



I-395/95 Commuter Choice Briefing: FY 2026-2027 Call for Projects

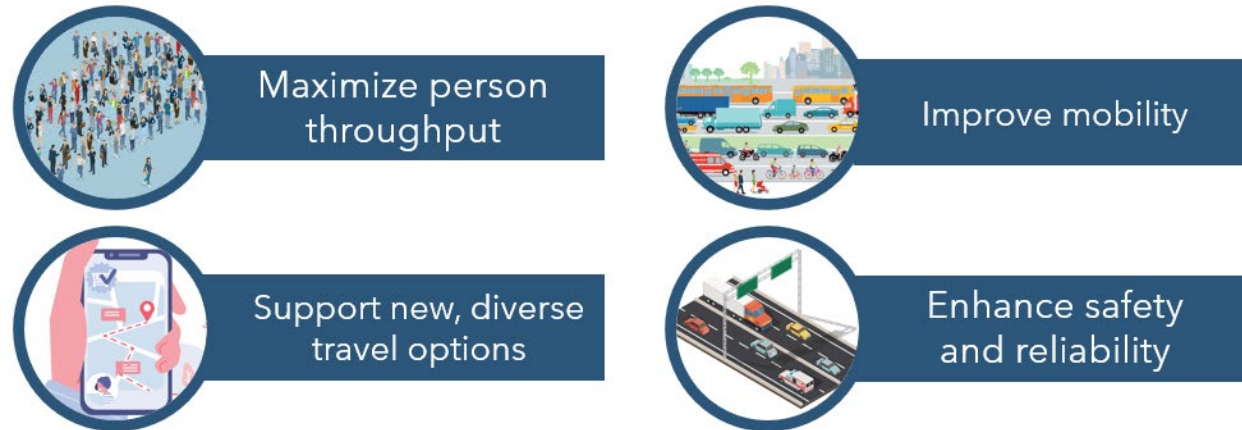
September 19, 2024

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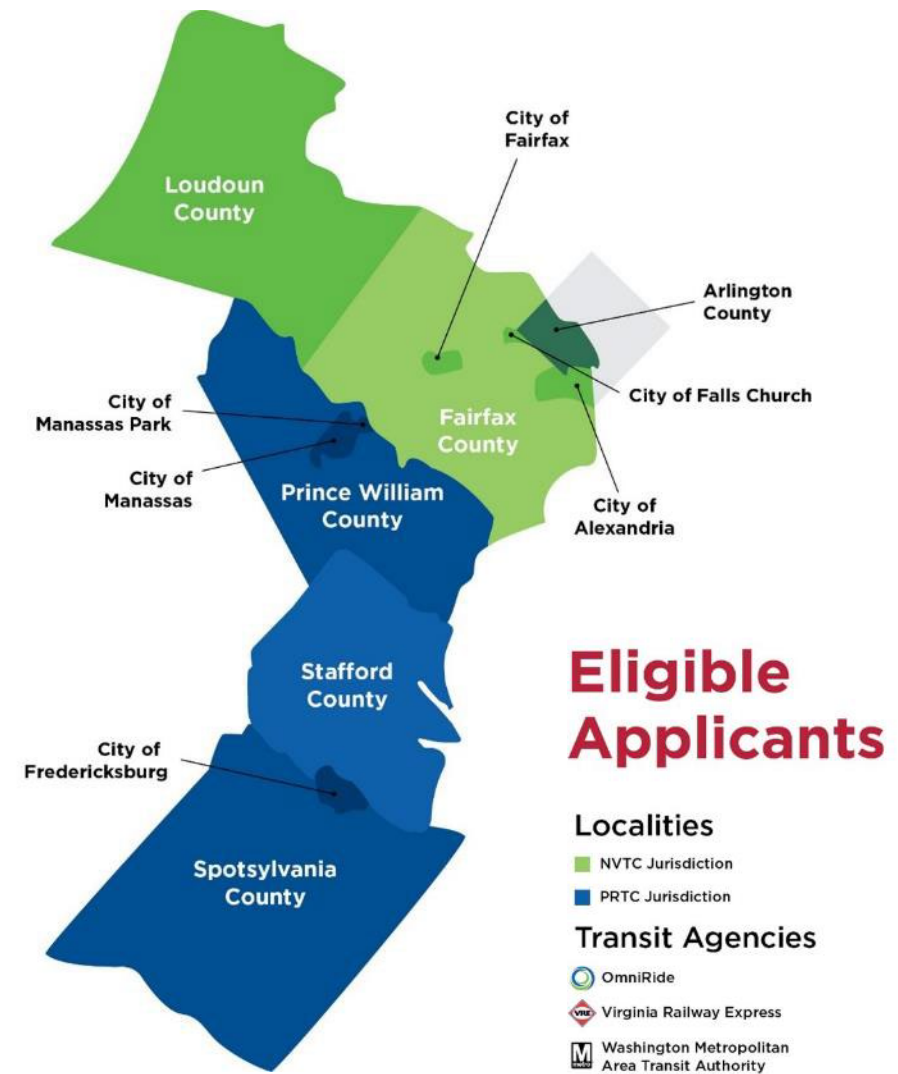
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About Commuter Choice

A competitive grant program that invests toll revenues from I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95 into transportation projects that...



