




Advancing transit
in Northern Virginia
since 1964



Executive Director Newsletter



July 2024

 @NoVaTransit

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A Message from Kate Mattice

When you think of NVTC, our management of funding and oversight of Metro might come to mind, or our founding and co-ownership of Virginia Railway Express. You might also think of our Commuter Choice program, which has funded more than \$178 million dollars toward projects designed to ease traffic congestion in Northern Virginia.

While that work is critical to keeping our region moving, it speaks to a larger purpose for NVTC—serving as a central institution where our local cities, counties and transit agencies come together to learn from each other. Whether it's important research on transit-related matters, streamlining operations or improving the rider experience by making payments and transfers easier, we are stronger as a region for that collaboration.

That's one reason we held our Transit Innovation Summit in June. The Summit was part of our ongoing 60th anniversary commemorations and a way to focus on past, current and future research on topics relevant to public transportation and a place to share those best practices. Each of the Summit's panel discussions covered real world examples of challenges and opportunities facing public transit providers today and ways to keep transit improving for all operators and users.

I'm also delighted to say that we sold out tickets for the Summit and I also want to express my gratitude to the many members of the NVTC staff who started planning this event more than a year ago. Their dedication and hard work paid off.

If you missed the Summit, or want to experience it again, you can watch the video of the event and see the presentation slides on [our website](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate A. Mattice". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Executive Director

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Save
the
Date

July 11

Joint WMATA/Legislative
and Policy Committees

July 17-18

Commonwealth
Transportation Board

July 18

Commission Meeting
(Special Date - All Virtual)

July 19

VRE Operations Board

August 27

Virginia Passenger Rail
Authority

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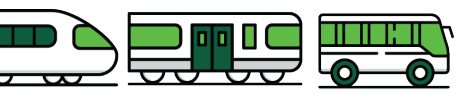


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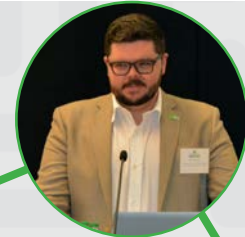
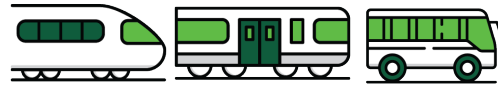


Transit In Sum





Innovation Summit





OmniRide Executive Director
Bob Schneider



NVTC Executive Director
Kate Mattice



NVTC Chair
Matt de Ferranti

NVTC's Transit Innovation Summit highlights research, looks to the future of transit

We held our first-ever Transit Innovation Summit on June 14, reflecting on hot topics in public transit and looking forward to innovations in the field. Planning for the sold out event at the George Mason University Schar School in Arlington started a year ago and I am delighted with the quality of the panels we produced and the opportunity to inform transit professionals about the work of NVTC and our many partners in Northern Virginia. Attendees heard about "Scaling up the Zero-Emission Bus Fleet: Lessons Learned and Next Steps Following Initial Deployment," "Bus Priority in Northern Virginia: Opportunities and Challenges" and "Transit Looking Forward." In addition, OmniRide Executive Director Bob Schneider's keynote address tackled "Stuff they didn't teach in planning school: Opportunities for transit excellence in a post-pandemic world."

The Summit was the first major event to celebrate NVTC's 60th anniversary. Kate reminded folks that NVTC has established itself as the leader in conducting transit research that results in meaningful outcomes for our local transit systems. Over the past 60 years, we've worked to understand how people move in our region and how public transit can take cars off the road. Believe it or not, NVTC was examining the role of transit in reducing emissions as early as 1973 and how bus rapid transit could help Northern Virginia back in 1977.

If you missed the Summit or just want to watch it again, a video of the event and presentation slides are available [on our website](#).





