applications to a Program of Projects



Dec

- Applications Due before Holiday Period (Dec. 18)

Jan

- Eligibility Review (All Applications)

Feb

- Technical Evaluation (Eligible Applications)

Apr

- Public Comment Opens
- PAC Meets to Consider Staff Recommended Program of Projects

May

- Commission Briefing on PAC-Endorsed Program of Projects
- Public Comment Closes

Jun

- Commission Action to Adopt Program of Projects
- Commonwealth Transportation Board Approves Program of Projects

ACTION ITEM: Authorize the
Executive Director to Issue the
I-66 Commuter Choice FY
2025 - 2026 Call for Projects





Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB) Regional Strategic Plan: Draft Strategies

October 5, 2023

Ann McGrane
Transit Technology
Senior Program Manager

Purpose

- Develop a set of regional recommendations that can help advance zero-emission buses (ZEBs) throughout the region.
- Provide support to regional partners as they advance their own ZEB transition plans.
- Areas we've explored include:
 - Industry trends
 - Shared infrastructure opportunities
 - Supportive policies and standards
 - Collaboration and coordination needs

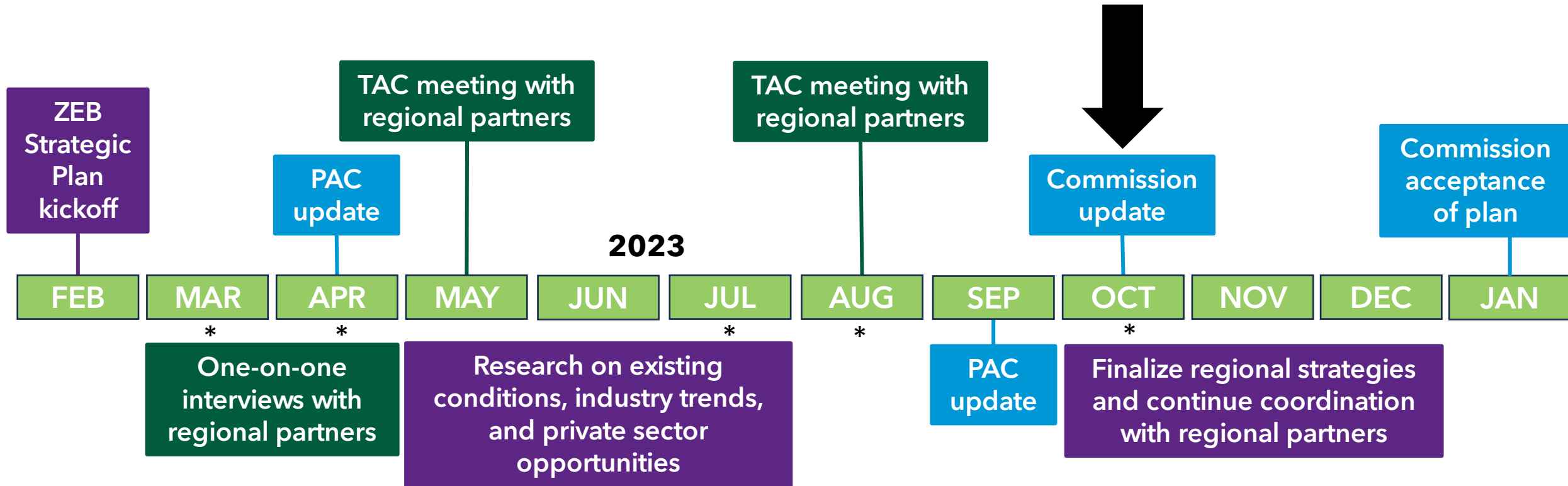
Current ZEB Planning Efforts

DRPT Modernizing Transit Fleets

NVTC Regional ZEB Strategic Plan

Agency-Specific ZEB Transition Plans

ZEB Strategic Plan Timeline



* Indicates NVTC ZEB Working Group Meetings

Draft Regional Strategies

- 1. Serve as Regional ZEB Forum**
- 2. Advocate for Consistent and Supportive ZEB Standards and Policies**
- 3. Coordinate Among Regional Partners on Funding and Procurement Opportunities**
- 4. Support Development of Shared Charging Infrastructure in Northern Virginia**
- 5. Evaluate Opportunities for Private Sector Partnerships**
- 6. Support ZEB-Related Workforce Training Programs**



