



**NVTC PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, July 26, 2023**

**NVTC Conference Room, Suite #230**

**2300 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia**

**[Public Streaming Via YouTube](#)**

**4:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks
  - **ACTION: Approval of Members Participating via Electronic Participation** (if needed)
2. Summary of the April 20, 2023 Program Advisory Committee Meeting
3. Commuter Choice – Overview of I-66 (FY 2025-2026) Call for Projects and Schedule
4. Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
  - A. Overview of Phase 4-1 Analysis – Falls Church to Seven Corners Segment
  - B. Overview of Recommendations from Strategic Implementation Plan
5. Other Business
6. Future Meetings

**Members of the Program Advisory Committee:**

Sarah Bagley, Chair

John Foust

Libby Garvey

David Snyder

Michael R. Turner

**NVTC PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY  
Via Electronic Participation  
Public Streaming via YouTube  
April 20, 2023**

**NVTC Program Advisory Committee Members Present:**

Sarah Bagley, Chair  
John Foust  
Libby Garvey  
David Snyder  
Mike Turner

**Other Commissioners Present:**

Walter Alcorn

**Staff and Others Present:**

Kate Mattice, Executive Director  
Allan Fye  
Adam Hager  
Xavier Harmony  
Ann McGrane  
Ben Owen  
Melissa Walker  
Ronneta Zack-Williams

Program Advisory Committee Chair Bagley called the meeting to order at 4:23 p.m. She noted that staff followed procedures and guidelines to give notice to committee members, the Commission, staff and the public about today's meeting. She explained that the meeting is an all-virtual public meeting as permitted under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and NVTC's Electronic Participation Policy and is being streamed live via NVTC's YouTube channel.

Mr. Fye called the roll and indicated a quorum was present. He then introduced staff.

Chair Bagley asked for any changes to the summary of the September 15, 2022 Program Advisory Committee meeting. Committee members accepted the summary with no changes. Chair Bagley then outlined the meeting agenda's topics: Envision Route 7 BRT work, the Northern Virginia Regional Bus Analysis and the Northern Virginia Regional Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan.

### Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Mr. Harmony provided an update on the Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. He stated that staff work is advancing the BRT project on two fronts: the Phase IV Mobility Study and the Strategic Implementation Plan. He explained that the consultant team is currently modeling four future-year scenarios – one no-build scenario and three build scenarios – and is examining various types of BRT infrastructure.

Mr. Harmony stated that the project's next public meeting will be held on May 16, 2023 at the Mary Riley Styles Library in the City of Falls Church. He shared that the results of modeling scenarios will be presented and encouraged committee members to help spread the word ahead about the meeting. Mr. Harmony also noted there would be upcoming pop-up events and bus stop chats in and around the Falls Church segment of the project corridor during the month of May.

Mr. Harmony stated that the Strategic Implementation Plan will be concluding shortly and the Phase IV Mobility Study will conclude this summer. He stated that the project team will continue engaging with the Federal Transit Administration regarding planned environmental work under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) through the summer and fall.

Chair Bagley asked for more details regarding the planned environmental work. Mr. Harmony explained that staff is still scoping the effort and there are various levels to it. The work will assess project impacts on issues like traffic, noise, cultural environment, and physical environment. That step will have a more detailed examination of what operations and ridership will look like.

Ms. Garvey asked whether staff has considered riding the bus along the corridor as a way to engage the community and educate the public. Mr. Harmony shared that part of the overall stakeholder engagement effort does include outreach at bus stops, but not actually riding the bus. He noted that the public tends to be more candid while they wait for a bus.

Mr. Snyder thanked staff for their work and asked whether there was coordination with staff in the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County. He also suggested that outreach at the Eden Center in particular should include Vietnamese materials and that throughout the corridor there should be Spanish materials. Mr. Harmony thanked Mr. Snyder for his recommendations and noted that there is routine coordination with staff counterparts in the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County.

### Northern Virginia Regional Bus Analysis

Mr. Harmony began his remarks by noting that each of the six transit service agencies in Northern Virginia must develop a Transit Strategic Plan (TSP) and that there is currently no regional strategic planning resource. He explained that the Northern Virginia Regional Bus Analysis effort will provide a macro-level review of agency TSPs looking at existing and planned services and capital needs in order to find opportunities for regional collaborations and efficiencies. He shared that staff will be coordinating with both the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

(WMATA) and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVRTA) as they are working on similar efforts. Mr. Harmony noted that the bus gap analysis component of the study will be completed in the summer before priority corridors are identified alongside a bus infrastructure analysis in the fall, culminating in a final report later in the winter.

