

N V T C newsletter



Vol 1, No 9

Northern Virginia

December 1965



GLEAMING STREAMLINED TRAINS of the Toronto Transit Commission on North America's newest rapid transit system provide fast, convenient, dependable service to downtown for passengers from "feeder" streetcar and trolley coach lines, and motor bus routes. General Electric Company photo

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Created by Acts of the Virginia General Assembly as a Public Instrumentality to Plan and Develop a Transportation System for Northern Virginia, and to Participate as Virginia's Share of an Interstate-Compact Transit Authority for Metropolitan Washington.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| FAIRFAX COUNTY
Frederick A. Babson
Joseph Alexander
John L. Beerman
Stuart T. DeBell | ARLINGTON COUNTY
Joseph L. Fisher
Roye L. Lowry
Leo Urbanske, Jr. | CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
Nicholas A. Colasanto
James T. Lockett, Jr. | CITY OF FAIRFAX
Philip D. Fisher | CITY OF FALLS CHURCH
Lee M. Rhoads
CHAIRMAN | VIRGINIA DEPT. OF HIGHWAYS
John P. Mills, Jr. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|

Executive Secretary
Gordon J. Thompson

NVTC ELECTS NEW OFFICERS:

At its December meeting, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission unanimously elected Mr. Lee M. Rhoads as Chairman. Mr. Rhoads is Vice Mayor of the City of Falls Church and served the past year as Vice Chairman of the Commission.

The Commission also unanimously elected Mr. Joseph Alexander as its Vice Chairman, and reelected Mr. Roye L. Lowry as Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Alexander is the County Supervisor from Fairfax County's Lee Magisterial District. Mr. Lowry is, until the end of 1965, a member of the Arlington County Board; although Mr. Lowry will continue as an officer of NVTC, he will no longer be a voting member after the expiration of his term on the county board.

In accepting the Chairmanship from outgoing Chairman Frederick A. Babson of Fairfax County, Mr. Rhoads said, "Although I represent the smallest jurisdiction in the Northern Virginia Transportation District, I am very interested in a rail rapid transit system for Northern Virginia and will do all I can to see that it becomes a reality. I pledge cooperation with Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the National Capital Transportation Agency, as well as our local jurisdictions, to bring rapid transit for the metropolitan area into operation as soon as possible."

Mr. Babson, when asked if he would continue to serve as an officer of the Commission, said, "I decline the honor reluctantly because of my participation in so many other organizations which include heavy demands on my time and energy. Frankly, I think that the Commission has made excellent headway since its organization and with the election of Mr. Rhoads as Chairman, the Commission is in good hands." In addition to being Vice Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Mr. Babson is Chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, and of this Board's Coordinating Committee.

TRANSIT COMMISSION FOR SUBURBAN MARYLAND:

Bringing the National Capital Region another step closer to transit planning and development on a metropolitan-wide basis, the recently created Washington Suburban Transit Commission (WSTC) organized itself in September 1965.

As described in the April 1965 issue of NVTC newsletter, WSTC is to the Maryland suburbs of Washington what NVTC is to the Virginia suburbs.

At its organizational meeting, WSTC elected Mr. James P. Gleason, Silver Spring attorney, as its Chairman, and Mr. Frank J. Lastner, a Prince George's County Commissioner, as Vice Chairman, and appointed Mr. Robert A. Passmore, Assistant to the Montgomery County Manager, as Secretary-Treasurer.

NVTC welcomes WSTC to the metropolitan transportation scene.

TRANSIT COMPACT TO GO TO VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Senator Charles R. Fenwick has announced that he will introduce into the 1966 General Assembly, the legislation by which Virginia can approve the interstate compact that creates a Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. The compact was approved by Maryland's legislature last year and still must be approved by the D. C. Board of Commissioners and be ratified by Congress.

The new Authority would continue -- on a metropolitan-wide basis -- the work of the National Capital Transportation Agency in planning and developing a rail rapid transit system. NVTC, the new WSTC, and the D. C. Board of Commissioners will participate in the Authority as explained in the April 1965 issue of NVTC newsletter.

The compact needs your support. Tell your State Senators and Delegates of your organization's or your individual support of this vital legislation. Without it, NVTC cannot function fully and the Northern Virginia area cannot gain the fast transit facilities which it needs so greatly.

OUR LAST ISSUE WAS FOR THE BIRDS:

The caption of the cover photograph of our November issue remarks that the train sent a pigeon into flight. "But where is the pigeon?", we are being asked. Our printer cropped the picture too short, leaving the picturesque bird out of the scene. Sorry.

WASHINGTON & OLD DOMINION RAILROAD AS TRANSIT CORRIDOR:

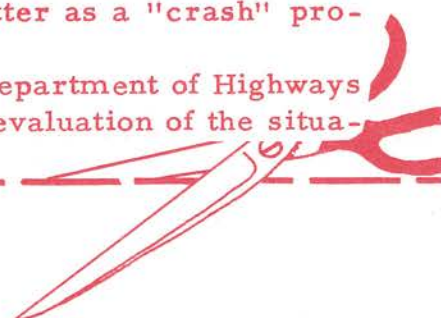
From the Capital Beltway to the vicinity of Fairfax City, the median strip of completed Route 66 is of sufficient width to accommodate rail rapid transit. But, the Virginia Department of Highways has designed the segment of the freeway inside the Beltway with a narrow median. The plans have been approved by the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, and construction is expected to begin soon.

