



As the voice of transit in Northern Virginia, NVTC's words and actions advanced the cause of public transportation at the local, state and regional levels throughout 2017.

Through numerous initiatives and actions, NVTC made clear the need for Northern Virginians to have access to safe, reliable and adequately funded transit options. Here are some highlights:

- Flanked by buses, bikeshare and a transit information display screen, Gov. Terry McAuliffe and Transportation Sec. Aubrey Lane launched the first round of I-66 Commuter Choice projects, which received a total of \$9.8 million through NVTC's I-66 Commuter Choice. By year's end, seven projects were fully operational and three others were partially implemented. A second call for projects closes Dec. 22.
- Tasked by the General Assembly in March with identifying priorities for reforms that would improve WMATA, NVTC adopted two resolutions addressing safety, governance and finances. Through its engagement with former U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood – commissioned by Virginia's Governor to develop WMATA reform proposals – NVTC helped shape many of the Commonwealth's recent recommendations.
- Recognizing that rail transit is vital to the economic well-being of Northern Virginia, NVTC conducted a study to measure what, if any, benefits Metrorail and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) confer on the Commonwealth. The results show that the additional 85,000 households and 130,500 jobs that the rail systems make possible in Northern Virginia generate over \$600 million annually in sales and income tax revenues that flow to Richmond. For each dollar the state invests in Metrorail and VRE, it receives \$2.50 in return. NVTC's study was informed, reviewed and supported by peers in the transportation community.
- As a member of Virginia's Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee, I worked to identify sustainable revenue sources to fund transit capital needs and ways to equitably prioritize the use of that revenue. The committee's work served to inform members of the Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board, a legislatively mandated panel tasked with providing the General Assembly with options for replacing bonds, due to expire in fiscal year 2019, that have funded transit capital investments for the past 10 years. Many of those recommendations are included in the Governor's biennial budget.

None of this would have been possible without our talented staff members, who are dedicated to NVTC's mission and vision. Also key to NVTC's effectiveness are our Commissioners, who bring knowledge and expertise to the table and work to find common ground on the issues that come before us each month. I have no doubt that we will be able to tackle the challenges that the new year will bring us. Happy holidays.



Executive Director

Inside this Issue

15 I-66 Commuter Choice Apps Expected 2
WMATA U-Pass Pilot Program2
No SmarTrip Card Negative Balances2
WMATA Expands Pentagon Bus Service ..2
WMATA Brings Wi-Fi to More Stations ...2
Gov's Budget Has \$150M for WMATA3
WMATA Publishes FY2019 Budget3
MwCOG Endorses \$500M for WMATA....3
Around Town4
Register for VTA Legislative Reception4
Gov. Elect Names Transportation Team ..5
NVTC to Serve on Transition Team.....5
Legislative Briefing Attracts Full House5
NVTC Briefs Leaders on Fare Collection ...5
Connector Launches I-66 Bus Service.....6
VRE Runs Annual Santa Trains6
TransportationCamp 20186
TPB Endorses Long-Range Initiatives.....6



Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
2300 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 620
Arlington, VA 22201
www.novatransit.org



Key Dates

Dec. 22	Application Deadline for I-66 Commuter Choice Funding
Jan. 4	NVTC Monthly Meeting
Jan. 9-10	CTB Monthly Meeting
Jan. 11	WMATA Board Meeting
Jan. (TBD)	NVTA Monthly Meeting
Jan. 17	TPB Monthly Meeting
Jan. 19	VRE Operations Board Meeting
Jan. 22	VTA Leg. Reception (Richmond)
Jan. 25	WMATA Board Meeting
Feb. 8	NVTC Monthly Meeting (Richmond)

NVTC Anticipates 15 I-66 Commuter Choice Funding Requests



With [applications for the second round of funding under I-66 Com-](#)

[muter Choice](#) due Dec. 22, NVTC expects to receive around 15 grant applications from as many as 9 jurisdictions and transit agencies. Staff will provide an overview of applications at the Jan. 4 meeting.

[I-66 Commuter Choice](#) uses tolls from the interstate to fund multimodal improvements that benefit those who [pay tolls inside the Beltway](#). The program is designed to identify and fund projects that move more people, increase opportunities to connect from one mode of travel to another, improve transit service, reduce roadway congestion, and increase travel options.

WMATA U-Pass Pilot Program Update

WMATA's [University Pass \(U-Pass\)](#) pilot program benefits several universities in D.C., providing unlimited students with rides on Metrobus and Metrorail at a substantially discounted price. In its first year, U-Pass provided more than 1.5 million Metro rides to American University students.

Given the pilot's success, WMATA plans to roll out the program in fall 2018. NVTC will work with WMATA, coordinating the exchange of information with Northern Virginia transit agencies to determine interest and participation levels in the program.



SmarTrip Cards Will Not Permit Negative Balances in 2018

As of January 8, Metro's fare system will no longer allow customers to carry a negative balance on a SmarTrip card for Metrobus and Metrorail. Previously, customers could complete certain trips even though there were insufficient funds on the SmarTrip card to pay the fare.