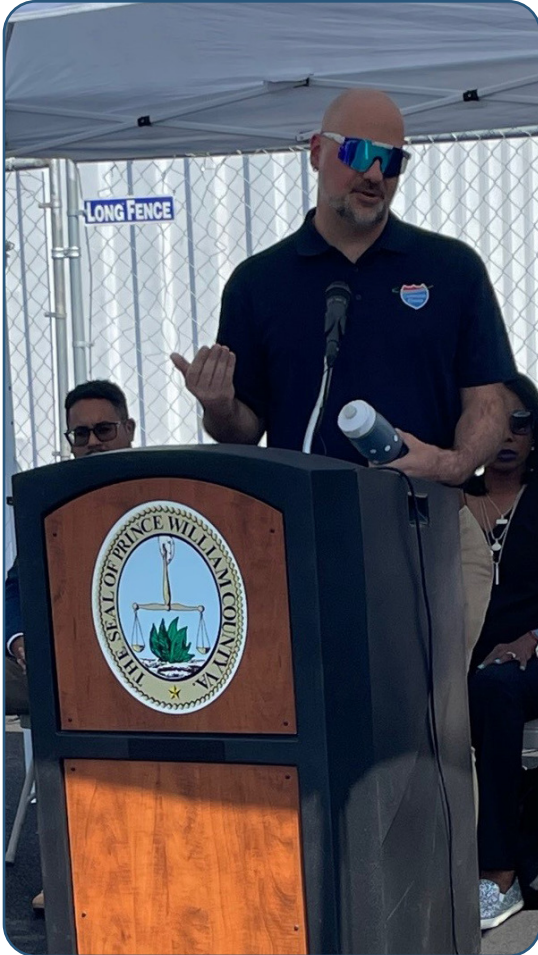
Ann McGrane, NVTC; Amy Mesrobian, Metro; Raymond Mui, DASH, Tom Reynolds Fairfax County



Vikram Sinha, NVTC; Raka Choudhury, Metro; Lee Farmer, VHB; Jason Mumford, STV



Xavier Harmony, NVTC; Allison Davis, Metro; Tiffany Dubinsky, DRPT; Lora Byala, Foursquare ITP



Commuter Choice supports expansion of Prince William commuter lot

Commuter Choice Senior Program Manager Ben Owen spoke at Prince William County's groundbreaking ceremony on June 21 for the Summit School Road Project, which includes Commuter Choice funding for the expansion of the [Horner Road Park-and-Ride](#) lot to accommodate additional vehicles. The lot, which serves several OmniRide express routes that run to Arlington and Washington, D.C., has seen robust demand for commuter parking post-pandemic, creating the need for additional parking spaces. Prince William County is using Commuter Choice funding for additional parking spaces in Lot #6, along with the installation of new bike parking for commuters that will be able to access the lot using the shared-use path along the new Summit School Road. We are pleased to help provide Prince William County residents with additional travel options along the congested I-95 corridor and look forward to the project's opening in early 2026.





I-66 COMMUTER CHOICE FY 2025-2026 PROJECT PROFILES

Thank you for reviewing the projects under consideration for I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2025-2026 funding. To learn more about Commuter Choice, visit novatransit.org.

CTB gives final approval to I-66 Commuter Choice projects

NVTC's [Commuter Choice](#) program continues to expand travel options for Northern Virginia residents with a newly approved I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2025-2026 Program of Projects. The program includes transit improvements, commuter incentives and access to transit enhancements proposed by Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun and Prince William Counties, as well as OmniRide and Virginia Railway Express. The Commonwealth Transportation Board gave the final approval to the set of projects on June 18 as part of its adoption of the Six-Year Improvement Program. The approved program matches that [adopted by the Commission](#) in early June, with 15 projects and a total of \$31 million of funding, though three of the projects also received funding this week under the Department of

Rail and Public Transportation's I-66 Outside the Beltway program and will ultimately be supported by that program instead. The [15 projects](#) together will support an additional 2,700 weekday transit trips along the I-66 corridor, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70% relative to drive-alone travel and save commuters \$2.6 million per year in fuel costs.

The Commuter Choice team, led by Senior Program Manager Ben Owen and Senior Program Analyst Daniel Knickelbein, is now turning its attention to the next I-395/95 Commuter Choice call for projects, which will cover the FY 2026-2027 period. Ben and Daniel will soon reach out to eligible I-395/95 program applicants to schedule informal discussions of potential project ideas.

NVTC tracks transit trends in Northern Virginia

We published a report on Northern Virginia [Transit Trends](#) in June. The report, produced by Senior Program Analyst Sophie Spiliotopoulos, tracks trends over a 15-year period, from 2008 to 2022, to identify how transit has changed over time, then analyzes transit from a geographic perspective to

understand transit's role in how and why people move within the region. Sophie also presented some of the high-level findings of the report to the Commission on June 6th and produced graphics based on the report that we shared on our [social media](#) channels.

