



NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

# Executive Director Newsletter



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Northern Virginia  
Transportation Commission  
2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 230  
Arlington, VA 22201

# December 2022



## A Message from Kate Mattice

We celebrated a momentous day in November with the opening of Phase 2 of the Silver Line. It was an honor to have the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and many present and past Commissioners be part of the many celebrations held that day.

However, you may not know that NVTC has been a part of the project since the very beginning. Some would say we've grown up with it. NVTC was founded in 1964 to represent the cities and counties in Northern Virginia that had a common vision and commitment to making Metrorail a reality. Along the way, the Commission became a place where our regional jurisdictions could discuss, debate and collaborate to create public transit solutions that work for our region.

Two years after its founding, back in 1966, the Commission held the very first public hearings on the idea of building rail to the then four-year old Dulles Airport. The Commission then pressed for Congressional funding for foundational studies that launched the planning for a transit connection to Dulles. Nearly two decades later, in 1985, when the vision of high-capacity rail became more than just a dream, NVTC was at the table with the Dulles Airport Access Task Force, which ultimately concluded that a rail line to Dulles was feasible. That's when the hard work began.

I also don't want to overlook the other milestone we recognized with the opening of six new Metro stations--new connections that our local bus systems made to link people to the Silver Line. Fairfax Connector and Loudoun County buses are a part of a comprehensive bus system that provides access to hundreds of thousands of jobs in Northern Virginia alone. With the Silver Line, those buses connect people to even more jobs, and so much more, throughout our region.

From our work to help connect Dulles to transit 60 years ago to our work today helping implement electric bus fleets, funding express buses and pressing Metro on issues that matter to Northern Virginia, NVTC is a partner in helping all of our public transit systems be the best they can be.

Executive Director

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**January 5**  
Commission Meeting

**January 17-18**  
Commonwealth  
Transportation Board

**January 20**  
VRE Operations Board

**January 24**  
Virginia Passenger Rail  
Authority

**February 2**  
Commission Meeting

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## Decades-long dream of Metro to Dulles and Loudoun realized



Upon arriving at Ashburn Station, Loudoun officials, including Matt Letourneau, led a second celebration marking Metro's extension to the county. From there we attended commemorations at Innovation Center and Reston Town Center Stations in Fairfax County.

Throughout the day there were stories of the decades of hard work that went into realizing both phases of the Silver Line. We know this project will have generational impacts as Metro becomes more accessible for tens of thousands of people. It's not just the train stations, it's also the new and updated Fairfax Connector and Loudoun County bus routes that bring people to and from the stations. We also see the economic development that's already sprouted, and we frequently read about projects in the pipeline.

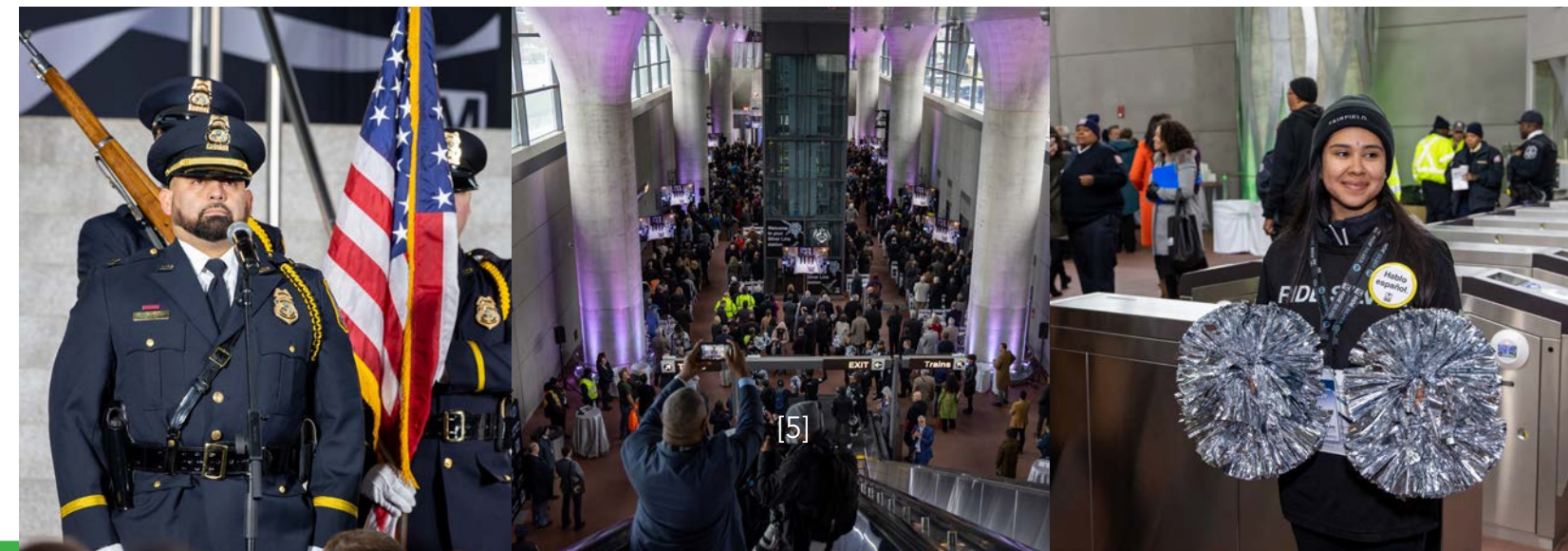
NVTC's creation in 1964 came just two years after the opening of the airport and Commissioners and staff were involved in the research and

