



Commuter Choice

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

NoVaTransit.org/CC

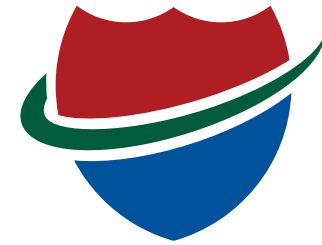


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Annual Report Fiscal Year 2026

July 1, 2025 — June 30, 2026

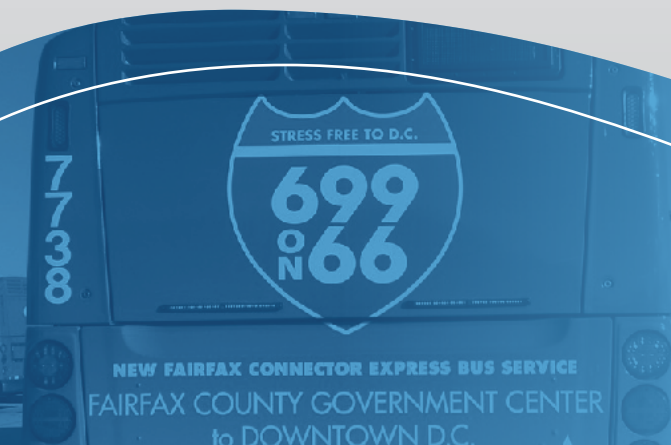


Commuter Choice, a trailblazing, innovative and competitive grant program, reinvests Express Lanes toll revenues into public transit and other transportation improvements along the I-66 and I-395/95 corridors in Northern Virginia.

A partnership between the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Commuter Choice improves commutes 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 main 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

Commuter Choice celebrated an important milestone in 2026: 10 years of funding transportation projects that have improved commutes, promoted economic development and helped save Northern Virginia residents time and money traveling on two of the nation's busiest highways.

Ten years ago, Northern Virginia embraced a transformative idea. Rather than viewing money collected from tolls simply as a means of maintaining and operating highways, state and local leaders recognized an opportunity to do something more. In 2016, NVTC and the Commonwealth of Virginia created Commuter Choice, a unique and innovative program that reinvests express lane toll revenues into transit and multimodal transportation improvements along two of Northern Virginia's most congested corridors.

Beginning with the I-66 corridor and expanded to the I-395/95 corridor in 2019, Commuter Choice has become much more than a grant program. It has become a key tenet of Northern Virginia's transportation strategy. By focusing on moving people, not just moving cars, we can transform how people access jobs and other opportunities with results that benefit everyone, including toll payers.

Since 2016, Commuter Choice has invested in dozens of projects that have expanded mobility and provided new transportation choices across the region. The program has funded new and enhanced local and commuter bus routes, improved Metro Rail and Virginia Railway Express stations, expanded park-and-ride facilities, constructed bicycle and pedestrian improvements and funded transportation demand management initiatives. Together, these investments have made it easier for thousands

of people to reach work, school, healthcare and other destinations.

These investments benefit more than transit riders. **Every commuter who chooses a bus or train instead of driving alone and every person who safely walks or bikes for part of their trip helps reduce demand on the region's busiest roadways and provides a faster trip for express lane users. The result is a transportation system that works better for everyone, no matter how they choose to get around.** That's one of the fundamental principles of the program, giving residents a *choice* for how they get to where they need to go.

Commuter Choice has also shown what regional collaboration and good governance can accomplish. The program brings together the Commonwealth of Virginia, local governments, transit operators, transportation agencies and elected leaders to identify investments that meet local needs while advancing regional priorities. A rigorous evaluation and eligibility process ensures funding goes to the highest performing projects that generate the greatest return on investment. And a transparent and engaging public involvement process ensures Northern Virginia commuters can voice their opinion on what projects ultimately receive funding.

We are proud of what the program has accomplished in its first 10 years, and excited for what comes next. Earlier this year, we completed

the I-66 Needs Assessment, a joint study with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to examine current and future needs and opportunities for strategic investment in the I-66 corridor. With nearly 90 projects identified as potential candidates for funding, we've developed a robust pipeline of potential transportation investments in the corridor for both the short and long term. And the next I-395/95 funding cycle opens this fall, with the opportunity for another round of projects to provide new and enhanced transportation options throughout the corridor.

