



With each trip to Richmond – and there have been several since the General Assembly convened on January 11 – I have had opportunities, both formal and informal, to share the Commission’s work with senators, delegates, staff, and transportation enthusiasts. As people are now more aware of NVTC’s regional role and expertise in transit, we have become the go-to organization for transit-related information and assistance. Several recent examples spring to mind, but it was WMATA’s request to have NVTC coordinate Northern Virginia’s transit planning for the Presidential Inaugural that clearly demonstrates the value we bring to the table.

The table around which the Commission will gather in Richmond for its February 2 meeting will have many guests. In addition to members of the General Assembly, Commonwealth Transportation Board Member Marty Williams will join us. As chair of the Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board, Williams will apprise us on the panel’s work to identify future funding and develop a prioritization process for new transit capital revenue. The advisory board, [which submitted an interim report to the Governor and General Assembly on January 1](#), is set to wrap up its work by August 1.

Supporting the advisory board’s efforts is the [Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee](#), which will meet in Richmond at month’s end. I and the other committee members will begin to explore sustainable revenue sources and analyze ways to equitably prioritize the use of that revenue.



Although there’s less than a month left in this year’s legislative session, there remain many opportunities to inform lawmakers and others about NVTC’s role as the voice of transit in Northern Virginia. My [appearance before the Senate Finance Committee](#) in

mid-January allowed just that – and gave me a chance to educate committee members about the history and effectiveness of the regional gas tax. The NVTC story is unique and I enjoy sharing it. If there’s someone with whom you would like me to share it, just let me know.

~ *Kate Mattice*
Executive Director

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Key Dates

Jan. 31	Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee Meeting
Feb. 2	NVTC Monthly Meeting In Richmond, 4 p.m.
Feb. 7	Crossover at General Assembly
Feb. 9	NVTA Monthly Meeting
Feb. 15	TPB Monthly Meeting
Feb. 15-16	CTB Monthly Meeting
Feb. 17	VRE Monthly Meeting
Feb. 25	General Assembly Adjourns
Apr. 5	General Assembly Reconvenes

Transform 66 February Update

The first of eight toll gantries on I-66 inside the Beltway was hoisted into place by VDOT on January 18. The overnight procedure required troopers to stop traffic in both directions between exits 71 and 72 near Ballston twice for about 15 minutes each time.

The remaining seven gantries will be lifted into place starting in the first half of February, continuing until completed. The gantries support the electronic tolling equipment that reads the E-ZPass and E-ZPass Flex transponders, which will be required in all vehicles traveling on the rush hour toll lanes.

To help drivers navigate the new toll lanes, VDOT plans to launch a consumer-oriented website, which will include informational programming. NVTC and VDOT are developing a communications package, compatible



The first toll gantry on I-66 inside the Beltway is lifted into place between exits 71 and 72 in Arlington.

with both organizations' brand, for the [Transform 66 Multimodal Project](#), which NVTC administers.

With tolling on I-66 inside the Beltway scheduled to begin in late summer, NVTC and VDOT are working on two kick-off events in May and/or June — one for the 10 multimodal projects funded by the Commission and another in advance of toll day one.

NVTC and the Commonwealth, meanwhile, have signed the revised Memorandum of Agreement, which will fund multimodal projects for 40 years. And, all but two of the 10 funding agreements with multimodal grantees have been signed.



Crews install the first of eight toll gantries on I-66 inside the Beltway in the early morning hours of January 18, 2017.



NVTC Hosts WMATA Board Member Forum

Funding Metro was the primary interest of those attending NVTC's WMATA Board Member Forum Wednesday night in Reston. Questions touched on how to stem the pending transit fiscal cliff, bolster the 2.1 percent regional gas tax, improve WMATA's bond rating, and advocate for additional resources from Richmond. The event, moderated by NVTC Secretary-Treasurer Matt Letourneau, [featured a brief presentation](#) by WMATA board members Cathy Hudgins, Jim Corcoran, Christian Dorsey and Paul Smedberg, who then fielded questions from a packed house. Board members spoke to the WMATA general manager's "shared sacrifice" approach to closing a \$290 million gap in the operating budget and the need to provide additional time for Metro to perform track maintenance.



