

Making Northern Virginia's Public Transit Network Sustainable and Strong

Overview of the

SJ 28 Joint Subcommittee on the Growing Needs of Public Transit in Northern Virginia

Briefing to the House Appropriations Committee

October 20, 2025



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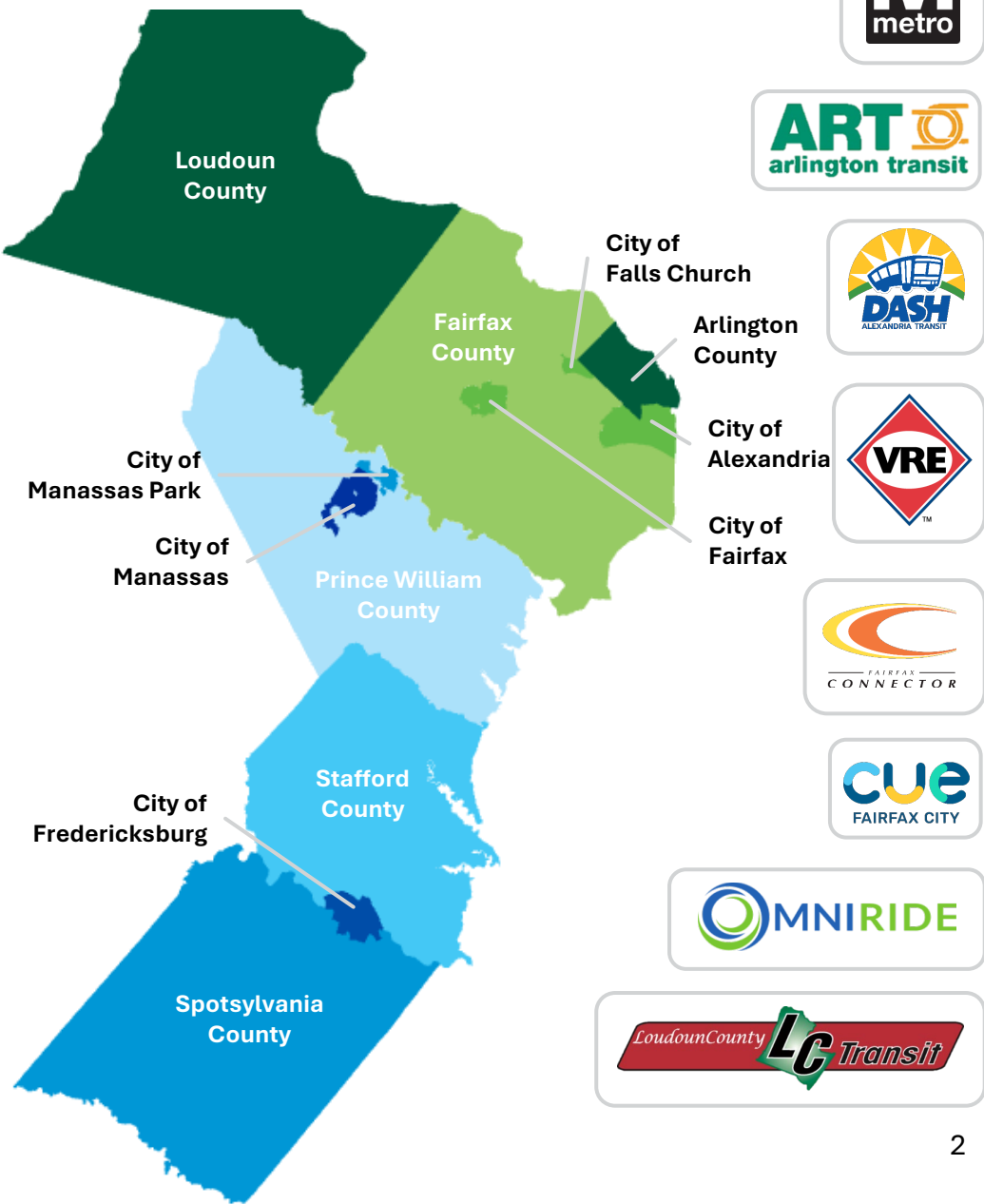


