

Executive Director Report

September 2016



Standing on a parking deck above I-66 last month as Governor McAuliffe officially launched Transform 66, I was struck both by how far NVTC has come and how much further we can go. These are exciting times for NVTC staff, as our role in moving more people more efficiently and reliably through the corridor is significant.

Our road map – for Transform 66 and a host of projects and programs – is a new work plan, being developed in consultation with the MAC. It will guide us through June 2018 as we endeavor to further NVTC’s mission.

Creating the plan is more than an academic exercise. Information gleaned through meetings with commissioners, conversations with partners, and much research and reflection has instilled in staff members a greater understanding of NVTC’s role — in NoVa, the Commonwealth and the D.C. region — and how each of us can best contribute.

The plan, to be shared with the Commission in October, contains an exciting array of programs, projects, activities and events that will support our jurisdictions, engage a range of stakeholders, and provide a forum for the discussion and solution of regional transit issues. Here are some highlights of planned efforts:

- Products to inform the Commission on WMATA’s economic contributions to NoVa and the Commonwealth
- Celebratory groundbreakings and kick-offs of components funded through the Transform 66 Multimodal Project
- Release of our Legislative & Policy Agenda at a joint NVTC-PRTC briefing, featuring high-profile speakers, for members of the General Assembly
- Release of NVTC’s work identifying opportunities to enhance the regional bus network
- A Transit Means Business event with NoVa’s chambers of commerce

As always, your thoughts and ideas — on the work plan or any NVTC– or transit-related topic — are welcome. I’m a quick call or email away.

~ *Kate Mattice*
Acting Executive Director

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Stay in Touch with NVTC Online

Whether your preference is to Friend or Follow, you can now interact with NVTC on [Facebook \(@NoVaTransit\)](#) and [Twitter \(@NoVaTransit\)](#). Our expanded online presence allows us to share news and updates with a wider audience and to connect with our jurisdictions and transit agencies, reposting or retweeting interesting and important information. Chances are, if you have a Twitter account, NVTC is following you. We encourage you to return the favor.

The Twitter feed also is displayed on NVTC’s homepage. Beneath the feed is a “Read the Latest” icon which allows visitors to peruse and subscribe to NVTC’s daily press clips, which features transit-related headlines from NoVa, the region, the commonwealth and beyond.



Key Dates

Sept. 7	VRE Management Online Chat
Sept. 8	WMATA Board Meeting
Sept. 8	NVTA Monthly Meeting
Sept. 16	VRE Operations Board Meeting
Sept. 20-21	CTB Monthly Meeting
Sept. 21	TPB Monthly Meeting
Sept. 22	WMATA Board Meeting
Sept. 22	NVTA West Ox Garage Groundbreaking
Oct. 6	NVTC Monthly Meeting

Transform 66 September Update

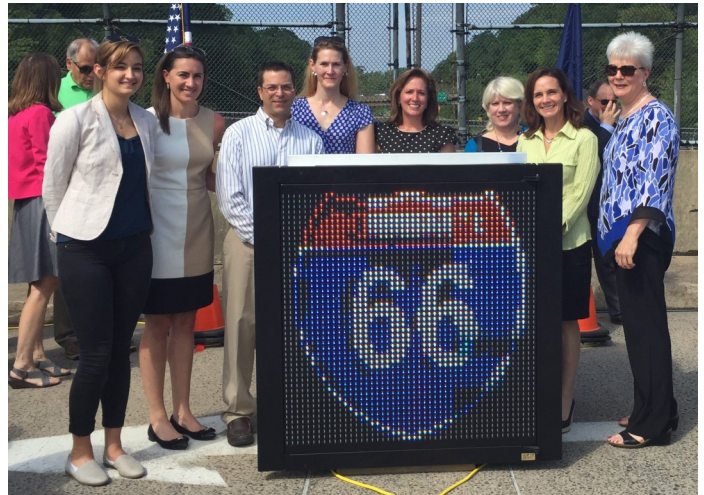
Within days of [the CTB’s endorsement of the 10 multi-modal components](#) approved by NVTC, Gov. Terry McAuliffe was joined by members of the General Assembly and local elected officials [to kick off the installation of the tolling infrastructure](#). Eight toll gantries and 125 signs will be installed over and around I-66 inside the Beltway. Tolling of the Interstate, which will provide revenue to fund additional multimodal components, will begin next summer.

