Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

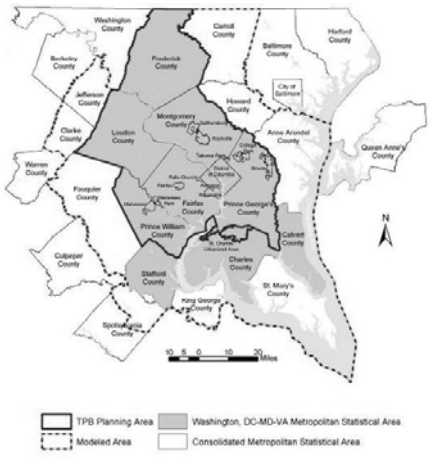
NVTC

Thinking Outside the Car Since 1964

HOW PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS ORGANIZED IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

NOVEMBER 5, 2008

Map of Washington Metropolitan Region



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Summary

- Public transit in Northern Virginia is coordinated and performs exceptionally well.
- Routes do not overlap, services are not duplicated, and systems do not compete.
- The institutions providing, planning and funding transit in Northern Virginia are many and their interrelationships are complex, but they have evolved for good reasons, function effectively and have well-defined individual responsibilities.
- In general those entities providing the most funding exercise the most control.
- While all participants continue to strive for improvements, there is no compelling need to alter the current institutional structure.



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Northern Virginia's Interconnected Transit Systems

In Northern Virginia: 142 million trips in FY 2008

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New Ridership Data for FY 2008 Show Continued Positive Regional Transit Performance

Strong transit performance in Northern Virginia:

- Preliminary FY 2008 results show over 142 million trips, up 3.3 percent compared to FY 2007.
- 17% ridership growth here since 2003.
- Metrorail was up 4 percent in FY 2008, VRE was up 5 percent, Arlington Transit was up 16 percent and Loudoun County Transit was up 19 percent.
- 75% of Virginia's transit ridership is in Northern Virginia.
- Northern Virginia's 2.1 million residents took 65 transit trips per capita in FY 2007, while in NVTC's WMATA jurisdictions residents took 96 (the statewide average was 24).
- Transit and ridesharing carry two-thirds of commuters in our major corridors in peak periods.

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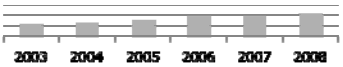
Total Transit Ridership Growth NoVA FY 2003-2008

Transit Provider	FY 2003 Passenger Trips	FY 2004 Passenger Trips	FY 2005 Passenger Trips	FY 2006 Passenger Trips	FY 2007 Passenger Trips	FY 2008 Passenger Trips
Metrorail (Northern Virginia)	83,529,741	87,817,948	89,624,272	94,642,466	94,161,091	97,964,390
Mertrobus (Northern Virginia)	20,855,658	19,190,908	19,314,871	20,899,080	21,011,434	20,870,898*
Fairfax Connector	7,595,138	7,990,825	8,474,143	9,529,056	9,717,392	9,810,228
Alexandria DASH Bus	2,986,631	3,131,284	3,323,021	3,556,486	3,743,449	3,978,773
Virginia Railway Express	3,179,957	3,645,434	3,745,382	3,640,000	3,453,561	3,628,563
PRTC OMNI Ride Bus	1,182,996	1,251,316	1,398,026	1,608,583	1,738,556	1,840,722
Arlington Transit	397,001	674,806	788,854	926,574	1,060,441	1,225,427
City of Fairfax CUE Bus	925,000	985,500	1,068,492	1,093,926	1,135,758	1,047,346
PRTC OMNI Link Bus	649,405	604,586	694,367	843,407	870,206	1,008,626
Loudoun County Transit	281,829	392,901	513,766	602,333	652,347	777,273
Total	121,583,356	125,685,507	128,945,194	137,341,911	137,544,235	142,152,246



Annual Transit Ridership in NoVA has Increased 17% since 2003

*Preliminary.

