



# Commuter Choice

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

[NoVaTransit.org/CC](https://NoVaTransit.org/CC)



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# Annual Report Fiscal Year 2025

*July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025*



*Commuter Choice, a trailblazing, innovative and competitive grant program, reinvests Express Lanes toll revenues into public transit and other transportation improvements along the I-66 and I-395/95 corridors in Northern Virginia.*

A partnership between the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Commuter Choice improves commuters' travel in two of the most congested corridors in the nation. NVTC selects projects for funding through a competitive process that considers each project's ability to support the program's goals: moving more people, supporting diverse travel choices and enhancing mobility, transportation safety and travel reliability.

***Commuter Choice projects benefit Express Lanes toll payers in two ways:***

1. By offering more options, toll road users and transit riders can choose the means of travel that gets them to the places that they want to go.
2. By moving people more efficiently, Commuter Choice projects lessen congestion and support more consistent travel speeds for Express Lanes users.

## Letter from the Executive Director

*NVTC's Commuter Choice program continued to support transit in two of Northern Virginia's most congested corridors, moving thousands of people daily while helping residents access jobs and other opportunities across the region.*

2025 brought significant changes to the Greater Washington region and the Commuter Choice program played a vital role in supporting Northern Virginia workers returning to the office. When tens of thousands of workers returned to the office full-time in early 2025, Commuter Choice funding helped our region's transit providers meet increased demand. The program funded additional transit trips to key employment hubs including the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, the Pentagon and downtown Washington. Buses along both the I-395/95 and I-66 corridors quickly reached capacity in early 2025, showing significant ridership gains compared to the same period in 2024. We've been thrilled to see rising transit ridership in the region and are proud that Commuter Choice played an important role in making it happen. More people riding buses means less congestion on I-66 and I-395/95, giving residents an important travel alternative that saves time, provides a toll-free commuting option, and helps reduce emissions and gas consumption.

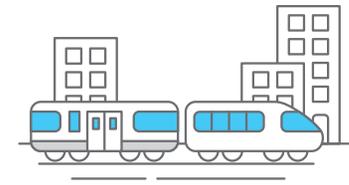
At the start of Fiscal Year 2025, the latest round of I-66 Commuter Choice projects was approved. With nearly \$22 million for 12 projects, we estimate that these projects will support over 2,700 weekday transit trips in the I-66 corridor once fully implemented. We ended the fiscal year with approval of the fourth round of I-395/95 Commuter Choice projects and nearly \$40 million dollars allocated to 15 projects across the I-395/95 corridor. These 15 projects are estimated to support over 3,800 weekday transit trips in the I-395/95 corridor upon full implementation.

In addition to approving funding for new projects, several capital projects funded in prior Commuter Choice rounds reached important milestones this year. In Manassas Park, Commuter Choice funding helped construct a 540-space parking garage next to the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station that will provide additional parking capacity for VRE riders, while enhancing the city's ability to promote transit-oriented development in its growing City Center Redevelopment District. We celebrated the "topping-off" of the garage, which opened this fall, with VRE, Manassas Park and other partners. We also joined DASH to mark the delivery of two fully electric buses that will be placed on the Commuter Choice funded Line 35 in the City of Alexandria. Commuter Choice funding allowed DASH to purchase the 60-foot American-made electric buses, which will help alleviate crowding on DASH's busiest route while supporting their transition to a zero-emission fleet.

With transit ridership surging in Northern Virginia and many Commuter Choice funded routes at or above pre-pandemic ridership levels, we anticipate strong demand for Commuter Choice funding to continue when we open the next I-66 Commuter Choice Call for Projects this fall. We appreciate the strong partnerships we've established with the region's transit operators to help move thousands of people across Northern Virginia every day.



