



# Advancing Transit

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



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# Executive Summary

*The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission had many reasons to celebrate in 2024.*

We honored the 60th anniversary of NVTC, played a significant role in locking in additional state aid to keep Metro running, served as a hub for critical discussions on long-term funding for all of the region's public transit agencies, notched records in our Commuter Choice program and published important information to aid the growth and evolution of Northern Virginia's public transit network.

NVTC was founded in 1964 to represent the Commonwealth in planning a rapid transit network for the Capital Region. Over our six decades, NVTC's mission and role has expanded exponentially. Our work touches every transit agency operating in Northern Virginia, while our research has influence across Virginia, and even throughout the nation.

The nature of transit planning means that we are always looking forward. The work we do today can take years, or even decades, to reveal its benefits. However, we are able to look back and see all that we have accomplished and know that our efforts now will be worthwhile. That's why I am encouraged to keep pressing forward to make the region's transit network as strong as possible.



**Kate Mattice**  
*Executive Director*



**The nature of transit planning means that we are always looking forward.**

**We know that our efforts now will be worthwhile.”**





# NVTC Celebrates 60 Years of Transit Excellence

*The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission celebrated a milestone in 2024 commemorating 60 years since the General Assembly's creation of NVTC. Throughout the year, we celebrated exciting events that highlighted the achievements and legacy NVTC has built over its remarkable 60-year journey.*

Many current and past NVTC Commissioners turned out for our 60th anniversary celebration and documentary premiere on September 5. They helped lead NVTC through 60 years of change and growth and their work has helped transform the region into a model for what communities can do when they work together to solve transportation problems.

NVTC was grateful to hear remarks from Sen. Tim Kaine, Rep. Don Beyer, Deputy Transportation Secretary Michael Sargent and Chair Matt de Ferranti. Rep. Gerry Connolly sent his good wishes and honored NVTC's milestone in the Congressional Record.

The "Advancing Transit in Northern Virginia" [documentary](#) tells NVTC's story, from the initial efforts to create NVTC and a rapid transit system for the Washington region, to the development of Metro, Virginia Railway Express and local bus systems, NVTC's role in bringing local jurisdictions together to make regional decisions, and the creation of the Commuter Choice program, to name a few highlights.

Our [Transit Innovation Summit](#) on June 14, reflected on hot topics in public transit and looked forward to innovations in the field. The event welcomed more than 150 transit professionals and showcased the exciting work of NVTC and our many partners in Northern Virginia.



# NVTC Through the Years



## 1964

The Virginia General Assembly creates NVTC to lead the Commonwealth's discussions on planning the Metrorail system. The Commission holds its inaugural meeting. The Urban Mass Transportation Act paves the way for nationwide expansion of public transit.



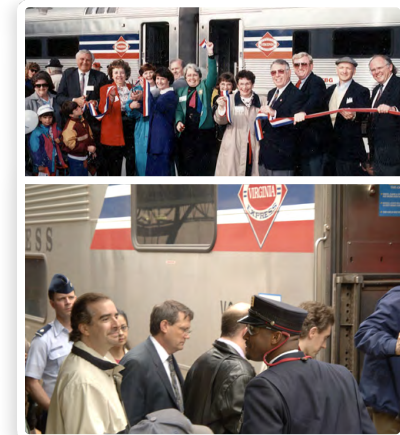
## 1970s

NVTC joins with the U.S. Department of Transportation in a first of its kind pilot program to operate commuter buses in dedicated bus lanes on Shirley Highway (now I-395). Metro starts service with NVTC appointees on the Board of Directors.



## 1980s

NVTC helps form the neighboring Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission and starts planning for Virginia Railway Express (VRE). NVTC assists with the creation of bus systems in five NVTC jurisdictions.



## 1990s

VRE launches service on the Manassas and Fredericksburg lines. NVTC expands into promoting energy efficient and environmentally friendly transit innovations, including a new bus system in Falls Church running on clean fuel technology.



## 2000s

NVTC provides guidance and staff to support the newly created Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. NVTC acquires, tests and installs SmarTrip fareboxes on all local transit agencies' buses.

## 2010s

NVTC kicks off planning for a bus rapid transit (BRT) system connecting Tysons and Alexandria, by way of Seven Corners and Falls Church. NVTC's one-of-a-kind Commuter Choice program launches. NVTC's Metro oversight expands with the passage of dedicated capital funding from the District, Maryland and Virginia.