As Commuter Choice enters its second decade, the program remains as important as when it started 10 years ago. Commuter Choice's success since it began is not simply measured in projects completed or dollars invested. It is measured in the transportation choices our residents have today that they did not have ten years ago, and in the stronger more connected region those choices have helped create.



Kate Mattice
Executive Director

I-66 CORRIDOR SUMMARY AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Building on a Decade of Improvements with a Plan for the Future



A decade ago, Commuter Choice introduced a bold and innovative vision to help fund transportation projects in the I-66 corridor, reinvesting toll revenues into projects that provide new transportation options for commuters. The program has matured and grown since 2016, but the focus on getting people wherever they need to go, while reducing congestion and providing transportation alternatives, remains the same.

Building on the strong ridership gains seen over the past several years, Commuter Choice funded projects continue to carry thousands of passengers each day. The 16 active Commuter Choice funded projects on the I-66 corridor recorded over 15,000 trips each work week in spring 2026. Ridership remained steady this year after a large increase following changes to the federal government's work from home policies in early 2025.

This year, NVTC completed the seventh I-66 Commuter Choice funding cycle, awarding over \$60 million to 14 projects. As part of the largest program in the history of the I-66 corridor, awards to Arlington County,

Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Metro and OmniRide will continue to expand transportation choices and improve mobility throughout the corridor, from far western Prince William County to Washington, D.C. Included in this Program of Projects is funding for Metro to implement new limited-stop bus service along the Route 7 corridor from Tysons to Alexandria. This aligns with NVTC's ongoing work as part of the Envision Route 7 initiative, which will lead to the future implementation of a bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor along Route 7.

Additionally, NVTC and DRPT completed the I-66 Needs Assessment earlier this year, providing a comprehensive roadmap for future investments in the corridor. The study evaluated existing and anticipated future travel demand, identified transportation needs, and developed a pipeline of candidate projects for future funding through either the I-66 Commuter Choice or DRPT I-66 Outside the Beltway funding programs. The study will help guide future funding decisions and ensure investments continue delivering the greatest regional mobility benefits.

Since 2016, Commuter Choice funded projects along the I-66 corridor have helped commuters save over

1.3 million
hours of travel time

As travel demand on I-66 continues to grow, Commuter Choice funded projects provide commuters with reliable transportation options that improve quality of life for Northern Virginia residents. Ten years after the program's creation, Commuter Choice has become an integral part of the I-66 transportation network, with key investments that will benefit commuters for many years to come.



I-395/95 CORRIDOR SUMMARY AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Strong Ridership and Capital Projects Drive Momentum on I-395/95



Building on the success of the I-66 program, Commuter Choice expanded to the I-395/95 corridor in 2019, bringing this innovative funding model to one of Northern Virginia's most traveled corridors and connecting to some of the largest job centers in the country, like the Pentagon.

Commuter Choice has funded dozens of projects on the I-395/95 corridor that have enhanced multimodal commuting options, giving residents new ways to reach jobs, healthcare, shopping and recreation opportunities. The 16 active Commuter Choice funded projects on the I-395/95 corridor provided over 61,000 trips each work week in spring 2026, setting a new record for ridership on the I-395/95 corridor.

Since 2019, Commuter Choice funded projects on the I-395/95 corridor have helped commuters save over

\$17 million

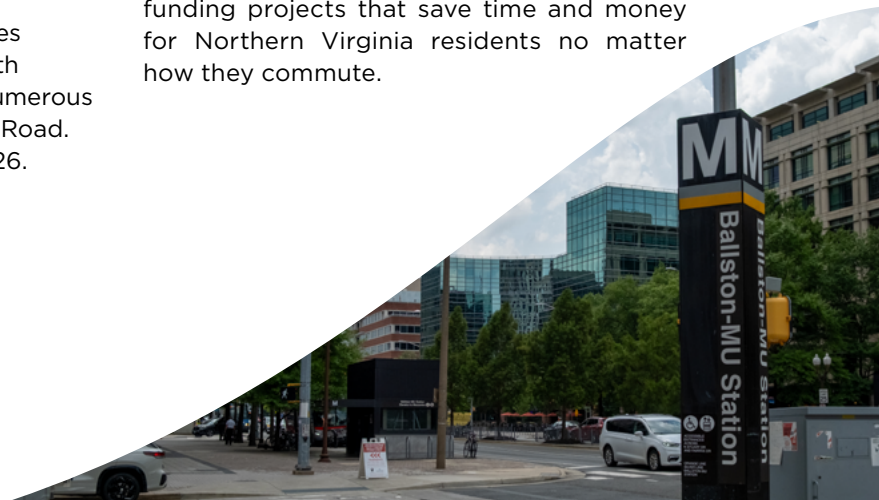
in fuel costs

I-395/95 Commuter Choice has supported numerous local and commuter bus routes that have seen strong and growing ridership since 2019. In addition to funding these important transit operation projects, Commuter Choice is supporting capital projects that will bring long-term benefits to the I-395/95 corridor, including:

- The Richmond Highway BRT project, which will bring fast and frequent bus service in dedicated lanes along Route 1 between the Huntington Metro Station and Fort Belvoir. Fairfax County continued work on right-of-way acquisition in 2026.
- Construction of the Horner Road Park and Road Lot. Commuter Choice funding supported Prince William County in constructing 100 new parking spaces at the Lot, providing commuters with additional capacity to access the numerous OmniRide routes that serve Horner Road. Construction wrapped up in fall 2026.

- Improvements to the Crystal City Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station, which will expand the station to allow for longer trains and strengthen multimodal connections at one of VRE's busiest stations. Construction is expected to begin in early 2027.

As Commuter Choice enters its second decade, the I-395/95 corridor demonstrates how the program's original vision has expanded to serve more communities across Northern Virginia. This fall, the fifth I-395/95 funding cycle opens, with an opportunity to fund another impactful set of projects that improve mobility along one of the nation's busiest travel corridors. As with I-66, Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 corridor has become a key program in funding projects that save time and money for Northern Virginia residents no matter how they commute.



Current Projects

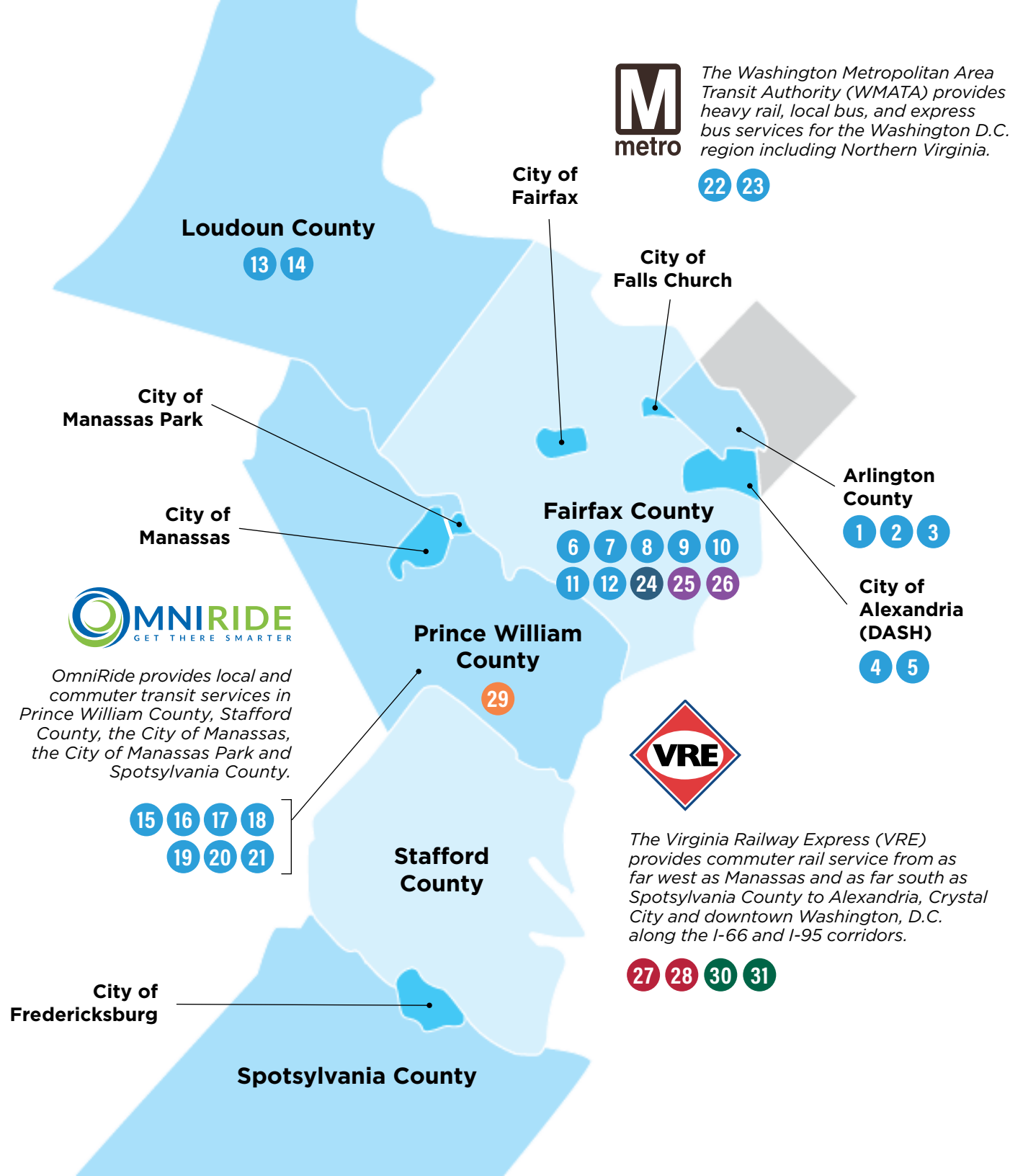
as of June 30, 2026

Project Type

- Bus Service
- Bus Capital
- Access to Transit
- Rail Capital
- Park-and-Ride
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM)



Visit NoVaTransit.org/CCProjects (or scan the QR code below) for an interactive map and descriptions of Commuter Choice funded projects.



BUS SERVICE

- 1 **Arlington County – Metro Bus 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 **Arlington County – ART 87: Shirlington to the Pentagon** I-395
Funding: \$475,000
- 4 **DASH – Line 35: Van Dorn Metro to the Pentagon** I-395
Funding: \$23,478,500*
- 5 **DASH – Line 36: Mark Center to Potomac Yard** I-395
Funding: \$13,761,500*
- 6 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 321/322: Greater Springfield Circulator** I-395
Funding: \$2,128,807