NVTC staff, in collaboration with the Commission’s jurisdictions and Multimodal Project grantees, has developed a Standard Component Agreement (SCA), which the Commission will consider at its September meeting. Each SCA contains an addendum that specifies the measures NVTC will use to determine the component’s effectiveness in meeting the goals of the [Memorandum of Agreement](#) between NVTC and the Commonwealth.

NVTC is working with local jurisdictions on component-specific kick-off events. The first will be an October groundbreaking for [construction of a 250-space park-and-ride](#) lot, which will anchor new commuter bus service, in Loudoun County’s Aldie community.



Gov. McAuliffe (third from right) and Transportation Sec. Aubrey Layne (third from left, unveil sign saying “Transforming I-66 Begins Here”



NVTC staff at the Transform 66 groundbreaking on the parking deck at Washington-Lee High School in Arlington on Aug. 1

NVTC-Approved Multimodal Components

- Bus Stop Consolidation and Accessibility Improvements
- Peak Period Service Expansion to ART Bus Route 55
- Peak Period Service Expansion to Metrobus Route 2A
- Loudoun County Stone Ridge Enhanced Transit
- Fairfax Connector Express Bus, Gov. Center to State Dept.
- PRTC Gainesville to Pentagon Commuter Service
- Expanded TDM Outreach to the I-66 Corridor
- Expanded Transit Access, through Capital Bikeshare
- Loudoun County Transportation Demand Management
- Multimodal Real-Time Transportation Information Screens

