Regional Fare Collection Program

NVTC leads fare collection coordination, planning, and technical assistance for the Northern Virginia transit systems.

“Northern Virginia transit systems envision an enhanced regionally integrated fare collection system with local flexibility to meet evolving customer expectations.”
- NVTC Fare Collection Vision Statement

NVTC’s Role: Funding, Coordination, Technical Support and Administration

Farebox Upgrades
NVTC coordinates with Northern Virginia transit systems and WMATA on upgrades to existing bus fareboxes to respond to growing reliability issues and components reaching end of life.

Off-Board Fare Collection
NVTC coordinates regional off-board payment activities including mobile payment solutions, and assists with identifying off-board fare payment solutions for transit systems offering bus rapid transit (BRT) services or multi-door customer boarding.

Next Generation Fare Collection
NVTC collaborates with the transit systems to envision and implement future regional fare collection system solutions.

Fare Collection Improvements for the Region

Why are Fare Collection Improvements important?
Technical and policy coordination with WMATA is required because Northern Virginia bus fare payment systems utilize WMATA’s regional SmarTrip® system to collect fares.

Fare collection improvements are needed for the 20-year-old fare system, which is at the end of its useful life. Upgrades and planning are necessary to keep existing fareboxes operating, and to plan and implement the next generation system.

Multiple projects are planned to replace failing equipment, keep pace with technology advancements and improve customer experience including real-time communications, mobile fare payment, and back-office upgrades.

Working Group

NVTC Regional Fare Collection Working Group

nova transit.org
NVTC Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Commission in 2018, the strategic plan describes the vision of what transit systems would like to achieve with its regional fare collection activities, establishes a cohesive plan and agreement on next steps, and defines actions to be taken by NVTC and the transit systems to advance fare collection.

Regional Coordination

NVTC’s responsibilities include managing technical requirements, grant funding, policy, as well as coordinating procurement and implementation for regional partner and WMATA-related projects. The lists below represent a sample of NVTC and WMATA fare payment-related projects underway or in planning stages.

**NVTC Fare Payment Projects**
- Fare collection planning and coordination
- Driver control unit upgrade coordination for region
- Fare payment policy
- NVTC Fare Collection Strategic Plan update
- Grant management
- Regional Mobile App planning
- SmartBenefits upgrades
- Off-board and multi-door fare collection coordination and planning

**WMATA Fare Payment Projects**
- State of Good Repair for Fareboxes - DCU, Faregate infrastructure, Fare Vending Machines, Back-Office System
- Mobile APP
- Procure and install new Faregates
- Complete Faregate Installation
- Procure and install new Fareboxes
- Implementation of new Back-Office software system
- New Fare Vendor installation
- Move fully to decentralized self-service model

Source: Fare Collection Modernization Program Update, Capital and Strategic Planning Committee, Item IV - A, April 12, 2018

Fare Collection

The fare collection, or fare payment system includes customer-facing equipment such as bus fareboxes, rail faregates, mobile apps, fare vending machines, and the hardware, software and communications to operate the system.