1. Serve as Regional ZEB Forum

- a. Continue to lead or participate in regional and industry working groups that share lessons learned about ZEBs.**
- b. Share operational data and findings among regional partners.**
- c. Coordinate on best practices for working with utilities and track hydrogen technology.**

2. Advocate for Consistent and Supportive ZEB Standards and Policies

- a. Engage with local jurisdictional staff and elected officials to ensure alignment with regional efforts.**
- b. Support the zero-emission transition as part of the NVTC legislative agenda.**
- c. Encourage interoperability across technologies and manufacturers.**

3. Coordinate Among Regional Partners on Funding and Procurement Opportunities

- a. Identify additional funding and resources to implement the recommendations of the strategic plan.**
- b. Develop proposals for multi-agency grant applications for federal or state funding.**
- c. Identify cost saving opportunities through joint procurement.**

4. Support Development of Shared Charging Infrastructure in Northern Virginia

- a. Conduct a feasibility study for shared on-route charging location(s).**
- b. Work with regional partners and local utilities to pilot a shared charging station.**

5. Evaluate Opportunities for Private Sector Partnerships

- a. Host listening sessions or industry days to learn more about ZEB infrastructure and technology vendors.**
- b. Develop a process through which vendors can propose solutions to demo with Northern Virginia transit agencies based on identified regional problems.**
- c. Explore options for an RFI to assess private sector interest in working with Northern Virginia agencies.**

6. Support ZEB-Related Workforce Training Programs

- a. Identify and share ZEB training resources with regional partners.**
- b. Engage with educational institutions, regional partners and DRPT about ZEB training opportunities.**

Questions?





“Ride With Us”

Marketing Campaign Highlights

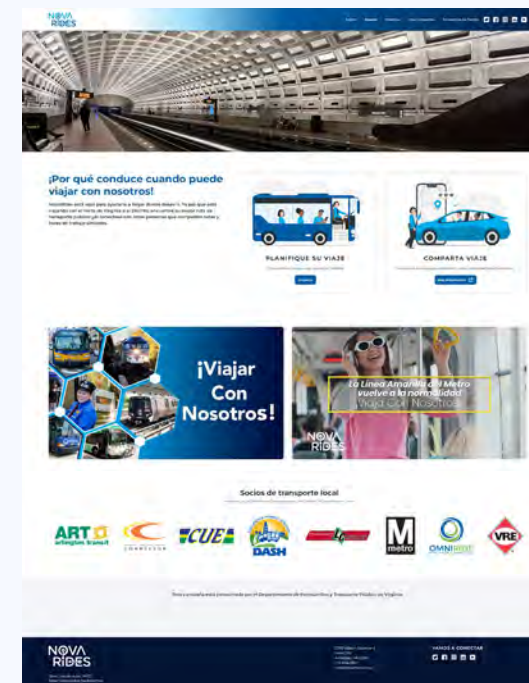





NovaRides.org/English





NovaRides.org/Español






Why sit in traffic when you can
Ride With Us?
Plan Your trip at **NovaRides.org**





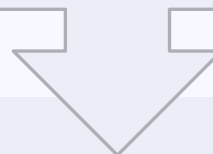
El servicio de la Línea Amarilla es volva sobre pista.
¡Monta Con Nosotras!



Expanded Reach



ALPHAMEDIA
LIVE, LOCAL, USA



Total Traffic
& Weather Network



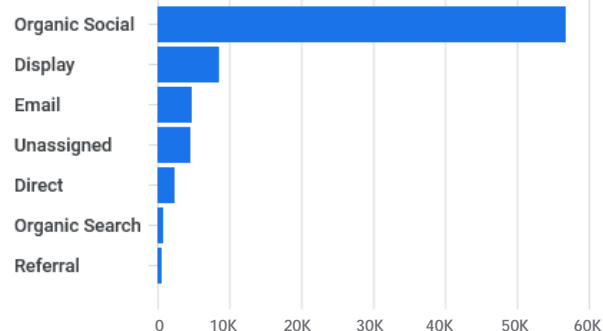
Campaign Highlights

As of August 2023

ENGAGEMENT

CONVERSION

55K clicks to
[NoVaRides.org](https://www.novarides.org)

