

Successes and Challenges for Northern Virginia's Transit Systems

**Presentation to Virginia General Assembly
House Appropriations
Transportation Subcommittee
February 2, 2009**

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Recent Success for Transit in Northern Virginia

- Ridership growing on all systems during the past year. Northern Virginia transit systems carried more than 142 million passenger trips in FY 2008 (Up 3.3%)
- Systems with the longest distance routes generally have seen the largest increases.
- Increased transit ridership has meant fewer vehicle miles traveled, less gasoline used and less air pollution.
- Metro had its highest ridership day ever on Inauguration Day. It carried approximately 1.5 million passengers which is nearly double its weekday average.

Transit Ridership Increases

One-Way Passenger Trips on Transit Systems Serving Northern Virginia First 6 Months FY 09
Compared to First 6 Months FY 08

	YTD FY 09	YTD FY 08	Percent Change	
Alexandria Transit (DASH)	2,072,932	1,994,044	4%	
Alexandria - King Street Trolley	376,845	n/a	n/a	
Arlington Transit (ART)	729,498	572,063	28%	
City of Fairfax (CUE)	559,498	525,611	6%	
Fairfax Connector	5,072,929	4,829,764	5%	
Loudoun County Transit	449,309	362,136	24%	
Virginia Regional Transit - Loudoun	282,748	217,613	30%	
PRTC Omni Ride/Omni Link	1,526,721	1,367,393	12%	
Virginia Railway Express	1,919,462	1,731,041	11%	
	TOTAL	24,042,083	22,551,405	7%

Source: Northern Virginia transit systems compiled by NVTC.

FY 2008 Metrobus ridership has been updated.

FY 2009 data has been verified by WMATA.

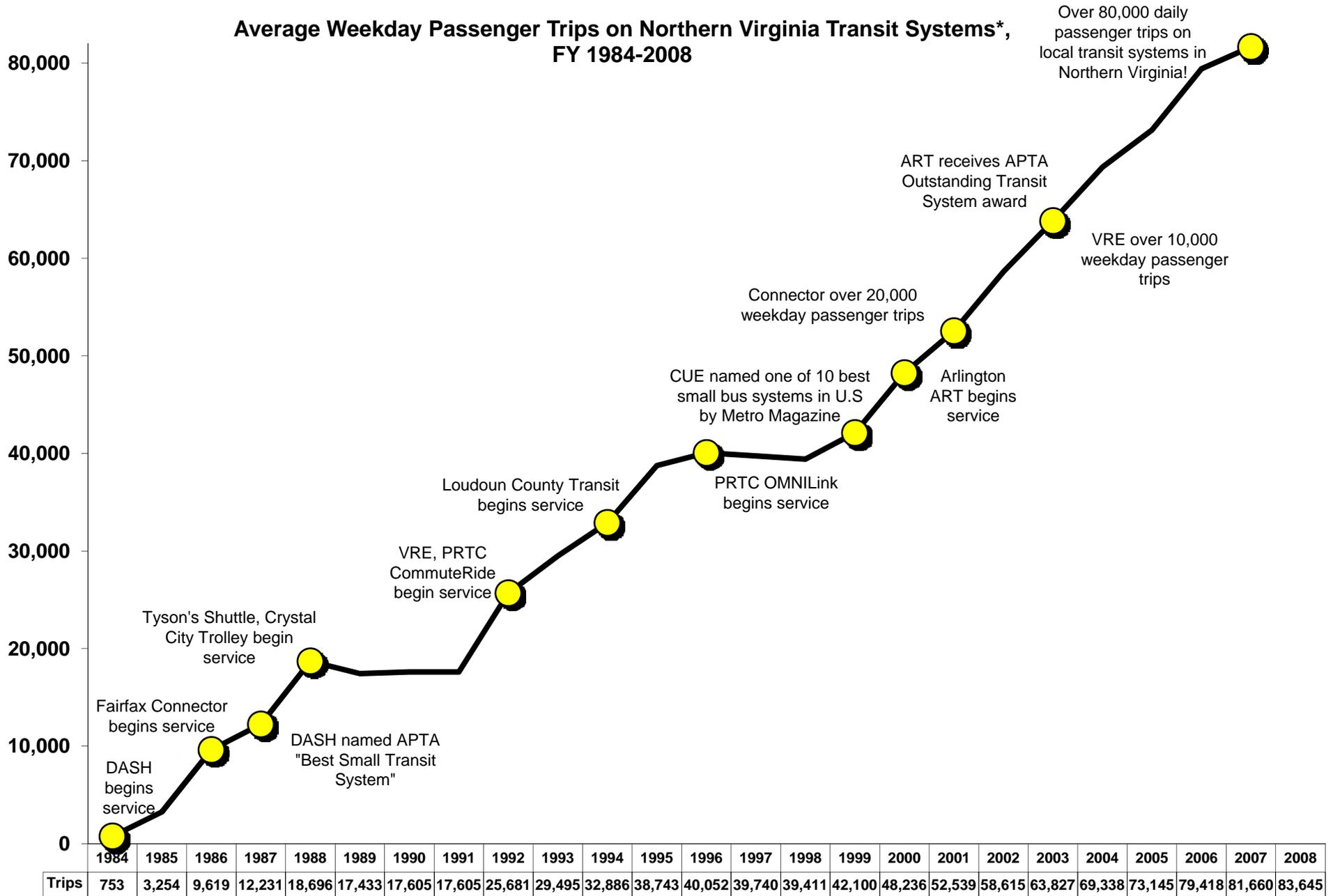
New Ridership Data Show Continued Positive Regional Transit Performance