planning of a transit connection to Dulles from nearly the start. That year the Federal Aviation Administration recommended reserving the median of the Dulles Access Road for future transit. Two years later, NVTC held three public hearings on potential rail corridors in Northern Virginia and adopted a resolution endorsing bills in the U.S. House and Senate to fund studies of high-speed ground transportation to the region's three major airports. NVTC's 1974 legislative agenda advocated funding a rail extension to Dulles that would connect with the planned Metrorail system. NVTC continued to work closely with elected officials, local jurisdictions and many others throughout the 1970s, 80s, 90s and 2000s as various ideas from buses to a monorail were proposed, studied and debated and ultimately finalized.

Northern Virginia's biggest public transit project in nearly a decade opened November 15 with celebrations that drew hundreds of people, including top administration and elected officials. Tuesday's opening of [Phase 2](#) of Metro's Silver Line marked the realization of an idea sparked by the construction of Dulles International Airport more than half a century ago.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, Sens. Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, and Reps. Don Beyer, Gerry Connolly and Jennifer Wexton and our Metro Board appointees Paul

Smedberg and Matt Letourneau were among those who spoke ahead of the official ribbon cutting at the airport station. They were joined by Fairfax and Loudoun County officials, past and present, Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke and many others who helped make the 11.4 mile extension, featuring six new stations, a reality. Executive Director Kate Mattice joined Director of Programs and Policy Allan Fye, WMATA Senior Program Manager Andrew D'huyvetter and Program Analyst Ronnetta Zack-Williams for the [ceremony](#). We then boarded a train bound for the end of the line.





# Welcome to the sv Silver Line EXTENSION *Grand Opening*



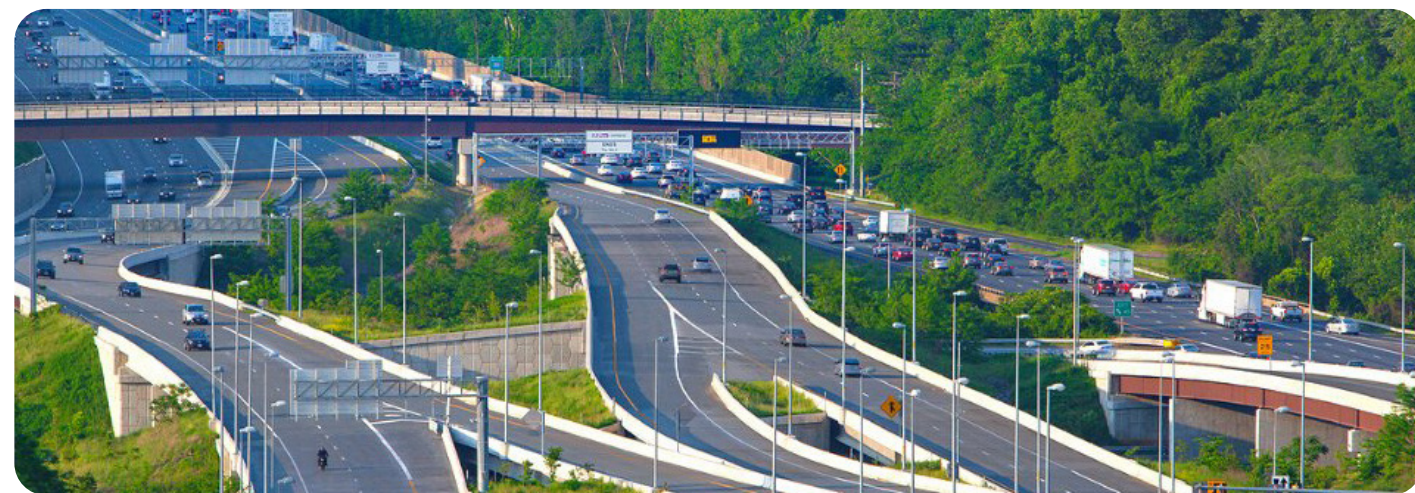


## I-395/95 Commuter Choice FY 2024-2025 Call for Projects opens

NVTC and Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) jurisdictions and transit providers may now [apply](#) for \$45 to \$48 million in available I-395/95 Commuter Choice FY 2024-2025 funding following actions by both Commissions last week to open the call for projects. I-395/95 Commuter Choice reinvests toll revenues from the 95 and 395 [Express Lanes](#) via annual transit payments by [Transurban](#), the Express Lanes concessionaire, into transit and other transportation improvements that benefit toll payers by moving more people more efficiently through the corridor and expanding commuters' travel options.