While most customers eventually load additional value to the SmarTrip card to resolve the negative balance, unresolved negative balances have added up to be worth about \$25 million dollars over the past 17 years.

WMATA Expands Bus Service to Pentagon Transit Center



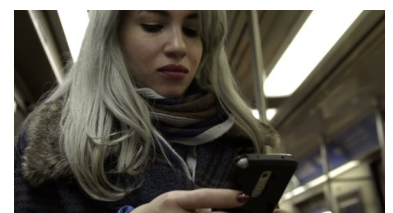
Metrobus recently [added new trips to the Pentagon Transit Center](#) in Arlington, enhancing service on its Burke Center and Landmark/Bren Mar Park

routes. Additional trips on 18P and 21D buses are funded through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation as part of the I-395 Express Lanes Transportation Management Program. Metro is making changes to a total of 35 routes, 12 of which are in Virginia, to improve on-time performance.

WMATA Brings Wi-Fi to Two Dozen More Rail Stations

Metro has announced the availability of free customer [Wi-Fi service at 24 additional underground stations](#), expanding the number of Wi-Fi enabled stations to 30. Metro began offering customer Wi-Fi at six stations in April: Metro Center, Gallery Place, L'Enfant Plaza, Judiciary Square, Union Station, and Archives. Starting yesterday, Wi-Fi became available at

Rosslyn, Crystal City, Clarendon and Court House in Virginia. All remaining underground stations will have Wi-Fi by mid-2018.



Governor's Budget Includes \$150 Million Annually for WMATA

[Releasing his biennial budget to the General Assembly's Joint Money Committees](#), Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe called on state legislators to provide dedicated funding for WMATA and to fix the looming transit capital fiscal cliff. "We need robust, sustainable public-transit systems to support the growth and diversification of our economy," he said on Dec. 18.

McAuliffe's [budget for fiscal years 2019 and 2020](#) includes \$150 million — Virginia's share of the \$500 million endorsed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (see below) — for WMATA and allows for the issuing of bonds totaling \$110 million a year to cover a looming shortfall in state transit capital funding. The budget proposes three increases in Northern Virginia taxes:

- The real estate transfer levy would increase a dime to 25 cents per \$100 of assessed value. That would supply \$33 million for Metro in 2019.
- The hotel levy would rise from 2 percent to 3 percent, raising \$15 million annually.
- An existing floor on the state wholesale gas tax would be applied to the regional levies, which are now separate. VDOT estimates that if the new tax is passed onto retail customers, it would add 2 cents a gallon to the

pump price. The change would raise an additional \$17 million in Northern Virginia for Metro, while the Hampton Roads increase would go toward road projects there.

The Northern Virginia taxes would apply in all jurisdictions that comprise the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, which include Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun and Prince William counties, and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park. The Governor's budget also calls earmarks \$85 million of the roughly \$330 million received by NVTa each year to WMATA.

McAuliffe's plan to provide \$150 million annually to WMATA is contingent on the District of Columbia and Maryland dedicating the same amount and agreeing to a smaller Metro reform board.

The budget, according to an [overview from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation](#), gives NVTC the authority to appoint non-elected officials to the WMATA Board. It also provides \$19 million in dedicated, ongoing funding for Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and restores the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission regional fuels tax to help fund VRE's 2040 System Plan.

WMATA Publishes Proposed FY2019 Budget



WMATA General Manager Paul Wiedefeld has released his [\\$3.2 billion budget](#), which neither raises fares nor reduces service. The proposed budget focuses resources on customer recovery and enhanced pass options to attract more riders,

capital program investment delivery to renew and preserve the system, and continued compliance and quality assurance enhancements to improve management effectiveness. The budget proposes \$1.3 billion of capital investment in fiscal year 2019 and \$8.5 billion over six years to strengthen the safety, reliability and state of good repair of Metro's infrastructure.

MWCOG Endorses Extra \$500 Million Annually for WMATA

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) board voted overwhelmingly Wednesday in favor of a [non-binding resolution](#) calling on the District of Columbia, Virginia, Maryland and the federal government to provide an additional \$500 million per year for Metro. Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova proposed an amendment stating that the funding should be divided equally among the four entities.

The amendment passed and was included in the resolution. The final vote was 19-5. Two D.C. Council members and a senior advisor to Mayor Muriel Bowser opposed the resolution, insisting that a regional tax, such as a sales tax, must be the source of any long-term, dedicated funding for WMATA. Falls Church Council Member David Snyder and Arlington County Board Member Christian Dorsey also voted against the resolution.