Each corridor has a multi-decade payout schedule and typically about \$30-35 million in available funds per two-year program.



Key Roles and Responsibilities



- Approves projects identified by NVTC and PRTC (CTB, via DRPT)
- Receives and distributes concessionaire payment (VDOT, DRPT)
- Receives annual Commuter Choice report

- Adopt program policy, including evaluation process
 - Select multimodal improvements
 - Adopt annual report for transmittal to CTB
 - Identify members for JCWG (3 apiece)
- NVTC staff handles day-to-day program management per agreement with PRTC*

- Apply for and carry out projects



\$90.1M

awarded to date, for:



18 buses to support expanded service



13 bus service improvements



2 park-and-ride expansions



1 rail station expansion



1 bus rapid transit line

... and more

Program Benefits To Date



I-395/95 Commuter Choice's investments since 2019 in expanded transit and other travel options have improved travel for the corridor's commuters and overall quality of life for area residents.

55M

fewer vehicle miles traveled



71%

greenhouse gas emission reduction relative to single-occupancy vehicle trips



\$19M

in regional economic benefit from reduced travel delay



\$7.6M

in fuel cost savings for commuters



4.2M

Commuter Choice-supported trips on the I-395/95 corridor



85

automobile crashes avoided



535K

hours of travel time savings



Coming next month: The FY 2024 Commuter Choice Annual Report



Commuter Choice by the Numbers

Bolstering Northern Virginia's Mobility with Record Ridership

Commuter Choice projects had another record year of ridership in FY 2024. Active projects in spring 2024 supported 7,500 passenger trips through the two corridors each weekday, a 20% increase over FY 2023. Program-wide ridership continues to grow as Northern Virginia transit ridership stays on a steady upward trajectory and new projects come online.

Each weekday in FY 2024, Commuter Choice projects saved travelers a total of

1,100
hours of travel time

120,000
miles of vehicle travel

\$15,000
in fuel costs

24
projects in operation
in spring 2024

... And Beyond the Numbers

How funding for expanded I-66 and I-395/95 travel options supports a prosperous, livable Northern Virginia

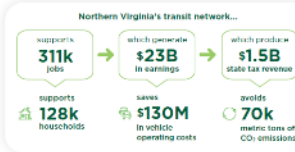
Economic Growth and Resilience
Last year, NVTC published the "Value of Northern Virginia Transit to the Commonwealth" report, which found that Northern Virginia's transit network generates \$15 billion in annual personal income and sales tax revenue for Virginia. Beyond the fiscal benefits to the Commonwealth, transit in Northern Virginia provides critical options to travelers who would otherwise travel on already congested roadways. Northern Virginia's transit network supports 311,000 jobs and 128,000 households, making it a key factor in the region's economic success and future growth.

Commuter Choice supports the growth of the region's transit network, by funding both new services and improved infrastructure. Commuter Choice-funded infrastructure projects, such as the construction of second entrances at the Ballston-MU and McLean Metro-rail stations, and of an expanded and relocated Crystal City Virginia Railway Express (and future Amtrak) station, enable new development that will cluster more jobs near high-quality transit service.

Faster, More Efficient Travel
New and expanded transit services operating in the I-66 and I-395/95 Express Lanes allow commuters to enjoy fast, reliable, comfortable commutes, from wherever they choose to live. The opening of the I-66 Outside the Beltway Express Lanes in late 2022 immediately provided Fairfax Connector and Omniride express route riders up to 15 minutes of time savings per one-way trip, fueling ridership growth on the routes.

In the I-95 corridor, riders on Omniride's new express route from the new Commonwealth Drive commuter lot in Spotsylvania County (partially funded by Commuter Choice) to the Pentagon save up to an hour each way with a reliable 65 mph ride in the Express Lanes relative to highly variable travel speeds and times in the non-toll lanes. Time savings also mean more efficient transit operations - allowing the same timetable to be met at less cost and potentially with fewer buses and operators, saving money for the region.

Omniride and Fairfax Co up to 15 minutes per trip the Outside the Beltway



More Public Interest for More Travel Options

NVTC holds a public comment period each spring on the proposed projects under consideration for Commuter Choice funding. In the last three years, nearly 900 Northern Virginia residents, workers and visitors offered their input on how individual projects would affect them, and expressed interest in expanded travel options that Commuter Choice can help fund. Many Northern Virginians rely on public transportation for at least some of their travel needs. Here is a sample of the feedback that NVTC received on the Commuter Choice program and the importance of transit.

- "This program has been a success in improving the public transportation options. I used to drive to work frequently, but the decreased waiting times allows public transportation to be an option for me."
- "I would never make it if I had to drive to and from the office every day. Omniride really helps!"
- "We greatly value the public transportation access from our home to work and to other attractions in DC."
- "Anything to remove cars from the road and congestion from the 95 corridor is a good investment."
- "We are so grateful for use of this funding to benefit folks who choose (or don't have a choice) to rely on public transit infrastructure!"