TRANSIT TRENDS FROM 2008 TO 2022

9%



increase in bus service

11



new Metro stations

1



new VRE station

Commuter Modes
2008-2022 Average



On average, public transit in Northern Virginia made up **10%** of all commutes

Northern Virginians commute by transit **more than** the national average

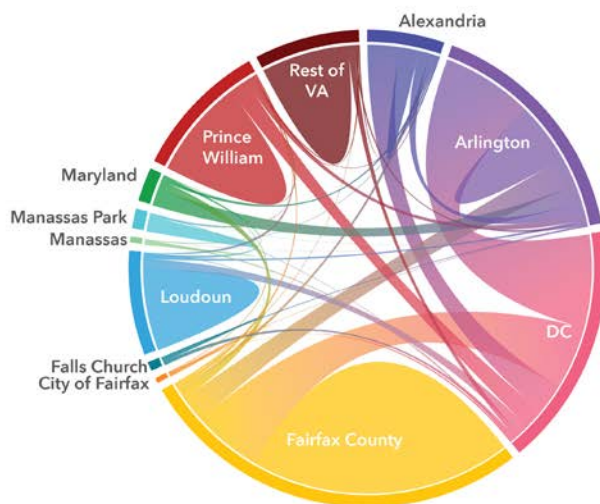
A look at how Northern Virginia transit has changed over space and time.

TRANSIT AROUND THE REGION

Public Transit Trips in Virginia

For trips starting or ending in Northern Virginia. The wider the connection between two locations, the greater the number of trips.

2017 Regional Travel Survey



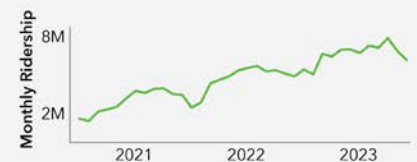
TRANSIT TODAY IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

8 transit agencies

2M residents

256 routes

Transit ridership has increased by **180%** since the pandemic



As of December 2023





DMVMoves holds first regional task force meeting in Arlington

[DMVMoves](#), a joint effort by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and Metro, held its first regional task force [meeting](#) in the Arlington County board room on June 10. The task force includes Chair Matt de Ferranti and Commissioners Paul Smedberg and Mark Sickles.

The task force's goal is to develop a unified vision and sustainable funding model for the region's transit network. During the meeting,

the task force took an in-depth look at topics that vary across local transit systems – from fare policies and payment methods to service hours and signage. Members expressed interest in exploring how to provide more frequent transit service regionwide as well as creating a more seamless network among the region's more than dozen systems to enhance transit users' experience and make transit their preferred option.



Paul Smedberg (left);
Matt de Ferranti (right)



Metro Board elects new officers



The Metro Board met June 27 and [elected Valerie-Joy Santos](#) as Chairman beginning in July. Ms. Santos was appointed by the District of Columbia as a principal director last December. Paul Smedberg, who has served as Board Chairman since 2019, will serve as First Vice Chair, while Joe McAndrew of Maryland will serve as Second Vice Chair in Fiscal Year 2025. NVTCThanks Mr. Smedberg for his five years of service as Chairman.

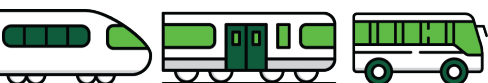
"I know we'll have the opportunity to reflect on your tenure here as chairman, which is at least five years, I know, but I just wanted to thank you for that extraordinary service to this organization. As was just pointed out, you were actually APTA board member of the year this past year, which is about as high honor as you can receive in this business," said Metro Finance Committee Chair Matt Letourneau. "So, I'm personally grateful. I think it's on behalf of everyone, for the amount of time, effort, and just accepting all results that we've had on your leadership."

Board Briefings

The Board received briefings on the Regional Opportunity and Partnership Annual [Report](#), FY 2024 third-quarter Service Excellence [Report](#) and approved the issuance of Second Lien Dedicated Revenue Bonds, Series 2024A, which helps finance projects in Metro's capital program. Michelle Zamarin was sworn in as Metro's next Inspector General.

Metro Fares

As the FY 2025 budget took effect June 30, Metro customers saw moderate [fare increases](#). These increases keep fares in line with cost-of-living adjustments and allow Metro to maintain current service levels. Most fares increased by 12.5%: Metrobus fares will be \$2.25, express bus fares are \$4.80, and Metrorail fares range from \$2.25 to \$6.75 on weekdays depending on distance traveled. Metrorail fares during late night (after 9:30 p.m.) and weekend service ranges from \$2.25 to \$2.50 depending on distance traveled.