Chair Bagley asked how the WMATA Bus Network Redesign effort ties into this project. Mr. Harmony explained some of the key differences between the efforts, namely that NVTC's effort includes OmniRide directly, assesses bus service and capital needs in Loudoun County and the WMATA study is looking at a nearer-term implementation timeframe. He added that a great deal of coordination is taking place across agencies.

Ms. Garvey thanked staff for including the map in the presentation and asked about the planned functionality in the interactive maps that will be produced from this effort and whether they will allow users to filter by time and day of the week. Mr. Harmony responded that staff is still working through which exact features will be available and thanked Ms. Garvey for her suggestions. Ms. Garvey also asked if school bus routes will be added to the map with public transit routes. Mr. Harmony noted that school bus routes are a little bit outside NVTC's purview, so they have not been included.

Mr. Turner asked whether this effort extends beyond inventorying the needs and identifying potential solutions. Mr. Harmony stated that this effort is more of a forward-looking study that will identify gaps in service and infrastructure rather than a real-time bus or routing information tool.

Chair Bagley asked whether costs to passengers are considered in this project. Mr. Harmony stated that the project team has not looked extensively into this yet, but the financial analysis component of the effort will look at potential fare revenues so there could be a limited element of assessing cost to passengers relative to costs of driving.

#### Northern Virginia Regional Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan

Ms. McGrane highlighted the two main components of the Northern Virginia Regional Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan, the first being the development of a set of regional recommendations that can advance zero-emission buses (ZEB) throughout Northern Virginia and the second as a way to provide additional support to regional partners to advance fleet transition plans. She noted that within both phases, the project team is trying to take an expansive look at multiple considerations, from shared charging infrastructure to advocating for better interoperability standards and coordinating on workforce training.

Ms. McGrane stated that the project team is currently in the discovery phase of the plan and has interviewed the seven transit agencies serving Northern Virginia and collected data including infrastructure and fleet composition. She stated that this phase will wrap up in the summer with three technical memos detailing the findings. She also noted that a preliminary set of regional recommendations will be developed in the summer followed by individual agency transition assistance in the fall and winter.

Ms. McGrane then shared numerous challenges and opportunities. Common themes from agency interviews include funding, manufacturer recalls, utility coordination, space constraints and the ongoing debate between battery electric buses and fuel cell electric buses. She also highlighted some of the opportunities including strong regional partnerships, the ZEB working group that could lead to joint procurements and grant applications and leverage new funding in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Ms. Garvey noted her concern about going all-in with electric buses and then realizing later that hydrogen fuel cell buses would have been a better long-term option. Ms. McGrane stated that the project team is very aware of that concern and is open to the idea that there may be a suite of options for the region.

Chair Bagley asked whether shifting to all-electric too soon is a concern, noting the source of the electricity to power buses may not be clean in the first place. Ms. McGrane stated that staff is assessing this topic and that the federal government provides some tools to assess those kinds of questions.

Mr. Foust noted that the region needs to develop a sense of urgency when it comes to dealing with the impacts of climate change. He observed that there might not be a perfect solution and that the overall shift to zero-emission is too slow in terms of how to deal with the climate challenge. Mr. Snyder noted his appreciation for this kind of forum for having thoughtful conversations around the concerns with shifting to all-electric and urgency in dealing with climate change.

Mr. Turner highlighted some of the issues Dominion is facing regarding constrained power in Loudoun County especially as it relates to new data centers. He noted that it is important to get away from fossil fuels as fast as possible. Mr. Alcorn reminded the committee about the local impacts of not moving quickly toward ZEBs, including air quality, particulate matter ingestion and noise pollution.

### Other Business

Chair Bagley asked for any other topics of discussion from committee members and they had none.

Mr. Snyder requested that, in the materials for the Envision Route 7 BRT project, no travel lanes will be taken in order for the project to be implemented. He thanked Chair Bagley for her leadership and thanked staff for their presentations.

### Future Meetings

Chair Bagley stated that staff will follow up regarding the timing of the next committee meeting and she adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.