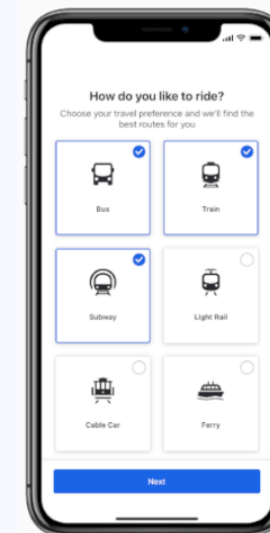


English:
IMP: 5.6M
Clicks: 27K
CTR: 0.47%

Spanish:
IMP: 2.5M
Clicks: 13K
CTR: 0.51%



*Spanish ads have 30% of the budget



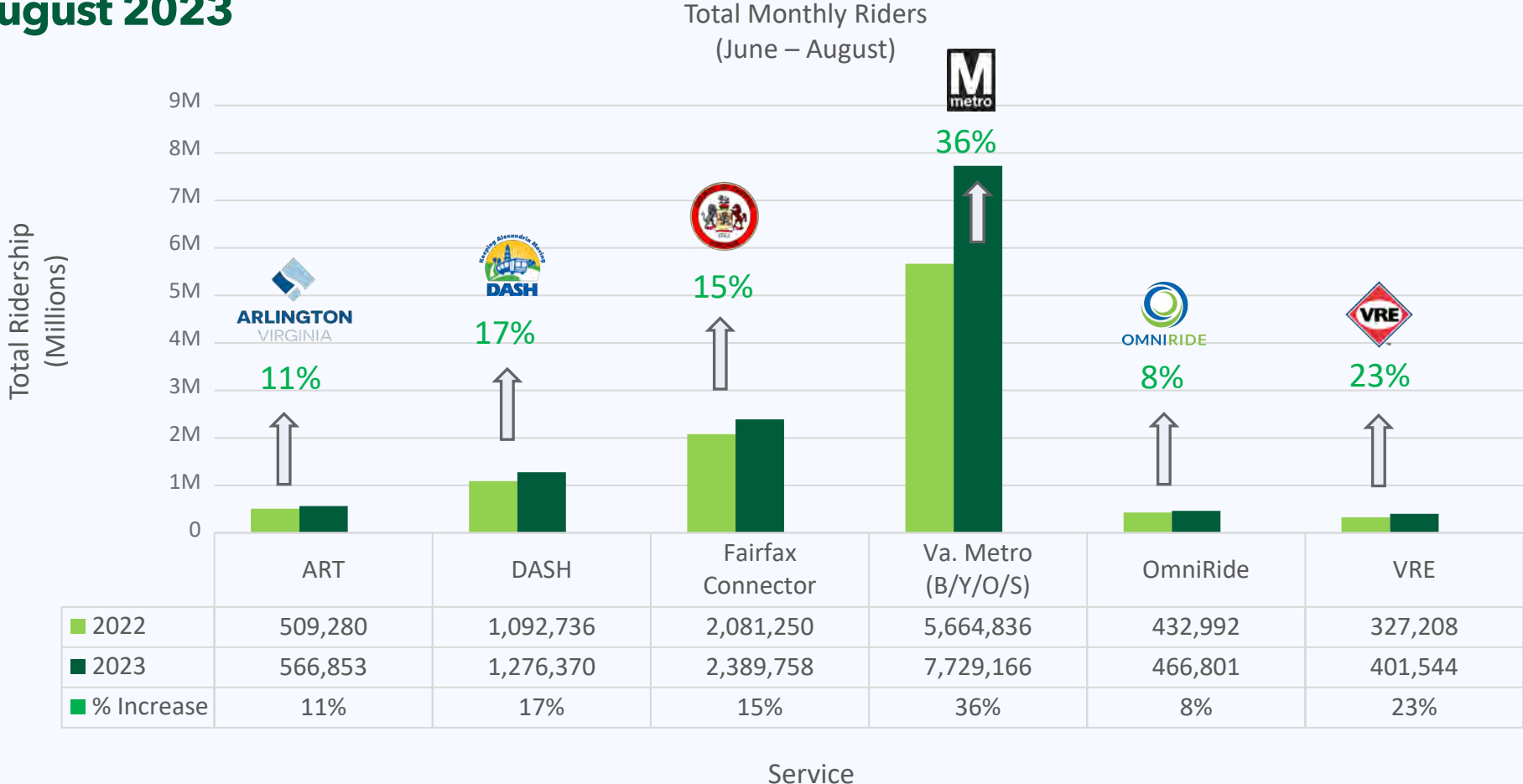
6K clicks to
moovit

14K clicks from
waze
OUTSMARTING TRAFFIC, TOGETHER



Ridership Trends

As of August 2023





“Ride With Us!”

NovaRides.org



IMPROVING AND EXPANDING SERVICE

- Original expansion concepts for both weekday and weekend included in agreements with VPRA
- But priorities can evolve with travel market changes and capital project timelines
- All changes subject to final approval of host railroads and other key stakeholders
- Parallel efforts within VRE between finance and operations



SATURDAY SERVICE CONCEPT

- Three round-trip trains on each line with service northbound in the morning and southbound in the afternoon/evening
- Total increase in service (train miles) of about 8 percent
- Question: how to deliver cost-effectively?
- Answer: reposition existing resources
 - ✓ Weekday longer trains (7 or 8 cars) become 6-car consists
 - ✓ Requires one fewer conductor
 - ✓ Shift those employee hours to Saturdays



PROPOSED FARE CHANGES

Proposed Change	Expected Impact
1. Make Zone 1-3 promotional \$5.00 fare permanent (with associated multiride fares)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive option for shorter trips• Zero to slight positive on revenue
2. Increase base fares by 5%, keep existing discount structure for multiride tickets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional revenue of ~\$1 million• Loss of ~100 daily riders
3. Eliminate 7-day pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simplified choices for riders• Shift to 10-trip or monthly• Minimal revenue impact
4. Allow children 18 and under to ride free, eliminate Youth discount	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Few youth travelers currently on weekdays• Make weekend travel by families more attractive

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input not limited to fares – want feedback on service, budget, and future plans

September

- Notification through multiple channels (14 days)

October

- In-person and remote meetings
- Recorded content
- 30-day public comment period

