

Advancing transit in
Northern Virginia
since 1964



February
2026

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Executive Director
Newsletter





A Message From Kate Mattice

With the 2026 General Assembly Session well underway, we are engaged in critical discussions about how to keep our public transit agencies moving forward, while ensuring that transportation costs remain affordable for Virginians. The Northern Virginia delegation is leading the charge to turn the recommendations from DMVMoves and the General Assembly's Growing Needs of Northern Virginia Public Transit Joint Subcommittee into real world solutions.

Creating long-term sustainable funding for Metro, Virginia Railway Express and every transit agency that serves the Commonwealth will create a more stable environment for the operating and capital needs of those agencies, while adding predictability for the state and local governments that support them.

We have been reminding General Assembly members and their staffers about the value of transit to the Commonwealth, sharing our research showing that Northern Virginia's public transit contributes \$1.5 billion annually to Virginia's General Fund. At the same time, we have been highlighting statewide data that show 3 million Virginians ride public transit each week and riding transit can turn into real savings for Virginia families—as much as \$11,500 a year!

NVTC's leadership team and staff have also been a visible presence in Richmond, participating in the Virginia Transit Association's Advocacy Day, hosting a Legislative Reception to connect legislators and administration officials with our Commissioners and serving as a technical resource for General Assembly members as bills work their way through the Session.

Public transit benefits every corner of the Commonwealth. We are working to secure its future and to make sure that Virginians continue to enjoy this safe, reliable and affordable way to travel.


Executive Director



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February 5
Legislative Reception
(Richmond)

February 17
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

February 19
Legislative and Policy
Committee

February 19
Program Advisory
Committee

February 20
VRE Operations Board

March 5
Commission Meeting

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NVTC welcomes new officers and Commissioners

Immediate Past Chair David Snyder [swore in](#) his successor, Sarah Bagley of Alexandria, alongside Vice-Chair Matthew F. Letourneau of Loudoun County and Secretary-Treasurer Maureen Coffey of Arlington County at January's Commission meeting.

Chair Bagley is Vice Mayor of the City of Alexandria and was first appointed to NVTC in 2022. She served as Chair of the VRE Operations Board in 2025.

NVTC also welcomed two new Commissioners and one alternate. Newly elected Fairfax County Supervisor Rachna Sizemore Heizer filled the vacancy created by James Walkinshaw's election to Congress. Transportation Secretary Shep Miller designated Darien Flowers to replace Paul Smedberg on NVTC and the Metro Board in January. Mr. Snyder also swore in Thomas D. Peterson as an alternate representing the City of Fairfax.

NVTC also recognized outgoing Commissioners Paul Smedberg and Mark Sickles for their contributions and Immediate Past Chair Snyder for his record-setting fourth term leading NVTC.



Matthew F. Letourneau, Sarah Bagley, Maureen Coffey, David Snyder



Darien Flowers, Thomas D. Peterson, Rachna Sizemore Heizer, David Snyder



Mark Sickles, David Snyder (bottom left); Paul Smedberg, David Snyder (bottom right)



NVTC committees review transit funding legislation, Metro budget

The NVTC WMATA and Legislative and Policy Committees held a [joint meeting](#) January 29 and received briefings on transit funding legislation under consideration by the General Assembly and Metro's FY 2027 operating budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Both committees also reviewed and discussed their respective 2026 work plans.

General Assembly Session

NVTC Director of Programs and Policy Ann McGrane provided an overview of the two House and Senate measures, [HB 900/SB 730](#) and [HB 1179/SB 638](#), that directly address the transit funding needs identified through DMVMoves and the General Assembly's Growing Needs of Northern Virginia Public Transit Joint Subcommittee. All four bills have been referred to appropriate committees and NVTC continues to monitor their progress. NVTC's Legislative Liaison Aimee Perron Siebert then discussed General Assembly updates.