**Kate Mattice**  
Executive Director



**65,000**

passenger trips each work week on Commuter Choice-funded projects

**\$88 million**  
invested since 2016



**33.7% increase**

in ridership on Commuter Choice funded bus routes on the I-66 corridor compared to the same period in 2024

**\$90 million**  
invested since 2019



**24.6% increase**

in ridership on Commuter Choice funded bus routes on the I-395/95 corridor compared to the same period in 2024

## I-66 CORRIDOR SUMMARY AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

# Funding Time-Saving Travel Options with an Eye Toward the Future

As congestion continues to increase on I-66, Commuter Choice funded projects offer commuters a time- and money-saving alternative to sitting in traffic. Continued post-pandemic recovery and return to office policies led to large ridership gains on I-66 Commuter Choice funded routes in 2025.

With booming ridership, the 14 active I-66 corridor Commuter Choice projects recorded over 20,000 trips each work week in spring 2025, a new record for the I-66 program.

This year NVTC and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) began work on the I-66 Needs Assessment. This joint study will identify short and long term projects that are strong candidates for future I-66 Commuter Choice and/or DRPT I-66 Outside the Beltway funding, and will take a holistic look at what travel in the corridor looks like now and is projected to look like in the future, in order to identify projects that can best meet future travel demand. NVTC

and DRPT staff met with jurisdictional staff and transit agency partners to brief them on the needs assessment and seek feedback on priority local and regional projects. Due to the unprecedented transit ridership surge in spring 2025, the study team is re-collecting and re-analyzing data to ensure the most up to date transit ridership and vehicle counts for the I-66 corridor are used to inform the existing and future conditions analysis of the corridor. NVTC and DRPT will continue working on the needs assessment through the fall, with an anticipated spring 2026 completion.

This fall, the seventh round of funding for I-66 Commuter Choice projects will open with the program's largest ever pot of available funding. We've been meeting with eligible applicants to discuss potential applications that can move the greatest number of people through the I-66 corridor and look forward to awarding funding to another set of projects in 2026.



**Ridership increases on select I-66 Commuter Choice funded routes between spring 2024 and spring 2025:**

**92%  
increase**

Fairfax Connector  
Route 698 (Stringfellow  
Road to the Pentagon)

**53%  
increase**

Loudoun County Transit  
Route 281/681  
(Stone Ridge to D.C.)

**21%  
increase**

OmniRide Route 612  
(Gainesville to the  
Pentagon)

## 62 projects

along the I-66 corridor funded across six funding rounds since 2017, with the next call for projects opening in fall 2025

I-395/95 CORRIDOR SUMMARY AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

# Strong Ridership Growth and a Dynamic New Program of Projects



As with I-66, transit ridership on the I-395/95 corridor surged in 2025, with Commuter Choice playing a key role in moving Northern Virginia residents to key destinations. Boosted by increased demand on routes accessing the Pentagon and downtown Washington, ridership on both local and express routes in the corridor saw huge increases compared with 2024.

I-395/95 Commuter Choice funded projects recorded over 45,000 trips each work week in 2025, setting a record for the I-395/95 program and ensuring people can quickly and efficiently move throughout the corridor.

2025 saw approval of the fourth round of I-395/95 Commuter Choice projects, with over \$39 million invested in 15 capital and operations projects. The Program includes funding for:

- DASH's highest ridership route, Line 35, ensuring it can continue to provide service every 10 minutes on weekdays and every 15 minutes on weekends.
- OmniRide's enhanced service on two commuter routes from Stafford County to the Pentagon and Downtown Washington, both lines have seen significant ridership gains this year.
- Fairfax County's Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit project, which will eventually link Fort Belvoir, Huntington Metro Station and points in between with fast, reliable bus service in dedicated bus lanes.

Commuter Choice projects not only move more people along the I-395/95 corridor; they also lead to less traffic, lower fuel costs, fewer car crashes and time saved. Full implementation of the projects included in this round's I-395/95 Program of Projects is estimated to result in 22 million fewer annual vehicle miles traveled, \$2.4 million in reduced fuel expenditures annually, 25 car crashes avoided and over 53,000 hours of annual travel time savings. These projects aren't just helping move people; they are enhancing safety, promoting economic development and improving the quality of life for residents and businesses in Northern Virginia.