Northern Virginia's Transit Network

Serves a region of



Transit Service Area



Northern Virginia's Transit Network is an Economic Engine



Generates

\$28B

in economic activity



Contributes

\$1.5B

in revenues to the VA
general fund



Provides

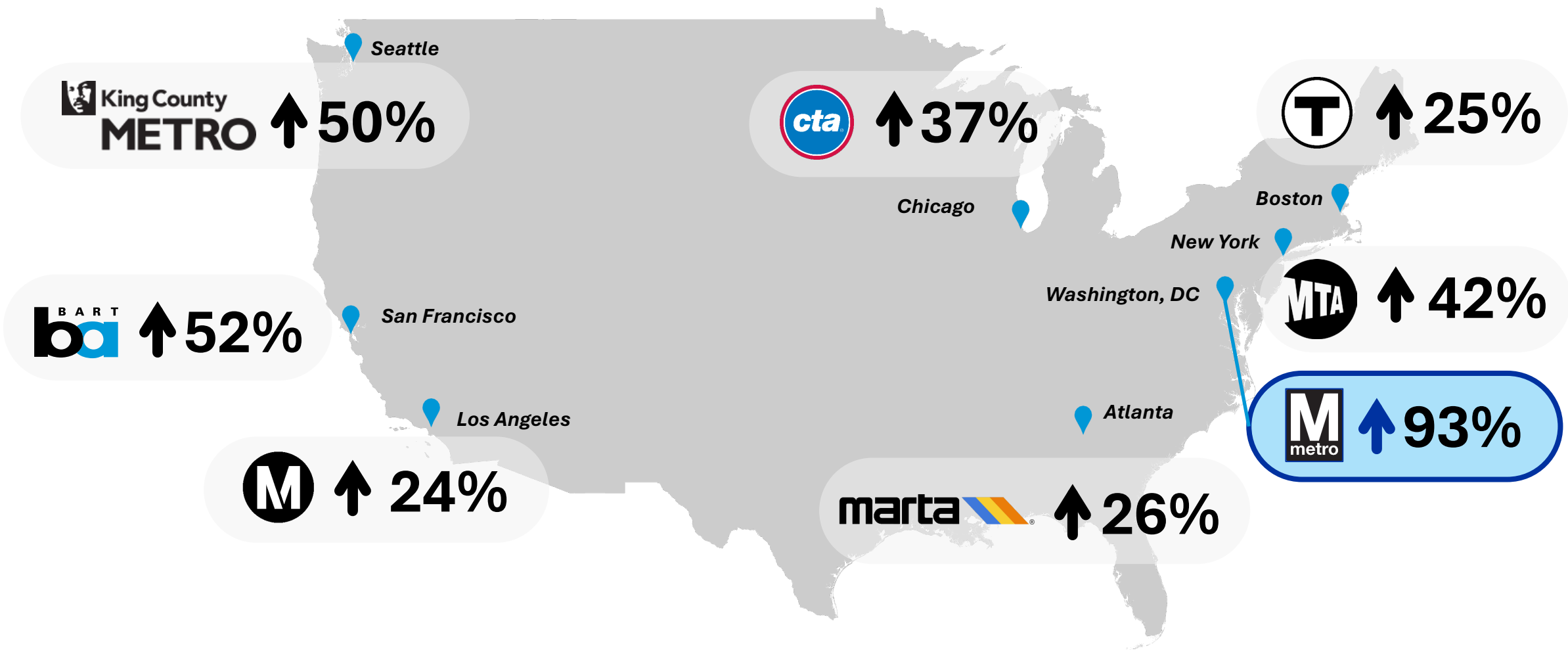
160%

return on
state investment



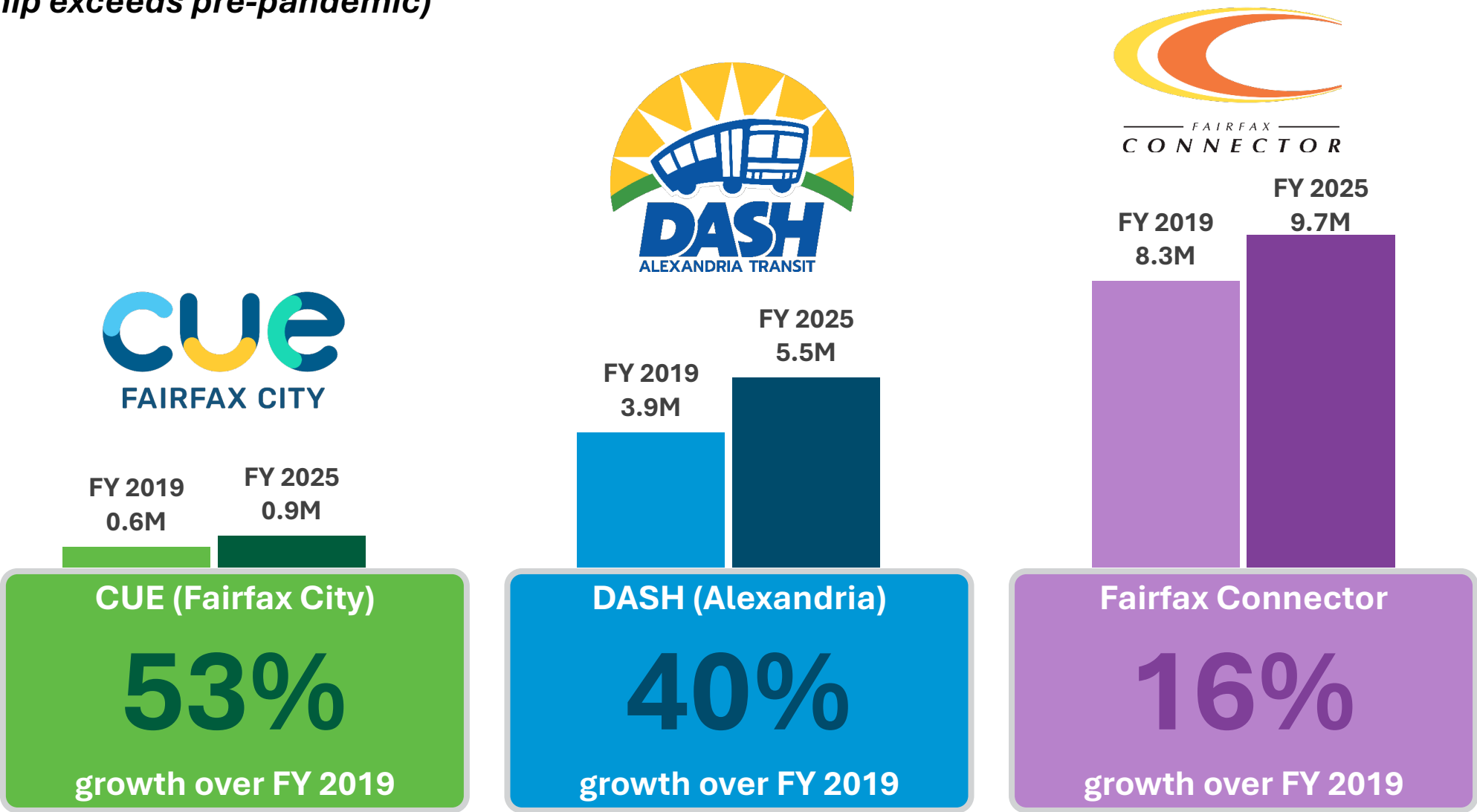
Ridership: WMATA's Rebound is Exceeding its Peers

Change in Transit Ridership from FY 2022 to FY 2025



Ridership: NVTC/Local Bus Systems Stronger than Before

(Ridership exceeds pre-pandemic)



VRE is Being Transformed with Major Investments

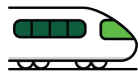
VRE is planning for the future of rail in Virginia.

- By leveraging infrastructure improvements, such as VPRA's Long Bridge project to expand rail capacity across the Potomac, VRE will improve connectivity between DC and Virginia as soon as 2030.
- Near-term funding will replace loss of COVID relief funding plus open the opportunity for weekend service.