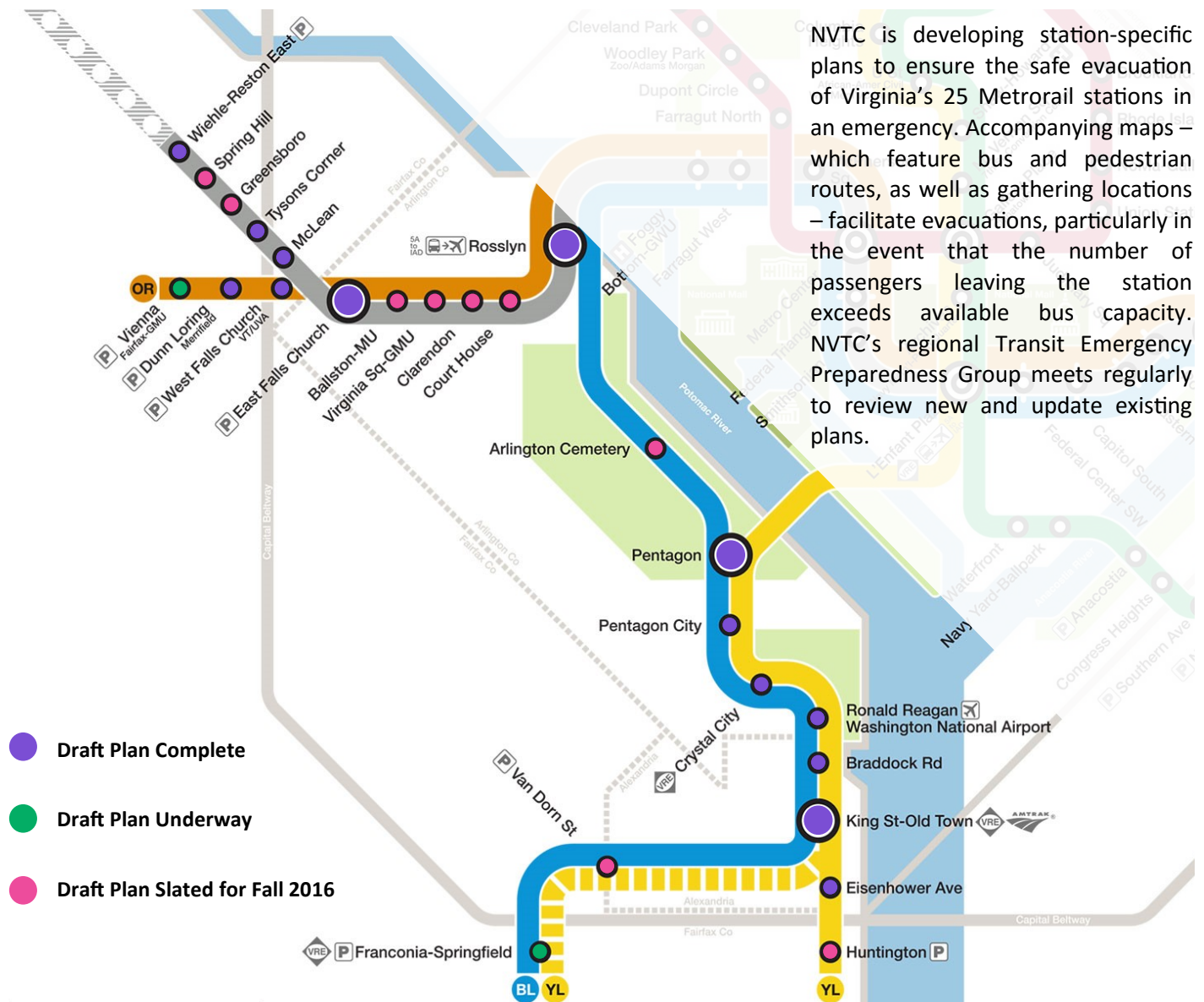
Transform 66 Resources

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| NVTC’s July 2016 Presentation to the CTB | DRPT’s July 2016 Presentation to the CTB |
| FY2017 Component Scores | FY2017 Component Profiles |
| FY2017 Submitted Applications | Transform 66 Evaluation/Prioritization Process |
| Transform 66 Memorandum of Agreement | Transform 66 Inside the Beltway Fact Sheet |
| 2013 DRPT Transit/TDM Study for the I-66 Corridor | VDOT I-66 Multimodal Study Inside the Beltway |

NVTC’s Transform 66 website is updated regularly. Visit www.novatransit.org/i66multimodal to learn more.

NVTC Completes 14 Emergency Plan Drafts for VA's Metrorail Stations

NVTC is developing station-specific plans to ensure the safe evacuation of Virginia's 25 Metrorail stations in an emergency. Accompanying maps – which feature bus and pedestrian routes, as well as gathering locations – facilitate evacuations, particularly in the event that the number of passengers leaving the station exceeds available bus capacity. NVTC's regional Transit Emergency Preparedness Group meets regularly to review new and update existing plans.



State Update

Smart Scale

Jurisdictions and transit agencies can [apply for funding under the Commonwealth's Smart Scale program through Sept. 30](#). To help transit agencies with their applications, the Virginia Transit Association has created [Winning Transit Projects in HB2 "Smart Scale."](#)

Smart Scale, which rates and prioritizes transportation projects, was [honored by the Southern Legislative Conference](#) for "its creative approach to solving problems and issues, far-reaching benefits and solutions, ability to transfer best practices to other states, and overall success in operating effectively and efficiently."

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Noting that expenses are rising faster than revenues, Virginia Railway Express CEO Doug Allen told the Commonwealth Transportation Board on July 28 that raising fares alone is not a viable solution. [Allen's presentation focused on adding capacity to corridors of statewide significance](#) and the funding necessary to do so.

[Following a presentation](#) by NVTC Acting Executive Director Kate Mattice, the [CTB adopted a resolution](#) to include the NVTC-selected multimodal components in the commonwealth's Six Year Improvement Program for FY 2017-FY 2022.

As WMATA Revises SafeTrack, NVTC Coordinates Regional Response

To address federal safety recommendations, [Metro GM Paul Wiedefeld announced changes to SafeTrack](#) to allow for aggressive work to be performed on interlockings, the points where trains change tracks, and account for slowdowns in work due to high heat and humidity.

Surge 8, originally scheduled to begin Aug. 20, has been pushed back to Aug. 27 and will continue through Sept. 11. In addition to weekday single-tracking between Franconia-Springfield and Van Dorn Street, the surge now includes three consecutive weekend shutdowns.

Surge 9, which features daily single-tracking between Vienna and West Falls Church, will run from Sept. 15 to Oct. 26, with weekend shutdowns. Vienna and Dunn Loring will be closed for all shutdowns. West Falls Church will be closed Sept. 24-25 and Oct. 1-2.

Metro will further revise the SafeTrack plan and announce modifications to surges 10-15 on Sept. 12. NVTC continues to coordinate NoVa's SafeTrack response, holding weekly calls that allow stakeholders to gain clarity on issues and provide feedback.