WMATA board members (from left to right, Paul Smedberg, Jim Corcoran, Cathy Hudgins and Christian Dorsey) respond to questions from a full house at the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce. NVTC Secretary-Treasurer Matt Letourneau (far right) moderated the panel discussion.

Metro to Resume SafeTrack

With five surges to be completed in the first half of 2017, [WMATA will reinstate track work next month](#). The first two surges will be in Virginia. From Feb. 11-28 there will be a complete shutdown of the Blue Line between Rosslyn and the Pentagon. Single-tracking will occur on the Yellow and Blue lines between the Braddock Road and Huntington/Van Dorn St. stations from Mar. 4-Apr. 9. The final three surges will affect the Green, Orange and Red lines. The SafeTrack program will conclude in late June, after which, Metro will shift to a regimen of preventive maintenance.

Prior to the commencement of the 2017 surges, Metro plans weekend work on the Orange/Silver/Blue lines from Feb. 4-5. [Shuttle buses will replace trains between the Foggy Bottom and Eastern Market stations both days](#). Customers traveling through the affected area should allow up to 45 minutes of additional travel time.

NVTC continues to coordinate Northern Virginia's SafeTrack response. Weekly calls clarify issues, allowing local transit systems to modify service so that residents have travel options as Metro addresses track issues affecting passenger safety.

2017 SafeTrack Surges

Date	Stations Affected	Lines Affected	Service Status
February 11-28	Rosslyn-Pentagon		Line segment shutdown
March 4 - 26	Braddock Road-Huntington/Van Dorn St.	 	Continuous single tracking
March 26 - April 2			Continuous single tracking
April 3 - 9			Continuous single tracking
April-May TBA	Greenbelt – College Park		Continuous single tracking
May-June TBA	Minnesota Ave – New Carrollton		Continuous single tracking
June TBA	Shady Grove – Twinbrook		Continuous single tracking

Public Comment on WMATA FY2018 Budget Closes February 6

WMATA will hold a [public hearing on its proposed FY2018 budget](#) a week prior to the close of public comment. The transit agency will host an open house from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Metro Headquarters ([600 5th Street NW, Washington, D.C.](#)) on Mon., Jan. 30. The public hearing will start at 5 p.m. Speaker registration is onsite only and will close at 9:00 p.m. Those unable to attend are encouraged to [take an online survey](#) prior to the close of public comment at 9 a.m. on Mon., Feb. 6.

NVTC's [letter on WMATA's operating and capital needs](#), was submitted on Jan. 6. The letter raises concerns

about the future rate of increase in jurisdictional subsidies, while supporting the general manager's "shared sacrifice" approach.

Metro also began hosting budget outreach events at its stations on Jan. 23. [Among the remaining sessions are three in Virginia](#). Metro staff will be soliciting public comment on Thur., Jan. 26 from 6-10 a.m. at the Vienna station and from 3:30-7:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring and King St/Old Town stations. The final Virginia outreach event is slated for Sat., Jan. 28 from 5:30-8 a.m. at the Reagan National Airport station.

FTA Removes Restrictions on WMATA Drawdown of Federal Funds

Noting that WMATA has made "significant progress in improving its financial controls," FTA has lifted restrictions on Metro's ability to draw down funds. This means WMATA can receive federal money up front, eliminating the need to borrow and then seek