Reinvesting Revenue Where It's Earned

Commuter Choice reinvests Northern Virginia toll revenues right where they're earned - into transportation projects that foster faster, more reliable travel through the I-66 and I-395/95 corridors by helping more people move along the expressways and nearby roads and transit lines more efficiently and creating new, attractive travel options. The benefits of many of Commuter Choice's projects also extend to other, non-commute trip purposes.

Within Commuter Choice's \$156 million total investment to date is over \$30 million to complete the funding commitments for major capital improvements along the two corridors - including rail station enhancements, park-and-ride expansions and a bus rapid transit line - matching over \$1.1 billion in federal, Commonwealth, regional and local funds for these projects. The Commuter Choice awards are providing vital construction funds for impactful improvements that will benefit I-66 and I-395/95 commuters for many years to come while also saving other Commonwealth financial resources for investment.

I-395/95 FY 2026-2027 Funding Cycle

\$25-30M

available for new projects

(after a second \$10M award, off-the-top, to Fairfax County's Richmond Highway BRT project, fulfilling the Commissions' and CTB's commitment in the prior Program of Projects)

There is likely to be high demand for limited funding and the Commissions will need to make challenging trade-offs with the programming.

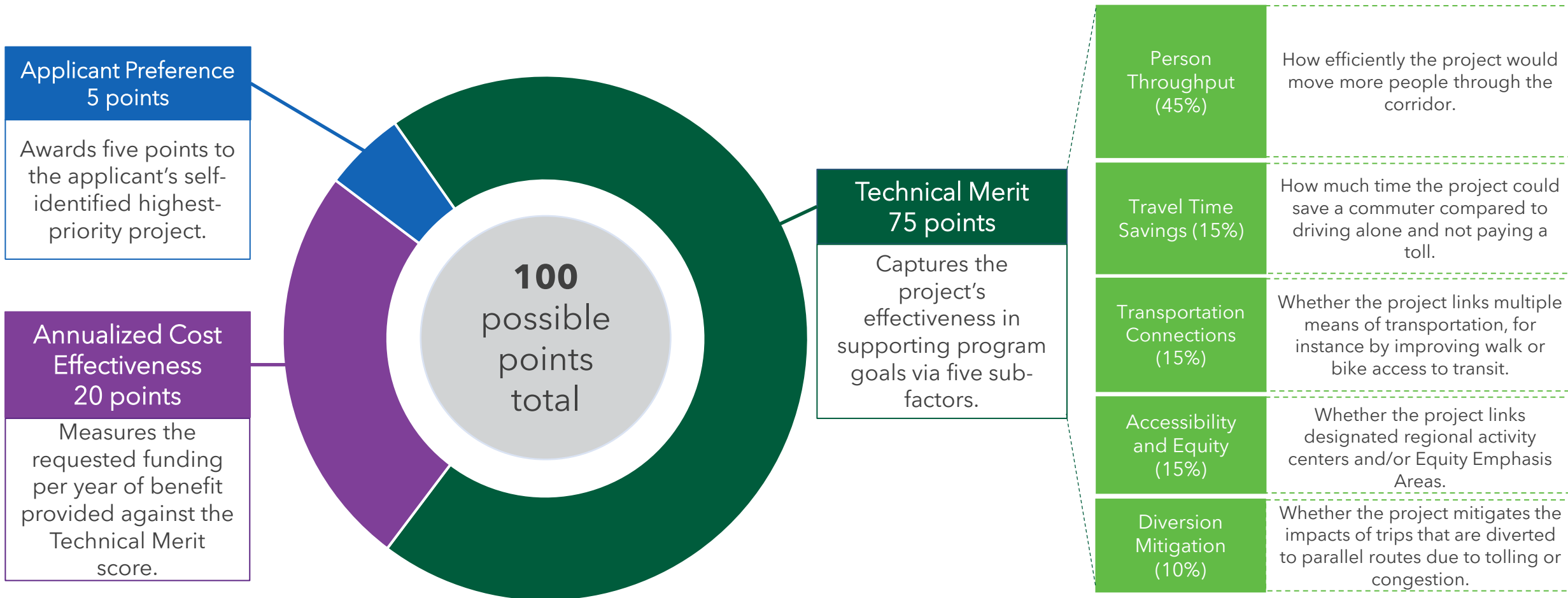
Several (successful) transit service enhancements will be seeking continued funding support and additional capital proposals are anticipated.



Technical Evaluation Process

Unchanged since last I-395/95 funding round

All eligible Commuter Choice proposals are scored on a process that prioritizes how well they support program goals.



Policy Refinements



Eligibility of Access to Transit Projects

Requires that trail, bike facility, and any other non-motorized projects must provide a physical and functional connection to a Metrorail station, VRE station and/or one of several significant regional bus transfer locations to be eligible for funding.