**Ridership increases on select I-395 Commuter Choice funded routes between spring 2024 and spring 2025:**

**89% increase**

Fairfax Connector Route 396 (Backlick North Park and Ride to the Pentagon)

**30% increase**

OmniRide Route 943 (Stafford to Downtown Washington)

**8% increase**

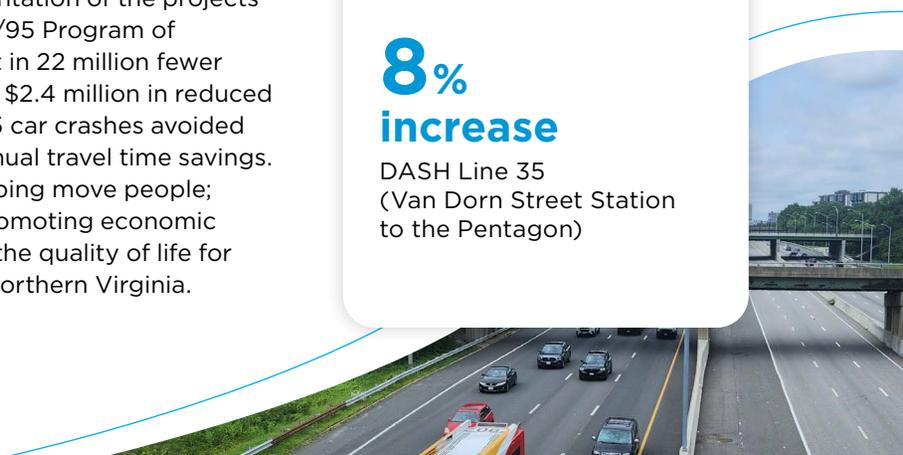
DASH Line 35 (Van Dorn Street Station to the Pentagon)



On average, a commuter bus traveling on the I-395/95 Express Lanes saves over

**43 minutes**

*in the morning compared to the same trip traveling in the general purpose lanes*