ENVISION ROUTE 7

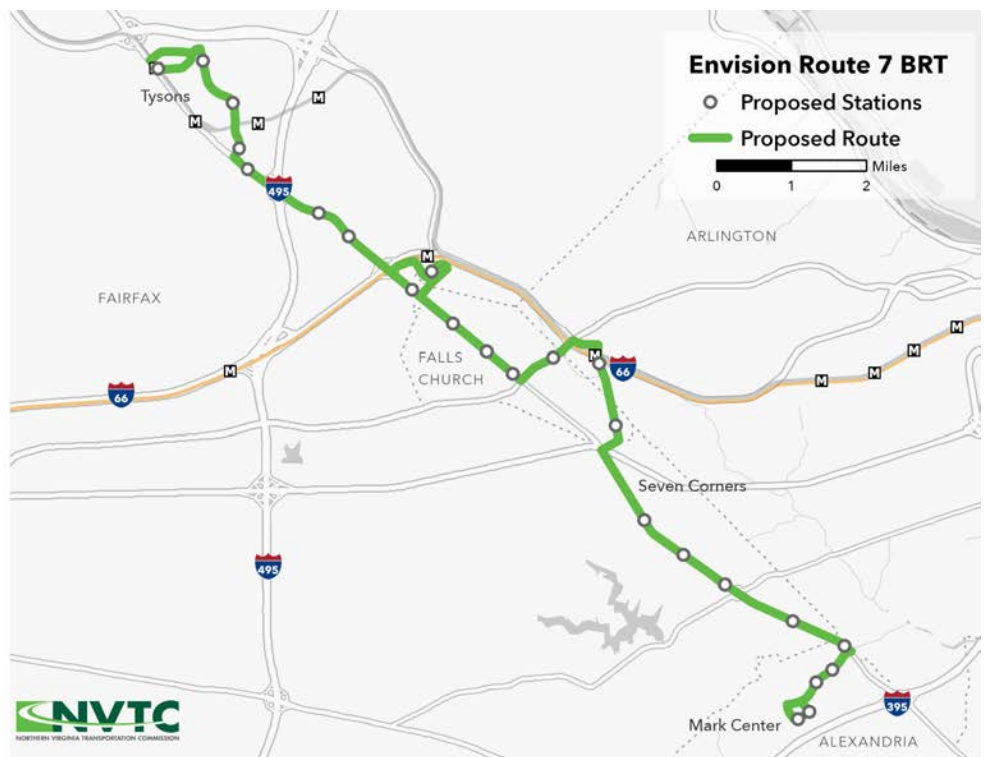
Staff brief Fairfax County supervisors on Envision Route 7 implementation

Director of Programs and Policy Allan Fye presented an overview of NVTC's [Envision Route 7](#) (Bus Rapid Transit) BRT Strategic Implementation Plan to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors [Transportation Committee](#) on June 18. Allan discussed NVTC's role in coordinating multiple local, regional, state and Federal partners, the importance of a robust,

multi-lingual outreach effort to stakeholders and how NVTC's work is closely coordinated with and leverages Fairfax County's efforts. Members of the Transportation Committee expressed support for NVTC's role and leadership in making transit along the Route 7 corridor even better.

The Vision: BRT on Route 7

- 14 miles
- Tysons (Spring Hill Metro) to Falls Church (linking West and East Falls Church Metro stations), Seven Corners, Bailey's Crossroads and Mark Center (linking West End Transitway)
- Frequent, high-capacity service with amenities
- Connects to three Metrorail stations



