

NVTC PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026
NVTC Conference Room, Suite #230
2300 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia
[Public Streaming Via YouTube](#)
4:30 p.m.

AGENDA

February 19 Committee Meetings:

4:30 p.m. Program Advisory Committee – NVTC Suite #230 Conference Room ([public streaming](#))

5:30 p.m. Boxed Dinners Available for Committee Members

6:00 p.m. Legislative and Policy Committee Meeting – NVTC Suite #230 Conference Room ([public streaming](#)) (see separate agenda)

If the meeting method is changed, NVTC will provide a new meeting notice, in accordance of VA Code §2.2-3707.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - **ACTION: Approve Commissioners Participating Electronically (if needed)**
2. Meeting Summaries of April 25, 2025 and September 18, 2025 Program Advisory Committee Meetings
3. Program Advisory Committee Overview and 2026 Work Plan
4. Commuter Choice Program
 - A. I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2027-2028 Program Update
 - B. I-66 Needs Assessment Update
5. Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Update
6. Other Items
 - Next Program Advisory Committee Meeting: Thursday, April 16, 2026, 4:30 p.m.

PAC Committee Members:

Dalia Palchik, Chair
Juli Briskman, Vice Chair
Sarah Bagley
Takis Karantonis
David Snyder

**MEETING SUMMARY
JOINT NVTC PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE/
NVTC-PRTC JOINT COMMISSION WORKING GROUP
Via Electronic Participation
Public Streaming via YouTube
April 24, 2025**

NVTC Program Advisory Committee

Members Present:

Sarah Bagley
Juli Briskman
Dave Snyder

NVTC Program Advisory Committee

Members Absent:

Maureen Coffey
Dalia Palchik

Other NVTC Commissioners Present:

Takis Karantonis
Mark Sickles

NVTC Staff and Others Present:

Kate Mattice, Executive Director
Andrew D’huyvetter
Jason Adle
Shannon Bacon
Daniel Knickelbein
Ann McGrane
Tenley O’Hara
Melissa Walker
Bob Schneider (PRTC Executive Director)
Amy Garbarini (DRPT)
Lucas Muller (Kimley-Horn)

NVTC-PRTC Joint Commission Working

Group Members Present:

Tinesha Allen (PRTC)
Kenny Boddye (PRTC)
Sarah Bagley (NVTC)
Jannan Holmes (PRTC)

NVTC-PRTC Joint Commission Working

Group Members Absent:

Maureen Coffey (NVTC)
Dalia Palchik (NVTC)

NVTC Commissioner Sarah Bagley called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and noted that she was filling in for Program Advisory Committee (PAC)/Joint Commission Working Group (JCWG) Chair Palchik. Ms. Bagley stated 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 committee members are participating via Zoom. She noted that the meeting is also being livestreamed via NVTC’s YouTube channel. She noted that staff

followed procedures and guidelines to give notice to PAC and JCWG members, both Commissions, staff and the public about the meeting.

NVTC Deputy Director of Programs and Policy Ann McGrane called the roll and determined a quorum was not present for either the JCWG or the PAC. Staff went ahead with the first presentation and a quorum for each committee was reached during the meeting as noted.

Ms. Bagley stated that the meeting summary of the September 19, 2024 Joint Program Advisory Committee/Joint Commission Working Group meeting was provided in the meeting materials and committee members had no changes.

Draft I-395/95 Commuter Choice Staff-Recommended Program of Projects

Ms. Bagley introduced NVTC Commuter Choice and Policy Manager Daniel Knickelbein, who provided an overview of the staff-recommended Program of Projects for the I-395/95 Commuter Choice program for FY 2026-2027. He provided a summary of the I-395/95 Commuter Choice program to date, which includes three prior rounds of funding with nearly \$90 million awarded. Mr. Knickelbein highlighted some of the benefits the program has provided to Northern Virginia since 2017, including reductions in vehicle miles traveled, avoided automobile crashes and reduced fuel costs.

Mr. Knickelbein provided an overview of the most recent Call for Projects, which closed in December 2024. NVTC received 15 applications totaling \$37.5 million dollars in requested funding. After an eligibility review, one project, Arlington County's Cross-Potomac Trail: Northern Virginia approach, was deemed ineligible for Commuter Choice funding and removed from consideration. Mr. Knickelbein provided a summary of the application scoring metrics, emphasizing that person throughput is the most heavily weighted scoring metric. Mr. Knickelbein then detailed the list of 14 new applications that are eligible in this round, and noted that a \$10 million dollar award to Fairfax County's Richmond Highway BRT project will be made this cycle, fulfilling a \$20 million dollar funding award that was awarded by the Commissions in the FY 2023-2024 Commuter Choice funding cycle to be split into two awards. The total staff-recommended Program of Projects includes \$39.5 million in funding, and consists of 12 bus service enhancement projects, one bus rapid transit line, one new bus route and one rail station enhancement. Mr. Knickelbein noted that the 15 projects are estimated to result in 3,800 weekday transit trips leading to a reduction of 22 million annual vehicle miles traveled and an annual savings of \$2.4 million in fuel costs.

