

Advancing transit in
Northern Virginia
since 1964



November 2025

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Executive Director Newsletter





A Message From Kate Mattice

If you noticed that this month's newsletter is longer than usual, you're right! October turned out to be an epic month for NVTC and this edition of the newsletter captures that whirlwind of activity. Much of what we accomplished last month was the result of work we've been building toward for the last couple of years.

Our Commissioners and staff have been deeply involved in the two major efforts to find long-term ways to fund the region's public transit agencies: the General Assembly's SJ 28 Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee and DMVMoves, the task force convened by Metro and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Both committees recently made recommendations that will shape next year's General Assembly Session.

I've also shared what we have learned with audiences across the Commonwealth, testifying before the House Appropriations Committee in Richmond, speaking to the business community in Northern Virginia and participating in the annual Northern Virginia Joint Transportation Meeting. Each appearance gave me the opportunity to talk about the amazing ridership recovery, as well as the funding gaps the region's transit agencies face, making the case that transit helps drive Virginia's economic success and quality of life.

We also celebrated major events for our programs, hosting a well-attended open house for the Envision Route 7 bus rapid transit current study phase and cutting the ribbon on a Commuter Choice funded parking garage benefitting Virginia Railway Express riders.

October was a defining month for NVTC, one that showed the results of months and years of behind-the-scenes work. And one that sets us up for even more success in the future.


Executive Director



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November 10
Commonwealth
Transportation Board

November 20
Joint WMATA & Legislative
and Policy Committees

November 21
VRE Operations Board

December 4
Commission Meeting

December 15
NVTC/PRTC/VRE
Legislative Forum

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ENVISION ROUTE 7



Open house gathers input on Envision Route 7 program

NVTC held a well-attended open house for our [Envision Route 7](#) program October 15 at the Culmore Community Library in Fairfax County to provide current and former bus riders, residents, commuters and business owners with the opportunity to find out more about the project, meet the team working to improve bus service along Route 7 and offer feedback on the current project phase.

Executive Director Kate Mattice also spoke with [WJLA-TV](#) about the program, while Senior Program Manager Vikram Sinha explained Envision Route 7 to reporters from ARLnow and Annandale Today.

Envision Route 7 will transform the 14-mile stretch connecting Tysons and Alexandria, bringing faster, more reliable transit to one of the region's busiest bus routes. This phase of outreach aims to inform the public about the challenges on Route 7 and potential solutions that can help carry more people on a busy corridor.

The open house was part of a new outreach phase, which includes pop up events and bus stop chats along with a new [newsletter](#) to keep people up to date on developments. We expect to return in the spring with a second round of outreach to discuss the results of our work and incorporate advice and insights on how to improve the bus experience.





I-66 Commuter Choice Call for Projects opens

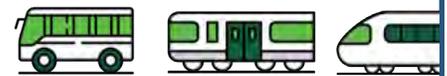
The FY 2027-2028 I-66 Commuter Choice [Call for Projects](#) opened in October and NVTC is accepting applications for funding through December 12. The program funds transit and other transportation projects, both capital and operating, that move more people, more efficiently through the I-66 corridor while providing transportation alternatives to using the I-66 toll lanes. Up to \$100 million is available for new projects, with funding limited to between \$200,000 and \$20 million per application.



Commuter Choice Program highlighted at TBP and Springfield TAGS

NVTC Commuter Choice and Policy Program Manager Daniel Knickelbein and Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Transit Planning Manager Amy Garbarini gave an update on the I-66 Needs Assessment to the September staff-level meeting of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee. The I-66 Needs Assessment is a joint NVTC-DRPT study to identify short- and long-term projects along the I-66 corridor that can be supported by NVTC's I-66 Commuter Choice or DRPT's I-66 Outside the Beltway funding programs.

Daniel also presented to the Transportation Association of Greater Springfield (TAGS) on projects included in the latest I-395/95 Commuter Choice [funding program](#), including three Fairfax Connector routes in the Springfield area that will see enhanced bus service thanks to Commuter Choice. NVTC appreciates the partnership with Fairfax County and TAGS to provide strong transit connections in Springfield.