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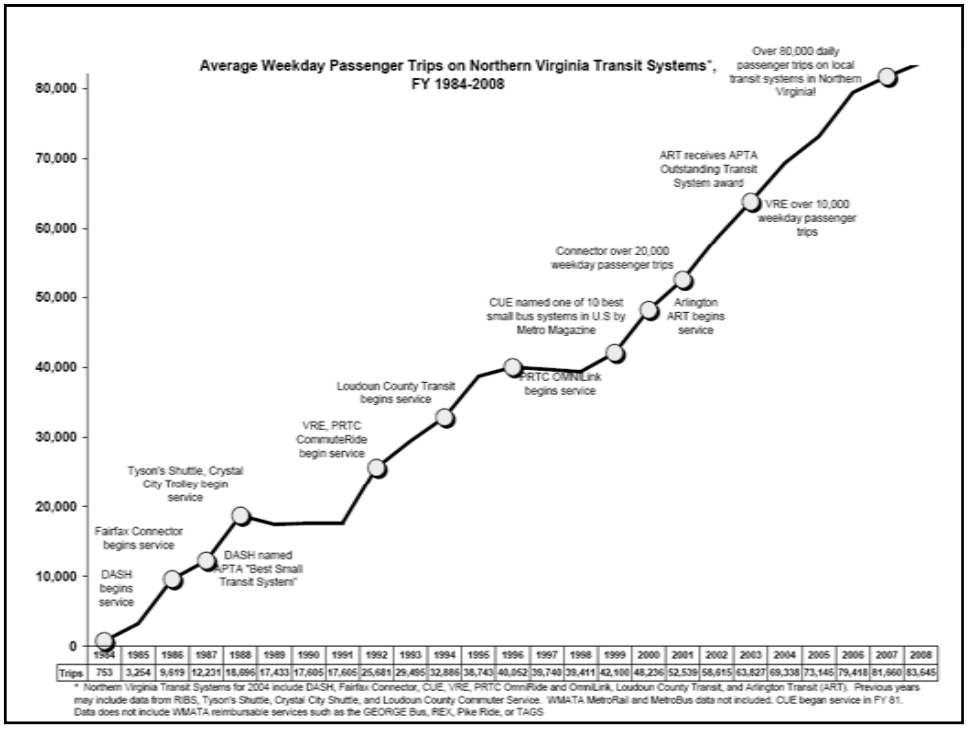

Average Weekday Passenger Trips

Northern Virginia Local Transit Systems

FY	DASH	Connector	CUE	VRE	PRTC	ART	LCT
1984	753						
1985	3,254						
1986	4,599	3,350	1,450				
1987	4,352	5,719	2,000				
1988	4,320	8,765	2,442				
1989	4,680	9,051	2,470				
1990	5,100	8,550	2,780				
1991	5,100	8,550	2,780				
1992	5,456	8,550	3,400				
1993	6,900	9,610	3,100	5,597	2,730		
1994	7,604	10,605	3,305	7,170	2,864		
1995	7,604	16,465	3,552	7,361	2,964		
1996	7,815	16,700	3,380	7,670	3,174		
1997	7,751	17,000	3,191	7,150	3,671		
1998	7,963	17,499	3,131	6,081	3,695		
1999	8,354	17,636	3,100	7,078	3,857	420	648
2000	8,689	20,494	3,435	8,414	5,350	714	710
2001	9,172	22,537	3,423	9,877	5,083	588	730
2002	9,330	24,765	3,250	11,467	6,153	837	838
2003	10,235	27,765	3,282	13,291	7,186	976	1,152
2004	10,864	28,590	3,438	14,540	7,635	2,640	1,642
2005	11,288	29,775	3,739	15,115	8,076	2,992	2,189
2006	12,178	33,154	3,831	14,785	9,611	3,528	2,449
2007	12,785	33,877	3,988	13,982	10,610	3,812	2,606
2008	13,647	32,576	4,227	14,662	11,218	4,243	3,072

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Costs of Operation

- All of Northern Virginia's transit systems have held their inflation-adjusted operating costs relatively steady over the past few years.
- Bus systems serving short passenger trips have lower costs per trip than bus and rail systems serving primarily long distance trips.
- Conversely, bus and rail systems with long distance customers have lower costs per passenger mile.
- Similarly, operating costs recovered from passenger fares vary with type of service offered. Short-haul feeder routes to rail stations recover much lower percentages than express bus routes and rail services. For example, VRE recovers over 50% and Metrorail over 70% while Metrobus recovers 33%.