- VRE will be able to move more people, more efficiently—and every dollar invested today helps make that possible.

VRE and the Commonwealth are making major investments to:



**Improve
service**

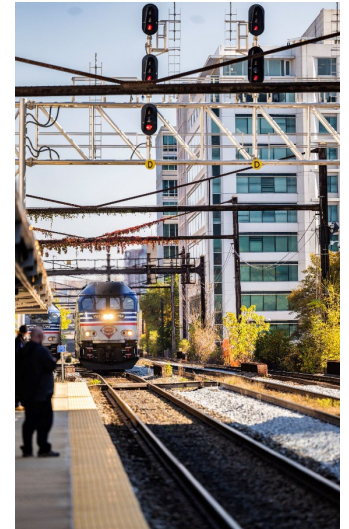


**Reinvent
the system**



**Increase
riders**

25%
year-over-year
VRE ridership
increase



PRTC/OmniRide is Rebounding and Diversifying

Note: Large share of OmniRide's funding comes from discretionary/unreliable sources

- ✓ Strong ridership **growth**
 - Current I-66 and I-95 commuter routes to Pentagon, DC, Tysons at full capacity
 - Commuter Bus reach now extends to Spotsylvania, Front Royal and Warrenton
- ✓ **Affordable local bus** offered within Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park
- ✓ New **Microtransit** service providing vital link to key “transit desert” communities
- ✓ Continue to offer **Vanpool Alliance** program key to commuters outside main destinations

