



This year's General Assembly session was one of the more remarkable – by some accounts historic – when it came to transit. It was heartening to see Virginia lead the way in [providing dedicated funding for WMATA](#). The \$154 million that state lawmakers approved, just hours before adjourning the regular session, is the Commonwealth's share of the \$500 million in dedicated funds that WMATA has said it needs annually to ensure Metro's safety and reliability.

In the eyes of some, the funding bill is not without flaws, particularly when it comes to sources of revenue. Governor Ralph Northam is reportedly considering amendments that would tap different sources of money for Metro, though the last thing he or NVTC wants is to jeopardize the hard-won \$154 million. I am proud of the work NVTC did – in partnership with the business community, MetroNow Coalition, Department of Rail and Public Transportation and Transportation Secretary's office – to represent the interests of our jurisdictions in negotiations on a final bill.

Lost in the headlines is what the funding bill does for VRE. A new Commuter Rail Operating and Capital (CROC) fund was established and \$15 million annually was dedicated to the CROC. While that amount is only enough to ensure VRE maintains its current level of service, it is a start. We will continue to work with VRE, the Commonwealth, our jurisdictional partners and state lawmakers to identify other sources of revenue so that VRE can accommodate growth in the region.

There were other legislative successes. The creation of a floor on the 2.1 percent regional gas tax has long been a NVTC priority. [SB896 \(Wagner\)](#) requires that the average distributor price, upon which the tax is based, be no less than what the statewide average distributor price would have been on February 20, 2013. NVTC and PRTC expect to see an additional \$45.2 million annually once the bill becomes law. The floor allows the Commonwealth to commit to its share of dedicated funding for WMATA.

NVTC looks forward to working with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, VRE and the Commonwealth Transportation Board to conduct annual, joint, public meetings on transportation projects proposed in Planning District 8, as required by [HB1285 \(LaRock\)](#). We also plan to work with Transportation Secretary Shannon Valentine in conducting a review of the membership provisions for the WMATA Board of Directors, as required by [HB384 \(Keam\)](#).

Our work is not done. Gov. Northam has called a special session for April 11, as the General Assembly was unable to approve a budget prior to adjournment. Several [budget amendments could affect NVTC](#). As we move through the special and April 18 veto sessions, NVTC will continue to represent the interest of its jurisdictional partners in Richmond. Stay tuned.



**Executive Director**

## Inside this Issue

- [I-66 Commuter Choice Public Hearing](#) .....2
- [VRE Potomac Shores Station to Open in 2020](#).....2
- [TSDAC to Address General Assembly Priorities](#) .....3
- [VRE Cuts Ribbon on Lorton Station Platform Extension](#) .....3
- [NVTC Presents to APTA Committee](#) .....4
- [NVTC Transit Article Wins Award](#) .....4
- [News from Around Town](#) .....5
- [NVTC Cultivates Future Planners](#).....5
- [Sandy Creek Transit Center Opens](#) .....6
- [WMATA Markets Branded Merchandise](#) .6
- [Bike to Work Day Registration Open](#).....6
- [VRE's Deibler One of 10 Fast Trackers](#) .....6



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## Key Dates

Apr. 5	<a href="#">I-66 Commuter Choice Public Hearing in Arlington</a>
Apr. 5	<a href="#">NVTC Monthly Meeting</a>
Apr. 11	<a href="#">General Assembly Budget Session</a>
Apr. 12	<a href="#">WMATA Board Meeting</a>
Apr. 12	<a href="#">NVTA Monthly Meeting</a>
Apr. 18	<a href="#">General Assembly Veto Session</a>
Apr. 17-18	<a href="#">CTB Monthly Meeting</a>
Apr. 18	<a href="#">TPB Monthly Meeting</a>
Apr. 20	<a href="#">VRE Operations Board Meeting</a>
Apr. 26	<a href="#">WMATA Board Meeting</a>
May 3	<a href="#">NVTC Monthly Meeting</a>

## I-66 Commuter Choice Public Hearing Set for April 5



While inclement weather forced the cancellation of the March 20 I-66 Commuter Choice Open House and Public

Hearing, NVTC is optimistic its April 5 event will go off without interference from Mother Nature. Next month's Open House begins at 6 p.m. on the main floor of the Navy League Building at 2300 Wilson Blvd. in Arlington. Following a brief presentation at 7 p.m., public comment will commence. NVTC Commissioners will convene immediately following the public hearing.