## 2020s

NVTC and local transit agencies adapt to fundamental shifts in commuting patterns brought about due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commuter Choice program reaches a milestone, funding \$178.4 million for projects. NVTC creates a regional strategy for zero-emission buses and calculates the Commonwealth's return on investment in public transit.



# Establishing Long-Term, Sustainable Transit Funding

*NVTC recognized that Metro, Virginia Railway Express and other transit agencies operating in Northern Virginia face an existential crisis in long-term operating funding needs. The change in commuting patterns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated existing structural funding deficiencies and served as a call to action.*



NVTC proactively identified the region's critical need for a two-step approach, first securing immediate additional funding for Metro and then driving efforts to establish sustainable, long-term funding sources.

First, by leveraging strong relationships, high quality and time-sensitive analyses, and a targeted communications campaign, NVTC secured an additional \$144.7 million in state aid to support NVTC's jurisdictional obligation to Metro in FY 2025-2026. This work involved extensive analysis and communications with the Youngkin Administration and members of the General Assembly to ensure that NVTC jurisdictions and the Commonwealth maintained their partnership in funding Metro and that the additional financial burden of Metro payments did not fall solely on Northern Virginia's local governments.

Second, NVTC worked with key members of the General Assembly to establish the SJ 28 Growing Needs of Public Transportation in Northern Virginia Joint Subcommittee to develop an expanded menu of revenue options that can potentially be part of a Virginia solution within a broader regional framework. The joint subcommittee work feeds into the efforts of DMV/Moves, which is looking at the Greater Washington region in conjunction with the other Metro Compact jurisdictions—the District of Columbia and Maryland. We know that Virginia's considerable number of transit agencies and complex transit



funding and governance structure makes finding funding solutions more complicated than in the other Metro Compact jurisdictions. That is one reason we have taken a proactive approach to ensure that NVTC and the region's elected officials have a literal seat at the table with membership in both the subcommittee and DMVMoves.

NVTC's staffing and technical support makes the work of the joint subcommittee possible, and we expect that the groundwork laid by both panels will feed directly into legislative action in the 2026 General Assembly Session.

We also used our annual Legislative Forum in December to explain this work in detail. One panel featured leaders and members of the subcommittee and DMVMoves.



# Legislative Forum Tackles Future of Public Transit Funding, Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Region's Transit Agencies

*NVTC held its 11th annual Legislative Forum in December in conjunction with our cosponsors, the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission and Virginia Railway Express.*

We enjoyed record turnout for the event, featuring Sen. Louise Lucas, President Pro Tempore of the Virginia Senate and two key panels: one focused on the future of funding for public transit in Northern Virginia and a second consisting of the leaders of Metro, VRE, OmniRide and DASH.

The speakers recognized the importance of transit to Northern Virginia, as well as the entire Commonwealth of Virginia and the Greater Washington region. The Forum gave panelists an opportunity to talk about the ongoing work to establish sustainable, long-term funding for transit through the General Assembly's [Joint Subcommittee](#) and Metro and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' [DMVMoves](#) task force.



# NVTC's Metro Program Advances Critical Policy Work and Recommendations for Long-Term Funding at Metro

*NVTC enjoys a special relationship with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), as it is charged with the funding and stewardship of Metro. NVTC serves as Virginia's voice on the Metro Board of Directors through its appointments. In addition, NVTC manages state aid and the regional gas tax funds, which NVTC jurisdictions use to meet their Metro funding obligations.*

This year, NVTC staff worked closely with Metro Board members and jurisdictional staff to ensure the success and adoption of the 2025 Better Bus Network and subsidy allocation formulas for both Metrobus and Metrorail. These efforts modernize the regional Metrobus network in a resource neutral manner and update the way Metro's funding jurisdictions pay for their respective shares of bus and rail service for the first time in decades.



## Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA

Beyond supporting the Virginia members of the Metro Board of Directors, NVTC publishes the “Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA,” each year, as mandated by Virginia law. The report outlines recommendations directed at Metro and other entities.

This year's recommendations work in conjunction with efforts to find long-term funding for public transit agencies. They include:

1. Continuing to work with federal, state, regional and local funding partners to develop long term, sustainable funding to meet Metro's capital and operating needs.
2. Preserving additional state aid (FY 2026) and the operating cap re-baselining contained in the two-year state budget.
3. Establishing a revised Virginia and Maryland legislative operating assistance growth cap.