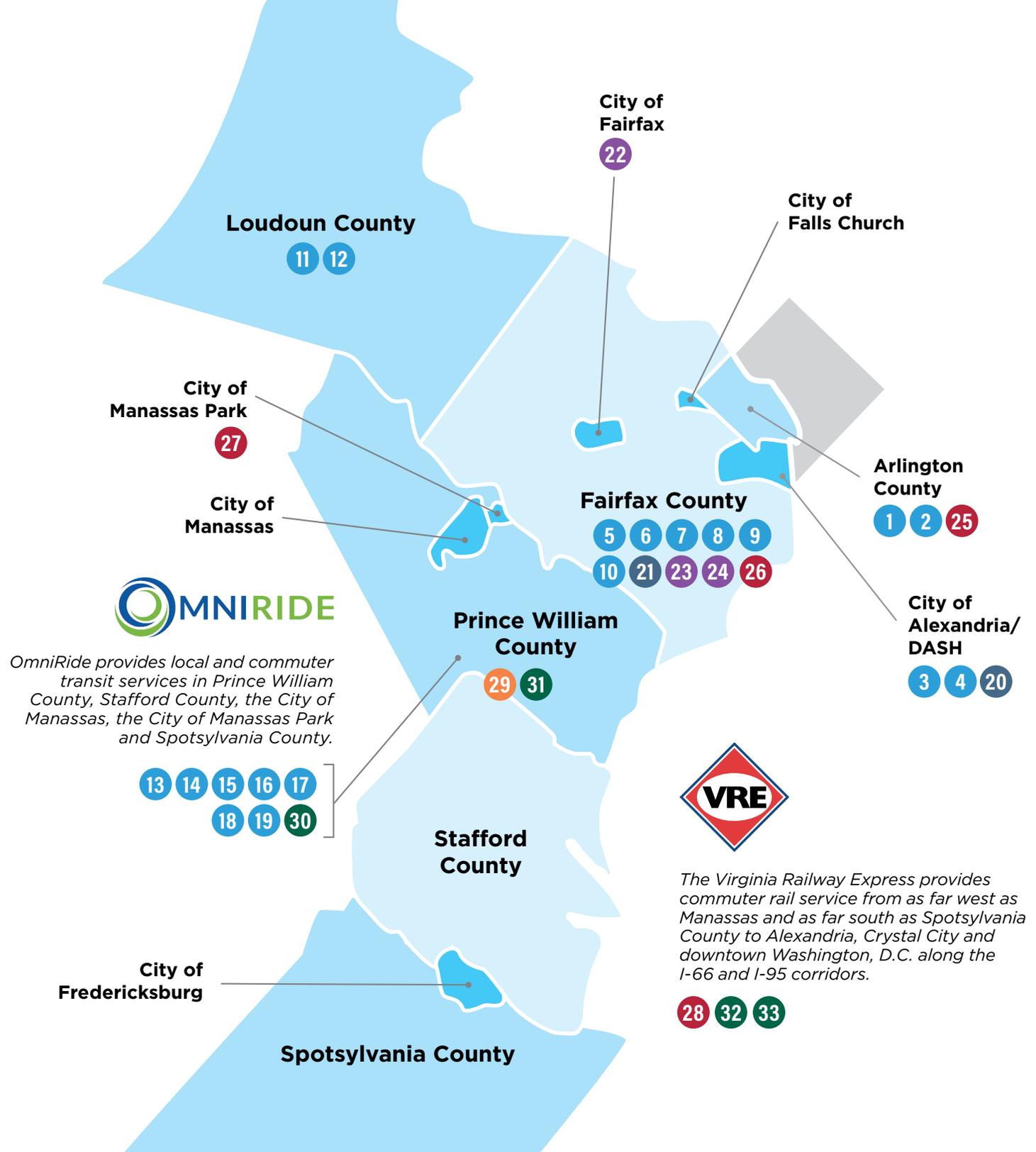
# Current Projects

as of June 30, 2025

## Project Type

- Bus Service
- Bus Capital
- Access to Transit
- Rail Capital
- Park-and-Ride
- TDM

 Visit [NoVaTransit.org/CCProjects](https://www.novatransit.org/CCProjects) for project descriptions and an interactive map of Commuter Choice funded projects.



## BUS SERVICE

- 1 **Arlington County - Metrobus A40: Columbia Pike - National Landing** I-395  
Funding: \$5,000,000
- 2 **Arlington County - ART 75: Shirlington to Virginia Square** I-66  
Funding: \$397,160
- 3 **DASH - Line 35: Van Dorn Metro to the Pentagon** I-395  
Funding: \$16,046,000\*
- 4 **Dash - Line 36: Mark Center to Potomac Yard** I-395  
Funding: \$9,373,000\*
- 5 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 371: Lorton to Franconia-Springfield Station** I-395  
Funding: \$2,496,529
- 6 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 396: Backlick Pentagon Express** I-395  
Funding: \$6,677,818\*
- 7 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 598: Reston South - Pentagon - Crystal City** I-66  
Funding: \$5,110,800
- 8 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 697: Stringfellow Road - D Street SW D.C.** I-66  
Funding: \$6,456,488\*
- 9 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 698: Stringfellow Road - Vienna - Pentagon** I-66  
Funding: \$6,191,521\*
- 10 **Fairfax County - Connector Route 699: Monument Drive Transit Center - Downtown D.C.** I-66  
Funding: \$4,531,944\*
- 11 **Loudoun County - Route 281/681: Stone Ridge Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-66  
Funding: \$3,025,970\*
- 12 **Loudoun County - Route 483/ 883: Harmony Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-66  
Funding: \$1,230,482\*
- 13 **OmniRide - Route 612: Gainesville to the Pentagon** I-66  
Funding: \$10,974,274\*
- 14 **OmniRide - Route 622: Haymarket to Rosslyn** I-66  
Funding: \$3,482,629\*
- 15 **OmniRide - Route 1 Local: Quantico to Woodbridge Station** I-395  
Funding: \$2,429,689\*
- 16 **OmniRide - Prince William Metro Express: Dale City to Franconia-Springfield Station** I-395  
Funding: \$1,668,854\*
- 17 **OmniRide - Route 942: Staffordboro to the Pentagon** I-395  
Funding: \$5,838,999\*
- 18 **OmniRide - Route 943: Staffordboro to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-395  
Funding: \$5,562,949\*