YL

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SINGLE TRACKING

Franconia-Springfield to Van Dorn Street

Continuous single-tracking between Franconia-Springfield and Van Dorn Street. Reduced service at Franconia-Springfield and Van Dorn Street only. Some trains will run to/from Huntington instead. Three consecutive weekend shutdowns with shuttles replacing trains along segments of the Blue Line.

📅 DATES: Aug. 27 to Sept. 11 (16 days)

🚗 WEEKDAY TRIPS AFFECTED: 18,000

🕒 TRAIN FREQUENCY: From Franconia every 24 minutes; from Van Dorn Street every 12 minutes. Near-normal service for other Blue Line stations. No Rush+ Yellow Line trains.

🚌 SHUTTLE BUSES: Express bus shuttles will be available during rush hour between Franconia-Springfield and Pentagon via 395HOV.

⚠️ ADVICE FROM METRO: Riders who use Franconia-Springfield or Van Dorn Street should consider using other stations, especially during rush hour.

OR

SINGLE TRACKING

West Falls Church to Vienna

Continuous single-tracking between Vienna and West Falls Church. Four consecutive weekend shutdowns with shuttles replacing trains along segments of the Orange Line between Vienna and East Falls Church

📅 DATES: Sept. 15 to Oct. 26 (42 days)

🚗 WEEKDAY TRIPS AFFECTED: 30,000

🕒 TRAIN FREQUENCY: Every 18 minutes at Vienna and Dunn Loring. Normal service levels at other Orange Line stations.

🚌 SHUTTLE BUSES: Not specified.

⚠️ ADVICE FROM METRO: Consider alternatives to the Vienna and Dunn Loring stations.

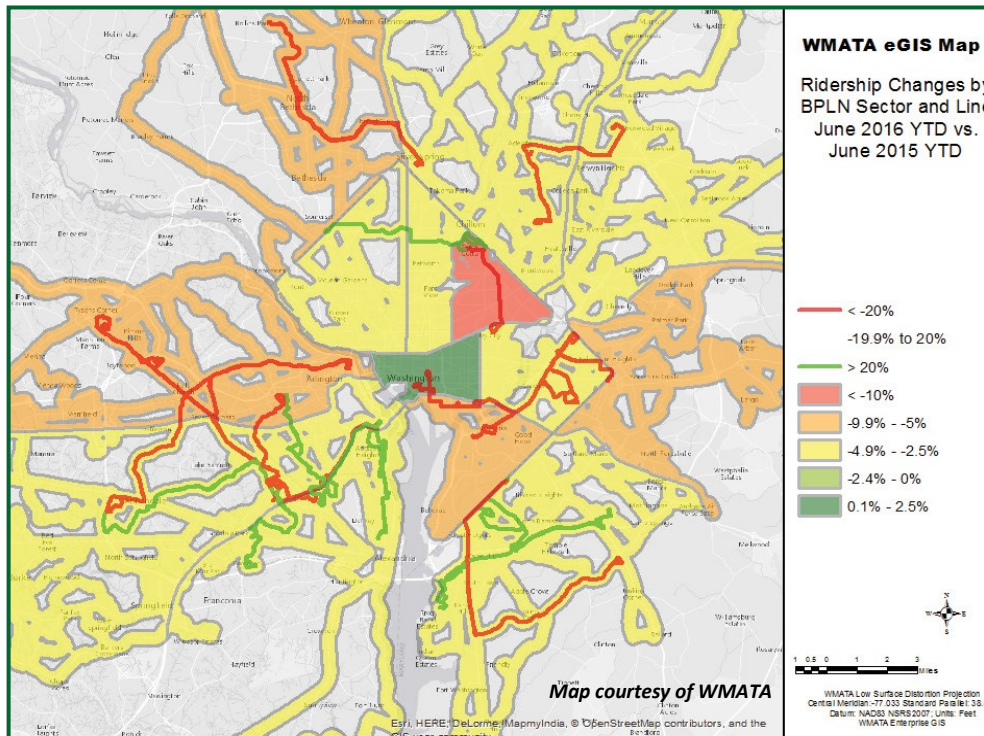
Graphics via The Washington Post online

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Declining Bus Ridership Is Focus of Regional Workshop

Bus ridership is down in the U.S. A definitive explanation is hard to come by, according to a panel convened by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in July. [Slate.com reports that bus trips have fallen nationwide](#) from 5.86 billion in 2002, a peak year, to 5.11 billion last year, and dropped almost 3 percent from 2014 to 2015.