Metro Matters

The joint committee received a briefing from NVTC Program Analyst Shannon Bacon regarding Metro's FY 2027 proposed [budget](#), highlights of which included rail and bus service enhancements, ridership and revenue growth, 3% total subsidy growth and a capital improvement program that features two scenarios, one with an additional \$460 million as recommended by DMVMoves and one without. Members also discussed a comment letter from NVTC to Metro regarding its FY 2027 budget which documents NVTC's support for the CIP scenario including DMVMoves funding, advancing rail modernization and using operating efficiencies to provide better service, among other items. The final comment letter will be submitted to Metro prior to its February 10 deadline and shared with the Commission at its March meeting.

WMATA FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

- Bus and rail enhancement concepts **primarily funded through operating efficiencies.**
- **No fare increase** in FY 2027.
 - Anticipated increase in FY 2028.
- FY 2027 baseline paid ridership growth of **2.3%**, and **4.9% with service improvements.**

Metrobus

- **More efficient bus operations** through schedule optimization
- **Add capacity and improve on-time performance** to address emerging crowding and reliability issues
- **Increase frequency** to drive ridership and improve customer experience
- **Enhance span and coverage** to key routes to provide more consistent service

Metrorail

- **More efficient rail operations** through train length optimization and Automatic Train Operation
- **Better all-day and late night service** to improve network usefulness for trips across the day and support major destinations with more frequent service
- **Add peak capacity** to mitigate crowding on the Red, Orange and Silver Lines

MetroAccess: Service area remains at FY2026 levels

Source: [December 11, 2025 Safety and Operations Committee](#)

