



Strategic Transit Policy Research Roadmap

Program Advisory Committee

February 15, 2024

Agenda

- Introductions & Background
- Research Roadmap Framework & Process
- Discussion
- Next Steps

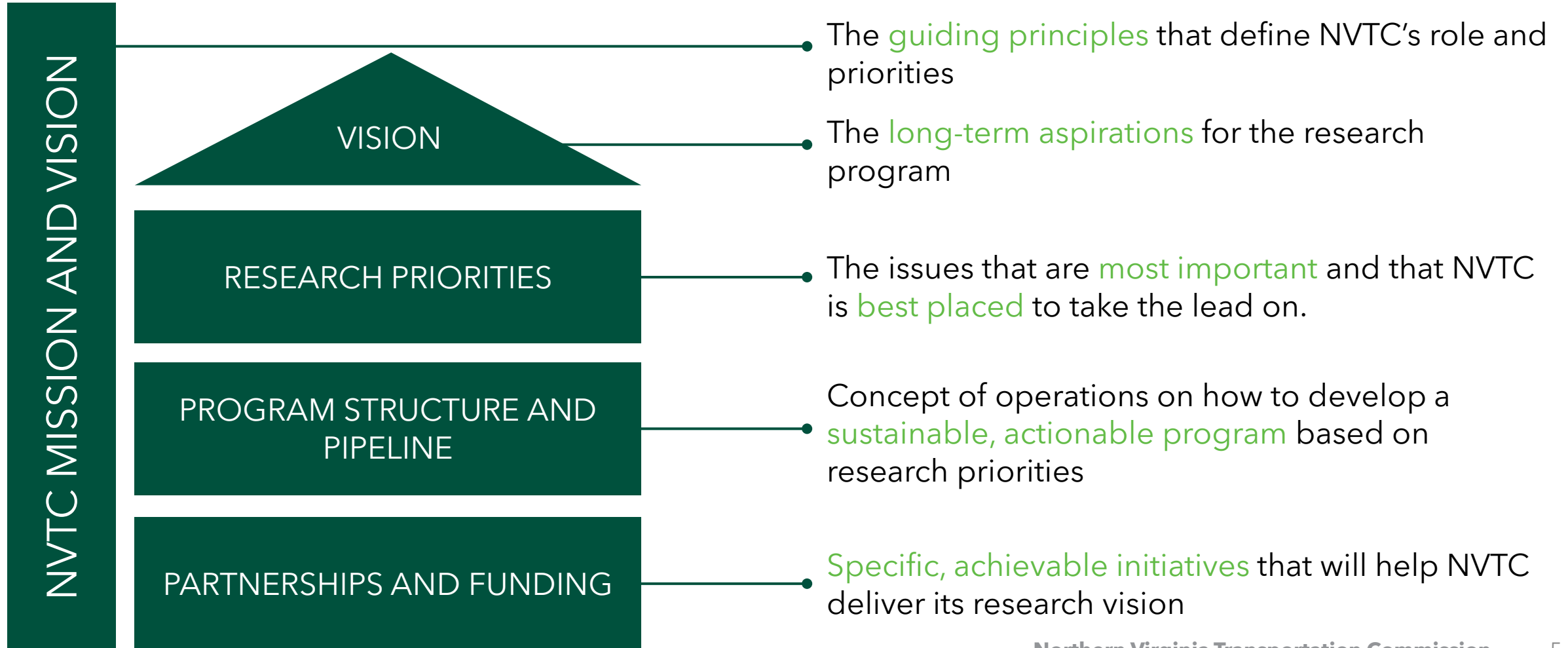
Current NVTC Research Program

- Dedicated budget line item since 2023
 - \$250,000 approved for FY 2025
 - Funded from jurisdictional contributions
- Recently completed projects
 - Northern Virginia Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan
 - Value of Transit
 - Advancing Bus Priority in Northern Virginia
 - Northern Virginia Transit through the COVID-19 pandemic

Research Roadmap Objectives

- Provide a strategic vision to guide NVTC regional transit policy research over the next 4-6 years
- Include a research idea pipeline for regional transit policy research
- Identify potential research partnerships, new or alternative funding sources and additional opportunities for disseminating research work

Policy Research Roadmap Framework



Policy Research Roadmap Process

WE ARE HERE



Stakeholder
Engagement

- Desktop research
- Subject matter experts and thought leaders
- NVTC'S jurisdictional staff and partners
- NVTC Commissioners

Research
Program
Development

- Strategic vision for NVTC policy research
- Research idea pipeline
- Partnership opportunities
- Funding strategies
- Dissemination strategy

Final Policy
Research
Roadmap

- Actionable, cohesive narrative of NVTC's Research Program



DISCUSSION

Discussion & Sticky Note Exercise

Discussion: What topics do you think are the most critical for transit in Northern Virginia over the next 4-6 years that NVTC is well-positioned to lead research on?