- 19 **OmniRide - Route 972: Dale City to Ballston** I-395  
Funding: \$848,057\*

## BUS CAPITAL

- 20 **DASH - Line 35 Bus Fleet Capacity Expansion with Electric Buses: Van Dorn Street Station to the Pentagon** I-395  
Funding: \$3,452,000
- 21 **Fairfax County - Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit Implementation: Fort Belvoir to Huntington Station** I-395  
Funding: \$10,000,000

## ACCESS TO TRANSIT

- 22 **City of Fairfax - Bike Share Implementation** I-66  
Funding: \$460,000
- 23 **Fairfax County - Trail Access to Vienna/Fairfax - GMU Station** I-66  
Funding: \$2,200,000
- 24 **Fairfax County - Fairfax Centre Bikeshare Expansion** I-66  
Funding: \$510,000

## RAIL CAPITAL

- 25 **Arlington County - Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance** I-66  
Funding: \$4,500,000
- 26 **Fairfax County - McLean Metrorail Station North Entrance** I-66  
Funding: \$1,000,000

- 27 **City of Manassas Park - Manassas Park VRE Station Parking Garage** I-66  
Funding: \$2,500,000

- 28 **Virginia Railway Express - Crystal City Station Expansion** I-395 I-66  
Funding: \$18,786,281\*

## PARK-AND-RIDE

- 29 **Prince William County - Horner Road Park and Ride Lot Expansion** I-395  
Funding: \$2,800,000

## TDM

- 30 **OmniRide - TDM Strategy - I-395/95 Corridor Vanpool Monthly Incentive** I-395 I-95  
Funding: \$604,800
- 31 **Prince William County - I-66 OmniRide Fare Buy-Down** I-66  
Funding: \$1,650,000\*
- 32 **Virginia Railway Express - Amtrak Step-Up Reinstatement on VRE Fredericksburg Line** I-395  
Funding: \$1,477,065
- 33 **Virginia Railway Express - Amtrak Step-Up Reinstatement on VRE Manassas Line** I-66  
Funding: \$537,420

*\*denotes the total funded amount for projects funded in multiple rounds*

# Commuter Choice by the Numbers

## *Bolstering Northern Virginia's Mobility with Record Ridership*

*Commuter Choice funded projects set a record for ridership in FY 2025. Active projects in spring 2025 supported over 65,000 passenger trips in the two corridors each work week, a 73% increase in trips compared to the same period in FY 2024.*

Each weekday in FY 2025, Commuter Choice projects saved travelers a total of



**2,400 hours**  
of travel time



**231,000 miles**  
of vehicle travel



**\$28,000**  
in fuel expenditures

**25 projects**  
in operation in spring 2025



*Since 2017, Commuter Choice's \$178 million investment in transit and other transportation projects has improved travel and overall quality of life for Northern Virginians.*

**197M**  
fewer vehicle  
miles traveled



**75%**  
greenhouse gas  
emission reduction  
relative to  
single-occupancy  
vehicle trips



**293**  
automobile  
crashes avoided

**1.9M**  
hours of travel  
time savings



**10.5M**  
Commuter Choice-  
supported trips  
on the I-66 and  
I-395/95 corridors



**\$67.7M**  
in regional economic  
benefit from reduced  
travel delay



**\$25.9M**  
in fuel cost savings  
for commuters

# Beyond the Numbers

*A data-driven, transparent and publicly accessible program helps deliver booming transit ridership in Northern Virginia.*

Transit ridership in Northern Virginia surged in spring 2025, helping demonstrate the continued value of Commuter Choice funding in moving more people, more efficiently along the I-66 and I-395/95 corridors. Between April 2024 and April 2025, monthly bus and rail boardings grew by 16% in Northern Virginia. As this increase in transit ridership took place, NVTC held an annual public comment period and public hearing on the proposed projects under consideration for Commuter Choice funding. This year, NVTC received over 450 responses during the public comment period, most of which were supportive of the projects under funding consideration. A few examples of the feedback on the importance of transit can be found to the right.