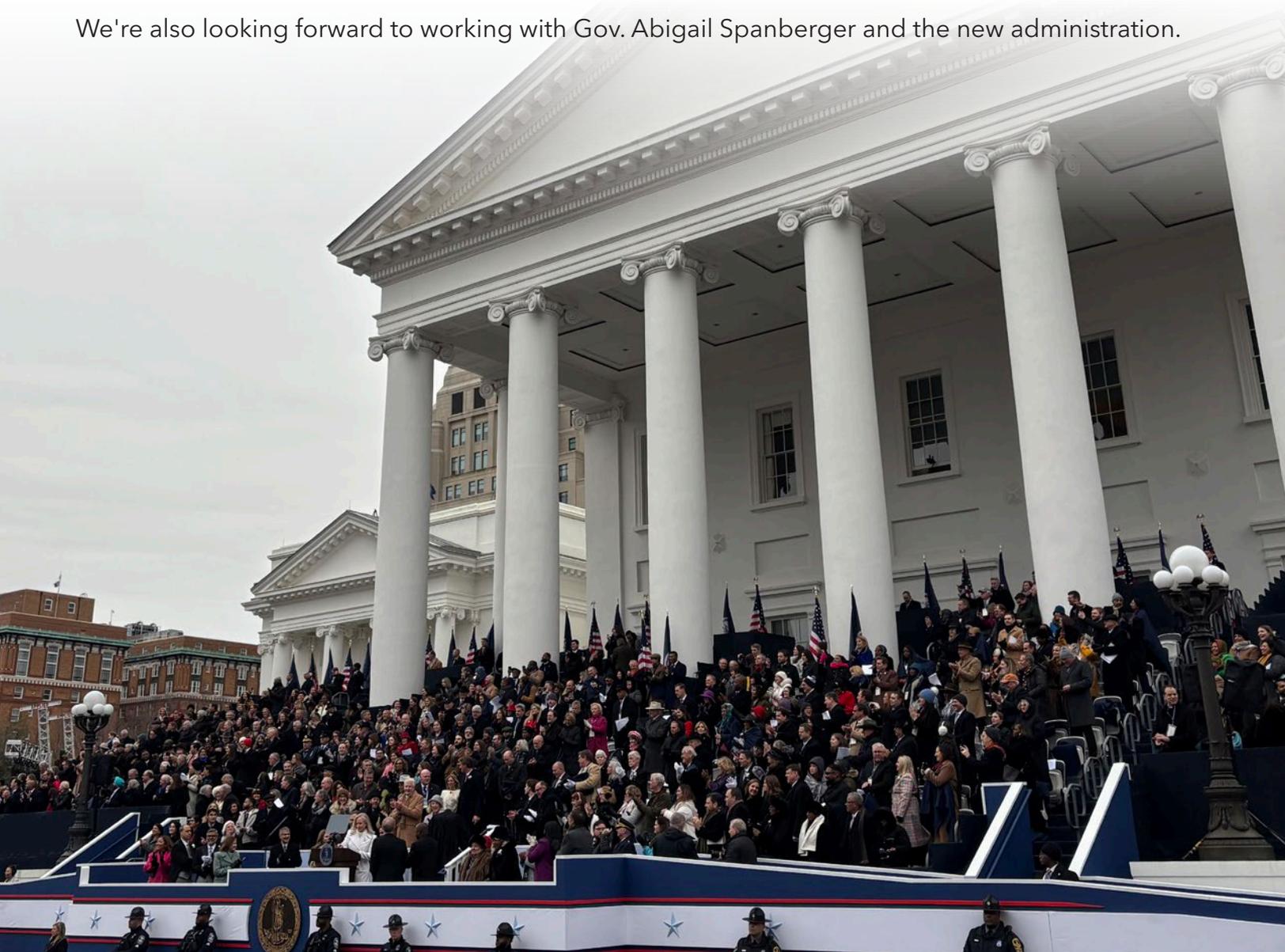


Transportation bills introduced in General Assembly

The 2026 General Assembly Session kicked off January 14 and NVTC is actively tracking legislation and budget items that could impact transit funding and operations in Northern Virginia. This session represents a pivotal opportunity for the region as NVTC and its partners work to advance the funding solutions identified through the General Assembly's SJ 28 Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee and the recently endorsed DMVMoves plan.

NVTC supports [HB 900](#) (Del. Sullivan) and [SB 730](#) (Sen. Surovell), a broader tax reform package initially championed by Del. Mark Sickles, as well as [HB 1179](#) (Del. Tran) and [SB 638](#) (Sen. Ebbin), which advance the recommendations adopted by the joint subcommittee. NVTC staff are focused on supporting and advancing these measures, both of which would be transformative for transit systems in Northern Virginia and throughout the Commonwealth.

We're also looking forward to working with Gov. Abigail Spanberger and the new administration.



KEEP VIRGINIA MOVING FORWARD: INVEST IN PUBLIC TRANSIT



Public transit in Virginia moves 3 million people every week.



Our safe, affordable transit systems save Virginia families up to \$10,000/year.



Public transit in Virginia generates billions of dollars in economic benefits for the Commonwealth each year.



FIND OUT MORE AT NOVATRANSIT.ORG/FUNDING



I live where I live so I can use transit.



This is my lifeline.

NVTC launches Value of Transit campaign

In January, NVTC launched a targeted campaign to remind Virginians that safe, reliable and affordable transit is essential to the Commonwealth. The campaign's message—"Keep Virginia Moving Forward: Invest in Transit"—is reaching audiences through print, digital, social media and podcast ads.

As the Virginia General Assembly considers several bills that would create dedicated, sustainable transit funding across the state, the path legislators choose will have significant implications for Northern Virginia and the entire Commonwealth. Transit is Virginia's economic engine, generating billions in growth annually

and helping 3 million people every week get to work, school, and other important destinations. Families who choose transit can save thousands of dollars a year on transportation costs—savings that matter when households are examining the affordability of everything from groceries to housing.

The campaign will run through February in outlets reaching audiences in Richmond, Northern Virginia and other parts of the state. We're excited to spread the word about transit's value at such a critical moment for Virginia's future.

PUBLIC TRANSIT KEEPS VIRGINIA MOVING

I live where I live so I can use transit.

This is my lifeline.

PUBLIC TRANSIT KEEPS VIRGINIA MOVING

Each week, 3 million people across Virginia take public transit to get to:

- School
- Work
- Doctor's appointments
- Grocery stores
- Entertainment

Safe, affordable, efficient service.

Each year, public transit generates billions of dollars in economic activity for the Commonwealth.

Let's Keep Virginia Moving Forward:

INVEST IN PUBLIC TRANSIT

Learn more about the value of transit and how sustainable long-term funding is key to safeguarding its future.