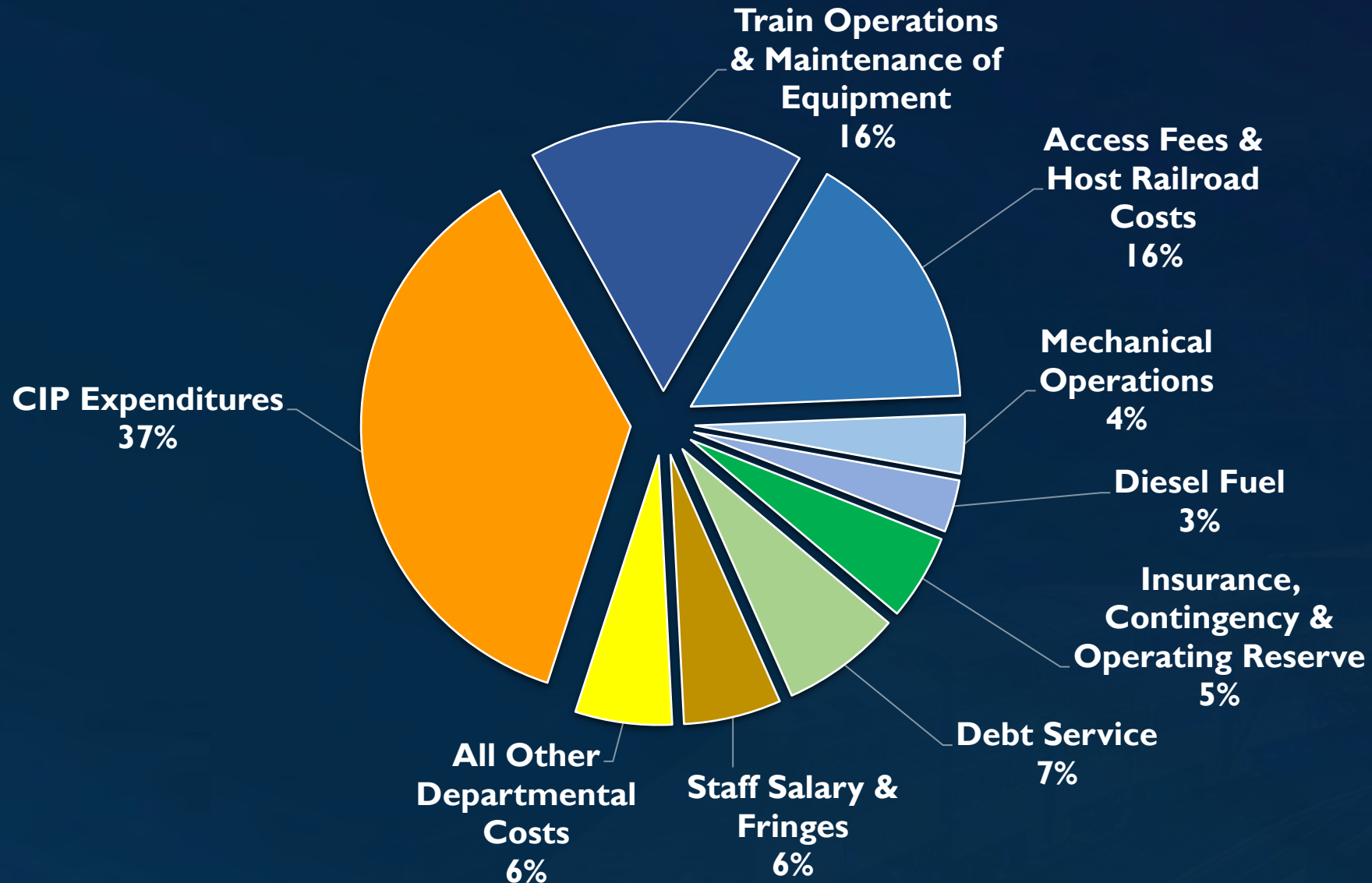
November

- Compilation of public feedback
- Review with Operations Board

FY25 EXPENSE DRIVERS

- **Costs reflect early estimates of Saturday service implementation**
 - Final budget will also reflect operating efficiencies and weekday service opportunities for cost reductions not yet fully represented
- **Major contracts with Keolis/host railroads/Amtrak services driven by inflation metrics (CPI and AAR):**
 - Preliminary budget for escalations is 4%, reflecting reduced inflationary pressures and contractual minimums
 - Amtrak services impacted by railroad union labor agreements
- **Diesel fuel:** \$3.25/gallon and ~1.83 million gallons
- **Insurance:** annual increases and expanded coverages (e.g., cyber)
- **Salary and fringes:** 4% annual increase and 3 FTE additions
- **Nothing yet deferred or eliminated**

FY 2025 USE OF FUNDS (THE BIG PICTURE)



Average Daily Ridership (ADR) by Month



JURISDICTIONAL SUBSIDY

Fiscal Year	Subsidy Amount	Change
2014	\$16,428,800	0%
2015	\$16,428,800	0%
2016	\$16,428,800	0%
2017	\$17,250,240	5%
2018	\$17,250,240	0%
2019	\$17,767,748	3%
2020	\$17,767,748	0%
2021	\$18,300,780	3%
2022	\$4,756,658	-74%
2023	\$13,544,122	185%
2024	\$16,000,000	18%
2025	\$18,300,780	14%

- Preliminary subsidy returns to \$18.3 million
- Subsidy would be ~\$22 million if it had growth with inflation since 2021