NVTC staff has created [fact sheets](#) for each of the 17 projects. An [animated PowerPoint presentation](#) gives a quick overview of the I-66 Commuter Choice program and each of the transit and roadway improvement projects submitted for fiscal year 2018 funding. The Commission will select projects to be funded at the May meeting. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will then consider the projects in June.

The I-66 Commuter Choice Working Group met in March to explore ways of building a strong program to benefit the corridor. By combining projects—based on characteristics such as geography, diversity, and cost effectiveness—the group identified those with the greatest potential, built consensus around projects, and ensured projects will benefit toll payers.



## VRE Potomac Shores Station to Open in 2020

A new Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station at Potomac Shores in Prince William County will open in 2020, under an agreement between the Virginia Department of Rail Public Transportation (DRPT) and CSX Transportation (CSX), which defines what portion of the third-track corridor improvements will be completed in the immediate future.

This new VRE station is a key component of Potomac Shores' emerging town center. Situated on the banks of the Potomac River 30 miles south of Washington, D.C., the 1,920-acre community is being developed by SunCal, one of the largest real estate development companies in the U.S. that specializes in large-scale, mixed-use master-planned communities.

As part of the Arkendale to Powells Creek Third Track project, funded by grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Virginia DRPT, CSX has been constructing a third set of tracks from the Arkendale station northward to Powells Creek, just north of Potomac Shores, to serve alongside the existing CSX tracks. The design and timing of the construction of the Potomac Shores station has been in coordination with this rail improvement project, itself a significant component of the Commonwealth of Virginia's long-term investment strategy to increase rail capacity, including DC2RVA, Atlantic Gateway and Long Bridge.



## TSDAC Begins Work to Address General Assembly Priorities

Several transit funding and policy issues – the result of General Assembly action – were the focus of the [Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee](#) (TSDAC) meeting in mid-March. NVTC Executive Director Kate Mattice, who is the Virginia Transit Association's TSDAC representative, notes that the group's efforts over the next few months will lead to the development of funding alloca-

tion models and policies that will affect all bus systems in the Commonwealth. TSDAC will address prioritization for state capital funding, allocation of operating assistance, and creation of strategic plans by bus operators with fleets greater than 20. Mattice plans to meet with Northern Virginia transit providers monthly to keep them informed and get their perspective.

## VRE Cuts Ribbon on Extended Platform at Lorton Station

Virginia Railway Express [celebrated the completion of a 250-foot extension of its Lorton Station platform](#) on March 8 at a ribbon-cutting event. "Now there is room for everyone to board and exit the train from every car, even an eight car train, which is much more efficient, said Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chair Sharon Bulova. "A relatively small improvement results in a big deal for VRE riders in Lorton."

Lorton is the first of several planned platform extensions at VRE stations. Funding for the project came from the federal and state governments, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and Fairfax County. "Talk about bang for the buck, these platform extensions are huge. They add tremendous capacity," said Fairfax County Supervisor John Cook.



**Attend Virginia Transit Association's  
2018 Transit Conference in Richmond  
May 22-23**



## NVTC Executive Director Talks I-66 Commuter Choice at APTA

Speaking at the [American Public Transportation Association's](#) (APTA) annual Legislative Conference, NVTC Executive Director Kate Mattice spoke to the successes and lessons learned in funding transit through the I-66 Commuter Choice program. Her remarks to the Innovative Funding, Finance and P3 Committee were well received. APTA is looking to repeat the panel discussion as part of its upcoming Rail Conference, June 10-13 in Denver.