Strong transit performance in Northern Virginia:

- 17% ridership growth here since 2003.
- 75% of Virginia's transit ridership is here.
- Northern Virginia's 2.1 million residents took 65 transit trips per capita in FY 2007, while in NVTTC's WMATA jurisdictions residents took 96 (the statewide average was 24).
- Transit and ridesharing carry two-thirds of commuters in our major corridors inside the Beltway in peak periods and about half outside the Beltway.
- Even though oil prices have declined significantly since their high point in the Summer and Fall of 2008, transit ridership seems to be holding relatively stable.



Average Weekday Passenger Trips on Northern Virginia Transit Systems*, FY 1984-2008



* Northern Virginia Transit Systems for 2004 include DASH, Fairfax Connector, CUE, VRE, PRTC OmniRide and OmniLink, Loudoun County Transit, and Arlington Transit (ART). Previous years may include data from RIBS, Tyson's Shuttle, Crystal City Shuttle, and Loudoun County Commuter Service. WMATA MetroRail and MetroBus data not included. CUE began service in FY 81. Data does not include WMATA reimbursable services such as the GEORGE Bus, REX, Pike Ride, or TAGS

Challenges for Northern Virginia's Transit Systems

- Despite record ridership, Northern Virginia's transit systems face significant challenges.
- Loss of over \$300 million annually of HB 3202 regional funding (and bonding opportunities for leverage) in February 2008.
- Loss of 10% of state transit funding in June 2008.
- Loss of another 15% of state transit operating assistance announced in November 2008 with more cuts expected this week when the CTB presents a revised Six Year Program.
- More losses of state aid threatened as revenue sources continue to decline.

Local Level of Effort

- It now costs over \$636 million dollars annually to operate, maintain and invest in public transit in Northern Virginia.
- Local sources (fares, 2% gas tax, local subsidies) provide two-thirds.
- For FY 2005, NVTC's jurisdictions had a local level of effort of \$208 per person. The next largest effort was in the Richmond District at \$20 per person.



The Perfect Storm: The Bleak Outlook for Transit without New State Funding

- Wildly fluctuating transit fuel costs, aging transit infrastructure, over-crowded trains and buses;
- Need to match new federal funding for WMATA;
- Declining local property tax revenues and serious financial distress among local and state governments supporting transit;
- Sharp fare increases and/or transit service reductions already in place or actively considered for the near future;
- Near collapse of the U.S. (and world's) finance system threatened borrowing for transit investment by transit systems and their state and local funding partners;



The Perfect Storm: The Bleak Outlook for Transit without New State Funding (continued)

- Federal stimulus programs for transit could focus on short-term needs and ignore long-term requirements;
- Even if federal stimulus funds do support long-term needs, transit systems could be left with capital projects that can't be completed due to lack of operating funds;
- This situation produces a tragic irony: Transit is forced to cut back at the same time concern for the environment and global warming are sending commuters to transit in record numbers.



Northern Virginia Transit System Impacts

CUE:

(Connection between GMU and Metro, circulator service in Fairfax City).

- Despite increases in ridership CUE, due to budget constraints, is examining whether or not to cut service in the coming months.

Loudoun County Transit:

(Primarily commuter service in regional core)

- “At this time, we do not plan to cut any service (in FY09). In spite of the reduction in state funding, due to the fare increase that we implemented last fall and increased ridership.”
- “FY10 is still in question.”

Northern Virginia Transit System Impacts

Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission

(PRTC) (Connection between Prince William County and Metro, Pentagon, Downtown Washington, also local service)

- PRTC will be cutting 5% of its service hours in FY 2010 irrespective of whether there's federal / state relief. Has a contingency plan for further cuts amounting to as much as 22%, though it appears we won't activate that contingency plan until FY 2011 and then only if there isn't relief (state or federal relief).
- Shortfall amounts to an estimated \$4 million in FY 2011. Will make it through FY 2010 by using past gas tax revenue reserves.

Northern Virginia Transit System Impacts

Fairfax Connector

(Feeder service to Metro, cross-county and local circulator service)

- Fairfax County is facing a \$650 million budget shortfall for FY 2010.
- All agencies have prepared budget cuts of at least 15%.
- Fairfax Connector has developed a 20% service cut package, despite a recent fare increase.

Northern Virginia Transit System Impacts

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

- Evaluating bus, rail and paratransit service cuts to balance FY 2010 budget.

Virginia Railway Express

- Has had two significant fare increases in six months and plans another one in July 2009, just to maintain existing service.

Summary

- Transit has been performing exceptionally well in Northern Virginia despite severe financial constraints.
- Despite significant ridership growth, Northern Virginia's transit systems faces significant financial challenges in FY 2010 and FY 2011.
- While capital funds are important, operating funds are more important in order to keep existing service operating.



Questions?