Mr. Knickelbein provided an overview of the public comment period. During the public comment period that ran from March 12 to April 11, NVTC received 458 public comments via an online survey and email. He noted that public comments received were generally supportive of the projects under consideration for Commuter Choice funding. He added that a public hearing was held prior to the April 24, 2025 PAC/JCWG meeting giving the public an additional opportunity to comment, and two public comments were received during the hearing.

Mr. Knickelbein concluded by providing a timeline of upcoming dates for the Program of Projects. He noted that the NVTC and PRTC Commissions will be briefed on the draft Program of Projects at their respective May 1 meetings. The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Rail and Transit Subcommittee will be briefed at its upcoming May 20 meeting. At their June 5 meetings, the NVTC and PRTC Commissions will be asked to approve the Program of Projects for transmittal to the CTB for inclusion in the FY 2026-2031 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), which is set to be approved by the CTB on June 25. He also presented future policy considerations for the I-395/95 program, noting that future rounds are anticipated to be highly competitive; service enhancement projects must re-apply on a bi-annual basis and are not guaranteed future funding; and that funding for operations projects cannot exceed 50% over a nine-year average.

Mr. Karantonis asked how equity was measured in the selection criteria. Mr. Knickelbein responded that projects are awarded points based on whether they start or end near one of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) Equity Emphasis Areas, which consider a variety of socioeconomic factors.

Mr. Boddye asked whether MWCOC's Activity Centers are factored into the scoring criteria. Mr. Knickelbein answered that the scoring considers if a project is located within one of MWCOC's Activity Centers. Mr. Boddye asked about the future possibility of a phased funding arrangement like that of the Richmond Highway BRT program. Mr. Knickelbein noted Commuter Choice has a funding maximum of \$20 million for any one project and that staff would be willing to work with applicants on a case-by-case basis to split funding across multiple programs.

Mr. Sickles left the meeting at 4:52 p.m. and did not return. Ms. Allen joined the meeting at 4:53 p.m. and Ms. McGrane confirmed a quorum for the JCWG.

The Joint Commission Working Group concluded their portion of the meeting at 4:55 p.m. at which point the JCWG members from PRTC left the meeting.

I-66 Needs Assessment Update

Ms. Bagley re-introduced Mr. Knickelbein to present an update on the I-66 Needs Assessment study. Mr. Knickelbein provided an overview of the Commuter Choice program, noting that the program covers both the I-395/95 corridor and the I-66 Inside the Beltway corridor and that it provides funding for bus service enhancements, new bus service, rail station enhancements and TDM and commuter incentive projects, among others across the region. Mr. Knickelbein then introduced Amy Garbarini, the NOVA Transit Planning Manager for the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), who provided an overview of the I-66 Outside the Beltway (OTB) program, which supports transit improvements in the I-66 corridor between Haymarket and the Beltway. Ms. Garbarini noted that approximately

\$1 billion is available in funding between FY 2025 and FY 2028, and past grantees for the I-66 OTB program have included Fairfax Connector and OmniRide.

Ms. Garbarini provided an overview of previous studies conducted along the corridor. The last study conducted on I-66 Inside the Beltway (ITB) was in June 2012 and recommended a series of multimodal projects, including enhanced transit service, bike/pedestrian improvements, and TDM strategies, among other items. The last study conducted on I-66 Outside the Beltway was in February 2020 and recommended a series of improvements that included additional commuter bus service, enhanced VRE service, and TDM strategies prior to the opening of the I-66 OTB Express Lanes. The purpose of the current needs assessment is to identify a menu of eligible short- and long-term multimodal investments that the I-66 programs could support. Ms. Garbarini noted that both Commuter Choice and DRPT programs have many years of funding remaining and that the assumptions from the most recent studies need to be refreshed. The assessment does not aim to identify specific routes or detailed projects, nor does it conduct the analysis needed for applicants to submit future funding applications to either I-66 funding program.

Mr. Knickelbein then provided an overview of the process being undertaken to identify the needs in the I-66 corridor. This process includes an identification of travel patterns through travel demand modeling and documentation of projects based on a review of existing plans. He also provided an overview of the timeline and process of the overall study. Mr. Knickelbein noted that the data collected in the Existing and Future Conditions Analysis was collected in 2024 and given the significant changes in travel patterns, the study team has decided to update the analysis with 2025 data to account for these changes. The study team will hold a second round of stakeholder engagement – likely in the form of a workshop – to review study findings.