Eligibility of Staffing and Travel Costs

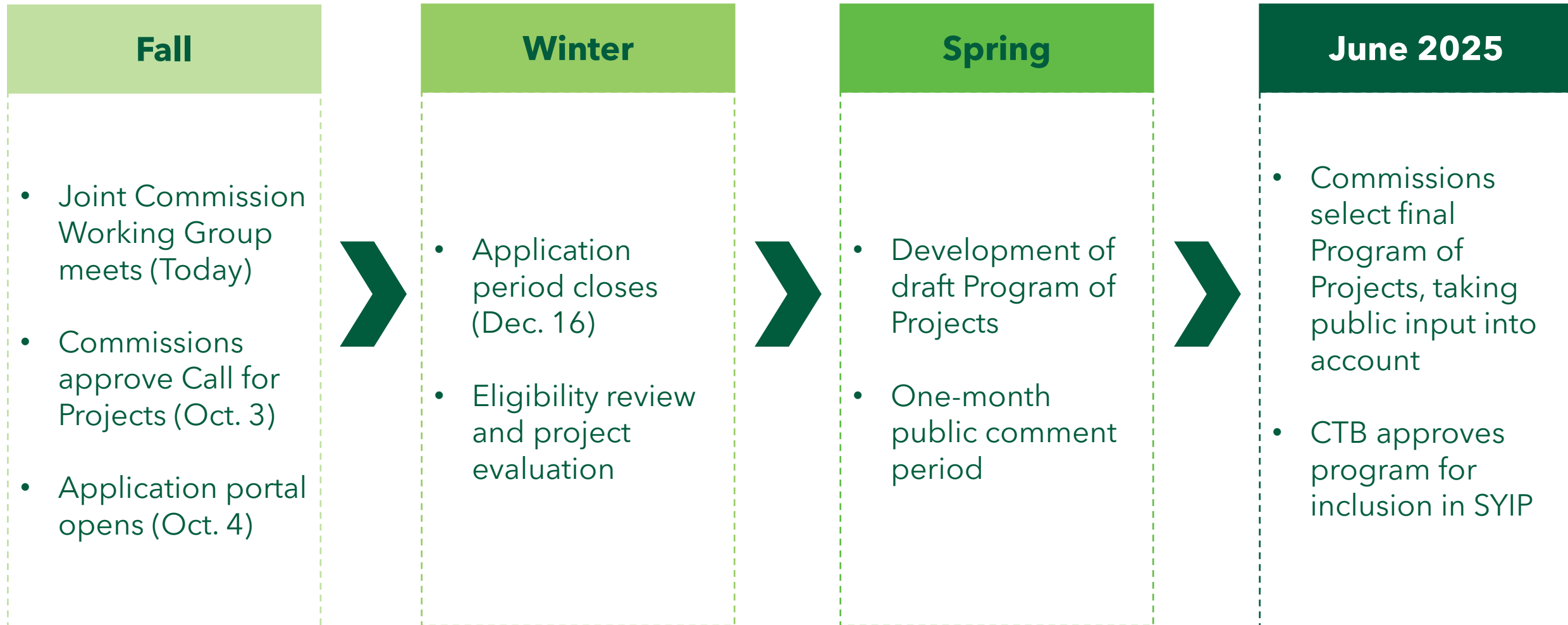
Clarifies that staffing (namely internal project management and support) and travel costs must be identified in a funding application and agreed to up front by NVTC.



Allocating Costs of Transit Service Improvements

Applications for transit service improvements no longer need to break out the costs counting towards the program's 50% cap on support for operations (NVTC will calculate the costs, saving work for applicants/recipients).

I-395/95 FY 2026-2027 Program of Projects Steps



Thank You.

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Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB) Update

Program Advisory Committee

September 19, 2024

Allan Fye

Director of Programs and Policy

Ann McGrane

Senior Program Manager

Agenda

- **Background**
- **NVTC ZEB Strategic Plan Tasks**
 - *On-route charging study*
- **Takeaways from ZEB Con 2024 in Philadelphia**