- 7 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 371: Lorton to Franconia-Springfield Station** I-395
Funding: \$4,638,726*
- 8 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 396: Backlick Pentagon Express** I-395
Funding: \$8,636,469*
- 9 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 598: Reston South – Pentagon – Crystal City** I-66
Funding: \$5,110,800

- 10 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 697: Stringfellow Road – D Street SW D.C.** I-66
Funding: \$6,456,488*
- 11 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 698: Stringfellow Road – Vienna – Pentagon** I-66
Funding: \$6,191,521*
- 12 **Fairfax County – Connector Route 699: Monument Drive Transit Center – Downtown D.C.** I-66
Funding: \$7,868,780*
- 13 **Loudoun County – Route 281/681: Stone Ridge Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-66
Funding: \$3,025,970*
- 14 **Loudoun County – Route 483/883: Harmony Park-and-Ride to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-66
Funding: \$1,230,482*
- 15 **OmniRide – Route 612: Gainesville to the Pentagon** I-66
Funding: \$10,974,274*
- 16 **OmniRide – Route 622: Haymarket to Rosslyn** I-66
Funding: \$3,482,629*
- 17 **OmniRide – Route 1 Local: Quantico to Woodbridge Station** I-395
Funding: \$3,107,389*
- 18 **OmniRide – Prince William Metro Express: Dale City to Franconia-Springfield Station** I-395
Funding: \$2,275,854*

- 19 **OmniRide – Route 942: Staffordboro to the Pentagon** I-395
Funding: \$7,811,699*
- 20 **OmniRide – Route 943: Staffordboro to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-395
Funding: \$7,500,149*
- 21 **OmniRide – Route 972: Dale City to Ballston** I-395
Funding: \$1,403,457*
- 22 **WMATA – Route A25: Landmark and Seminary Valley to the Pentagon** I-395
Funding: \$741,040
- 23 **WMATA – Route A29: Van Dorn Street Station to Downtown Washington, D.C.** I-395
Funding: \$2,357,200

BUS CAPITAL

- 24 **Fairfax County – Richmond Highway BRT Implementation: Fort Belvoir to Huntington Station** I-395
Funding: \$20,000,000
- 25 **Fairfax County – Trail Access to Vienna/Fairfax – GMU Station** I-66
Funding: \$2,200,000
- 26 **Fairfax County – Fairfax Centre Bikeshare Expansion** I-66
Funding: \$510,000