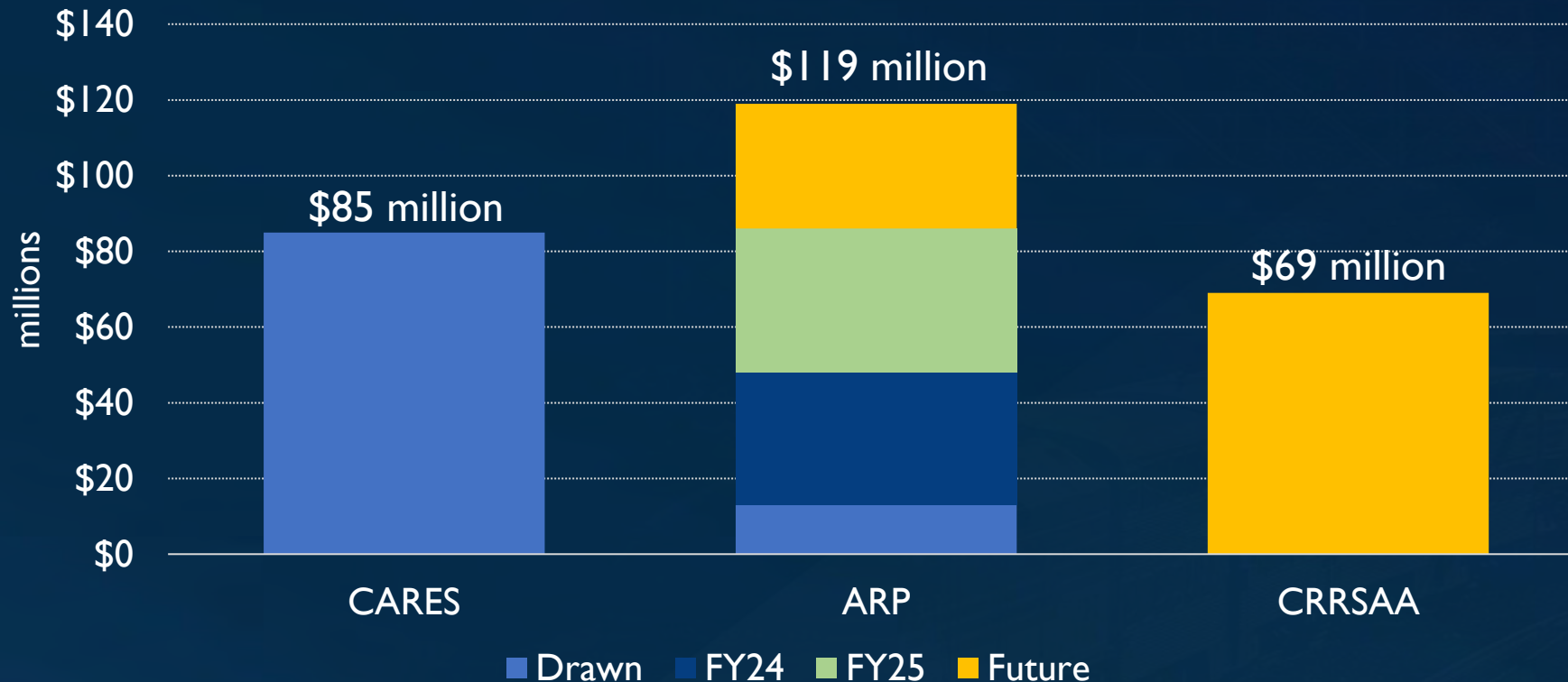
COMMONWEALTH FUNDING

- FY 2024 is final year in the MERIT program
- In FY 2025 VRE will receive up to 3.5% of the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund (MTF)
- Dedicated amount covers both operating subsidy and capital grant matching
- FY 2025 Preliminary Projections:
 - \$16 million total
 - \$7.9 million to operations
 - \$8.1 million to capital
- Amounts may change as capital program review proceeds in Oct/Nov and additional information is received on MTF funding



USE OF PANDEMIC RELIEF FUNDS

- Spending rate is downstream of ridership return and our policy decisions on subsidy, fares, etc.
- Likely to use more funds in FY 2024 than originally budgeted as ridership return has been below projections



Link to the October 2023
[NVTC Executive Director Newsletter](#)

NVTC, PRTC AND VRE PRESENT:

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE FORUM

Join transit leaders and special guests for an in-person overview of federal and state issues affecting transit in Northern Virginia.

**Featuring Our Transit
Leader Panel:**

RSVP

— Today —



8:30 - 11 a.m.

Friday, December 1, 2023



New Location!

George Mason University
Schar School/Van Metre Hall
Multipurpose Room 125/126
3351 Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22201



★ Moderated by:

Katie Cristol



Randy Clarke



Rich Dalton



Kate Mattice



Bob Schneider