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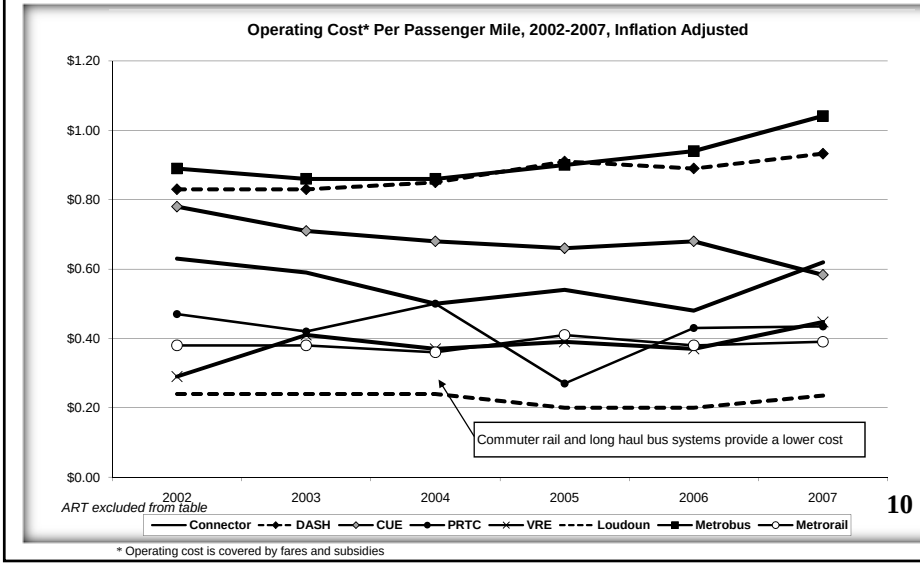
Cost of Operation



ART excluded from table

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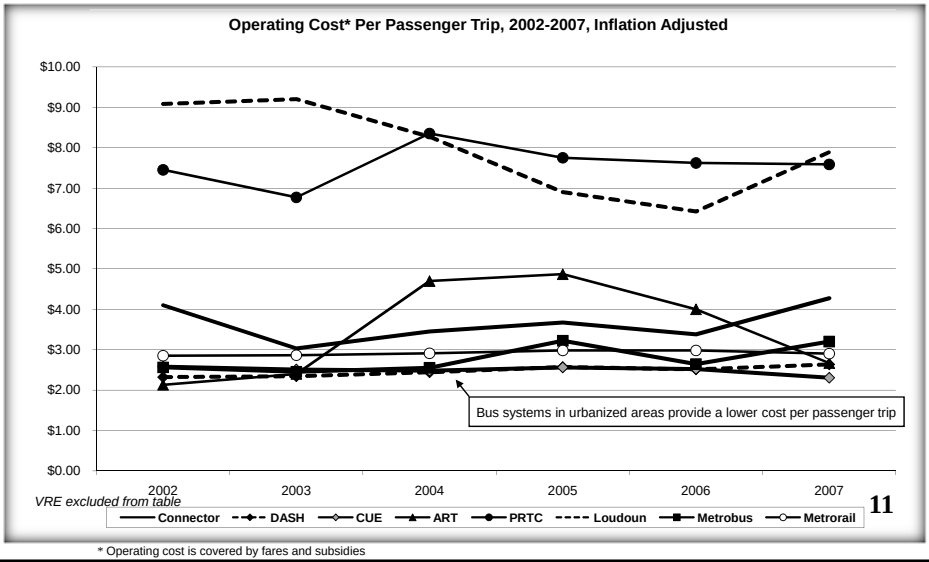
* Operating cost is covered by fares and subsidies

Cost of Operation



VRE excluded from table

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* Operating cost is covered by fares and subsidies

Local Level of Effort

- It now costs over $622 million dollars annually to operate, maintain and invest in public transit in Northern Virginia.
- Local sources (fares, 2% gas tax, local subsidies) provide two-thirds.
- The latest available data show that, NVTC's jurisdictions had a local level of effort of $208 per person. The next largest effort was in the Richmond District at $20 per person.

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Many Separate Institutions, Each with Well-Defined Responsibilities

- As shown on the following chart and in the appendix, there are 10 distinct agencies providing public transit regionally and locally in Northern Virginia.
- There are seven additional regional and state agencies with some role in planning transit in Northern Virginia.
- Most of these local, regional, and state agencies, as well as federal agencies such as Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Railroad Administration have a role in funding transit.

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Summary of Agencies Planning, Operating and Funding Public Transit

Organization	Primary Responsibilities
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Federal formula and discretionary funding and safety regulation.
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Flexible federal funding available for transit.
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Federal loans and grants for passenger rail systems and safety regulation.
Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)	State transit formula and discretionary grants, statewide planning, technical assistance.
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)	State funding and in Northern Virginia-planning, technical assistance and ITS architecture.