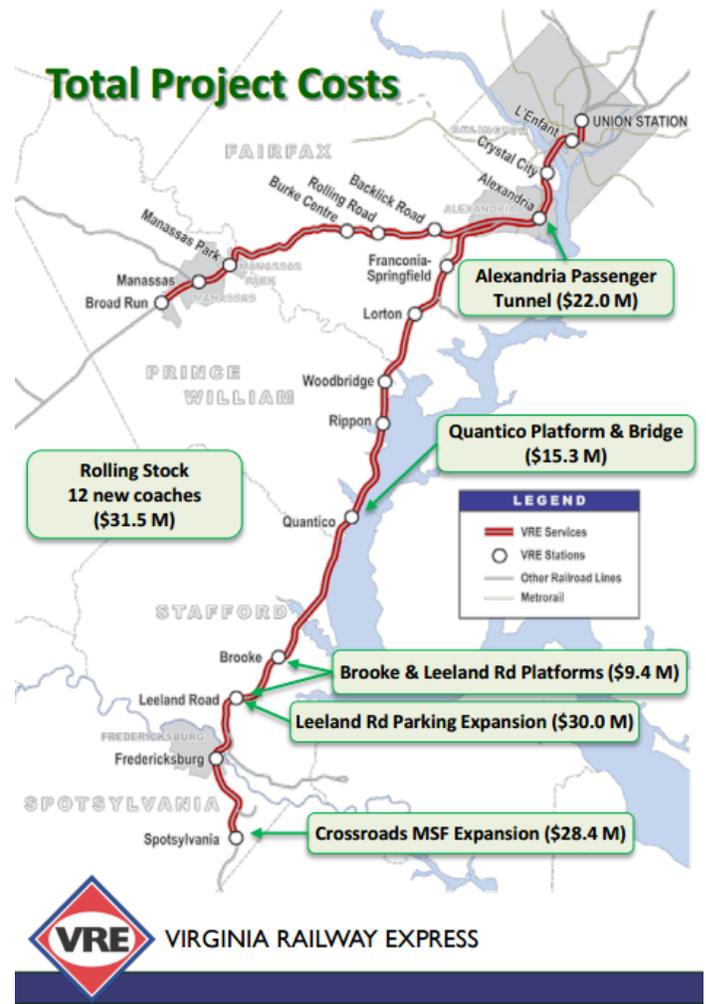
reimbursement. The 2014 restrictions were put in place after consultants raised concerns over poor book-keeping and the awarding of millions through no-bid contracts.

VRE Fredericksburg Line Upgrade Scores Well Under Smart Scale

Capacity expansion on VRE's Fredericksburg Line is [the second highest rated project under Smart Scale](#), Virginia's transportation funding prioritization program. Out of six categories, the \$136 million expansion ranked tops in safety, environment, and economic development. [The project includes a variety of station, parking, and storage yard expansion projects](#), as well as acquisition of new coaches. NVTC, which manages state funds for VRE, submitted the grant request, now being considered for \$70.5 million in Smart Scale funding from the Commonwealth. An additional \$22 million to fund improvements at VRE's Brooke and Leeland Road stations and construction at the Potomac Shores station was requested by the George Washington Regional Commission.

Also scoring well was [Arlington County's Columbia Pike Smart Corridor](#), a transportation demand management (TDM) project. The county requested over \$1 million for TDM improvements, including a new Commuter Store, real-time transportation information screens and mobile device app, bicycle rack installation, and Capital Bikeshare stations.

The state has released [a complete list of rankings for the 400+ projects scored under Smart Scale](#), now in its second year. The CTB will hold a public hearing in the spring before adopting a six-year improvement plan in June.



NoVa Transit Providers' Inaugural Planning Coordinated by NVTC

With the possibility that increased security would push road closures earlier than during previous inaugurations, NVTC convened a call of NoVa transit providers to share logistical details and coordinate changes in service plans. While providers individually communicated service modifications to riders, WMATA include all changes on

its inauguration website. The call featured discussion of emergency response, which included a "walk out" plan routing pedestrians to Pentagon City. WMATA noted the helpfulness of NVTC's station evacuation plans and participation in table-top exercises in evaluating emergency response options for the inauguration.



Legislative Update

Legislation establishing a Metro Safety Commission ([HB2136](#) and [SB1251](#)) passed out of House Transportation Subcommittee #3 on Thurs., Jan. 26 as amended by Del. Minchew. His enactment clause requires the Commonwealth to undertake specific actions before it can sign the MSC agreement. The bill will go before the full committee on Wednesday. The Senate Transportation Committee will consider its MSC bill next week.

Also passing out of House Transportation Subcommittee #3 was Del. LeMunyon's resolution ([HJ617](#)) calling for a

review of the WMATA Compact to identify improvements to Metro's governance, financing and operations.

Budget amendments offered by [Del. LeMunyon](#) and [Del. LaRock](#) placing limitations on funding to WMATA and DRPT related to WMATA Compact revisions were not discussed at Monday's House Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee meeting, but remain under consideration.

A status update on legislative activity will be provided at the Commission's Feb. 2 meeting in Richmond.

Fare Payment Technology Update

NVTC is working to modify the scope of an existing DRPT grant to fund farebox upgrades in FY2018. The existing grant had been designated for WMATA's New Electronic Payments Program, which was cancelled in 2016. To extend the life of the current regional fare payment systems, Northern Virginia transit operators must: 1) replace obsolete components and systems, 2) explore enhanced func-



tionality and features through these upgrades to provide better fare collection options, and 3) provide a path for migrating to an upgraded fare collection system.