Mr. Knickelbein noted that as part of the initial work, the needs assessment has identified a ‘toolbox’ of potential solutions that could be applied along the corridor. This list was assembled based on the eligibility criteria from the I-66 Commuter Choice and Outside the Beltway Programs and includes:

- Enhanced transit service (increased frequency, modified/adjusted stops)
- New transit (connections to Metrorail via local bus, new commuter bus routes)
- High-capacity rail (expand Metrorail and/or VRE service, improve Metrorail and/or VRE facilities)
- Capital projects (Expand existing park and ride, new park and ride, bus stop enhancements, transit priority improvements)
- Pedestrian/bicycle (ped/bike access to transit)

Ms. Briskman asked for clarification on whether this list represents the categories that applications would have to ‘fit’ into. Mr. Knickelbein clarified that the list represents a potential list of solutions and that not every solution would work for every jurisdiction.

Mr. Snyder joined the meeting at 4:59 p.m. and Ms. McGrane confirmed a quorum for the PAC.

Mr. Knickelbein concluded with next steps, noting that the project team is currently documenting the stakeholder meetings that were held in March and April and identifying any unaddressed needs. The team is also starting discussions on how to update travel data based on trends in early 2025, as well as discussions on possible policy considerations that would support projects identified in the study.

Ms. Briskman noted rising ridership on Loudoun County Transit commuter buses that resulted in the reinstatement of new buses that had previously been taken out of service and stated that the County would be monitoring the progress of the needs assessment. Mr. Knickelbein added that projects in Loudoun County have previously received Commuter Choice funding and that NVTC and DRPT staff will continue to have conversations with county staff.

Other Business

Ms. Bagley announced that the next PAC meeting has been scheduled for June 18 at 4:30 p.m. at NVTC Suite #230 conference room.

Ms. Bagley adjourned the meeting at 5:12 p.m.

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MEETING SUMMARY
PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NVTC Suite #230 Conference Room
2300 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia
Public Streaming via YouTube
September 18, 2025

Program Advisory Committee Members Present:

Dalia Palchik
Juli Briskman

Program Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Sarah Bagley
Maureen Coffey
David Snyder

NVTC Staff and Others Present:

Kate Mattice, Executive Director
Jason Adle
Shannon Bacon
Andrew D’huyvetter
Adam Hager
Daniel Knickelbein
Ann McGrane
Tenley O’Hara
Sophie Spiliotopoulos
Melissa Walker
Owen Williams
Brent Riddle (Fairfax County)
Kirk Dand (Arlington County)
Randy Minchew (Commonwealth Transportation Board)

Program Advisory Committee Chair Palchik called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. She stated that the meeting is being streamed live via NVTC’s YouTube channel. She noted that they did not have a quorum, but it was agreed to go ahead and have staff give their presentations. Chair Palchik noted that the meeting is not a formal Program Advisory Committee meeting, but since staff followed the public meeting requirements, they can continue to meet in their role as Commissioners.

Chair Palchik stated that acceptance of the Meeting Summary of April 24, 2025 Joint Program Advisory Committee/Joint Commission Working Group meeting will be requested at the next meeting when a quorum is present.

Transit Ridership Update

Chair Palchik introduced Deputy Director of Programs and Policy Ann McGrane who explained that the presentation by Data Visualization Program Manager Sophie Spiliotopoulos would highlight the strength of transit in Northern Virginia ahead of the 2026 Legislative Session.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos stated that the NoVaTransit Data Dashboard, NVTC's resource that provides information on current and historical performance of transit in Northern Virginia, has been updated to improve transparency and usability of the dashboard. The updated dashboard is now live on the NVTC website.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos proceeded to the presentation, noting that overall, transit ridership in Northern Virginia is strong. From January to July 2025, there were 706,000 weekly bus riders on Northern Virginia transit services, 1.3 million weekly Metrorail riders in Virginia, 47,000 weekly VRE riders – all of which culminate in 15% year-over-year ridership increase. For comparison, the rest of the Commonwealth showed an 11% year-over-year ridership increase.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos stated that in June 2025, Virginia Metrobus routes and local bus services exceeded the average ridership from 2019. Many agency-level initiatives played a part in these increases. Several local agencies have restructured or redesigned their bus networks. Other agencies provided service enhancements. Finally, many local agencies have rolled out free and reduced fare programs to reduce financial barriers to accessing transit. These agency initiatives and others have contributed to ridership increases across all agencies.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos also noted that on long-haul commuter routes and VRE, federal Return to Office mandates and similar trends have resulted in a doubling of ridership on commuter bus services between January and March 2025 and 76% higher ridership on VRE over the past six months. Long-term investments such as the Long Bridge Replacement and upgrades along the Manassas Line will provide the infrastructure necessary to support future growth.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos stated that WMATA has undertaken a number of initiatives to improve their system, such as the implementation of the Better Bus Network on June 29, 2025, optimization of rail service with more peak service, deployment of the Tap.Ride.Go. payment (the ability to pay with a credit or debit card or linked smart device) on the rail system, and the return of Automatic Train Operation (ATO) across the entire network. In terms of safety, enhanced enforcement measures, including but not limited to a new banning policy, have resulted in a decrease in serious crime by 40% and a decrease in rail fare evasion by 82%. Taken together, these initiatives led WMATA to exceed customer satisfaction targets for all modes. Chair Palchik noted that WMATA won the 2025 Outstanding Public Transportation System award from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