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Summary of Agencies Planning, Operating and Funding Public Transit

Funding and Planning:

Organization	Primary Responsibilities
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA)	Manage Dulles Rail Extension and Dulles Toll Road as well as Dulles and Reagan airports.
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)	Modeling, transportation and air quality data collection, vision and constrained planning.
Transportation Planning Board (TPB)	Metropolitan Planning Organization, Transportation Improvement Program, regionwide priorities. Federal statutory responsibility for constrained long-range plan and period calculation of available funding resources.
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)	Northern Virginia multi-modal unconstrained transportation plan, funding priorities, legislative advocacy, project implementing.
Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)	Collect and manage 2% gas tax for Metro, coordinated state grant applications, co-own VRE, demonstrations of innovative technologies, appoint Metro Board members, legislative advocacy

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Summary of Agencies Planning, Operating and Funding Public Transit

Transit Operators:

Organization	Primary Responsibilities
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	Major regional transit provider of rail, bus and paratransit service.
Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)	Co-own VRE, 2% gas tax for members' transportation, coordinate VRE's federal grants, operate Omni Ride (commuter bus) and Omni Link (demand-responsive local bus).
Virginia Railway Express (VRE)	Transit Provider of regional commuter rail service.
Virginia Regional Transit	Transit Provider of regional rural and local bus service.
Fairfax Connector	Transit Provider of local, BRT, commuter, circulator, and feeder bus service.
Loudoun County Transit (LCT)	Transit Provider of long distance commuter bus service.
Arlington Transit (ART)	Transit Provider of local and circulator bus service.
Falls Church GEORGE	Transit Provider of circulator bus service.
Alexandria DASH	Transit Provider of local bus service.
City of Fairfax CUE	Transit Provider of circulator bus service.

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What Factors Contribute to Effective Coordination of Public Transit in Northern Virginia?

- While there are many individual agencies, each has a well-established historic role. Agency staffs interact regularly and frequently in many venues and share information.
- Many of the same local and state elected officials serve on agency and transit system boards, providing the opportunity for learning and coordination.
- In general, the region has organized its transit systems according to the principle that those sponsors providing the most funding should exercise the most control. Local sources of funding (property tax, passenger fares, regional 2% gas tax) cover about two-thirds of total transit costs, with state and federal aid covering the remainder.

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What Factors Contribute to Effective Coordination of Public Transit in Northern Virginia?

- Because local funds cover such a large proportion of Northern Virginia's transit costs, not only are these systems responsive to the needs of customers, but they also maintain tight controls on spending.
- In fact, Northern Virginia has by far the greatest per capita transit ridership, per capita local funding effort and overall transit efficiency of any district in Virginia. Northern Virginia recognizes transit's importance and therefore focuses on effective coordination.
- In general, regional agencies (TPB, WMATA, NVTA, NVTC, PRTC) help coordinate these local services to be certain their combined operations offer an integrated system.

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Why Do Most Northern Virginia Localities Operate Separate Transit Systems?

- Local systems were created to provide service at least as effective as WMATA at lower cost.
- WMATA had more costly labor agreements than those available to new local systems. Also, new transit systems hired new drivers who started at the low end of longevity-based pay scales.
- WMATA was less flexible (requiring consensus among three "states" and extensive public hearings). Also, most local bus systems did not use federal funding and thereby avoided costly rules and regulations.

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Why Do Most Northern Virginia Localities Operate Separate Transit Systems?

- Local bus systems generally took over low density feeder routes from Metrobus, thereby improving service quality and overall efficiency. Metrobus concentrated on long-distance, multi-jurisdictional routes.
- Local bus systems can better reflect local conditions, values and goals and are an aid to local development and a source of civic pride.

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Why Do Most Northern Virginia Localities Operate Separate Transit Systems?

- When NVTC wished to initiate new commuter rail service, local governments within and outside NVTC considered the relative benefits of expanding NVTC and chose instead to create a contiguous district (known as the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission). This allowed the new 2% motor fuels tax to be used for VRE and other transportation in the new district while retaining NVTC's focus on WMATA. NVTC and PRTC have never voted differently on significant VRE issues and VRE is achieving unprecedented ridership gains.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Route Planning and Service Integration:

- NVTC conducted a region-wide analysis of transit services to identify gaps and overlapping services. The study led to new services operated by Fairfax Connector and other local systems to fill the gaps.
- NVTC managed a study of transit opportunities in the Route 1 corridor of Fairfax and Prince William counties. The Fairfax Connector and PRTC now have added (and continue to add) new services there, including the unique REX service which is functionally equivalent to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).
- DRPT conducted a consulting study of how to expand transit services in the I-95/395 corridor as HOT lanes are added, stretching from Spotsylvania County to the Pentagon. All of the affected jurisdictions and transit systems participated.
- NVTA introduced a unique method of describing corridor specific transit improvements in its 2030 transportation plan, as well as generating unprecedented levels of public involvement using innovative techniques.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Route Planning and Service Integration:

- WMATA operates a core network of regional bus routes in which Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. share subsidies. Its non-regional routes are operated at the request of individual jurisdictions with subsidies paid by the requesting jurisdictions. WMATA has recently completed its Metrobus Priority Corridor Network Plan which reflects a strategy for improving its travel times, reliability, capacity, productivity and system access. It is consistent with WMATA's Regional Transportation Vision, Regional Bus Study, Core Capacity Study and APTA Peer Review.
- Service provided by local bus systems is integrated with that of Metrobus wherever possible. For example, REX on Route 1 in Fairfax County operates at 15 minute intervals at limited stops while Fairfax Connector service is provided every 30 minutes to more stops. In combination they provide 10 minute headways.
- MWCOG/TPB's Regional Bus Subcommittee meets regularly to identify top priority bus system integration projects for the entire metropolitan area.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Performance Measurement:

- Each year VDOT's Northern Virginia District directs MWCOG staff to conduct traffic studies in major commuting corridors for NVTC. The studies measure the performance of various commuting modes (transit and ridesharing provide from a half to three-quarters of peak period trips in major corridors).
- NVTC provides consulting assistance to its local bus systems to complete annual National Transit Database reports, thereby earning an additional $6 million annually in federal funds for WMATA.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Agency Cooperation:

- MWAA has taken over management of the vital rail extension to Dulles Airport and into Loudoun County. Fairfax Connector operates BRT service in the corridor as a precursor to rail and Loudoun County Transit connects points further west with core destinations.
- NVTA has operated very successfully for several years in planning and setting priorities despite a lack of funding and no staff. Only extensive cooperation among jurisdictions and agencies volunteering their staffs makes that possible.
- Northern Virginia's transit systems also actively participate in the Virginia Transit Association, which provides a forum for statewide advocacy and coordination. Most also are members of the American Public Transportation Association for coordination with U.S. and Canadian transit systems.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Fare Integration:

- With DRPT's funding and NVTC's leadership, each of Northern Virginia's regional and local bus systems uses the same SmarTrip fareboxes and regional clearinghouse. Also these systems offer SmartBenefits (access to monthly tax-free employer-provided transit passes up to $115). Pass products and the ability to have funds automatically transferred to SmarTrip cards is planned for 2009.
- NVTC, using federal funding provided through NVTA and DRPT, directs a cooperative program of free bus fares in Northern Virginia on days forecast by MWCOG to have very bad air quality (Code Red). All bus transit systems participate.
- Fare systems are very similar. For example, the Fairfax Connector has acted to mirror the structure of Metrobus.

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Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Emergency Response:

- After September 11, 2001, NVTC assembled all of the region's transit operators together with first responders (police, fire, EMT), and developed emergency response plans for WMATA's key Metrorail stations in Northern Virginia, including designated alternative routes and staging areas. A region-wide transit operators group is now extending this work to the entire metropolitan area under the auspices of WMATA.

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More Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Cooperative Customer Service:

- Customers using WMATA's trip planning tools (on-line or by telephone) and NVTC's e-schedules receive up-to-date information on local bus systems as well as Metrorail and Metrobus.

- Most jurisdictions operate transit stores at which fare media of Northern Virginia's transit systems are available together with schedules and other information.

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More Examples of Effective Regional Transit Coordination

Technologies:

- NVTC initiated a demonstration of new diesel engine filters that led to the creation of the Falls Church GEORGE bus system.
- NVTC is developing two new real-time bus arrival information systems. One, successfully tested on Falls Church's GEORGE, is a low-cost, non-proprietary system. Customers call a telephone number with their bus stop location and are told the arrival time of the next bus. The second system will be more sophisticated and is being developed for Alexandria. This system may be expanded to the entire region if it is successfully tested.
- WMATA is testing a single log-in by drivers using Smartcards that will integrate access on each Metrobus to SmartTrip fareboxes; Clever Devices maintenance monitoring, voice annunciators and automatic passenger counters; GE digital video cameras; Motorola radios; Orbital GPS devices; and Luminator destination signs.

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Conclusions

- Public transit performs exceptionally well in Northern Virginia overall and especially compared to other districts of Virginia.
- The institutions governing the provision of transit service and its planning and funding are many and seemingly complex, but they have evolved for good reasons, have well-defined individual responsibilities, and support the principle of providing the greatest control to those providing the most funding.
- From the transit customer's perspective, services are seamless. They share common customer information, e-schedules, SmarTrip fare collection and trip planning. Customers care about reliability of service, not the logo on the side of bus.
- All participants continue to strive for more efficiency, interconnections and coordination, and there is always room for improvement. That is why there are several forums with regular meetings to identify and resolve any problems, including those of TPB, WMATA,NVTA, and NVTC among others.