Applications are due Friday, January 27 and NVTC anticipates approval of an FY 2024-2025 Program of Projects in June. To help interested eligible applicants identify projects that would fit well within the program's unique requirements, the Commuter Choice team will hold one-on-one workshops in the coming weeks to discuss preliminary project ideas and review the required application materials.

The Commuter Choice project selection process incorporates a data-driven [technical evaluation](#) process, as well as a public comment period that will take place in spring 2023. The Commissions adopted enhancements last week to the technical evaluation process that allocate more of the possible points to measurable factors, introduce equity considerations and reduce the number of overall criteria.



## Metro stations south of Reagan National Airport reopen

Six Metrorail stations in Northern Virginia [reopened](#) November 6 following an eight-week shutdown to integrate the future Potomac Yard Station into the system. Those stations south of Ronald Reagan National Airport will be served by Blue Line trains only until May 2023 as rehabilitation work continues on the Yellow Line bridge and tunnel. Metro is providing three free shuttle buses and Virginia Railway Express has [reduced](#) fares. Metro says Potomac Yard Station, between Reagan National Airport and Braddock Road, will open in 2023.



## Envision Route 7 plans presented to Falls Church City Council

Senior Program Manager Xavier Harmony gave an update on the [Envision Route 7](#) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project at the invitation of the [Falls Church City Council](#) November 14. The planned bus system would connect Tysons and Alexandria by way of Falls Church and Seven Corners. Xavier provided background on the project's history before describing the current mobility study, including some of the key findings identified through traffic modeling. Xavier concluded the presentation with an update on next steps, including the next round of public outreach in the spring, as well as the concurrent NVTC effort that is developing funding, governance and implementation strategies for the next phases of the project.





Executive Director Kate Mattice attended the Capital Region Transportation Forum in Pentagon City November 9. It was sponsored by the Greater Washington Partnership and Greater Washington Board of Trade.

Photo: (l-r) Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke, Virginia Transportation Secretary Shep Miller, NVTC Chair Canek Aguirre, Kate Mattice, Federal appointee to the Metro Board Sarah Kline

## Transit Technology workshop covers zero-emission bus and fare upgrades

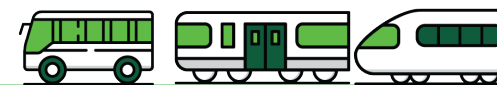
NVTC hosted a Transit Technology Workshop for members of its Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB) and Regional Fare Collection working groups. It was great to see staff from our regional partners in person.

The morning session focused on ZEBs, with Program Analyst Ronnetta Zack-Williams identifying key takeaways from a ZEB Conference that she attended in California earlier this fall. The conversation then transitioned to a roundtable discussion with each jurisdiction updating the group on its ZEB plans and pilots as well as any lessons learned through the process. Looking to 2023, the ZEB Working Group will serve a critical role advising on the development of NVTC's [Northern Virginia Regional ZEB Strategic Plan](#), which is being managed by our new Transit Technology Senior Program Manager Ann McGrane.

In the afternoon session of the Regional Fare Collection Working Group, Metro updated the

group on the farebox upgrade and procurement status. Each jurisdiction then discussed its anticipated farebox procurement timelines and any fare pilots in progress. In 2023, NVTC looks forward to broadening the scope of the Regional Fare Collection Working Group into a Transit Technology Working Group. While the working group will continue to provide coordination opportunities on fare collection, it will also be a place to discuss new transit technologies to improve the rider experience or operations.

A special thanks to Ann, Ronnetta and Program Analyst Sophie Spiliotopoulos for organizing the event.



NVTC AND PRTC PRESENT:

### ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE FORUM

**RSVP Today**

8:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
Monday, December 5, 2022

Embassy Suites by Hilton  
8100 Loisdale Rd. Springfield, VA

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

Moderated by NVTC Executive Director Kate Mattice alongside DRPT Director and keynote speaker Jen DeBruhl.

Welcome from NVTC Chair Canek Aguirre and PRTC Chair Victor Angry, and featuring our transit leader panel, Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke, Virginia Railway Express CEO Rich Dalton and OmniRide Executive Director Bob Schneider

Welcome to the District:  
Rep. Don Beyer

Keynote Speaker  
Jen DeBruhl





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