Sticky Note Exercise: What are specific research questions you want answered related to these topics?

Next Steps

1. Synthesize findings from interviews
2. Executive Committee Presentation on March 7
3. Jurisdictional and Regional Staff Workshop on March 20

Thank you



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Peer Programs

- District DOT Research Program
- Greater Greater Washington
- Louisiana Transportation Research Center
- Regional Planning Association (RPA)
- San Francisco Bay Area Planning & Urban Research Association (SPUR)
- Transit Center
- Transportation for America
- University Transportation Center - UC Davis
- USDOT Research & Development Program
- Virginia Transit Association
- Virginia Transportation Research Council

Proposed Jurisdictional and Regional Staff Workshop Participants

- City of Alexandria
- Alexandria Transit Company (DASH)
- City of Fairfax/ City-University Energysaver (CUE)
- City of Falls Church
- Fairfax County
- Arlington County
- Loudoun County
- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
- NVT
- WMATA
- MWCOC
- OmniRide
- VRE

Climate Benefits of Transit in Northern Virginia



Key Findings

- ✓ The use of public transit in Northern Virginia reduces 120,000 to 160,000 Metric tons of CO₂ annually.
- ✓ All bus fuel types, even diesel buses, are a much greater environmental option than using cars.
- ✓ There are opportunities for the region's jurisdictions and transit agencies to learn from each other when it comes to transit and environmental policies.

Key Recommendations

1. Increase ridership (*shorter-term*)
2. Reduce miles and hours when a transit vehicle is not taking passengers ("deadheading") where possible (*shorter-term*)
3. Increase the amount of transit in the region (*medium-term*)
4. Speed up buses using bus priority infrastructure and policies (*medium-term*)
5. Transition to zero emission buses (*longer-term*)

Annual CO₂ savings due to transit are equivalent to...



13,500,000 gallons of gasoline



**27,000 cars driven for one year
(cars end-to-end would go from
Washington, DC to Richmond, VA)**



33 wind turbines running for a year



**Over 15,000 homes' energy use for one
year**



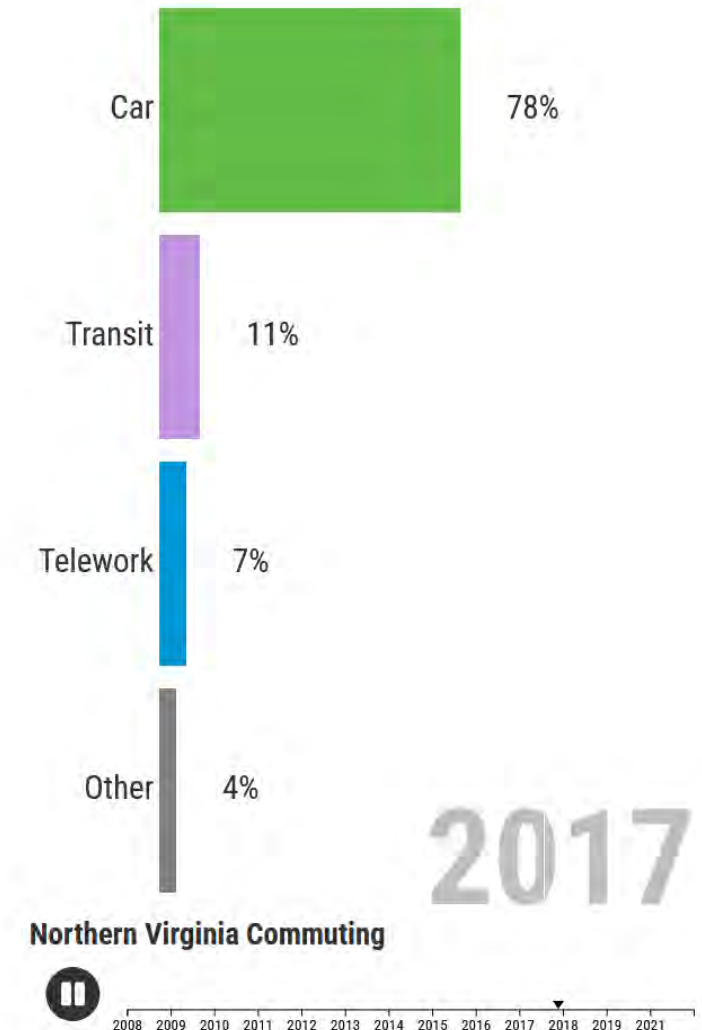
**Almost 2,000,000 tree seedlings grown
for 10 years**