Throughout the lifecycle of a Commuter Choice funded project, funding recipients must demonstrate that the project benefits corridor toll payers by moving additional people with transit or transportation alternatives. Commuter Choice's scoring methodology emphasizes person throughput gains, travel time saved and cost-effectiveness and selected projects are monitored over time to gauge their impact. Projects must demonstrate that they meet at least one of the four Commuter Choice Improvement Goals shown in the graphic below.



This data-driven approach allows NVTC to present a detailed breakdown of the Commuter Choice projects funded over time and impact on their respective corridor.

*Thank you for funding our public transportation routes. They have made a huge difference in our lives by providing reliable, affordable and convenient options. Your support truly helps our community every day."*

*This route is one of the most efficient in the system, offers outstanding service and is essential for those of us who rely on public transportation for our daily activities... For those of us who live farther away and do not have the financial resources to afford other means of transportation, this savings is very important and makes a real difference in our daily lives."*

*I've recently gone from remote work at home to returning to work at the office 5 days a week, and I've been utilizing the Dale City to Rosslyn-Ballston Enhanced Bus Service to commute to the office. This bus route has literally felt like a lifesaver."*

*With a rapidly expanding population in the DMV, it's critical to have public mass transportation to offset the traffic congestion, pollution and transportation frustrations that accompany increased vehicular traffic!"*

For a deep dive on the data behind the projects included in NVTC's 2025 Commuter Choice Annual Report, visit:

[NovaTransit.org/CC](https://www.novatransit.org/CC)

# Commuter Choice in the Community

The Commuter Choice program invests locally generated revenue right back into Northern Virginia, helping people get where they want to go, reducing congestion, creating new travel options and promoting economic development. Since 2017, Commuter Choice has provided \$178 million in funding to dozens of projects across the region, including enhanced bus service, rail station improvements, expansion of the Capital Bikeshare system, new park-and-ride lots and a future bus rapid transit line, all of which help save commuters time and money while reducing the need for limited Commonwealth funds.

NVTC celebrated important milestones for several Commuter Choice funded projects with our partners this year. Prince William County began construction on an expansion of the Horner Road Park and Ride, creating an additional 100 parking spaces for commuters accessing OmniRide commuter buses. In Manassas Park, the city and VRE celebrated the “topping-off” of the Manassas Park VRE Garage, a new 540-space parking garage next to the VRE station that will provide additional parking capacity for VRE riders while promoting transit-oriented development. In Alexandria, DASH celebrated record breaking ridership of over 5.3 million riders, with Commuter Choice playing an important role in funding additional frequencies on two of DASH’s busiest routes, Lines 35 and 36. NVTC also joined DASH to celebrate the delivery of two Commuter Choice funded electric buses that will be used exclusively on Line 35, enabling DASH to meet increasing ridership demands while powering the transition to an electric fleet.



**From top to bottom:**  
 Horner Road Groundbreaking (August 2024), Manassas Park VRE Garage “Topping-Off” (August 2024), DASH 5 Million Riders Celebration (September 2024), DASH Electric Buses Delivery Celebration (May 2025)