ACCESS TO TRANSIT

RAIL CAPITAL

- 27 **VRE – Leeland Road Station Improvement Project** I-395
Funding: \$2,150,566
- 28 **VRE – 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 **VRE – Amtrak Step-Up Reinstatement on VRE Fredericksburg Line** I-395
Funding: \$1,477,065
- 31 **VRE – 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

A decade of transformative investments in two corridors continue to save commuters time and money and deliver record-breaking ridership. Active Commuter Choice projects in spring 2026 supported over 76,000 passenger trips in the two corridors each work week.

Each weekday in FY 2026, Commuter Choice projects **saved travelers a total of**



2,340 hours
of travel time



220,000 miles
of vehicle travel



\$31,000
in fuel expenditures

32 projects
in operation in spring 2026

*Across 10 years, Commuter Choice's **\$218,000,000** investment in transit and other transportation projects has improved travel and overall quality of life for Northern Virginians.*

2.5M

hours of travel
time savings



254.7M

fewer vehicle
miles traveled

369

automobile
crashes avoided



77%

greenhouse gas
emission reduction
relative to
single-occupancy
vehicle trips



14.5M

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



\$89.3M

in regional economic
benefit from reduced
travel delay



\$33.9M

in fuel cost savings
for commuters

Commuter Choice Key Milestones

2016-2026



DECEMBER 9, 2015

The Commonwealth Transportation Board authorizes the use of I-66 Inside the Beltway tolls for use by NVTC for a new competitive program (initially called Transform66: Inside the Beltway) to support transit and other investments. The official Memorandum of Agreement is signed on January 5, 2016.

MAY 5, 2016

The first Commuter Choice Program of Projects is approved when the Commission awards \$9.8 million in funding to **10 projects** along the I-66 corridor.

MARCH 6, 2016

NVTC issues its first call for projects for the program that will become Commuter Choice, receiving **19 applications** for new multimodal projects including new and enhanced transit services for commuters.

JULY 28, 2016

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) provides final approval of the **\$9.8 million** in funding, making official the first Commuter Choice Program of Projects.



OCTOBER 25, 2016

The first of many Commuter Choice project groundbreakings: Representatives from NVTC, Loudoun County and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) break ground on the Stone Ridge park-and-ride lot, which opened in July 2017.



SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

Gov. Terry McAuliffe hosts an event celebrating the first year of Commuter Choice and announcing a second call for projects.



DECEMBER 12, 2016

OmniRide is the first grant recipient to implement new bus service as its Gainesville to Pentagon commuter bus route becomes operational.

A novel idea was born 10 years ago: reinvest money collected from tolls on Northern Virginia's most traffic-congested highways into projects that provide people with more ways to travel and move more efficiently. Since 2016, Commuter Choice has done just that- provide transportation options and help reduce congestion on the I-66 and I-395/95 corridors.

DECEMBER 20, 2017

Commuter Choice officially expands to the I-395/95 corridor, with the creation of a **new Memorandum of Agreement** between NVTC, the PRTC and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

OCTOBER 17, 2019

The first I-395/95 funding awards are approved by the CTB, with **\$18.1 million** for 10 projects receiving funding.

NOVEMBER 17, 2019

The new I-395 Express Lanes open with three reversible HOV lanes operating 24/7.



DECEMBER 9, 2020

The CTB approves funding for six new projects on the I-66 corridor during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating the continued demand for transportation options to get people to and from work even during a global pandemic.

2026

Commuter Choice turns 10! The program continues to improve quality of life for Northern Virginia residents by reducing congestion, providing transportation alternatives and supporting economic development.

JULY 1, 2025

Boosted by return-to-office policies, Commuter Choice sets a record in FY 2025, averaging over **65,000 trips** per workweek on projects in both corridors.

MAY 22, 2025

NVTC and DASH celebrate the delivery of new electric buses for deployment on Line 35. Commuter Choice funded the purchase of the buses and funds enhanced service on Line 35, the busiest route in the system.



JUNE 21, 2023

The largest (to date) I-395/95 Program of Projects is approved, with **\$48 million** for 13 projects, including the first ever Commuter Choice investment in BRT, with \$20 million awarded to Fairfax County's Richmond Highway BRT project.