The Washington & Old Dominion Railroad in the same vicinity provides a superior alignment for rapid transit. But, the Department of Highways has a contract with the railroad to purchase the right-of-way if abandonment is approved by the State Corporation Commission and the Interstate Commerce Commission. Abandonment will enable the Department of Highways to avoid construction of overpass structures for Route 95 (Shirley Highway reconstruction) near Shirlington and Route 66 west of Falls Church, and to use the railroad right-of-way between Patrick Henry Drive and Lee Highway, Arlington, as part of the land required for Route 66. The Department of Highways also has entered into contracts to resell all of the land it does not use for highway construction.

At NVTC's November meeting, Commissioner Lee M. Rhoads, representing Falls Church, observed that "the Department of Highways is effectively blocking the only two alternatives we have to provide rail rapid transit service toward Fairfax City and Reston. Because we realize that this circumstance is unintentional -- after all, these contracts were made before this Commission got under way -- I believe the Highway Department will be cooperative in finding a solution whereby the rapid transit can pass through this critical area." Commissioner Roye L. Lowry added that he believes the highway and rail facilities could be jointly designed so as to make optimum use of the land and keep the required right-of-way width to a minimum. Chairman Frederick A. Babson asked Commission member John P. Mills, Jr., representing the Department of Highways, to arrange a meeting between NVTC's staff and Department of Highway staff to explore the situation and seek possible solutions to the problem. Mr. Babson instructed NVTC's Executive Secretary to proceed with this matter as a "crash" program.

Members of NVTC's staff subsequently conferred with the Department of Highways engineers and were provided with data and plans to assist in an evaluation of the situation.

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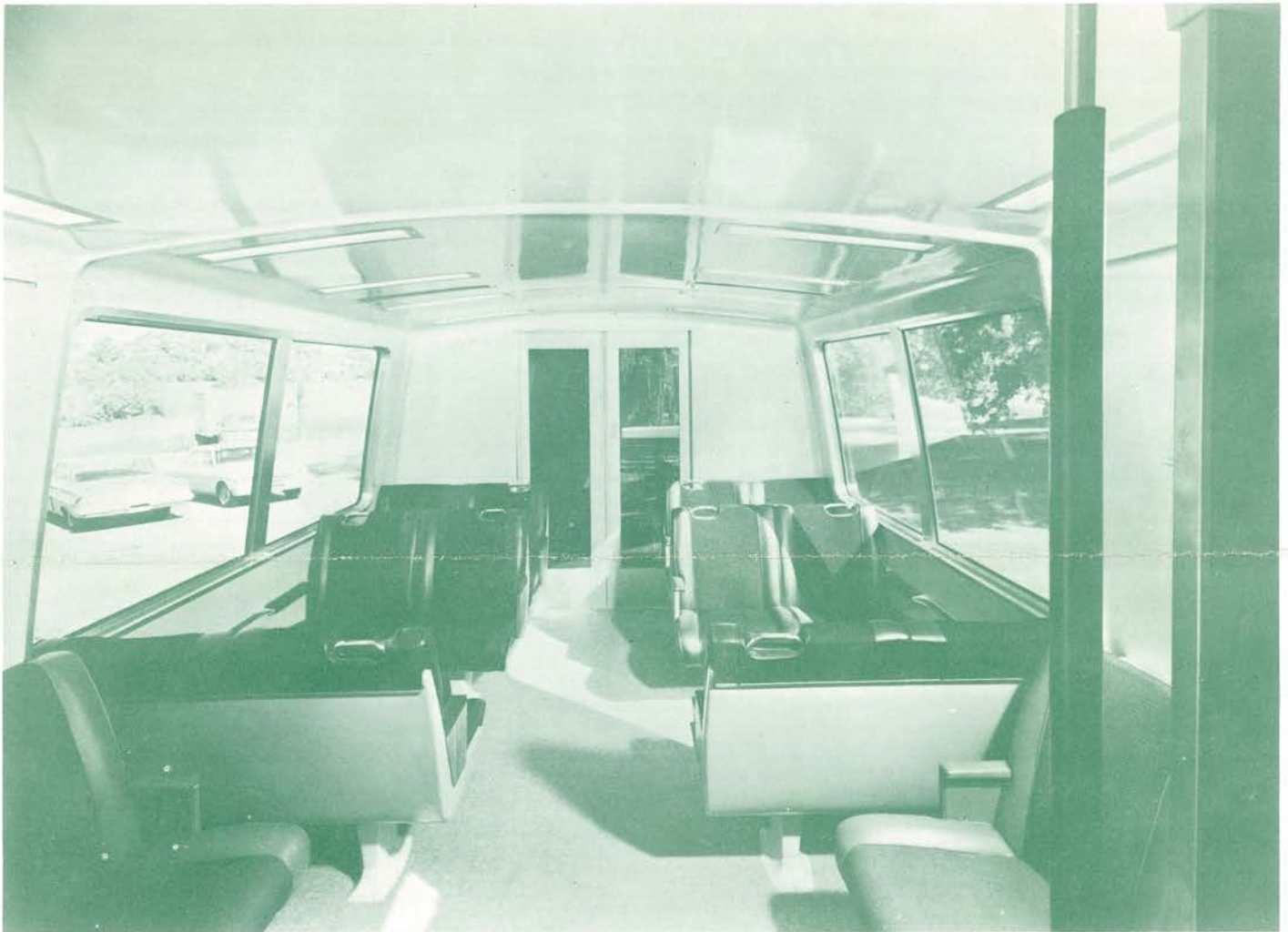
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NEW RAIL CAR DESIGN for San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BARTD) features luxurious interior, designed to compete with the finest automotive and aircraft styling. BARTD seeks -- through comfort and attractiveness -- to win ridership for the all-new regional commuter railway network which it has under development. General Steel Industries photo

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The two color photographs appearing in the November issue of NVTC newsletter were snapped by Charles J. Lietwiler, NVTC's Senior Transportation Planner.

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