Visit novatransit.org/funding



Metro Board receives safety update, swears in new members

Metro staff provided an [update](#) on the Metro Safety Management System and 2026 Agency Safety Plan at the January 15 Board [meeting](#). The safety plan includes a three-year blueprint across four focus areas: safety policy, safety risk management, safety assurance and safety promotion. Milestones in each focus area are assessed and updated each year as Metro works toward continuous improvement. Staff also provided a snapshot of a peer benchmarking analysis to gauge how Metro is performing relative to other agencies. Metro is an industry leader in three of 10 key safety metrics including rail collisions and customer injuries, among others.

Chief Michael Anzallo of the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) provided a brief update on public safety initiatives and crime statistics. Notably, the Part 1, or more serious, crime rate fell to the lowest level in 25 years. Chief Anzallo attributed this success in part to department-wide enforcement actions, which include arrests, citations and warnings, increasing 27% from 2024 to 2025. Fare enforcement on bus and rail increased by 35% year over year. At the meeting, Metro was recognized by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) with the TSA Gold Standard Award, a significant recognition for public transit agencies.

New Board members were sworn in and the Board approved new committee assignments. NVTC Commissioner and Commonwealth appointee Darien Flowers was sworn in as a principal director representing Virginia and Leslie Ford Weber was sworn in as a principal director representing Maryland. Mr. Flowers will serve on the finance and capital committee and NVTC Commissioner Walter Alcorn will serve as the chair of the safety and operations committee and a member of the executive committee.



Metro Board Chair Valerie Santos swears in Darien Flowers

Metro Board advances procurements, adopts policy changes

The Metro Board [met virtually](#) January 29 and provided agreement on three procurement activities as required under a new Board policy. The new procurement policy strengthens the Board's oversight role by requiring Finance and Capital Committee concurrence on new [procurement](#) contracts greater than \$15 million, sole source contracts of \$500,000 or greater and certain modifications to existing contracts. The Finance and Capital Committee advanced three procurement activities including upgrades to traction power systems, improvements to

the [MetroPulse](#) mobile app and infrastructure investment at the Four Mile Run compressed natural gas fueling station.

The Board also approved a revised Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Policy to align with federal standards, amended the Potomac Yard Station reimbursable project to financially close out the project and amended the Comprehensive Parking Policy to expand non-fare revenue sources.



MERIT review progresses with new DRPT leadership

Executive Director Kate Mattice participated in an in-person [meeting](#) of the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) in Richmond January 20 for continued discussions regarding the [MERIT](#) Capital and Operating Assistance Review, including how proposed refinements could shape future state transit investments. While technical work is ongoing, the overall direction of the review remains focused on strengthening performance incentives, improving transparency and ensuring the MERIT program effectively supports transit systems of different sizes and service types across the Commonwealth.

The meeting also marked an early opportunity for TSDAC members to engage with the new leadership at the Department of Rail and Public Transportation. NVTC welcomes Director Mariia Zimmerman and Chief Deputy Director Allan Fye, a team we know well. Kate has had the pleasure of working on national transit-oriented development initiatives with Mariia for over the past 20 years and Allan, as the NVTC community knows, was NVTC's director of programs and policy until 2024.



Good luck, Andrew D'huyvetter!

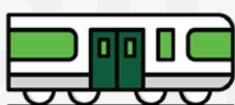
We bid farewell to former Director of Programs and Policy Andrew D'huyvetter in January. Andrew recently played an integral role as chair of the technical working group for the General Assembly's Growing Needs of Northern Virginia Public Transit (SJ 28). He worked with our staff, partner agencies, subcommittee members and Chair Sen. Adam Ebbin to advance that effort into adopted recommendations that have guided legislation during this Session.

Andrew joined NVTC nine years ago, shepherding our Metro program, helping Commissioners establish the WMATA Committee and improving communications between staff and Virginia's Metro Board members. He assumed the director position in 2024. He also worked to ensure a smooth transition to Ann McGrane, who became director of programs and policy on January 1.

We wish Andrew the best of luck as he and his family relocate to Australia!



Take care!





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