USDOT Decarbonization Blueprint

DECARBONIZATION BLUEPRINT STRATEGIES

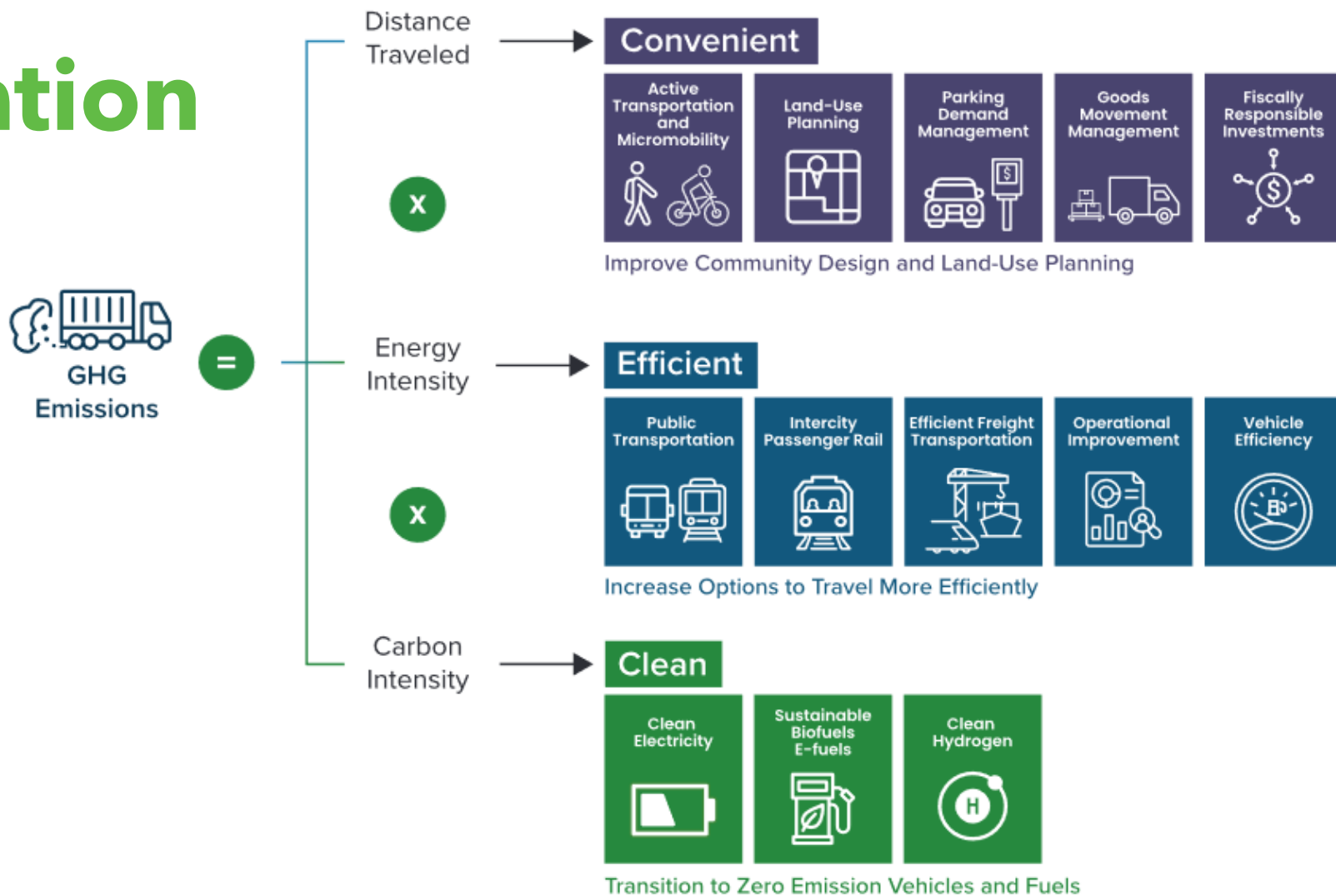


Figure 6: The Decarbonization Blueprint strategies of Convenient, Efficient, and Clean work to address the three main drivers of transportation emissions: activity, energy intensity, and carbon intensity.

DRPT's Modernizing Transit Fleets Guidebook

This summer, DRPT released a toolkit on how to transition to low- and zero-emission buses. It includes:

- Agency readiness checklist
- Utility engagement and planning guidance
- Workforce development best practices for change management
- Transit agency financial analysis tool
- Transit agency emissions reductions modeling tool using EPA's MOVES4 model
- FTA-compliant agency transition plan template