Northern Virginia Transit Trends

A look at the last 15 years of transit in the region.



- 1 **There is an overemphasis of transit service for Monday - Friday, morning-afternoon commuting.**
- 2 **The region's bus speeds have slowed down.**
There are opportunities to speed them up.
- 3 **More transit connections are needed within Northern Virginia.**





Commuter Choice Update

NVTC Program Advisory Committee
February 15, 2024

Ben Owen
Commuter Choice
Senior Program Manager

I-66 Commuter Choice: FY 2025-2026 Eligible Applications



Bus Service:

8 applications
\$11.5M funding
request *



ART 75 Service Enhancement: \$0.4M
Shirlington to Virginia Square



Fairfax Connector Route 699: \$2.6M
Monument Drive Park-and-Ride to
Downtown Washington, D.C. **

Fairfax Connector Route 698: \$1.5M
Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride to the
Pentagon **

Fairfax Connector Route 697: \$2.1M
Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride to L'Enfant
Plaza **



LC Transit Route 281/681 Service
Enhancement: \$0.6M
Stone Ridge Park-and-Ride to Downtown
Washington, D.C. **

LC Transit Route 483/883: \$0.3M
Harmony Park-and-Ride to Downtown
Washington, D.C. **



OmniRide Route 612: \$2.4M
Gainesville to the Pentagon **

OmniRide Route 622: \$1.6M
Haymarket to Rosslyn **



TDM:

2 applications
\$1.5M funding
request



I-66 OmniRide Fare
Buy-Down: \$1.0M **



Amtrak Step-Up
Reinstatement on VRE
Manassas Line: \$0.5M



Access to Transit:

1 application
\$0.5M funding
request



Fairfax Centre
Bikeshare
Expansion: \$0.5M

* Three further applications, for Fairfax County (1) and OmniRide (2) bus service improvements, have been referred to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's I-66 Outside the Beltway funding program for consideration as their location and purpose align better with the requirements of that funding.

** Funding would continue an improvement previously funded by the program.

Staff-Proposed Strategic Programming Adjustment: VRE Crystal City Station Expansion Project



- In the last I-395/95 Commuter Choice round, Commissions funded construction of the new, larger Crystal City VRE (and future Amtrak) station, a project with a unique nexus to both corridors
- \$18.8M award was to be split across I-395/95 FY24-25 (\$10.8M) and FY26-27 (\$8M) programs
- Staff propose to advance the outstanding \$8M as part of the current I-66 FY25-26 program instead
- Supports Transforming Rail in Virginia, makes funding available to VRE sooner, and frees up funding in the next I-395/95 cycle



Images: [VRE](#)



Image: [VPRA](#)



Image: [WMATA](#)



Thinking and Working Ahead: Staff-Proposed I-66 Corridor Needs Assessment



- Staff propose to update pre-pandemic I-66 transit and TDM plans, in collaboration with DRPT
- There is substantial need for long-term multimodal improvements along the entire corridor (Inside and Outside the Beltway)
- Final product would identify:
 - Comprehensive list of eligible transit and other multimodal projects
 - Strategic, long-term transformative capital investments
- Staff are coordinating with DRPT on scope and budget

I-66 Commuter Choice: Next Steps

March

- Complete technical evaluation of all eligible applications for FY 2025-2026 funding

April

- PAC Meeting, April 11: Review staff recommended Program of Projects
- Public comment opens mid-month

May

- Commission briefing on proposed Program of Projects
- Public comment concludes mid-month

June

- Adoption of Program of Projects by Commission
- CTB briefing (Rail and Transit Subcommittee) and final approval of Program of Projects as part of DRPT's Six-Year Improvement Program

July

- Implementation of funded projects begins
- Begin I-66 needs assessment study