Eligible Applicants

Localities

 NVTC Jurisdiction

 PRTC Jurisdiction

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

Transit Agencies

 OmniRide

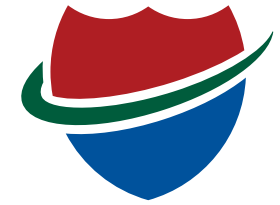
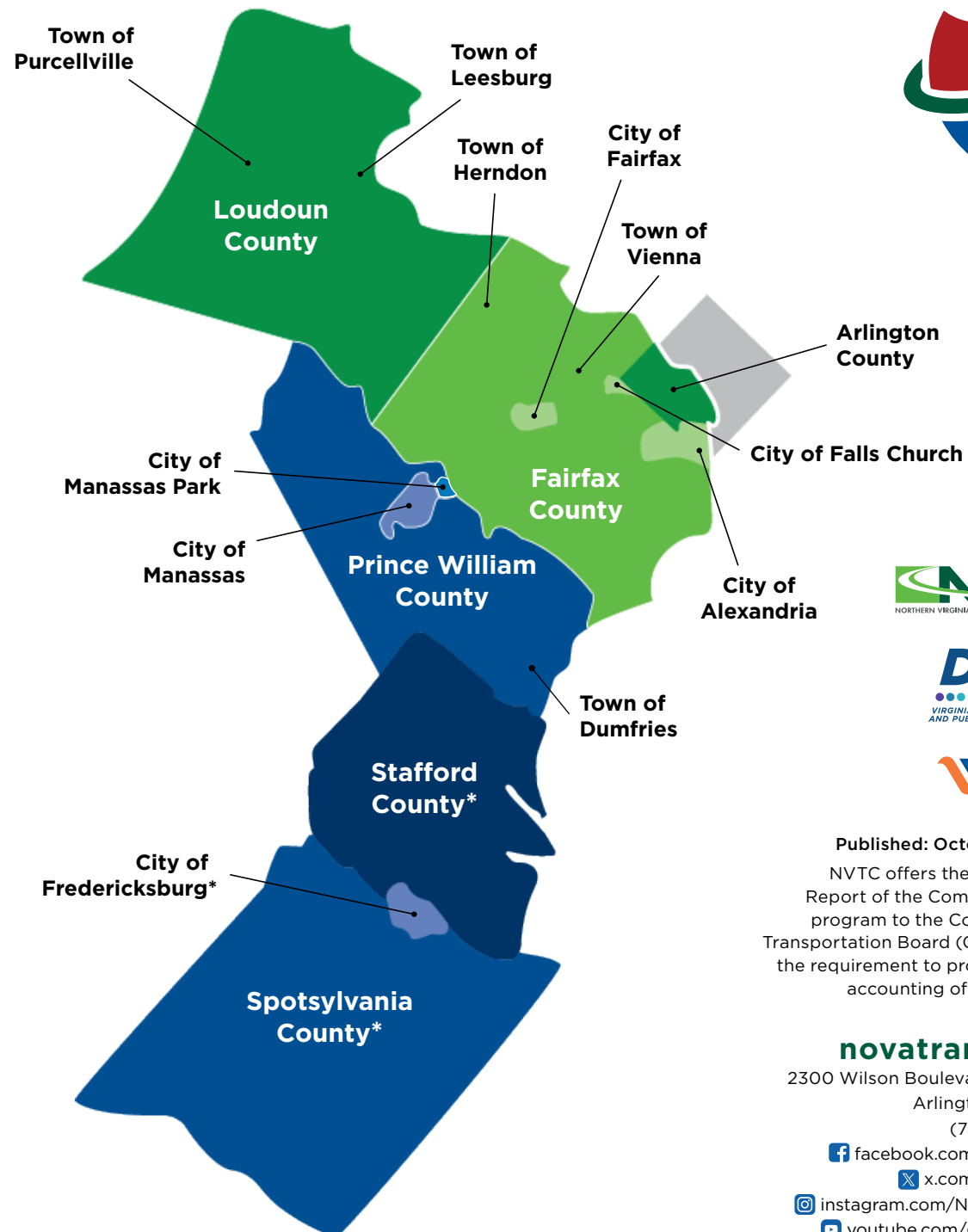
 Virginia Railway Express

 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Transit agencies serving eligible jurisdictions



NVTC
NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DRPT
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation

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NVTC offers the 2026 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

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