The NVTC technical team worked with local transit operators to gather information on plans for upgrading fareboxes over the coming fiscal years. The DRPT grant will allow NVTC to purchase equipment (DCU tablet, tablet mounts, replacement farebox parts, cabling, power supply), nonrecurring engineering support specific to Northern Virginia operators, and deployment support.

Around Town: Headlines about NVTC Jurisdictions & Partners



[Alexandria Transit Company Board Selects New DASH General Manager](#)



[Transportation secretary expects debate on Metro bill](#)

[New bill seeks to extend I-66 exemption for hybrid commuters](#)



[A closer look at Arlington's bike counters show how riders are using the trails and bike lanes](#)



[Federal grant will pay for armbands designed to warn Metro inspectors, track workers of trains](#)



[Silver Line Progress Steady](#)



[Potomac Shores' VRE station running behind schedule](#)



[Dude, where's my bus? Fairfax Connector to launch bus tracker](#)



[Ride-hailing apps are changing how people get to the region's airports](#)

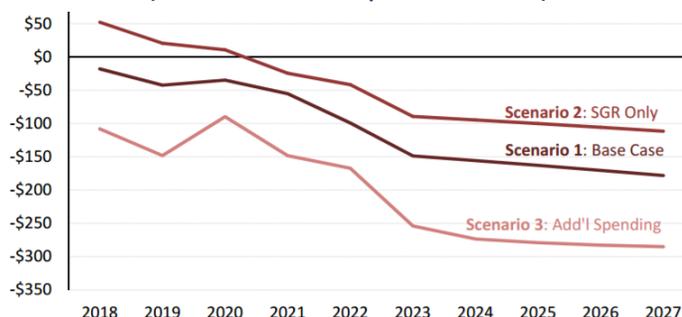
[Route 7 is getting new trails and a tunnel that connects communities](#)

Transit Capital Revenue Project Advisory Bd



Tasked by the General Assembly with examining the impacts of the funding gap that will occur when transportation bonds expire in 2018, the Transit Capital Revenue Project Advisory Board [has released its interim report](#). The report documents the size of the gap based on three scenarios: base case, state of good repair only, and additional spending for transit expansion projects. A final report, identifying new revenues and prioritizing funding, is due in August. CTB Member Marty Williams, who chairs the advisory board, will provide insight into the panel's work at [NVTC's Feb. 2 meeting in Richmond](#).

Annual Projected State Transit Capital Funding Gap by Scenario (FY 18 – FY 27)
(Millions of Year-of-Expenditure Dollars)



Transportation Planning Board



NVTC Immediate Past Chairman Jay Fisette was [elected vice chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board in December](#). "Smart transportation investments are critical to ensure our region's economy and quality of life," said Fisette. "I want to ensure that the TPB is an effective forum for local and state leaders to make these decisions together."

City of Rockville Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton will serve as TPB chairman. "I look forward to working closely with my colleagues from across the metro area to address our region's long-term transportation needs," she said. Newton replaces NVTC Commissioner Tim Lovain of Alexandria for a one-year term as chairman.

District of Columbia Councilmember Charles Allen also will serve as a TPB vice chairman. "I look forward to continuing to push for increased focus on transportation equity and environmental justice," he said.

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority



Draft recommendations for the [VTrans2025 Multimodal Transportation Plan](#) (VMTP) were to be made available on Jan. 26 in advance of a public workshop sponsored by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority on behalf of the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment. The recommendations in VMTP 2025 will be presented to the Commonwealth Transportation Board in mid-2017. While future Smart Scale applications will not be limited to those contained in VMTP 2025, the recommended projects will reflect the most strategic responses to the 2025 needs.



NoVa General Assembly Bus Tour



NVTC spoke to the Commission's unique role as the voice of transit in Northern Virginia and its work on the Transform 66 Multimodal Project as part of a bus tour for General Assembly members on Jan. 5.

Arranged by Senator Dave Marsden and Delegate Vivian Watts, the tour highlighted several of the significant transportation projects underway in Northern Virginia. VDOT coordinated logistics, while Fairfax Connector provided transportation.