Modernizing Transit Fleets

A Guidebook to Low- and Zero-Emissions Transit Buses

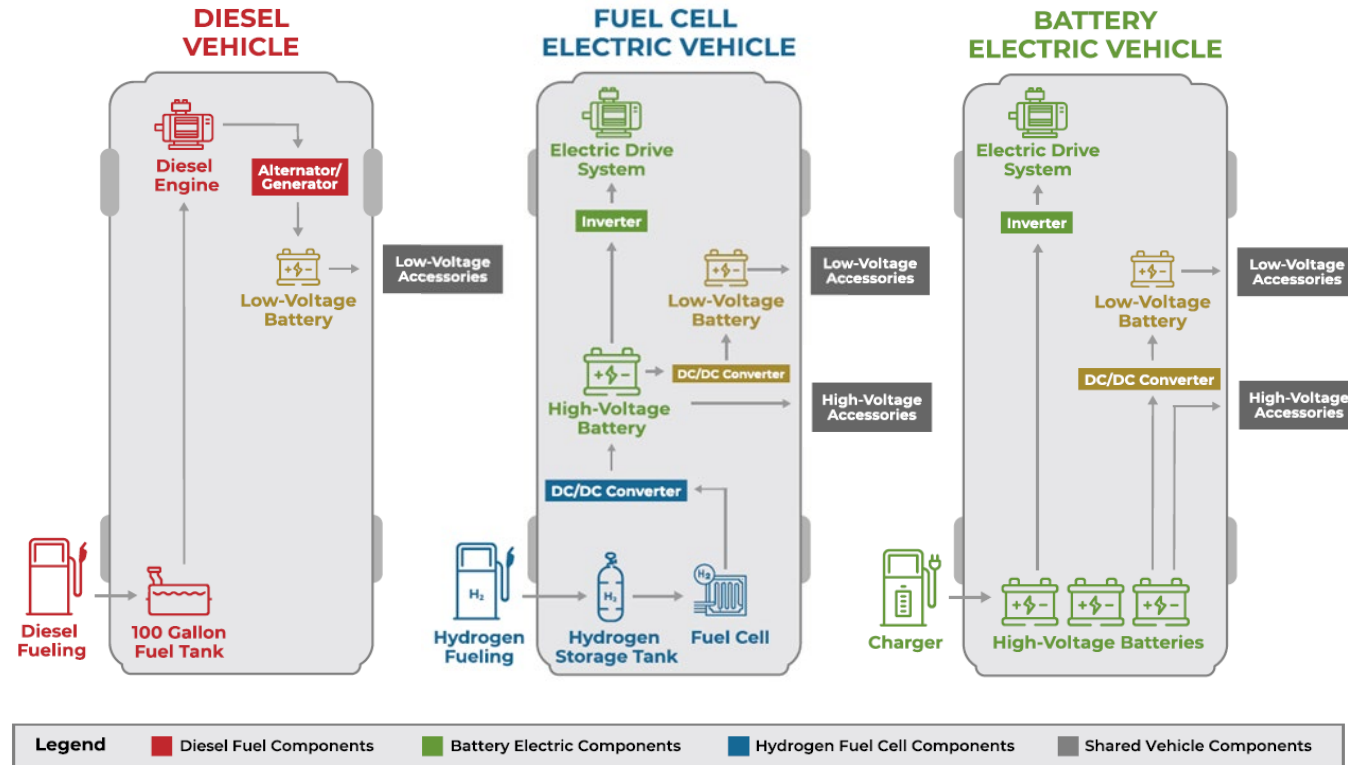
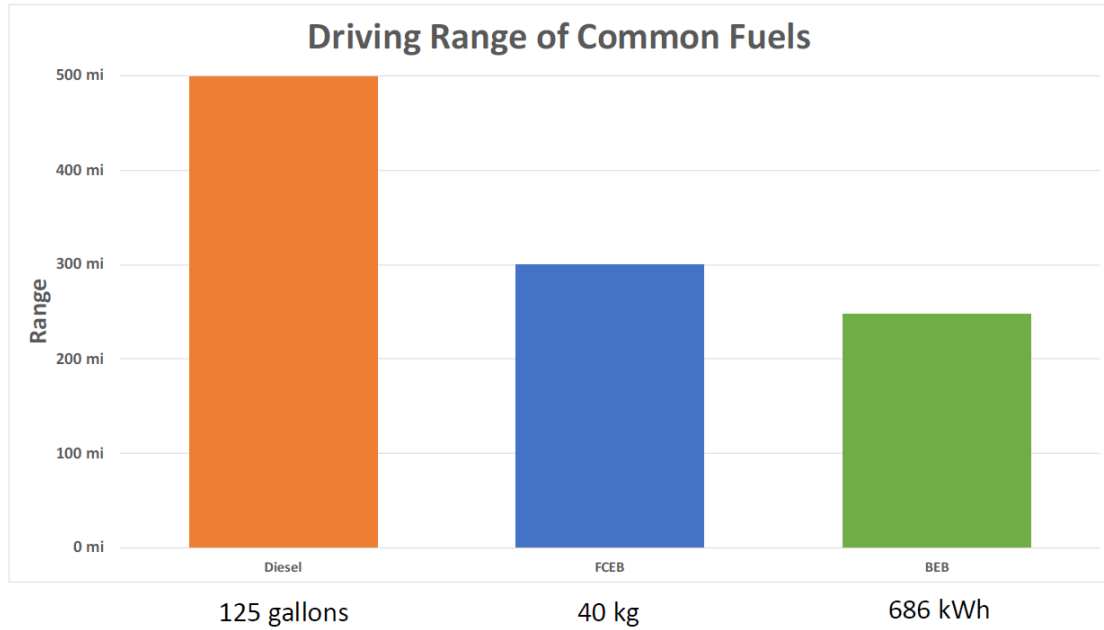
Final ♦ June 2024

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What Makes ZEBs Different?



NVTC's ZEB Strategies

1. Serve as a Regional ZEB Forum
2. Advocate for Consistent and Supportive ZEB Standards and Policies
3. Provide Regional ZEB Funding Coordination
4. Support Development of Shared BEB Charging Infrastructure
5. Evaluate Opportunities for Private Partnerships Related to ZEBs
6. Support ZEB Workforce Training and Education

NVTC recognizes that the region's transit systems are at various stages of transitioning to ZEBs and that there is an opportunity to better coordinate ZEB planning and share best practices among them. The Northern Virginia Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan outlines how NVTC can support the ZEB transition among Northern Virginia transit agencies.