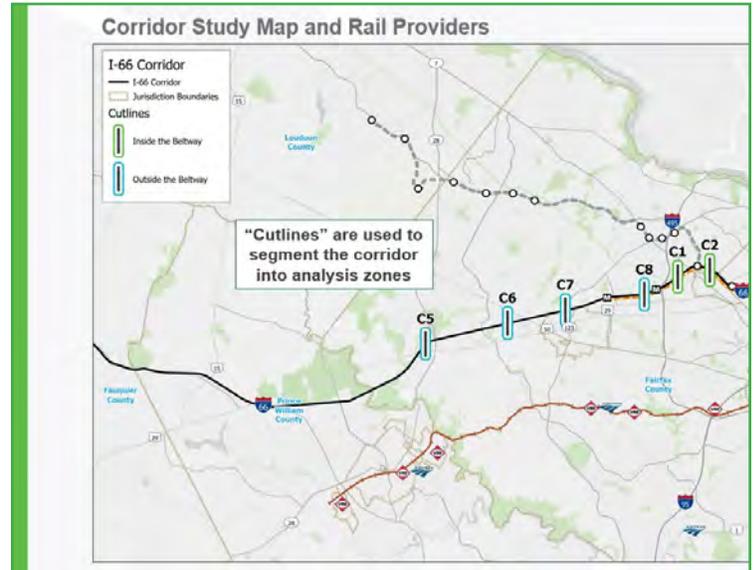


NVTC, DRPT examine transportation needs along I-66 corridor

Staff from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) joined Daniel Knickelbein, Commuter Choice and Policy Program Manager, and NVTC staff October 30 for an interactive workshop with local and regional stakeholders to discuss the ongoing I-66 Needs Assessment. That review is looking at current and future travel patterns in the I-66 corridor to identify potential future candidate projects for either NVTC's I-66 Commuter Choice or DRPT's I-66 Outside the Beltway grant programs. The workshop included breakout sessions for partners to discuss collaboration on local and regional projects that may be a good fit for one or both programs.

The study team will take feedback from the workshop and refine the list of potential projects. A draft of the Needs Assessment and briefing

for NVTC's Program Advisory Committee (PAC) is anticipated in the spring.

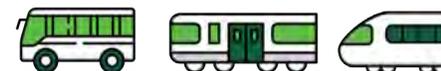


VRE opens Commuter Choice supported parking garage



Executive Director Kate Mattice helped cut the ribbon for a new parking garage at Virginia Railway Express' (VRE) [Manassas Park Station](#) October 22 that will provide 540 parking spaces for riders. NVTC's Commuter Choice program provided \$2.5 million toward the \$35.2 million total cost.

The garage enhances access to the VRE station while supporting the city's growing downtown, which is centered around transit-oriented development. It also opens as VRE experienced a 75% jump in ridership in the first half of this year. This garage helps prepare the commuter railroad for long-term growth.



Committees discuss Metro, legislative issues

NVTC's WMATA and Legislative and Policy Committees [met jointly](#) October 16 to discuss Metro's Strategic Transformation Plan, NVTC's 2025 "Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA" and NVTC's 2026 Legislative and Policy Agenda. The Committees have a busy fall planned, with another meeting scheduled for November 20 in preparation for the upcoming 2026 Virginia General Assembly Session.

NVTC's 2025 Report on the Performance and Condition of WMATA

- NVTC is required each year to produce a report addressing (§33.2-3403):
 - Potential strategies to reduce the growth in costs and to improve the efficiency of WMATA operations
 - Use of the dedicated capital funds
 - Safety, reliability, ridership and financial performance data
- Commission briefing and draft report review in November
- Due to Governor and General Assembly by December 15



Fairfax Connector celebrates 40 years and 250 million rides



Executive Director Kate Mattice joined current and former Commissioners to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Fairfax Connector October 1. Fairfax County launched its own bus system in 1985 and NVTC was instrumental in its establishment. Throughout the years, NVTC has invested in the growth of the network through our Commuter Choice program. Those contributions funded 25 buses and helped start or expand 10 bus routes. Fairfax Connector operates 93 routes and has carried 250 million riders in the last four decades.



Commissioner James "Jimmy" N. Bierman, Jr. and Fairfax County Chair Jeff McKay



Former NVTC Commissioners: Fairfax County Chair Jeff McKay with former Chairs Sharon Bulova and Kate Hanley

General Assembly joint subcommittee nears transit funding recommendation

The General Assembly's SJ 28 Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit [Joint Subcommittee](#) met at Metro's Eisenhower Office Building October 21 and agreed to support funding a series of transit funding needs for Metro, Virginia Railway Express and local bus agencies in Northern Virginia. The total funding need beginning in FY 2028 is approximately \$400 million, with an initial \$153 million of additional operating support for Metro needed in FY 2027.

The Joint Subcommittee also received an update from [DMVMoves](#) facilitator Nick Donohue, a briefing from Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke and reviewed the results of cost containment research. The Joint Subcommittee will hold its final meeting on Wednesday, November 5 and is anticipated to approve recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly in the 2026 legislative Session.