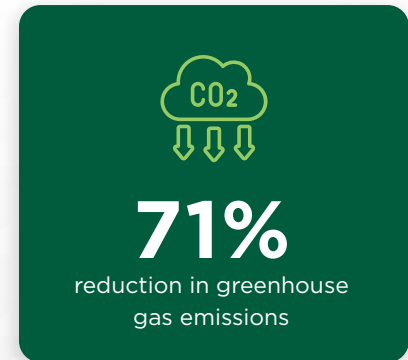
*The full list of recommendations is presented in the **report**.*

# Commuter Choice Program Reaches 7 Million Trips

**Commuter Choice**, a trailblazing, innovative and competitive grant program, reinvests Express Lanes toll revenues in 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 and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Commuter Choice improves commuters' travel in two of the most congested corridors in the nation.

## Commuter Choice Benefits Toll Payers and Commuters

In 2024, Commuter Choice crossed an inspiring milestone, supporting over seven million trips in the I-66 and I-395 corridors since the program kicked off. Additionally, funded projects provided an average of 7,500 daily passenger trips each weekday, a new record, resulting in 135 million fewer vehicle miles traveled, 1.3 million hours of travel time saved and a 71% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, compared to single-occupancy vehicle trips.





## Commuter Choice Celebrates Successes

Several Commuter Choice funded projects hit important milestones this year:

- The City of Manassas Park's VRE Station Parking Garage topped off. When it fully opens next year, it will have 540 parking spaces for Virginia Railway Express riders.
- Commuter Choice funded OmniRide projects set all-time ridership records, including routes from Staffordboro to the Pentagon and Staffordboro to downtown Washington.
- Two battery electric buses purchased by DASH and funded through Commuter Choice are expected to be delivered in early 2025.
- Construction on a second entrance at Metro's McLean Station is complete and expected to open in 2025 once construction on the adjacent Capital One campus is finished.





# Virginia Railway Express Adapts to Changed Travel Patterns

*NVTC helped found Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and co-owns the commuter railroad with the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC). Both Commissions appoint members of the VRE Operations Board and must approve VRE's annual budgets, policy and fare changes, major investments and legislative initiatives.*

## Long Bridge Groundbreaking

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg led the **groundbreaking** for the new **Long Bridge** in October. The passenger rail bridge over the Potomac River will uncork a major bottleneck and enable Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and Amtrak to run more trains.

The \$2.3 billion project features a two-track railroad bridge that will connect Arlington with the District, allowing for the expansion of rail service to meet future demand. The new bridge will be built next to the existing bridge, which is 119 years old and will allow for the separation of passenger and freight rail traffic.

## Preparing for Expanded Service

While VRE awaits the completion of Long Bridge in 2030, the passenger railroad took another major step forward, approving VRE's first-ever Saturday service. The service will give riders new options for getting out of their cars and is a first step toward adjusting service compared to previous daily commuting patterns.

## Manassas Line Changes Hands

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPR) purchased 25 miles of the Manassas Line from Norfolk Southern Railway Company to promote, sustain and expand passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth. The purchase will aid VRE in expanding evening and weekend frequencies.

# Helping Northern Virginia Transition to Zero Emission Buses (ZEB)

*The completion and launch of the multi-year “Regional Zero Emission Bus Strategic Plan” highlights opportunities for regional coordination in the procurement, installation, training and overall implementation of zero emission buses and supporting bus facilities.*

NVTC also hosted the ZEB Working Group, in which agencies shared lessons learned and next steps in their ZEB transition process.

NVTC received a no-cost technical assistance grant from the federal government that will enable the efficient deployment of zero-emission bus technologies and help identify shared bus charging facilities that will be strong candidates for future state and federal funding.

Regionally, the Federal Transit Administration awarded the Fairfax County Department of Transportation \$50.5 million in 2024 to purchase low-emission, diesel-electric hybrid buses to replace older buses.



# A New Roadmap for Transit Data Analysis

The newly renamed Transit Data and Analysis program adopted a Strategic Transit Policy Roadmap to guide all research for NVTC and to determine whether a potential research effort appropriately falls under NVTC’s mission.

## Studying Climate Impacts and Travel Trends

Reports published by the Transit Data and Analysis program examined how use of public transit benefits the climate, how people **use transit** in Northern Virginia and provides a regional **context and analysis** of existing and planned bus service in the region.

The “**Climate Benefits of Transit in Northern Virginia**” report found that the use of public transit in Northern Virginia reduces 120,000 to 160,000 metric tons of CO2 annually and that all bus fuel types, even diesel buses, are a much greater climate option than using cars.