1. Serve as a Regional ZEB Forum

- a. Continue to facilitate ZEB working group
- b. Share operational data and findings



- NVTC continues to host a **regional ZEB working group** and participates in a DC/MD/VA ZEB subcommittee hosted by WMATA. We also hosted a ZEB Panel at our Transit Innovation Summit
- We completed an **analysis of industry standard metrics** used to **evaluate zero-emission bus fleet performance** in preparation for collecting and sharing operational data among the regional partners in the future

Regional ZEB Forum: Current Topics of Conversation

- **Manufacturing backlog**

- As of June 2024, New Flyer has an [\\$11.8 billion backlog in orders](#)
- The large number of orders, as well as previous supply chain constraints, means that price quotes are taking longer and delivery dates are far into the future (regardless of manufacturer)

- **Charge management systems (CMS)**

- As ZEB fleets grow, managing their charging becomes more important. CMSs help agencies keep their buses charged and ready for service while accounting for utility rates, available charging windows, charging power, and costs

- **Hydrogen**

- We continue to track the deployment of hydrogen-powered fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs). Montgomery County broke ground on its future green hydrogen production facility earlier this summer

3. Provide Regional ZEB Funding Coordination

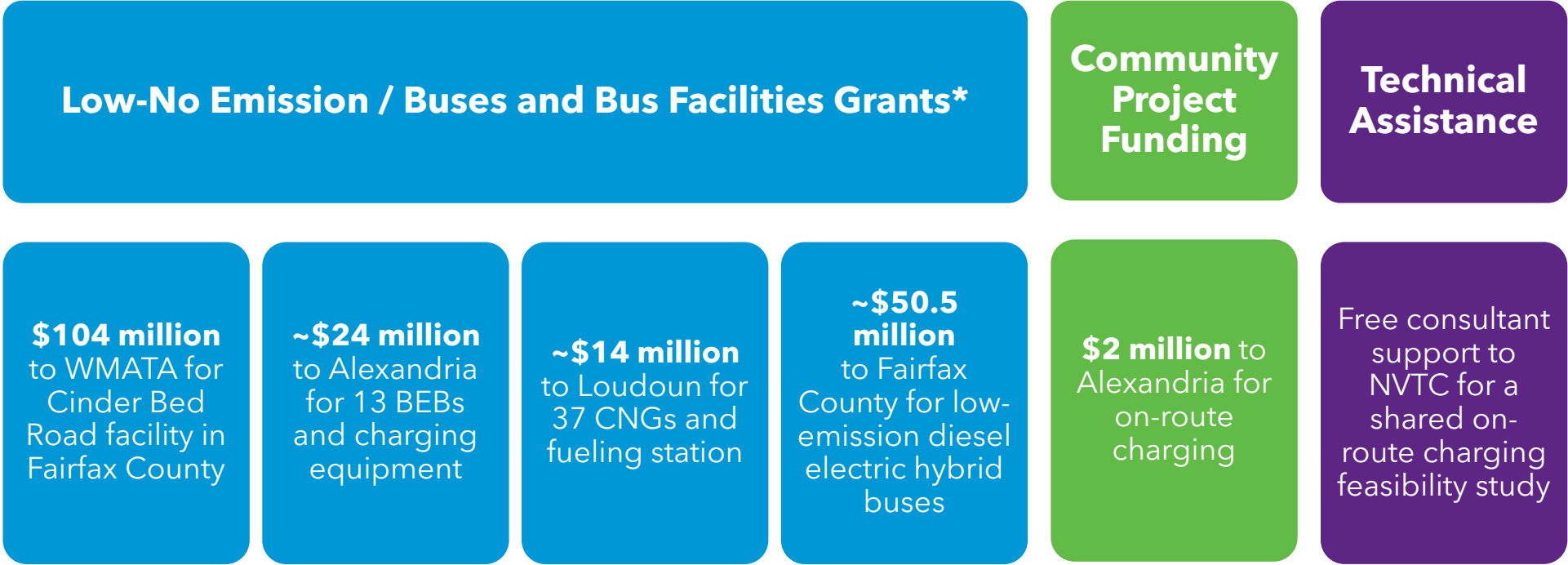
- a. Create a ZEB funding strategy
- b. Develop multi-agency ZEB grant applications
- c. Identify ZEB joint procurement opportunities



Our local agencies are familiar with and applying to FTA grants, and NVTC makes sure to share opportunities for ZEB grants from other sources such as the Department of Energy or Federal Highway Administration

Recent Funding Wins!

Federal



*In FY23, FTA received 475 eligible project proposals totaling about \$8.7 billion, of which \$1.7 billion was awarded to 130 projects. In FY24, FTA received 477 eligible project proposals totaling about \$9 billion, of which \$1.5 billion was awarded to 117 projects.

