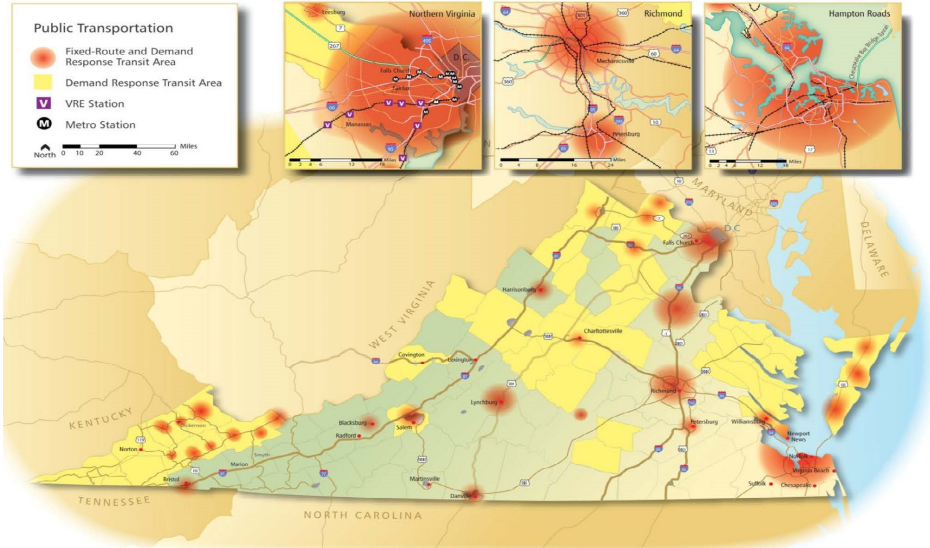


What Transit Means to Virginia

Facts & Figures

- Every \$1 in government spending on transit returns \$4 in economic benefit to the local community. (*APTA ROI calculus*)
- Transit trips in Virginia's rural communities exceed 1.6 million annually.
- About 30 percent of Virginians between the ages of 18 and 24 who are eligible for a driver's license choose not to have one.
- Virginia's population is slated to grow from 8 million to more than 10 million by 2030.



Transit in the Commonwealth

If transit was discontinued...

Richmond would experience an annual increase of 571,000 hours delay (one hour delay annually per consumer) with a congestion cost of \$11 million

Virginia Beach would see an annual increase of 1.3 million hours delay (two hours delay annually per consumer) with a congestion cost of \$25 million

Northern Virginia would experience an annual increase of 35.5 million hours of delay (18 hours annually per consumer) for a total congestion cost of \$726 million

Demographic shifts and changes in lifestyles have altered Virginians' transportation needs. Transportation choices are essential if the Commonwealth is to remain economically competitive and provide its residents with access to healthcare, retail, recreation, employment and education.

Not Your Grandmother's Transit

Long thought of as only bus travel, transit also includes commuter and light rail, ferry, streetcar, trolley and vanpool service. Fare boxes and coin tokens are becoming obsolete, replaced by electronic fare card payment systems. On the horizon is a system that will let passengers use a smartphone or government ID to pay their fare. Wi-Fi and comfortable, ergonomic seats increase passenger comfort and buses that can be lowered to curb height make access easier. Even bus stops are getting a facelift. Well-lit stops often offer shelter from the elements and provide real-time arrival information.

All Aboard

Such enhancements are attracting riders from every socioeconomic background and profession. Transit in the Commonwealth truly is a mass market service. For some – particularly the elderly and disabled – transit is a necessity; for others – such as Millennials – it is a lifestyle choice.

Take a Ride

Transit is found in communities, both large and small, throughout Virginia. Rural transit services are a lifeline, providing roughly 1.6 million rides each year to people who live in small towns and remote locations. In more populated areas it also serves commuters, tourists and students.

- **Williamsburg** – The downtown trolley, just \$2 for an all-day pass, connects residents and visitors to 15 points of interest. Of the 10 bus routes in the city, one serves students and faculty at the College of William & Mary.
- **Norfolk** – The Tide light rail has transported more than 5.2 million passengers. Its 11 stations are strategically located near a major medical complex, baseball park and university.
- **Virginia Beach** – A 3.2-mile extension of the Tide light rail into the Virginia Beach Town Center is being studied with plans calling for a late 2019 or early 2020 opening.
- **Prince William, Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties** – Two new stations, part of a plan to double ridership by 2040, will expand the reach of Virginia Railway Express (VRE), a commuter rail service that terminates at Union Station in Washington, D.C. A study will explore the possibility of extending the Manassas Line to Gainesville and Haymarket in Prince William County. VRE’s new mobile app lets riders purchase and present tickets via smartphone.
- **Richmond** – Known as the Pulse, Richmond’s planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line will run 7.6 miles along Broad Street from Willow Lawn to Rocketts Landing. When it opens in 2017, the Pulse will fuel economic activity in the corridor, which has 33,000 residents and 77,000 jobs within a half-mile of the 14 proposed BRT stations.
- **Charlottesville** – The city’s free trolley connects downtown and the University of Virginia, with stops at the Greyhound and Amtrak stations and UVA Hospital. Its nine other bus routes provide access to shopping, entertainment, education and recreation facilities.
- **Blacksburg** – Among its dozen routes is the Two Town Trolley, which connects Blacksburg and Christiansburg. Several routes serve Virginia Tech and there are special game day buses for football and basketball games on campus.
- **Northern Virginia** – More than half of all jobs here are located within a quarter-mile of a bus stop or rail station. Each day, commuters take more than a half million trips via transit. Eight transit systems serve the region, providing bus, BRT and commuter rail service.

Despite the key role that transit plays – connecting people to jobs, school and health care – a potentially disastrous fiscal cliff looms large. In 2018, 62 percent of the annual capital funding for equipment and stations will expire, making it difficult for transit providers to maintain a state of good repair for their current vehicles and to provide additional services down the road. Localities, which will have to make up the deficit, may choose to hike fares or cut service.

Projected Transit Capital Revenues: Impact of HB1887 (2015)

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has relied on bond revenues to supplement its transit capital program for the past five years. In FY2018, DRPTs allocated bond fund revenue begins to drop, declining by 62%, and disappears completely in FY 2019. Without new funding to replace this lost revenue, DRPT’s capital funding program will be decimated.