Ms. Spiliotopoulos stated that ridership within the WMATA network is continuing to increase, with 24 million trips taking place on bus and rail each month between March and

June 2025. One trend to note is that weekend ridership at Virginia Metrorail stations in 2025 is 30% higher compared to 2019. Ridership is also increasing compared to peer systems. WMATA has seen a change in ridership of 93% from FY 2022 to FY 2025. This contrasts with peers who have seen increases between 24% to 52% in the same period.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos concluded her presentation by noting that these successes have been because agencies have been able to maintain service levels. However, funding uncertainty puts these ridership gains both for local agencies and WMATA at risk – particularly with state aid in decline. The SJ 28 initiative will work to find a long-term funding solution for the local agencies, while DMVMoves will work to find a long-term funding solution for both the local agencies and WMATA as part of its work. NVTC plans to elevate the success of transit in Northern Virginia ahead of the next General Assembly Session.

Ms. Briskman provided an update on microtransit pilot services being launched in Loudoun County. She asked if there was a way to calculate how much time commuters are saving by using transit and how much CO2 emissions are being prevented from transit use.

Chair Palchik introduced incoming Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Urban At-Large Member Randy Minchew, who provided an overview of his history and experience.

Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Update

Chair Palchik then introduced Envision Route 7 Senior Program Manager Vikram Sinha who provided an update on Envision Route 7.

Mr. Sinha reviewed the Route 7 corridor and the current Metrobus F20 service, as well as the existing capital projects that will ultimately support BRT on Route 7. Over \$518 million in capital project funding will be invested in the corridor to deliver on Envision Route 7 BRT. He then gave an overview of the project task and outreach phases, highlighting the specific tasks for the Phase 4-2 project, two distinct outreach phases, and two distinct analysis tasks for Falls Church and Alexandria.

Mr. Sinha explained the upcoming “Building Understanding” outreach phase, which includes high-level goals for the outreach and the key questions that would be asked of the public and of key stakeholders around the project. This phase aims to increase awareness and understanding of the project and BRT service in general, collect feedback to inform decisions for the Alexandria southern terminus analysis task, and empower stakeholders to become advocates and champions for the project. The outreach will include several pop-up events at key locations along the corridor, as well as bus stop chats. There will also be an open house event at the Culmore Library on October 15 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Sinha concluded by providing a more in-depth overview of bus service on Route 7 and NVTC’s role in the Route 7 corridor. The Phase 4-2 study aims to advance jurisdictional decision-making on BRT route and bus treatments but will not make bus operation decisions and is not looking to remove bus routes. As part of this project, NVTC is convening staff from the jurisdictions, VDOT, regional agencies and transit agencies along the corridor to ensure

the community is served and to explore broader opportunities to collaborate along the corridor on service and infrastructure improvements. He stated that NVTC has rolled out a public-facing map to allow viewers to see the location of bus priority infrastructure in the region. This map was enabled by the efforts of jurisdictional staff sharing data on the location and details of bus priority infrastructure. The map includes details on bus priority lanes, transit signal priority, and other similar infrastructure. It is available on NVTC's website.

Chair Palchik asked how soon implementation activity on the project would be, highlighting that there may be concerns about engaging in something without a clear timeline. Mr. Sinha responded that NVTC staff acknowledged the phased nature of the project and have been working with and supporting jurisdictional and transit agency staff towards advancing components of the project. NVTC staff have been actively working with Fairfax County staff to facilitate work on the project. There are also active conversations with WMATA about putting forward an I-66 Commuter Choice application for a peak-period, limited-stop service similar to the ultimate Envision Route 7 BRT service.

Director of Programs and Policy Andrew D'huyvetter also provided additional context noting that the project includes significant coordination with the main owners of the right of way (VDOT). The Envision Route 7 team will be coming to the Fairfax County Transportation Committee later in the fall to brief the committee on the project and provide updates specific to the Fairfax County portion of the project.

Other Business

Ms. Palchik announced that the next PAC meeting has yet to be scheduled but will occur sometime in 2026.

Ms. Palchik adjourned the meeting at 5:28 p.m.