4. Support Development of Shared BEB Charging Infrastructure

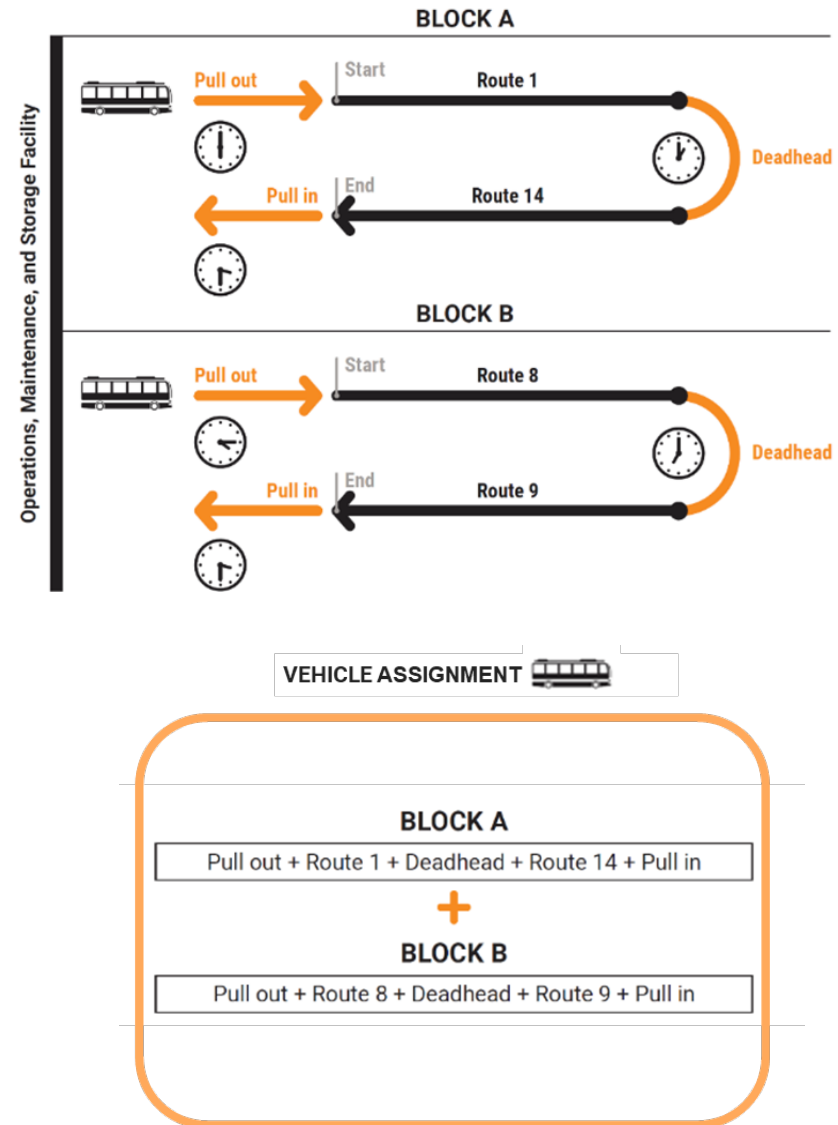
- a. Conduct a shared charging feasibility study
- b. Pilot shared on-route charging station



- On-route charging is when chargers are placed along a bus route so that **buses can charge at locations other than the depot**
- This **extends the range of a BEB** and can be critical for blocks that are longer than the typical mileage a bus can achieve on a single charge.
- With seven bus agencies operating in Northern Virginia – and given the expense of installing charging infrastructure for BEBs – a key opportunity identified in the Northern Virginia ZEB Strategic Plan was shared charging infrastructure

Shared On-Route Charging Update

- NVTC is working with National Renewable Energy Laboratory and its consultant team led by Stantec on a shared on-route battery electric bus (BEB) charging feasibility study
- We recently held a workshop with the four participating agencies (WMATA, ART, Fairfax Connector, DASH) to evaluate potential shared charging locations. Locations are being analyzed based on:
 - # of agencies served
 - # of blocks served
 - # of failing blocks (e.g., blocks that can't be completed by a BEB)
 - Time available to charge
 - Space available at the location



Shared On-Route Charging Update

What potential locations are rising to the top? It all depends on how you prioritize what's most important in a shared on-route charging location.

- **# of agencies served:** Pentagon Transit Center, Van Dorn Metro Station, Shirlington Transit Center
- **# of blocks served:** Pentagon Transit Center, King St Metro Station, Ballston Metro Station
- **# of failing blocks:** Pentagon Transit Center, Tysons Metro Station, King St Metro Station

We are still refining the prioritization criteria and working through what policy, institutional or infrastructure barriers might arise.

ZEB Conference - Philadelphia

Midvale Hydrogen Pilot



What's Next?

- Wrap up the shared on-route charging feasibility study (late 2024 / early 2025)
- Conduct additional analysis of one or two potential shared sites using DRPT FY 2025 technical assistance grant (late 2024 through 2025)
- Continue to host the ZEB Working Group
- Continue discussions about potential regional grant opportunities

Questions?



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