Northern Virginia Transportation Commission 3

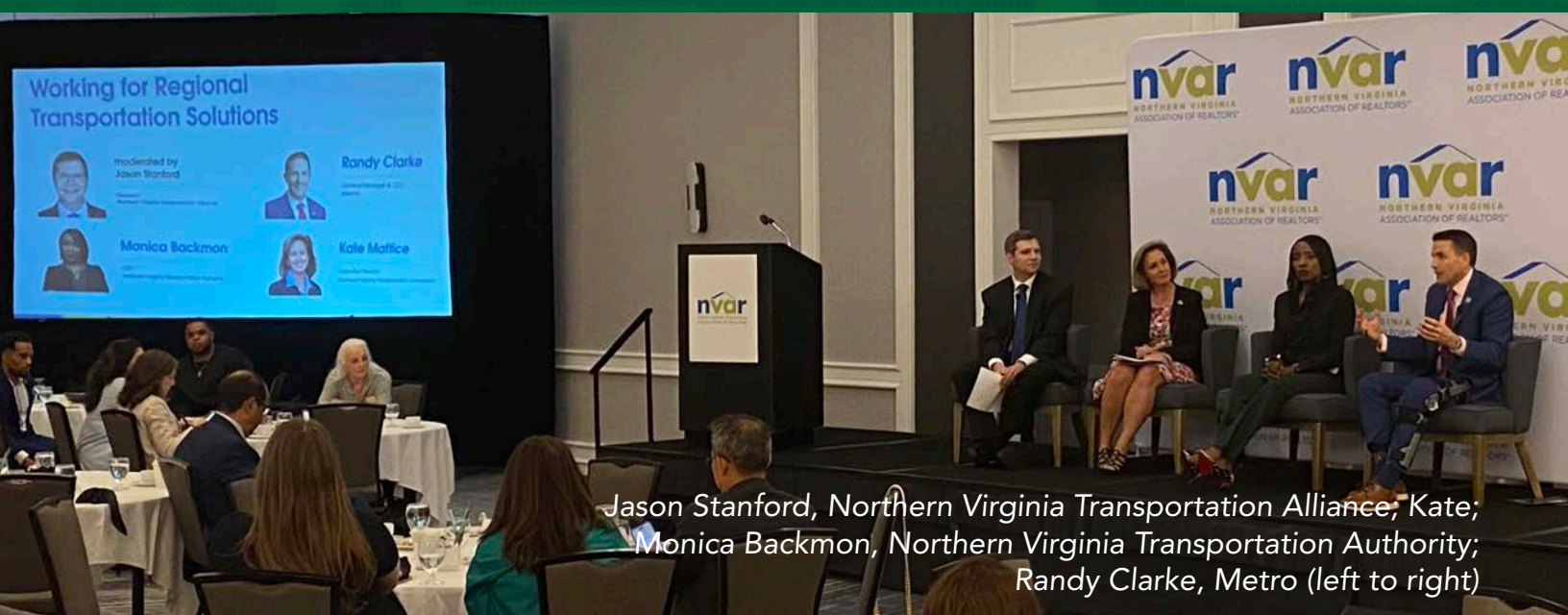
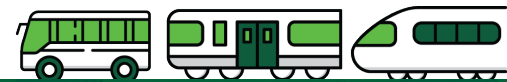




NoVa bus systems provide important connections for households and businesses

Executive Director Kate Mattice joined a panel to discuss the importance of Northern Virginia's transportation network to economic success in the region on June 11. Kate thanks NVAR, the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors, for inviting her to talk about the role that our bus systems and Virginia Railway Express have in supporting our communities. With

the simultaneous launch of DMVMoves and the Virginia General Assembly's Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee, Kate shared NVTC's role in ensuring the coordination of these major efforts to ensure the long term health of our transit systems.



Jason Stanford, Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance; Kate; Monica Backmon, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority; Randy Clarke, Metro (left to right)



APTA wins transit ridership challenge

Marketing and Engagement Manager Monique Blyther joined regional partners and the Advanced Energy Group (AEG) to recognize the winning team from the [Ride for the Region](#) transit challenge. The four-week competition was the first-of-its-kind in the region, intended to spark increased use of public transit through gamification and friendly rivalry. The [American Public Transit Association](#) (APTA) was one of eight organizations to participate, taking the lead with the highest number of trips via regional bus and rail services.

Major kudos to the APTA team and a special thanks to volunteers from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, District Department of Transportation, AEG, NVTC and Metro who worked to make the challenge possible. Sustainability really is a team sport and we look forward to continuing the conversation on ways to improve mobility and climate in our region.





Good luck Robert!

We want to wish good luck to Transit Fellow Robert Rudesill. Robert has been working with the communications team since January, where he's been instrumental in supporting planning for NVTC's 60th anniversary events, creating social media posts and graphics, and helping out with writing and editing publications like this

newsletter. Robert plans to attend law school in the near future. We also want to thank the Department of Rail and Public Transportation for its financial support of this vital program that provides hands on experience in public transit and public policy.



Special *thanks* to our 60th Anniversary sponsors:

Platinum Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Bronze Level





*Advancing transit in
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2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 230
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