## NVTC Transit Article Wins Award from Parenting Media Organization

"[Guiding Kids to Navigate Transit](#)," an article written for *Washington Parent* magazine by NVTC's Karen Finucan Clarkson, received a silver award for service feature from the Parenting Media Association (PMA) in early March. "When do you trust your adolescent to go solo

on public transit? A personal and reasoned guide to how to let you and your child feel confident navigating around town. The article takes into consideration all the facets of riding buses and subways -- including assessing your child's readiness to go solo," noted the PMA awards jury.

# GUIDING KIDS ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ TO ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ NAVIGATE TRANSIT

By Karen Finucan Clarkson



attend events and activities when parents are at work or otherwise unavailable. That's especially important in Fairfax County, says Boggs, where high schools run late buses just one day a week. "Encouraging kids to ride transit allows them to participate in clubs or sports at school, regardless of what day they meet, and to access jobs."

For Advani, who has been taking public transportation with her son for all 11 years of his life, the trips provide quality time. "When driving, you can't give your child the same attention as you can when riding transit."

## Around Town: Headlines from/about NVTC Jurisdictions and Partners



[Perspective in Virginia: Maintain a Strong Federal Role in Public Transit and Rail](#)

[Teleworking at Least One Day a Week Pays Off, State Says](#)

[Open House with DRPT Procurement Department](#)



[Statement from Metro regarding passage of dedicated funding legislation in Virginia](#)



[From Vision to Reality: NVTA 2017 Annual Report](#)



[RIDE Magazine for March 2018](#)

## NVTC Cultivates Future Transportation Planners

NVTC's Patricia Happ recently participated in Washington-Lee High School's Career and Technical Education Day. Several teens inquired about types of bus pass discounts available to students, as well as what to study in

college in order to work at an agency such as NVTC. Many of the students were interested in the link between transit and the environment.



## George Mason University



The Sandy Creek Transit Center on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University was inaugurated on March 15. Sandy Creek serves as the primary hub of Mason Shuttles, with four of the six shuttle routes passing through. The renovation of Sandy Creek was made possible through a \$1 million grant from Fairfax County. "Fairfax County's support has quadrupled the capacity of Sandy Creek," said Josh Cantor, Director of Parking and Transportation at Mason. "The county saw it as a regional transit opportunity. Part of the long-range plan is to eventually bring regional transit into the core of campus. That conversation couldn't happen until Mason had the capacity. Now we do."



## Bike to Work Day



Commuter Connections and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association are sponsoring [Bike to Work Day](#) on Friday, May 18. It is a celebration of bicycling as a clean, fun and healthy way to get to work. Be one of the first 20,000 [to register](#) and attend this free event, then bike to your choice of more than 100 pit stops in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia and receive a free T-shirt and refreshments, and be entered into a raffle for a new bicycle.



## WMATA



Metro brand merchandise is now available at M Shop, Metro's pop-up retail store at Metro Center Station. M Shop has apparel, tote bags, mugs, maps, backpacks, and memorabilia displaying the iconic Metro brand. M Shop merchandise can also be viewed online at [wmata.com/mshop](http://wmata.com/mshop).

"This is a great opportunity for people to get something unique from Metro, whether you are a visitor looking for a souvenir or an everyday rider," said Metro General Manager Paul Wiedefeld "At the same time, M Shop represents another potential source of revenue to help support Metrorail and Metro-bus operations."



Your stop & shop for Metro apparel and accessories.

## Virginia Railway Express



From the beginning of his career crewing freight trains, VRE's Greg Deibler has worn his enthusiasm for the industry on his sleeve. His goal is and always has been to serve as a chief operating officer for a Class 1 railroad. That is, in part, why Deibler, VRE's chief safety, security & compliance officer, [is one of this year's Railway Age's 10 Fast Trackers under 40](#). Armed with experience and perspective from the freight and passenger sides of the industry, he is constantly brainstorming innovative ideas for projects and programs at VRE.