19%
year-over-year
OmniRide
ridership increase



Solving Transit Funding Needs

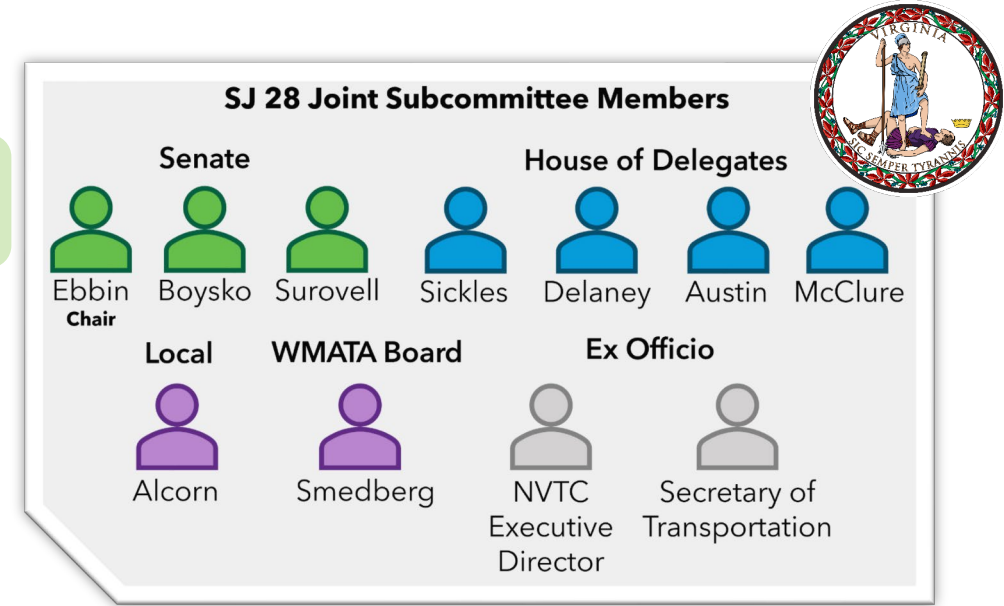
SJ 28 Joint Subcommittee

Chair Senator Adam Ebbin | Vice Chair Delegate Mark Sickles

Two-year effort of Virginia Legislators and Local Officials to:

- ✓ Identify sustainable, dedicated funding sources for
 - WMATA
 - NVTC Local Bus systems
 - VRE
 - PRTC/OmniRide
- ✓ Examine WMATA cost-containment strategies
- ✓ Provide a Virginia-focused solution to DC/MD/VA efforts (DMVMoves)

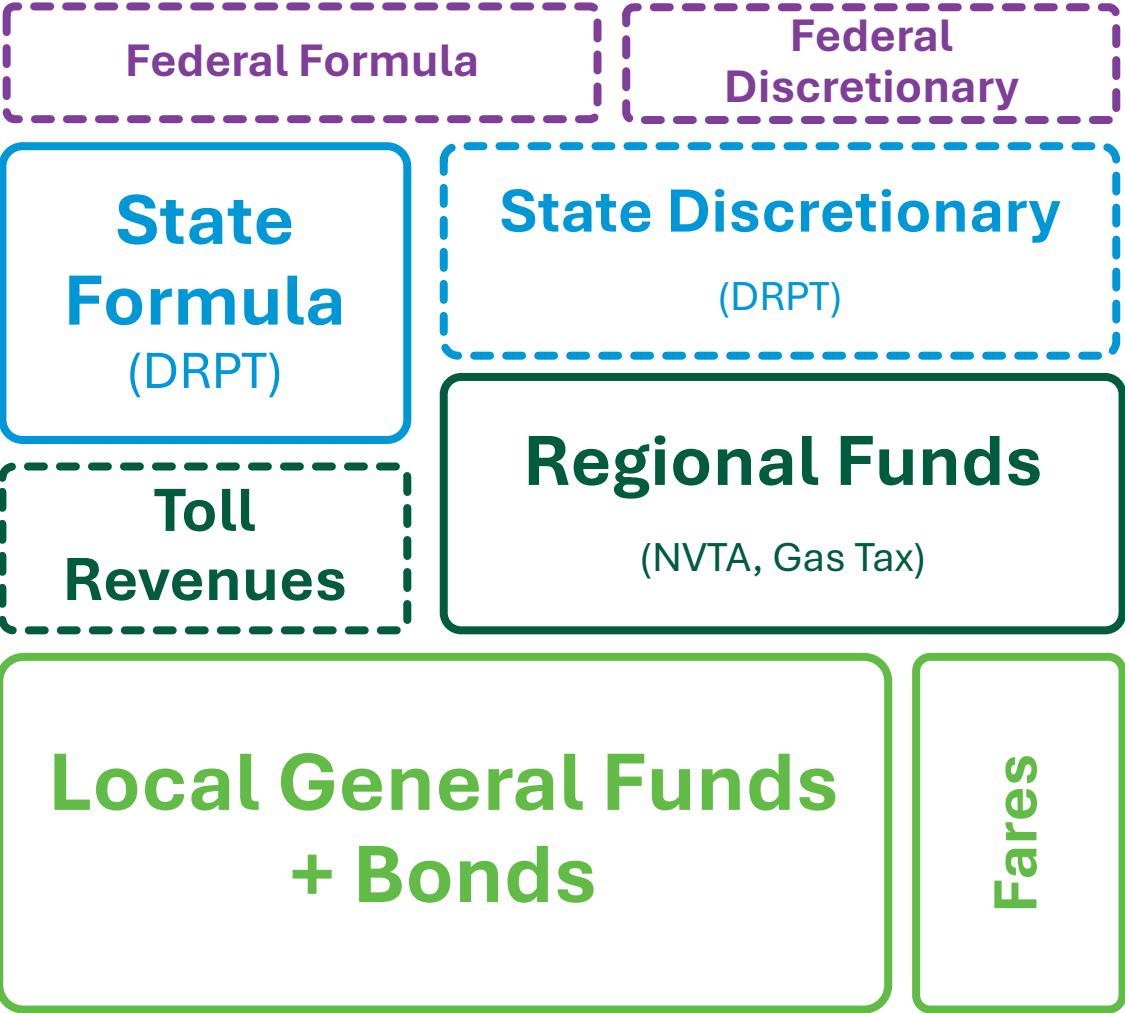
**Recommendations expected November 2025
for 2026 General Assembly consideration**