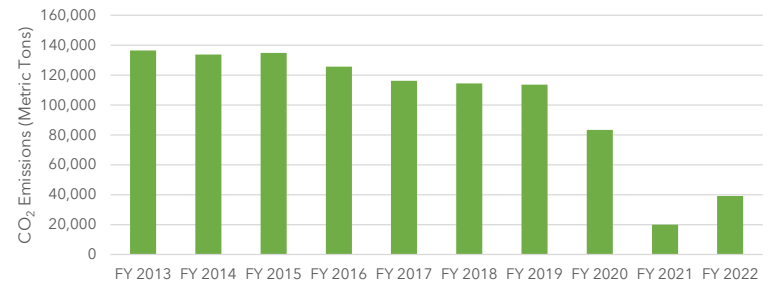


Figure 5: Personal CO2 emissions avoided by taking transit in Northern Virginia

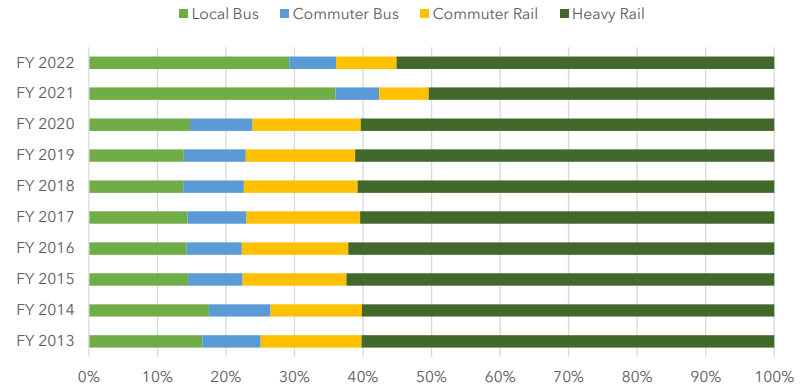


Figure 6: Proportion of CO2 emissions avoided by transit mode in Northern Virginia





# Envision Route 7 Focuses on Near-Term Improvements

## Enabling Better Bus Now

Envision Route 7 is a planned bus rapid transit (BRT) system connecting Tysons and Alexandria, by way of Falls Church and Seven Corners. NVTC works with Arlington and Fairfax Counties, the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church as well as Metro to plan and implement high-quality bus service in the long-term. In addition, NVTC has identified ways to deliver near-term targeted enhancements to the existing Metrobus 28A service along the Route 7 corridor to realize Better Bus Now.

NVTC will launch a detailed analysis of the planned BRT service between Seven Corners and Alexandria in 2025, building on the completed work for the northern segment of the BRT line and completing the corridor's mobility analysis.



# NVTC in the News

*Local, regional and national newspapers, magazines and television stations interviewed NVTC's chair, leaders and staff to report on NVTC's policy leadership and programs more than 50 times throughout the year, covering topics including Metro funding, the Commuter Choice program, Envision Route 7 and NVTC's zero-emission bus research.*

## DCist

- › **Metro Needs Funding, Badly. Will Virginia Help Provide It?** [bit.ly/3ZBVioE](https://www.dccist.com/news/transportation/metro-needs-funding-badly-will-virginia-help-provide-it/)

## WJLA

- › **Youngkin says Metro budget amendment will save tax money, local leaders say otherwise** [bit.ly/3OAlYRr](https://www.wjla.com/news/transportation/youngkin-says-metro-budget-amendment-will-save-tax-money-local-leaders-say-otherwise/)