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Appendix: Individual Agencies Providing Transit Planning, Operations and/or Funding in Northern Virginia

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Federal Transit Administration

Role:

- Administers federal formula and discretionary grants for transit through a regional office in Philadelphia and headquarters in Washington D.C.
- For FY 2008, expected about $115 million in federal funds, or 18.5% of the total $622 million spent on transit operations and capital in Northern Virginia.
- Enforces and audits extensive rules on planning, labor protection, procurement, U.S. manufacturing of transit vehicles, charters, safety and grant requirements.

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Federal Highway Administration

Role:

- Provides flexible funding for such transit sources as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality. Northern Virginia's process for such funding calls for initial requests from transit operators with their board's approval, prioritization by the Jurisdictional and Agency Coordinating Committee (JACC) of NVTA, approval by NVTA, approval by TPB and approval by CTB, provision of funds by FHWA to VDOT, and contracting with DRPT.

- While the above process is lengthy, it ensures regional priorities are met and is accomplished routinely within a set schedule each year.

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Federal Railroad Administration

Role:

- Administers limited grant programs and more extensive loans for passenger rail service (utilized by VRE to purchase railcars).

- Requires adherence to safety programs and regulations by freight and passenger rail operators.

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Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Role:

- Created July 1, 1992 (formerly a division of VDOT).
- Provides formula and discretionary funding for transit through Richmond and Northern Virginia offices.
- For FY 2008, expected funding for NVTC, VRE and WMATA totaled $136 million or about 22% of the $622 million total.
- Audits compliance and performance of transit systems, developing an on-line asset management system, requires six-year capital improvement programs from each transit system.
- Completing a statewide transit plan due in spring, 2009 and also completing a state rail plan and transit ITS plan.
- Conducts corridor transit studies such as Route 29, BRT (SJR 122) and I-95/395 HOT lanes.
- Member of TPB, NVTA, NVTC, PRTC and VRE boards.
- Member of Commonwealth Transportation Board (which allocates funds available from the state).

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Northern Virginia District of Virginia Department of Transportation

Role:

- Provides funding for regional planning efforts through MWCOG and has its own modeling staff emphasizing multi-modal involvement.
- Funds annual mode share corridor studies including transit.
- Maintains regional ITS architecture.
- With headquarters office maintains Northern Virginia's TIP and statewide STIP (necessary to qualify for federal funding).
- Manages HOV lanes used by transit systems.
- Serves as a member of CTB, TPB and NVTA.

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Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

Role:

- Governed by a Board of appointees from Maryland, D.C., Virginia, Congress and the U.S. President, it manages Virginia's Reagan National and Dulles airports under a long-term lease with congressional review.
- Now responsible for managing the extension of rail in the Dulles Corridor and using Dulles Toll Road revenues to help fund the project.

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Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Role:

- Serves as policy forum for suburban Maryland, Virginia and D.C. on issues such as transportation and air quality.
- Provides modeling and databases for population, employment and transportation forecasts.
- Operates Ride Finders Network (carpooling/vanpooling).
- In 1966 recognized by the federal government as the agency responsible for comprehensive regional planning and agreed with TPB to use that agency as its Transportation Policy committee.

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Transportation Planning Board of the National Capital Region

Role:

- Serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region as defined in federal transportation planning regulations.
- Now includes representatives of 17 cities and counties, plus several state and regional transportation agencies.
- MWCOG's Director of Transportation is lead staff of TPB.
- Produces long-range plans (constrained, vision) with statutory responsibility for the constrained long range plan and for periodic assessments of available funding resources.
- Approves and updates 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Provides air quality analyses.
- Maintains technical and other committees (including regional bus operators).
- Providing transportation input to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee which produces the region's clean air plans and conformance strategies. Violations would jeopardize federal transportation funds.

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Northern Virginia Regional Commission

Role:

- One of Virginia's planning district commissions, it is responsible for state planning reviews (A-95) with coordinated comments on federally funded projects.
- Provides a forum for resolution of land use and environmental issues.
- A 1971 contract with MWCOG recognizes TPB's official transportation responsibilities and avoids duplication of effort with other regional bodies.