DMVMOVES
Moving our region forward, together.

How is Transit Funded?

Agencies use a combination of the following sources



What Does It Pay For?



SJ28 Findings: DMVMoves Vision for WMATA

DMVMOVES

Moving our region forward, together.

WMATA World-Class Transit Investments

\$450-500M in FY28 + 3% per year

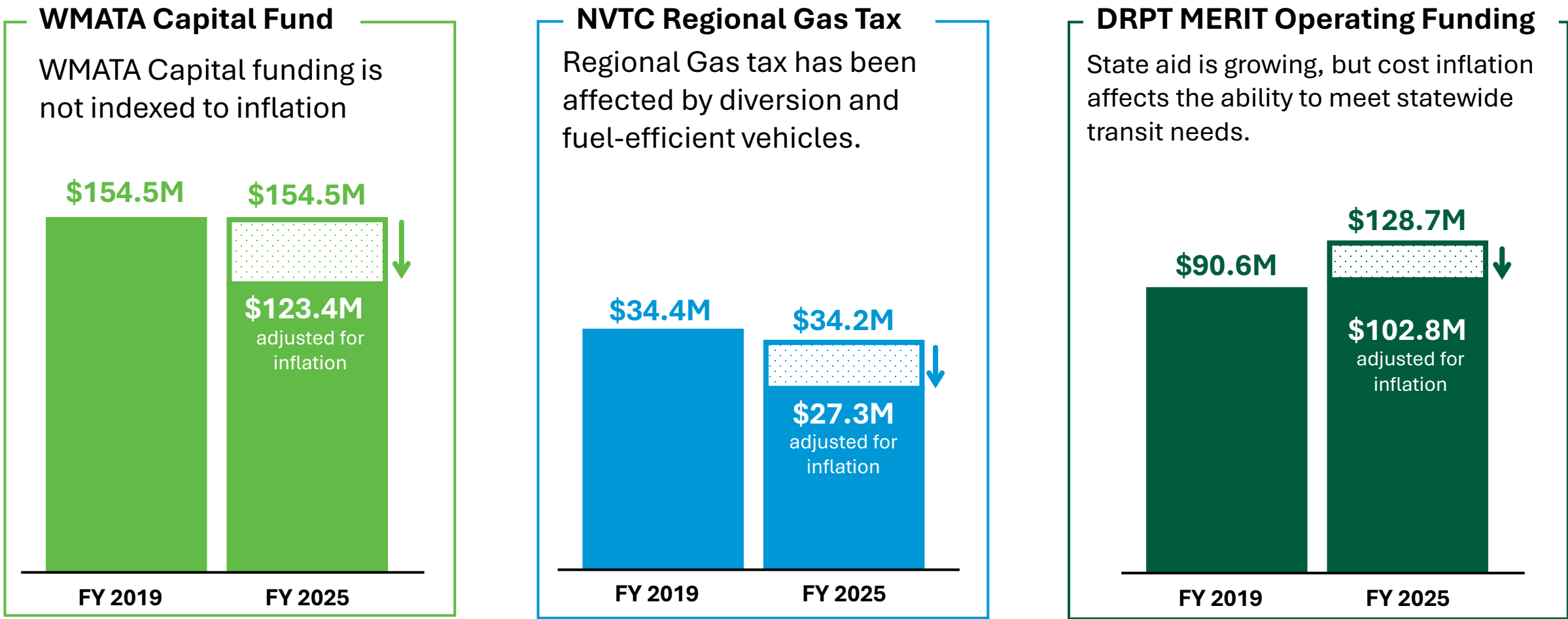
**Rail
Modernization**



**Reinvesting in
and
Modernizing
Metro**

SJ28 Findings: Current Funds Not Meeting Other Transit Needs

These trends are consistent across all transit systems and revenue sources.



SJ 28 Findings: Sustainable + Reliable Funding is Needed for All Northern Virginia's Transit Systems

WMATA Operating

Find permanent solution to FY 2025 and FY 2026 General Fund infusion in WMATA's operating budget (MD/DC already fixed)

NVTC Local Bus

Address inflationary pressures to state aid + provide reliable and growing fund for current service