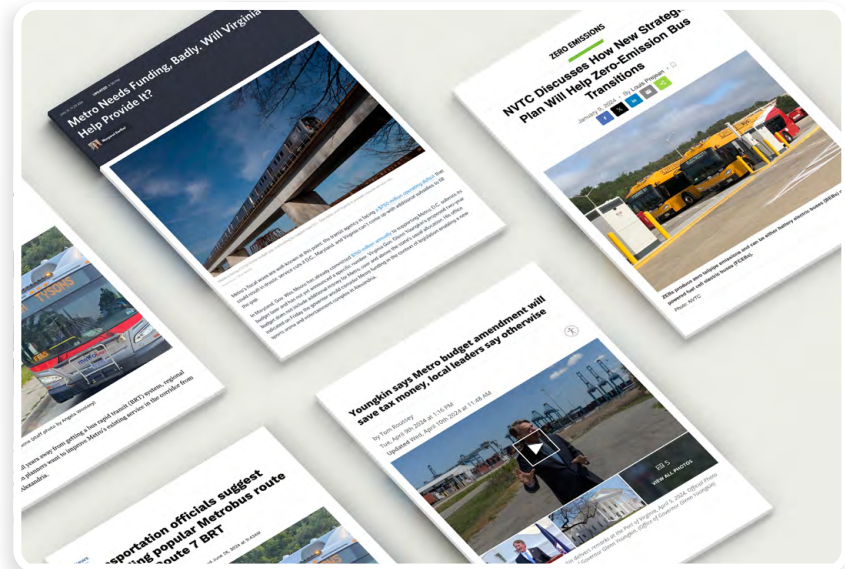
## Metro Magazine

- › **NVTC Discusses How New Strategic Plan Will Help Zero-Emission Bus Transitions** [bit.ly/3B9VydB](https://www.metrova.com/news/nvtc-discusses-how-new-strategic-plan-will-help-zero-emission-bus-transitions/)

## FFXnow

- › **Transportation officials suggest upgrading popular Metrobus route ahead of Route 7 BRT project** [bit.ly/4gqiqgAl](https://www.ffxnow.com/news/transportation/transportation-officials-suggest-upgrading-popular-metrobus-route-ahead-of-route-7-brt-project/)
- › **'Road map' for dedicated transit funding still work in progress, N. Va. officials say** [bit.ly/3AYMF6Q](https://www.ffxnow.com/news/transportation/road-map-for-dedicated-transit-funding-still-work-in-progress-n-va-officials-say/)

Read more: [novatransit.org/news-and-media/nvtc-in-the-news](https://novatransit.org/news-and-media/nvtc-in-the-news)



# Awards and Honors

## Regional Marketing Campaign Receives Two Awards

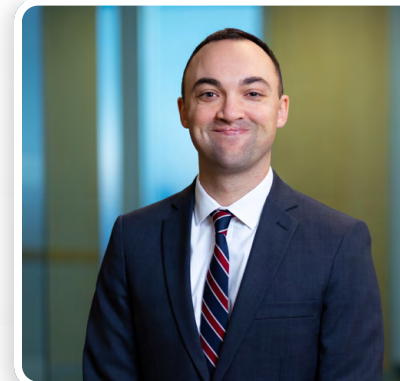
NVTC's **"Ride With Us"** regional marketing campaign won a first-place award from the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) in the category of digital-social media campaign (paid) and the Virginia Transit Association Outstanding Transit marketing award. That campaign ran last summer following the reopening of Metro's Yellow Line Bridge and the opening of the Potomac Yard-VT Station, while encouraging people to ride all of our public transit systems. It was a partnership between the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax County, OmniRide and Virginia Railway Express.

## Virginia Transit Leadership Institute

Senior Program Manager Adam Hager joined the second class of the Virginia Transit Leadership Institute (VTLI), presented by the Virginia Transit Association. Meanwhile, Senior Grants and Procurement Manager Brittany Sumpter wrapped up a successful year in the VTLI's first class.

## Joe Alexander Distinguished Public Official Leadership Award

The Virginia Transit Association presented Mary Hynes with the Outstanding Contribution by an Individual: Public Official Leadership Award for her career of service in transportation on the Commonwealth Transportation Board, NVTC, Metro Board of Directors, the Arlington County Board and other regional organizations.



# NVTC in the Community

*As a collaborative organization, it's in NVTC's nature to participate in events run by, or in partnership with others. NVTC staff members attended and presented at national and regional conventions and meetings, joined groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings, and shared NVTC expertise whenever called on to do so.*

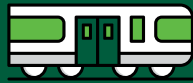




# Financial Management

*NVTC fiscal year 2024 financial and compliance reports received clean audit opinions. The two opinions covered the financial position of NVTC's activities and the internal control over financial reporting and compliance with laws, contracts, regulations, grant agreements and other matters.*

**Total NVTC  
Fiscal Year  
2024 Revenue  
\$445.5  
million**



## **\$210.5 million STATE ASSISTANCE**

State assistance for Metro operating and capital commitments of the NVTC jurisdictions, contracted through NVTC with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), came to \$210.5 million.



## **\$107.5 million STATE ASSISTANCE**

State assistance for local operating and capital needs, which NVTC applied for on behalf of its member jurisdictions' transit systems, came to \$107.5 million.



## **\$31.4 million REVENUES**

Net revenues from the regional gas tax, which NVTC received for Metro operating and capital requirements, equaled \$31.4 million.



## **\$31.3 million STATE ASSISTANCE**

DRPT assistance to VRE, for which NVTC served as grantee, totaled \$31.3 million.