Immediate and Long-Term Funding Needs

Starting in **FY 2028**, Northern Virginia transit needs an additional

~\$400M/year

growing with inflation to **maintain current service levels and state of good repair.**

WMATA Operating*
Funding Need

\$153M

beginning in **FY 2027**

In FY 2025, the General Assembly + NVTC localities provided **two-year fix** for WMATA operating gap. MD and DC fix was permanent.

WMATA Capital**
Funding Need

\$136-150M

beginning in **FY 2028**

As identified by DMVMoves Growing 3% each year

Virginia Railway Express
Funding Need

~\$35M

beginning in **FY 2028**

After Long Bridge completion, an additional **\$40M** is needed

NVTC Local Bus
Funding Need

~\$35M

beginning in **FY 2028**

OmniRide Funding Need

~\$22M

beginning in **FY 2028**

All sources grow **annually** with inflation

*Va needs additional WMATA operating funding beginning in FY 2027
**Va share of DMVMoves funding still being finalized



DMVMoves approves Metro recommendations, bus priority and system integration actions

The DMVMoves Task Force met for the final time October 29, approving [a set of recommendations](#) for a regional investment plan for Metro and an action plan for regional bus priority and system integration actions. Executive Director Kate Mattice also provided testimony to the Task Force on the progress that the General Assembly's SJ 28 Growing Needs of Northern Virginia Public Transit Joint Subcommittee has made in identifying how Northern Virginia can pay for its portion of the plan. The Metro Board and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Board are scheduled to hold a joint meeting on November 17 to adopt the DMVMoves plan.



House Appropriations gears up for budget season



Executive Director Kate Mattice [testified](#) before the Virginia House Appropriations Committee October 20 as it begins to review budget priorities for next year's General Assembly Session. She [reminded](#) members about the reach of Northern Virginia's public transit network and its economic benefits and highlighted dramatic growth in the region's transit ridership.

Kate's testimony came as the General Assembly's SJ 28 Northern Virginia Growing Needs of Public Transit Joint Subcommittee comes closer to making recommendations to fund and support the continued success of our region's transit systems.

