Northern Virginia Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan

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Patricia Happ
NVTC Regional Fare Collection Program Manager
patriciahapp@novatransit.org
Overview

Why is fare collection planning important?

NVTC’s fare collection efforts on behalf on the region

Strategic planning process

Findings and actions

Next Steps
Why is Fare Collection Planning Important?

- The current fare collection system is nearing obsolescence – upgrades and planning in progress.
- Coordination is key: NVTC bus systems collect fares through the regional SmarTrip® system operated by WMATA.
- The entire region benefits from a system that is reliable, customer-friendly, and economical to operate.
- Fare Collection is often customers’ first interface with a transit system.
- Fare payment often defines a transit customer’s experience, so its ease of use and reliability are extremely important.

Fare Collection is often customers’ first interface with a transit system.
Memorandum of Agreement for the Regional Fare Collection Program (August 2017) directs NVTC to allocate grant funding and provide resources to coordinate upgrades to existing regional fare collection systems and explore options and enhancements for the regional fare collection program.

NVTC Tasks:

1 – Bus Fare Collection Upgrades
2 – Off-Board Fare Collection
3 – Next Generation Regional Fare Collection Funding and Administration
Strategic Planning Purpose and Need

To ensure upgrades and enhancements are based on the transit system needs and that consensus is achieved, NVTC implemented a strategic planning process, resulting in the Northern Virginia Regional Fare Collection Strategic Plan.

**Purpose**
- Provide a roadmap for advancing fare collection in Northern Virginia
- Provide input into WMATA fare collection modernization initiatives

**Need**
- Replace or upgrade the system as components near end of life
- Keep pace with customer expectations and changing technology
Strategic Planning Process

November 2017 Workshop attended by all Northern Virginia transit systems, WMATA and FTA

Surveys and interviews with Northern Virginia transit systems on issues and needs

Stakeholder review and feedback process

Strategic Plan
Regional Fare Collection Working Group

Working Group Members
Arlington Transit (ART)       Loudoun County Transit
City of Fairfax CUE               PRTC
Alexandria DASH                   VRE
Fairfax Connector                 WMATA

Consulting Team: Kimley-Horn and IBI Group
Strategic Plan Details

- 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
- Defines actions to be taken by NVTC and the transit systems to advance fare collection
Vision Statement

A vision statement was developed by NVTC and validated by the transit systems to describe what Northern Virginia would like to achieve with its next-generation regional fare collection activities.

Northern Virginia transit systems envision an enhanced regionally integrated fare collection system with local flexibility to meet evolving customer expectations.

This vision statement will guide current and future actions to enhance the transit fare collection systems in Northern Virginia.
The strategic planning process resulted in the conclusion that there was broad agreement on the need for a regional fare collection system to complement and coexist with local solutions to meet the transit systems’ needs.

- Increase the role of Northern Virginia transit systems in WMATA fare collection planning
- Upgrade existing system: Replace obsolete components and improve system maintainability
- Provide seamless travel and payment with neighboring or intersecting transit systems
- Retain and improve interoperability with SmartBenefits®
Findings

Continued need for an upgraded and enhanced regional fare collection system

Local solutions should coexist and complement regional system to meet the transit systems’ needs

Strong interest in Northern Virginia mobile ticketing
Actions

In response to the priorities gathered throughout the process, NVTC developed the following actions. The actions identify the areas NVTC will assist the transit systems in fare collection efforts. Not all transit systems will have required involvement in each action.

1. Continue Farebox Obsolescence Management
2. Implement a Coordinated Local Platform for Mobile Ticketing
3. Engage with WMATA on SmartBenefits® Enhancements
4. Engage with WMATA on SmarTrip® Upgrades
5. Support Retail Network Expansion
6. Initiate Long-Term Regional Fare Collection System Planning and Enhancements
Next Steps

- Continue farebox obsolescence management/ bus fare collection upgrades
  - System hardware and software upgrades
  - First article testing
  - Upgrades ready for implementation January 2019

- Advance local platform for mobile ticketing
  - Meet with transit systems to solidify approach
  - Develop requirements
Questions?

Contact:
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