## **\$15.0 million CROC FUNDING**

\$15 million annual Commuter Rail Operating and Capital funding, derived from regional gas tax revenues, received by NVTC on behalf of VRE.



## **\$49.7 million COMMUTER CHOICE**

\$49.7 million in toll-related revenues received for the I-66 and I-95/395 Commuter Choice programs.

# Commission Officers

## 2024 NVTC Officers



**Matt de Ferranti** ▶  
*NVTC Chair*  
*Arlington County*



**David Snyder** ▶  
*Vice-Chair*  
*City of Falls Church*



**Sarah Bagley** ▶  
*Secretary-Treasurer*  
*City of Alexandria*



**Dalia Palchik** ▶  
*Immediate Past Chair*  
*Fairfax County*

## NVTC Committee Chairs



**Canek Aguirre** ▶  
*Legislative and Policy Committee*



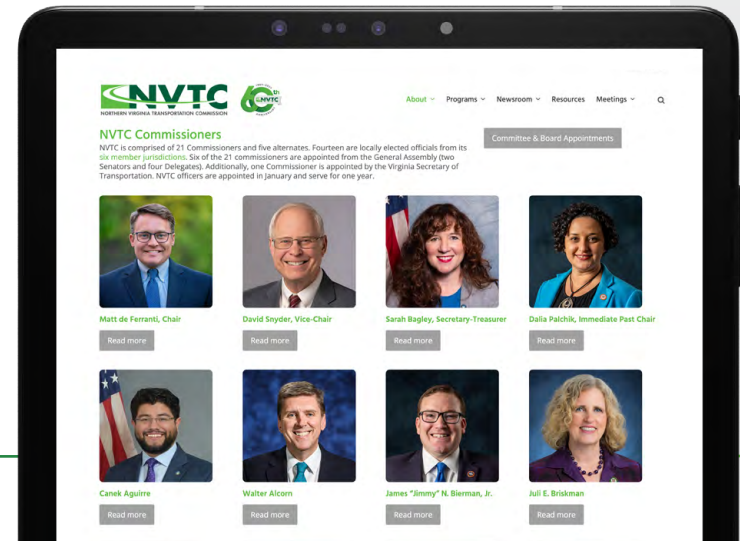
**Dalia Palchik** ▶  
*Program Advisory Committee*



**Walter Alcorn** ▶  
*WMATA Committee*

## Meet Our Commissioners Online

[View All Commissioners Here](#) ▶  
([novatransit.org/commissioners](https://novatransit.org/commissioners))



# NVTC's Professional Staff



**Not pictured:**  
Tenley O'Hara

**BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:**

Ben Owen, Melissa Walker, Scott Kalkwarf, Xavier Harmony, Genoveva Cutrell, Ann McGrane, Andrew D'Huyvetter, Noman Sayed, Daniel Knickelbein, Matt Friedman, Vikram Sinha

**FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:**

Monique Blyther, Adam Hager, Colethia Quarles, Colie Touzel, Allan Fye, Kate Mattice, Rhonda Gilcrest, Sophie Spiliotopoulos, Brittany Sumpter



## Transit Fellow Program

NVTC hosted three Transit Fellows 2024



**Robert Rudesill** is a graduate of Drexel University with a bachelor's degree in political science and plans to attend law school. He spent the first half of the year supporting the Communications team.



**Will Heltzel** is completing his master's degree in urban and regional planning at Virginia Tech. He spent the summer supporting NVTC's zero-emission bus efforts.



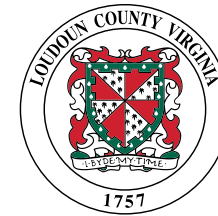
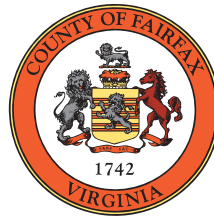
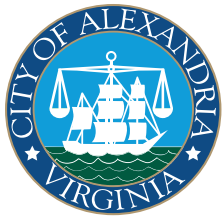
**Mirna Armanious** completed her master's degree in urban and regional planning at Virginia Tech and supported NVTC's Metro program during the fall.

The Transit Fellow program is made possible through generous support from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation



# Member Jurisdictions

NVTC thanks our local, state, regional, federal and non-governmental partners for their valuable contributions toward advancing public transit.



# Our Partner Organizations



# Transit Agencies Serving Northern Virginia





# Advancing Transit

## 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

*The 2024 Year in Review is a product of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission*

### Contact Us

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