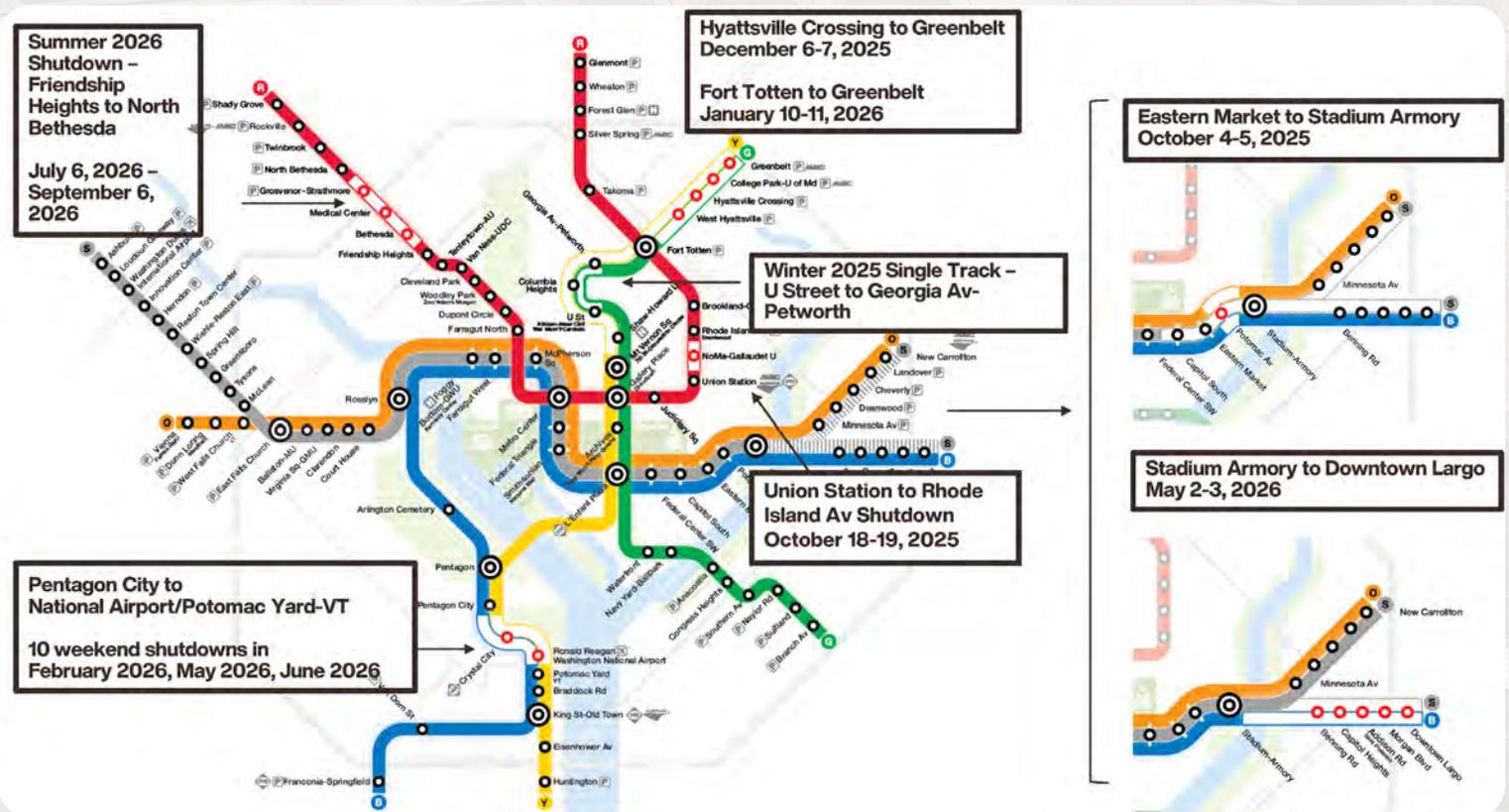


Metro Board reviews capital program, upcoming service outages

The Metro Board received an update on the FY 2027-2032 [Capital Improvement Program \(CIP\)](#) [October 9](#). In recent years, Metro has used increased regional funding to improve system performance and customer experience. Facing an anticipated capital funding shortfall around FY 2029, Metro proposes a two-scenario CIP, one of which assumes no new capital funding and a second that assumes new capital funding as identified in the DMVMoves process which would enable Metro to push for ambitious rail modernization goals. More information is expected to be provided in November, followed by GM/CEO Randy Clarke's proposed budget in December.

2026 Service Outages

The Metro Board also received an overview of maintenance related [service outages](#) in FY 2026. These include 10 weekend shutdowns between Pentagon City and National Airport, with intermittent shutdown extensions to Potomac Yard. These shutdowns occurring in February, March, May and June will support the construction of a new entrance at the Crystal City Station, and will also encompass lifecycle reinvestment such as track and signaling components. Shuttle bus plans are being developed with local partners to support customer trips during these outages.



Virginia's Metro Board members, GM/CEO provide Metro update to CTB

Commissioners Walter Alcorn and Paul Smedberg, Metro Board Chair Valerie Santos and Metro GM/CEO Randy Clarke provided an annual [briefing](#) on Metro matters to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) October 14. Required by Virginia law, the Virginia members of the Metro Board and general manager address the CTB each year regarding

the Metro budget, system performance and utilization of the Commonwealth's investment in the Metro system. The briefing offered insight into several key issues for CTB members who might be less familiar with Metro including ridership growth, financial performance, improvements in safety and long-term capital funding needs.



(Left to right) Commissioners Walter Alcorn and Paul Smedberg with Metro Board Chair Valerie Santos

Metro's Impact by the Numbers

#1 2025 APTA award for outstanding transit agency	9 years of successful clean audits	92% FY25 historic customer satisfaction numbers on rail	83% FY25 historic customer satisfaction numbers on bus	3 category leaders in federal safety measures
55% reduction in crime over three years — lowest level in eight years	30,000+ systemwide public safety cameras	82% reduction in Metro Rail fare evasion	57% of paratransit trips served through Abilities-Ride	1,490 residential units built on Metro property since 2022
\$2.2M saved by customers using Metro Lift	54 consecutive months of year-over-year ridership growth	265M total trips in FY2025	11 new high-frequency routes in new bus network	\$215M annual tax revenue through joint development

Comment period opens for MERIT changes

Executive Director Kate Mattice participated in the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) meeting on October 6, where staff from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) presented new alternatives to the Making Efficient and Responsible Investments in Transit (MERIT) operating assistance formula. DRPT reviewed several alternative performance scenarios, such as using three years of performance data, excluding commuter bus deadhead miles and adjusting cost measures.

DRPT also posted an overview of the [proposed changes](#) on its website as part of a 45-day [public comment](#) period that remains open through November 21.