WMATA Capital

Solve for Virginia's share of DMVMoves-identified capital funding in a bondable, indexed solution

VRE

Address loss of federal COVID-aid , add weekend service and ready VRE for post-Long Bridge service

PRTC/OmniRide

Address inflationary pressures to state aid + reduce reliance on discretionary funds

SJ28 Findings: WMATA Savings + Efficiencies

93%

growth in ridership
since 2022, leading to
increased revenue



\$532M

in capital and operating
savings between FY 2023 and
FY 2025

82%

reduction in fare evasion



New funding formulas for DC, MD and VA that
better align jurisdictional subsidies with service received.

SJ 28 Findings: Revenue Sources

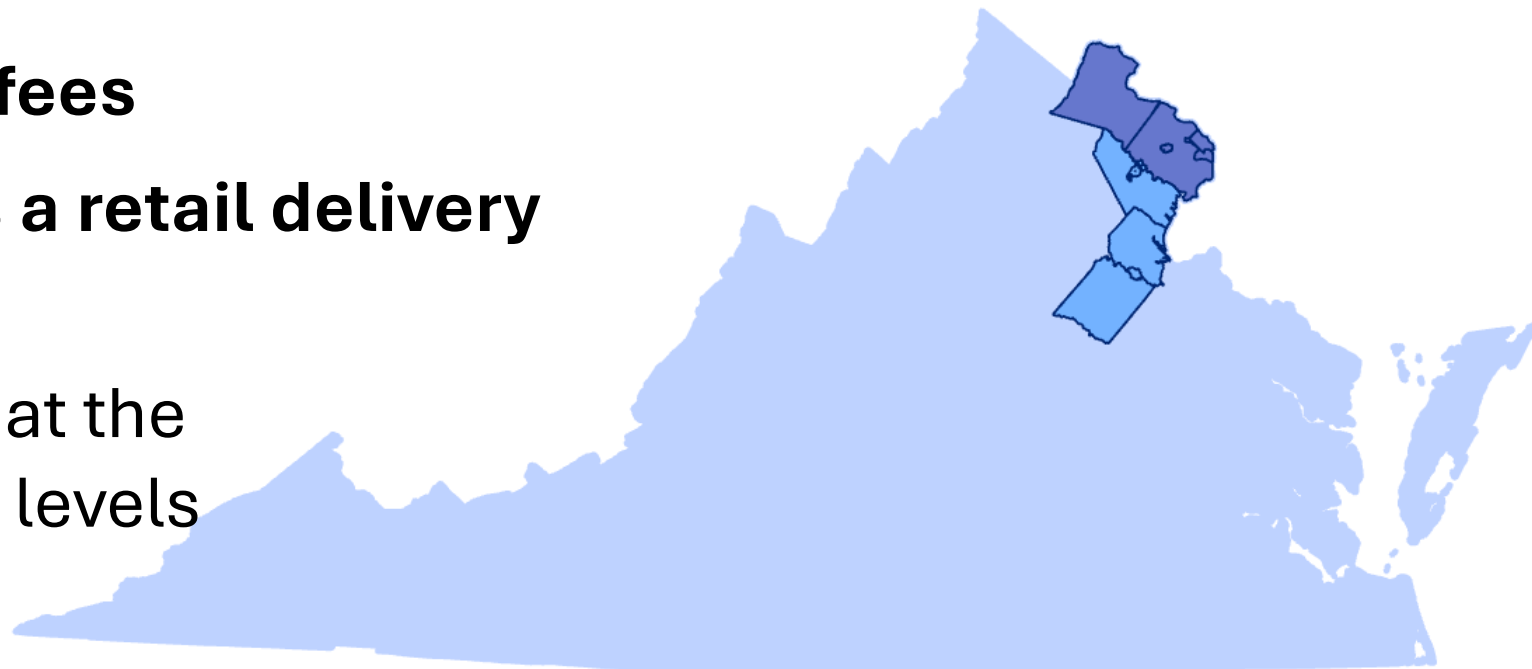
SJ 28 examined more than 15 revenue sources, many of which already support transit and transportation including the:

- **retail sales and use tax**
- **vehicle-based taxes and fees**
- **emerging trends, such as a retail delivery fee**

Each source was estimated at the **NVTC**, **PRTC** and **statewide** levels

Transit Agencies

- WMATA
- Commuter Rail (VRE)
- 6 local bus agencies



SJ 28 Findings: Immediate and Long-Term Needs

WMATA Operating
\$153M

beginning in FY 2027

In FY 2025, the General Assembly + NVTC localities provided a **two-year fix** for WMATA operating gap. MD and DC fix was permanent.

NVTC Local Bus
~\$35M

beginning in FY 2028

VRE
~\$35M

beginning in FY 2028

After Long Bridge completion, an additional \$40M is needed

WMATA Capital
~\$135M - \$150M

beginning in FY 2028

PRTC/OmniRide
~\$22M

beginning in FY 2028

All growing annually with inflation

SJ 28 Findings: Potential State + Regional Approach

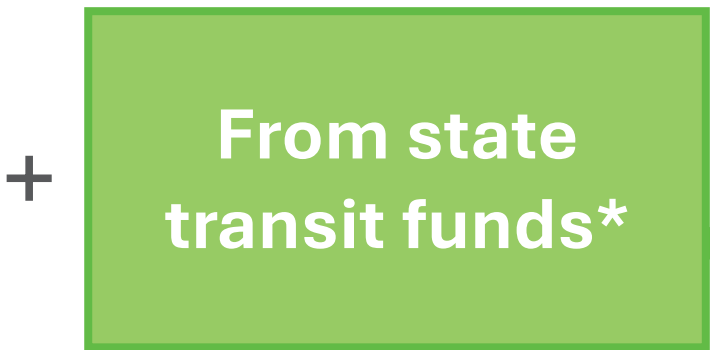
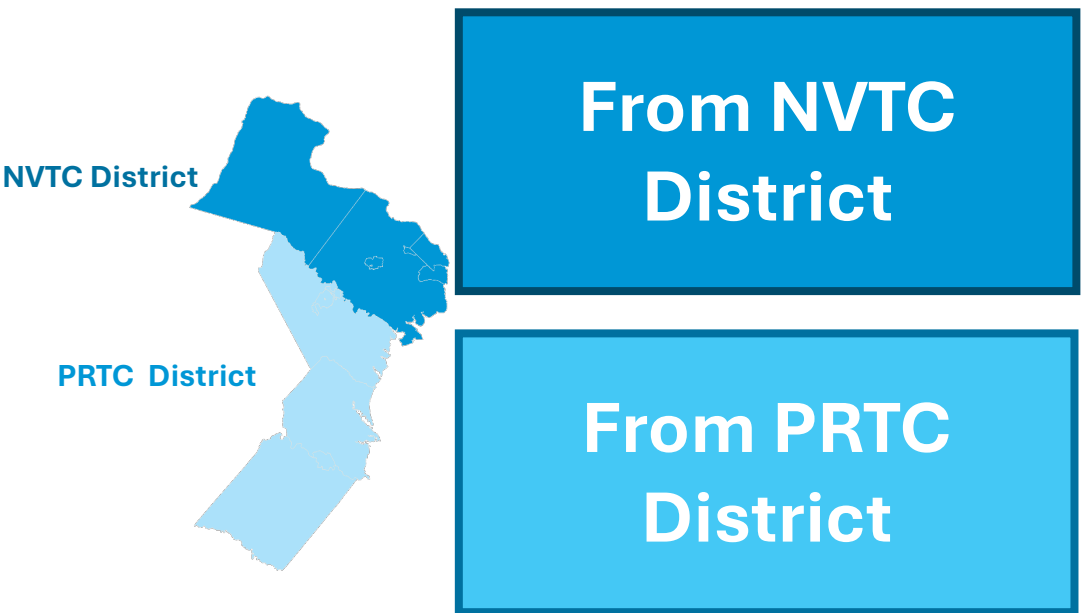
A funding concept for WMATA, VRE, NVTC Local Bus and PRTC/OmniRide transit agencies