# Eligible Applicants

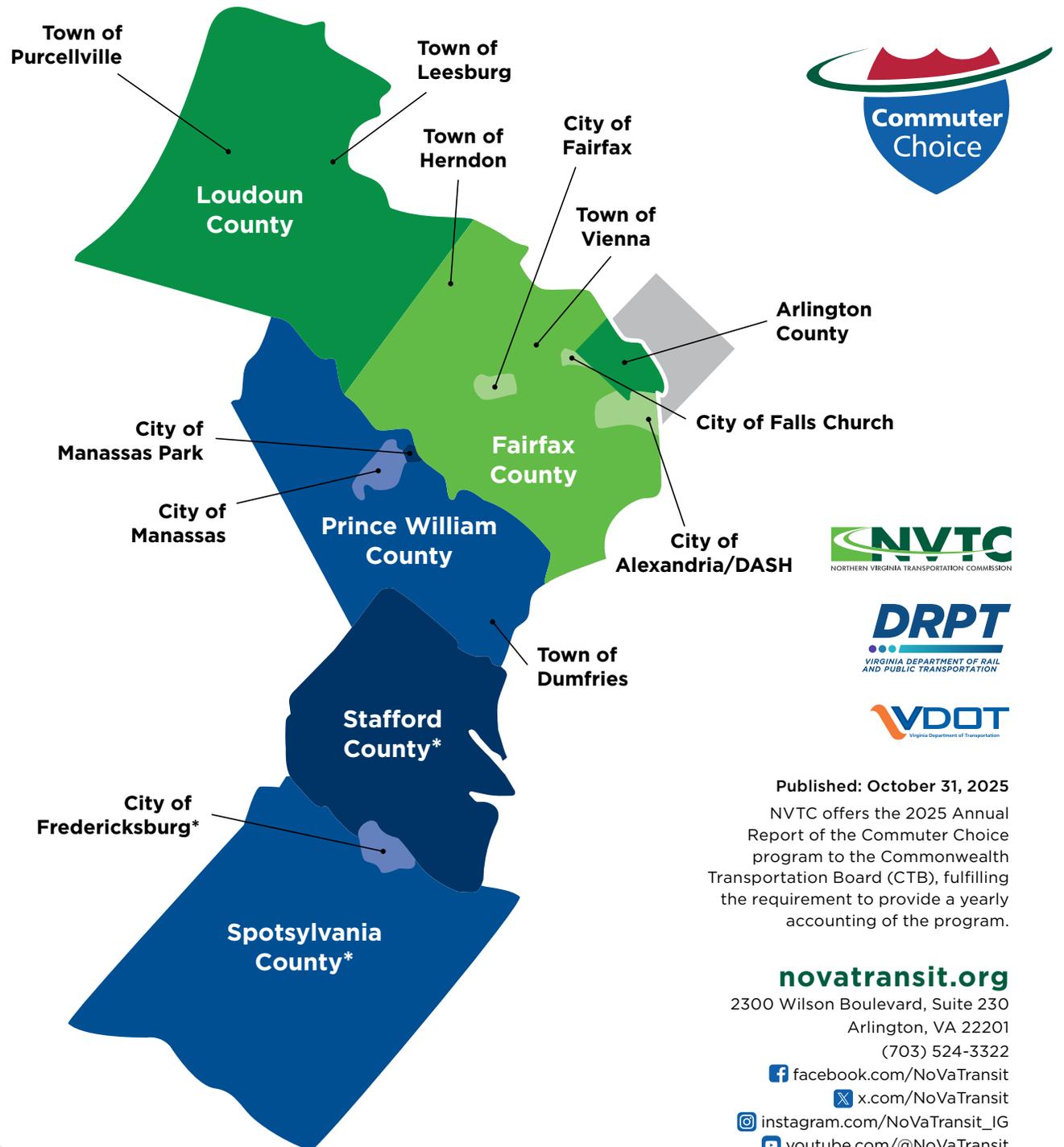
## Localities

- NVTC Jurisdiction
- PRTC Jurisdiction

*\*Only eligible for I-395/95 Commuter Choice*

## Transit Agencies

-  OmniRide
-  Virginia Railway Express
-  Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority



Published: October 31, 2025

NVTC offers the 2025 Annual Report of the Commuter Choice program to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), fulfilling the requirement to provide a yearly accounting of the program.

[novatransit.org](https://novatransit.org)

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