During the same period, all NoVa bus systems experienced declines except DASH and Loudoun County Transit. When combined, trips [on NoVa's seven bus systems dropped about 3 percent](#) from 2014 to 2015, in keeping with the national trend.

Sixty percent of WMATA bus and rail customers cite these reasons for riding less:

- lack of service reliability
- lack of sense of safety
- value of service for price paid
- less traffic congestion

Other possible factors include:

- shifting demographics
- changing land use patterns
- availability of alternative modes
- increased teleworking
- fare increases

NVTC will continue to work with WMATA and NoVa bus systems to explore the reasons underpinning the drop in ridership and find solutions that can be implemented at the local and regional levels.

Around Town: Headlines from NVTC Jurisdictions & Transit Providers



[Potomac Yard Metro Station receives \\$66 million from NVT](#)

[Improvements to King Street-Old Town Metrorail Station proposed](#)



[Bike share is getting in gear](#)

[Arlington County Board approves 10-year plan for bus service improvements](#)



[Silver Line Phase 2 construction is 30 percent complete](#)



[Georgetown-Rosslyn Gondola public meeting materials](#)

[Arlington considers on-demand ridesharing](#)

[Arlington's Moving Words bus program is back](#)



[Renovations proposed for Union Station Concourse](#)

[Union Station Great Hall returned to its former glory](#)



[Embark Richmond Hwy community meeting video](#)



[MyTripTime gives personalized information on your Metrorail trips](#)

[Metro invites public to preview the new wmata.com](#)

Virginia Railway Express



While bus ridership is declining, commuter rail is experiencing an uptick. The [Virginia Railway Express \(VRE\) recorded 23,309 individual trips on July 12, its highest single-day ridership](#). A weekly ridership record was also set, as VRE topped 100,000 trips for the first time. This increase in ridership can be linked to WMATA's SafeTrack program.

Many of these new VRE riders took advantage of the VRE Mobile app, which experienced a spike in downloads in early July. VRE was the first transit system in the Washington, D.C. region to offer such an app, which allows customers to plan their routes and purchase their tickets directly on their smartphones.



Atlantic Gateway

Calling it “the most comprehensive transportation package in Virginia history,” Gov. Terry McAuliffe detailed [a \\$1.4 billion program to fund road and rail projects](#). At Alexandria’s Union Station in July, McAuliffe announced a \$165 million federal grant that finalized the state’s financial plan.



The project will improve freight and passenger rail (Amtrak and Virginia Railway Express) capacity and reliability in the corridor and increase bus service. The I-95 Express Lanes will be extended both to the north and south, offering commuters a reliable trip from the Potomac River to Fredericksburg, and points in between. Atlantic Gateway also will:

- Add commuter parking and technology upgrades
- Build pavement to allow for autonomous vehicles
- Acquire a rail corridor, abandoned by CSX, that runs from North Carolina to Richmond to safeguard the future of high speed rail in the Southeast.

Transportation Planning Board



Was it WMATA SafeTrack surge 1,2,3 or 4 that kept folks sitting in traffic longest? [The Transportation Planning Board \(TPB\)](#), which examined hour-by-hour traffic patterns on area roadways, says the first was the worst. Its analysis reveals some

noteworthy impacts that could help traffic management agencies, transit providers, employers, and daily commuters plan for future disruptions. Its recently published [list of lessons learned](#), broken out by jurisdiction, during the first four SafeTrack surges is insightful. These include:

- Convening a broad, inclusive group of parties that may not regularly work together allows stakeholders to gain clarity on issues and provide feedback .
- Coordinated, clear messaging among all stakeholders is key, as the control of information is critical.
- On-platform communication with passengers is necessary to reinforce advertising and web-based and social media announcements.

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority



NoVa's quality of life in terms of transportation was rated 5.8 on a 10-point scale, [according to a new poll](#) by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). Respondents described ideal travel as quick, smooth or easy, safe and predictable, noting that typical travel in the NoVa is slow, congested, unpredictable and frustrating. Among the findings:

- Residents spent 64 minutes on average commuting round trip, primarily by automobile and motorcycle.
- Traffic flow and congestion were cited by 59 percent as having the biggest impact on quality of life. Of those, 71 percent felt the region is doing a ‘mostly bad’ job in this area.
- Reducing trip times (58 percent) and making the transportation system affordable (53 percent) were the improvements most frequently mentioned.