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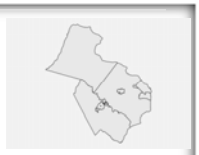
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority



Role:

- Created by Virginia General Assembly in 2001 and consists of 16 members, including one local government official from each of its nine localities.
- Completes and updates Northern Virginia's unconstrained multi-modal transportation plan, the most recent through 2030.
- Sets priorities for Northern Virginia's desired transportation projects and regional funding (e.g. CMAQ). Forwards Virginia's portion of each year's TIP to TPB for approval.
- Legislative advocacy.
- Implementation of projects.
- Currently no external funding and staff. It relies entirely on volunteer work by its member jurisdictions.

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Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

Role:

- Created in 1964 by Virginia's General Assembly.
- 20-member board of state and local elected officials.
- Allocates up to $200 million annually of transit assistance to its six member jurisdictions (covering 1,000 square miles with a population of 1.6 million).
- Collects and manages regional 2% gas tax dedicated to WMATA.
- Serves as a forum for resolving transit issues and coordinating services.
- Co-owner of VRE and issues bonds for VRE.
- Appoints two voting and two alternate members of WMATA's Board of Directors.
- Conducts transit demonstration projects.
- Manages state and federal grant-funded projects.
- Coordinates transit services.

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Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Governance:

- Created in 1968 by interstate compact. Amendments to compact require identical language by Maryland's Legislature, District of Columbia's Council, Virginia's General Assembly and the U.S. Congress. Metro's board has six voting members, two from each of Maryland, D.C. and Virginia (recent federal legislation would add two federal voting members).
- No action passes the board without at least one affirmative vote from each of the three jurisdictions.
- In Virginia, NVTC's original five members are compact signatories (Arlington and Fairfax counties and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church). Loudoun County, as a member of NVTC in 1990, is also part of the transit zone but isn't required to fund Metro as it currently is not served.
- Metro operates subway and regional bus service with 10,000 employees and an operating budget of about $1.2 billion annually.

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Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Performance:

Metrorail--

-215.1 million trips as of FY 2008, of which 98.0 million were in Virginia.
-Second largest rail transit system in the U.S.
-Cost recover of over 79%.

Metrobus--

-132.8 million trips as of FY 2008, of which 20.9 million were in Virginia.
-Sixth largest bus transit system in the U.S.
-Cost recovery of less than 33% (since many routes feed Metrorail)

Metro Access--

-1.7 million trips as of 2008 system-wide, up 556% from 262,367 in 1998.

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WMATA

Funding:

In FY 2008, system-wide budget of $1.2 billion for operations and $674 million for capital. Within Virginia, NVTC's WMATA jurisdictions used $71.2 million of local funds to meet a total bill of $419.3 million. Other sources were fares ($181.1 million), NVTC's 2% gas tax ($29.1 million), federal aid ($64.0 million) and state aid ($73.9 million). Thus, combined local sources (local, 2% gas tax and fares) met 67% of the total Virginia bill.

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Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission's Omni Ride and Omni Link

Governance:

- Created in 1986. Governed by a board of appointees from its five member jurisdictions (Prince William and Stafford counties and the cities of Fredericksburg, Manassas and Manassas Park).
- Co-owns VRE and collects regional 2% motor fuels tax available to its members for any transportation purpose.
- Operates Omni Ride long-distance commuter bus service and Omni Link which is local, demand responsive service.

Performance:

- As of FY 1993, provided 2,730 average weekday trips. By FY 2008, the total is 11,218.
- Annual totals for FY 2008: Omni Ride= 1,840,722; Omni Link= 1,008,626.

Funding:

- In FY 2008, PRC budgeted about $28.3 million for operations and capital, consisting of $18.1 million of local contributions and fares (64%), $4.1 million of state aid (14.4%), $4.3 million of federal aid (15.1%), and $1.8 million from other sources including carryover funding (6.4%).

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Virginia Railway Express

Governance:

- Created in 1988 by Master Agreement and co-owned by NVTC and PRTC.
- Recently expanded its board structure to offer a greater role for all of its members based on relative ridership.
- The commissions employ a Chief Executive Officer to oversee the VRE staff and delegate most spending decisions within approved budgets to the VRE Board.
- Major policy decisions remain the responsibility of NVTC and PRTC.
- Amtrak employees operate the trains.
- Rights-of-way owned by VRE with CSXT, NS and Amtrak.

Performance:

- As of FY 1993, provided 5,597 average weekday trips and 1.404,961 annually. By FY 2008, the weekday average was 14,662, and the annual total was 3,628,563. In September, 2008, the average weekday total exceeded 16,200.