Around Town: Headlines from/about NVTJ Jurisdictions and Partners



[East Falls Church Metro Station Could Get More Bus Space Under County Plan](#)

[Bus-Only Lanes May Soon Be Possible on Columbia Pike](#)

[How Transportation Fixes Could Help Rosslyn Land The Next Nestlé](#)

[Metro might one day build an Arlington-DC "loop." What's that again?](#)



[City council adopts Vision Zero action plan](#)

[DASH To Purchase Clean Diesel Buses; Plans Future Transition To All Electric](#)



[Virginia Breeze intercity bus meets with success](#)



[County Government Applauds Companies for Commuter Benefits](#)



[Falls Church to seek developers for 10-acre site near Metro](#)



[How should Herndon develop the area around its incoming Metro station?](#)



[Metro is seeking input on the how to design its 8000-series railcars](#)

[Metro announces special late-night service New Year's Eve](#)



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

[How has commuting in our area changed in 50 years?](#)



[RIDE Magazine \(Dec. 2017/Jan. 2018\)](#)

Register for the Virginia Transit Association Legislative Reception

January 22 from 5-7:30 p.m. at Richmond's Main Street Station



Go to vatransit.com

Governor-Elect Appoints Transportation Team

Commonwealth Transportation Board Member Shannon Valentine will serve as transportation secretary when Gov.-elect Ralph Northam takes office January 13, 2018. Valentine, a former state delegate from Lynchburg, previously served as co-director of a transition team focused on transportation issues when Gov. Terry McAuliffe was elected in 2013.

Other appointments include Quintin Elliott, chief deputy commissioner of VDOT, as deputy secretary of transportation and Stephen Brich, a vice president with Kimley-Horn and Associates, as VDOT commissioner. Nicholas Donohue, deputy secretary of transportation, and Jennifer Mitchell, director of DRPT, will continue to serve in their current posts.

NVTC's Mattice to Serve on Transportation Transition Team

Gov.-elect Ralph Northam has assembled a group of some of the state's most knowledgeable transportation leaders to assist in his transition. The transportation transition team, led by Aimee Perron Seibert of the

Commonwealth Strategy Group and John Milliken, a former Virginia Secretary of Transportation, includes NVTC Executive Director Kate Mattice, who will advise on transit issues.

Annual Legislative Briefing Attracts Full House

A dozen state legislators – both veterans and newly elected members – and more than 100 local elected officials, federal and state legislative staff, and area business leaders joined NVTC and PRTC on December 4 to learn more about federal and state issues affecting transit in Northern Virginia. Transit industry leaders addressed the critical funding and policy challenges facing

our region and transit-savvy business leaders – from EY, Comstock Partners, Monumental Sports and Entertainment, and Inova – spoke to the importance of bus and rail to our economy and quality of life. [Information shared during the meeting is available on NVTC's website.](#)



NVTC Updates Greater Washington Partnership on Fare Collection

NVTC's Patricia Happ participated in a fare payment visioning roundtable in December sponsored by the [Greater Washington Partnership](#) (GWP). She shared the work NVTC has been doing with Northern Virginia transit providers to update existing technology and imagine the future of integrated fare collection.

GWP is an alliance of CEOs from Richmond to Baltimore that seeks to improve quality of life in the region. With [transportation a primary focus](#), GWP convened the roundtable as part of its effort to improve regional mobility.

Fairfax Connector



Concurrent with the Dec. 4 start of tolling on I-66, [Fairfax Connector launched express bus service](#) between Government Center and downtown Washington, D.C. Route 699 provides 10 inbound and outbound trips each weekday. Morning service departs roughly every 20 minutes between 5:40 and 8:25 a.m. and afternoon service departs about every 22 minutes between 3:25 and 6:43 p.m. The regular one-way fare is \$4.25. Route 699 is funded through NVTC's I-66 Commuter Choice program.



TransportationCamp 2018



[TransportationCamp DC](#) brings together 500 thinkers and doers in the fields of transportation and technology. In addition to talks and presentations from well-known names in the field, TransportationCamp includes sessions and activities led by attendees themselves. Held on the Saturday before the Transportation Research Board's Annual Meeting, the camp is a high-energy, exciting day of presentations, panels, and networking opportunities.

DC's 7th annual camp takes place Sat., Jan. 6, 2018 in Founders Hall at George Mason University's Arlington Campus. Tickets are \$50 each and include breakfast, lunch, and a brief reception with food and drink after the event. [Preregistration for the camp](#), which is sponsored by Mobility Lab, is required.



Virginia Railway Express



With snow lightly falling, the [Virginia Railway Express Santa trains](#) took to the tracks Dec. 9. Five excursions of Santa trains operated from commuter rail stations in Burke, Fredericksburg, Manassas, Spotsylvania, and Woodbridge. The 5,000 tickets sold out online in under seven minutes when they went on sale Nov. 20. Another 5,000 were quickly snapped up at select visitor centers and VRE stations in the region. Children who ride the trains received candy canes and coloring books. The trains operate as part of [Operation Life Saver's "Look, Listen, and Live"](#) campaign. NVTC staff member Dan Goldfarb made a cameo appearance as Santa's elf.



Transportation Planning Board



TPB has endorsed [five long-range transportation initiatives identified by a task force](#), which was chaired by Arlington County Board Chairman Jay Fissette. The five are a regional express travel network, regionwide bus rapid transit and transitways, Metrorail core capacity improvements, optimizing regional land-use balance, and employer-based travel demand management policies.

The TPB's endorsement means these initiatives will be included as the aspirational element of the organization's long-range transportation plan, Visualize 2045. It also moves the ideas forward so TPB member agencies can study them in more depth. It does not, however, mandate member jurisdictions to alter their own local plans, programs, or policies or to design, fund, and implement these initiatives without further study.