~\$400M

in new revenue starting in FY 2028

Generated at the Regional Level

Generated at the State Level



* Statewide solution would benefit all transit systems in Virginia

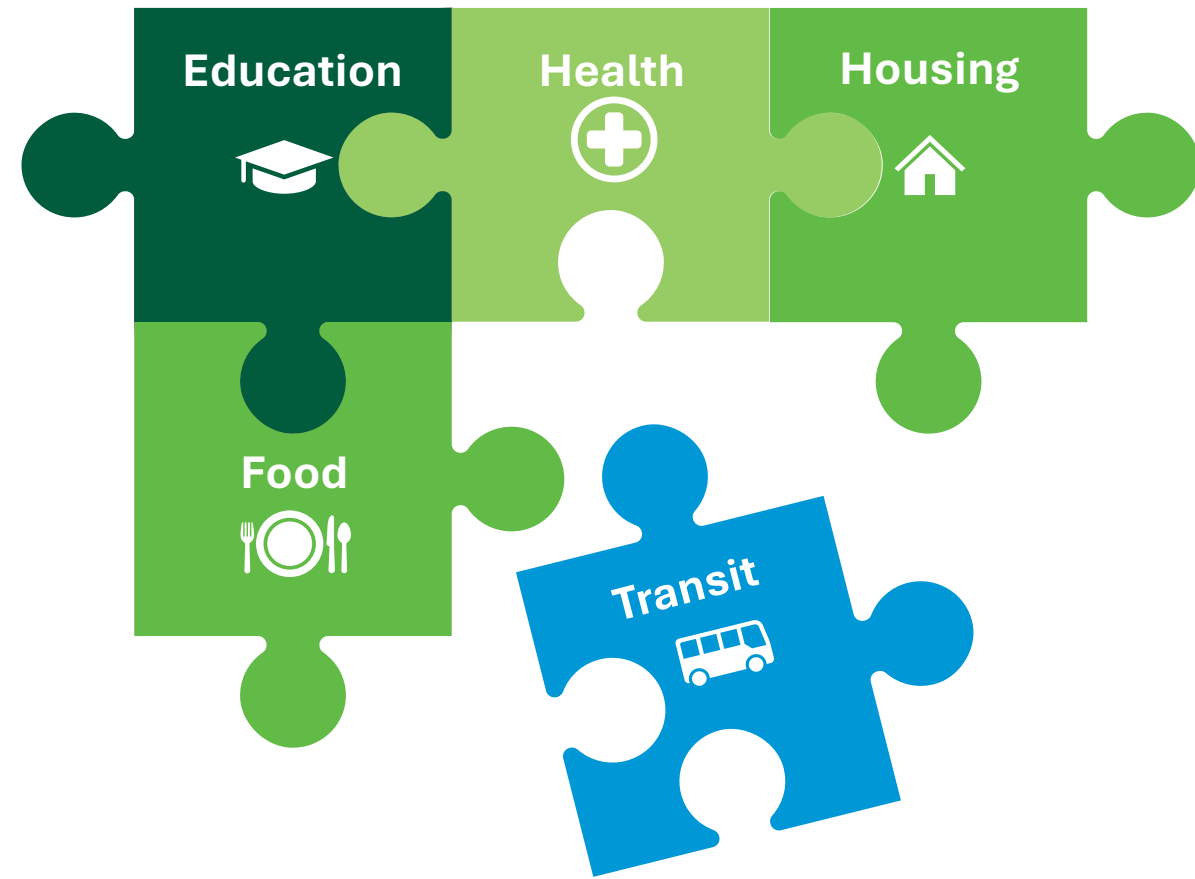
SJ28 Next Steps: Key Meetings + Recommendations

- ✓ **Tomorrow (Tues, October 21) – Subcommittee Meeting**
 - Finalized agency needs, hear latest from WMATA on cost containment
- ✓ **Weds, November 5 – Subcommittee Meeting**
 - SJ 28 to present final recommendations
- ✓ Identify opportunities to address other statewide needs
- ✓ SJ 28 recommendations seek to inform General Assembly 2026 legislation



Transit Funding Needs to be Part of Funding Solutions

WMATA, VRE, NVTC Local Bus systems and OmniRide need reliable and growing funding.



- ✓ Northern Virginia's transit network fuels **economic growth**.
- ✓ **Transit is STRONG** in Northern Virginia – we need to sustain this momentum.
- ✓ Public transit is a **people industry** – bus drivers, mechanics, customer service, and back-office staff are necessary for a reliable system.
- ✓ The funding **solution can be shared** between the State and the Region.
- ✓ **Raising state aid** will also support the additional 30+ transit systems across the Commonwealth.

Thank you!



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