Funding:

- In FY 2008, VRE budgeted about $90.4 million for operations and capital, consisting of $35.0 million of local contributions and fares (38.7%), $15.9 million of state aid (17.6%) and $39.5 million of federal aid (43.7%).

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Virginia Regional Transit

Governance:

- A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization headquartered in Purcellville (Loudoun County). Began service in August, 1990. Serves 15 jurisdictions in 10 Virginia counties. Each jurisdiction names the services (e.g. Front Royal Area Transit, Town of Orange Transit). Operates several routes in the Town of Leesburg and within Loudoun County.

Performance:

- FY 1997= 24,000 trips.
- FY 2008= 900,000 trips.

Funding:

- FY 2008 operating budget of $6 million, of which $2 million is federal, $1 million state, $1.5 million local and the remainder from private sources.

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Alexandria DASH

Governance:

- Alexandria Transit Company (ATC) created by city and hires a private management company. Drivers work for ATC.
- Buses owned by city.
- Created in 1984.

Performance:

- FY 1984 ridership= 753 average weekday.
- FY 2008 ridership= 13,647 average weekday.
- FY 2008 annual ridership= 3,978,773.

Funding:

- In FY 2008, Alexandria provided $15.0 million from local funds and another $2.4 million in gas tax funds for WMATA (out of $39.8 million billed). For DASH, $2.9 million of local funds were used out of a total bill of $10.7 million.

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Arlington Transit (ART)

Governance:

- Owned by Arlington County. All buses are natural gas powered. Operated under contract to a private management company employing drivers. Created in 1999.

Performance:

- As of FY 1999, ART provided 420 passenger trips on an average weekday.
- By FY 2008, ART carried 4,243 on an average weekday.
- FY 2008 annual ridership= 1,225,427.

Funding:

- In FY 2008, Arlington provided $26.3 million from local funds and another $3.6 million from regional gas tax for WMATA to meet total bills of $70.1 million. For ART, Arlington used $5.0 million of local funds to help meet a $19.0 million bill.

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City of Fairfax CUE

Governance:

- Owned and operated by the city of Fairfax using their own employees. George Mason University makes a substantial contribution so their students ride free. Began service in FY 1981.

Performance:

- As of FY 1986 carried 1,450 average weekday trips. By FY 2008, that measure increased to 4,227.
- FY 2008 annual ridership= 1,047,346.

Funding:

- The city used $1.3 million of regional gas tax proceeds to cover the local portion of a $1.9 million WMATA bill in FY 2008. For CUE, the city spent $4.1 million of local funds to help meet a $5.2 million total bill.

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City of Falls Church GEORGE

Governance:

- Owned by the city using buses obtained by NVTC. Operated under contract with WMATA. Started in 1993.

Performance:

- Ridership is included in Virginia's Metrobus totals. FY 2003 ridership was 26,600 passenger trips. For FY 2008, the total was 67,770.

Funding:

- The city spent $0.2 million of local funds plus $1.0 million of regional gas tax proceeds to meet a FY 2008 WMATA bill of $2.8 million. For GEORGE, the city used $0.2 million of local funds for a bill of $1.0 million.

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Fairfax Connector

Governance:

- Owned by the county. Organized into two divisior Operated under contract by private management companies. Drivers work for the private companie Began in 1986.

Performance:

- FY 1986 average weekday ridership= 3,550.
- FY 2008 average weekday ridership= 32,576.
- FY 2008 annual ridership= 9,810,228.

Funding:

- The county used $30.4 million of local funds and another $20.8 million of regional gas tax to help meet FY 2008 obligations to WMATA of $123.6 million. For Connector, $24.5 million of local funds were used for bills of $54.0 million.

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Loudoun County Transit

Governance:

- Owned by the county. Operated under contract to a private management company. Drivers work for the private company. Began in its present form in FY 1994. The county purchased buses beginning in 2003.

Performance:

- FY 1999 average weekday ridership=648.
- FY 2008 average weekday ridership= 3,072.
- FY 2008 annual ridership= 777,273.

Funding:

- Net transit payments for FY 2008 were $5.8 million.

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Other Branded Services

REX:

BRT-like service with distinctive purple livery and yellow lion logo. Operated in Route 1 corridor by WMATA under contract to Fairfax County. Limited stops.

TAGS:

Transportation Association of Greater Springfield owns the buses and contracts with WMATA to operate neighborhood feeder services to businesses and the Franconia-Springfield Transportation Center (Metrorail).

PikeRide:

Enhanced regional Metrobus service along Columbia Pike partially funded by Arlington County. Very frequent service. Distinctive logo, bus stops and passenger information displays.

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For More Information

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