Updated Timeline and Progress To-Date

<p>Steps Completed To-Date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee: Process Kickoff • April 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSDAC: MERIT Operating & Capital Review Discussion • May 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSDAC: Update on MERIT Operating & Capital Review • July 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTB: Briefing on proposed ideas for MERIT Operating & Capital Changes • TSDAC: Briefing on proposed ideas for MERIT Operating & Capital Changes, Discussion, and Feedback • August 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSDAC: Briefing on refined MERIT Operating & Capital Changes • September 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-One meetings with TSDAC Members, Transit Service Providers, and other Stakeholders 	<p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSDAC: Review of feedback from stakeholders, proposed refinements, discussion, and feedback • October 7, 2025: Release for 45-day Public Comment • November 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 21, 2025: End of 45-day Public Comment • TSDAC: Review Public Comment and provide final review and feedback on proposed changes • December 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSDAC: Review Public Comment and provide final review and feedback on proposed changes • CTB: Presentation of proposed changes to CTB Workshop • January 2026: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTB: Vote on adoption of proposed changes
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5 VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

DASH bus drivers show off skills

Executive Director Kate Mattice served as a judge for DASH's "rodeo" October 19. Bus drivers snaked through traffic cones and performed other feats of driving skill for the chance to take home a trophy. Top finishers move onto the American Public Transportation Association and Community Transportation Association of America national rodeo circuits.



Kate with Lonnell Glover, first place winner of the 35-Foot bus contests



NVTC programs shared at regional transportation meeting

NVTC joined transit and governmental agencies from across Northern Virginia October 20 night to share our programs and projects with the public and to receive feedback. Staff, including Sarah Godfrey, Vikram Sinha and Daniel Knickelbein, answered questions about our Commuter Choice and Envision Route 7 programs. Executive Director Kate Mattice then participated in a [listening session](#) where she highlighted \$212 million in Commuter Choice project funding, the opening of the Call for Projects for I-66 Commuter Choice and the near-term bus priority improvements along Route 7, as well as the opportunity to provide [feedback](#) on the planned bus rapid transit system along Route 7 between Tysons and Alexandria.



Progress at NoVa transit agencies shared at Alliance breakfast



The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance invited Executive Director Kate Mattice to serve on the panel for their annual [What You Need to Know about Transportation](#) breakfast October 24. It was an opportunity to explain the work of NVTC, the importance of Northern Virginia's public transit network as an economic engine and the recent successes of the transit agencies serving our region. She spoke about the funding challenges those agencies face and how the region hopes to establish long-term fixes. In addition, the Alliance honored Gov. Glenn Youngkin for his contributions to transportation. In his remarks, the government referenced NVTC's "[Value of Transit](#)" study, which found every dollar Virginia invests in transit in Northern Virginia generates an additional \$1.60 in statewide revenue, a 160% return on investment.

NVTC showcases innovative data visualization at national conference

NVTC Data Visualization Program Manager Sophie Spiliotopoulos and Metro Program Manager Adam Hager presented at the [Mpact Transit + Community Conference](#) in Portland, Oregon October 29 and described how NVTC uses compelling graphics and storytelling to simplify complex transit topics. They highlighted the [Transit Funding Guide](#) and [Value of Transit](#) to the Commonwealth, key NVTC products that educate and inform the public, partners and Commissioners. Sophie and Adam also heard from industry professionals from across the country about how transit investments are transforming communities.



Conferences teach advanced design, event planning skills

Communications and Design Specialist Colie Touzel attended the [Adobe MAX](#) conference in Los Angeles the week of October 27. Colie focused on learning advanced techniques in InDesign while also enhancing their skills in Photoshop and Adobe Express. The conference offered innovative insights into the latest developments in graphic design and time-saving workflows.

NVTC Events and Administrative Coordinator Tenley O'Hara attended the [Event Planner Expo](#) in New York City October 14-16. The premier three-day conference brought together event planners, corporate decision-makers, marketers and industry leaders. The expo was an incredible opportunity to network, gain valuable insights and discover innovative ways to help bring NVTC events and outreach to the next level.



Happy Halloween from NVTC!

Spooky season arrived at NVTC October 30 as we celebrated Halloween over lunch. Congrats to best costume winner Andrew D'huyvetter, as Metro Center, and runner up Tenley O'Hara, as Helly R from Severance. Meg Johnston took home first place for best decorated door, with Sarah Godfrey placing second.



Staff training focuses on strengths and conflict styles

All NVTC staff participated in an in-house retreat Friday, September 26, which examined personal strengths and how each staff member deals with conflict. It was time well spent where we learned more about each other's motivations and how we connect as a team.





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