

Commonwealth Transportation Board Rail and Transit Subcommittee
CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting
VDOT Central Office – HR Training Room
1221 East Broad Street

March 29, 2023
8:30 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Approval of December 06, 2022 Meeting Minutes
2. Public Comment
3. Director's Report - Jennifer DeBruhl
4. Rail Industrial Access Program Overview - Mike Todd
5. FY 24 Rail Update - Emily Stock
6. FY 24 Transit Update - Zach Trogdon



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Jennifer B. DeBruhl
Director

DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
600 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 2102
RICHMOND, VA 23219-2416

(804) 786-4440
FAX (804) 225-3752
Virginia Relay Center
800-828-1120 (TDD)

DRAFT MINUTES CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting

VDOT Central Office – HR Training Room
1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
Tuesday, December 6, 2022, 9:00 am

The CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee held a meeting on December 6, 2022. The location was VDOT HR Training Room, located at 1221 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

CTB MEMBERS PRESENT

Jennifer DeBruhl (Chair), H. Randolph Laird, E. Scott Kasprovicz, Frederick Stant, III, Thomas Fowlkes, Mark Merrill, Dr. Raymond Smoot, and Wayne Coleman

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Sheila Beard (VDRPT), Emily Stock (VDRPT), Michael McLaughlin (VPRA), Karen Harrington (HDR), Bridget Wagner (HDR), Margaret Rockwell (McGuireWoods Consulting), Grant Sparks (VDRPT), Mike Todd (VDRPT), Katy Miller (VDRPT), Andrew Wright (VDRPT), Mike Todd (VDRPT), and Robert Whitfield.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair DeBruhl called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE June 21, 2022 MINUTES

On a motion by Thomas Fowlkes and seconded by Mark Merrill, the June 21, 2022, CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee meeting minutes were approved.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Presented by Chair Jennifer DeBruhl

Chair DeBruhl provided everyone with a brief overview of what to expect in the board meeting with updates on the following:

- FY 24 freight rail grant application cycle opened on December 1 for Rail Preservation Program and the Freight Fund
- FY 24 Transit and TDM application period opened from December 1, 2022 through February 1, 2023
- WMATA Silverline completion and celebration on November 15
- Hampton Roads Transit held a ribbon cutting on December 2 to mark the opening of the Base Express
- Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study
- SMART SCALE
- Petersburg Area Transit (PAT)

Another item mentioned to the committee, Virginia Breeze Ridership had the highest ridership month in the nearly five-year history of the Breeze with a total ridership of 6,705. The three routes had their highest ridership ever: Piedmont Express, Capitol Connector, and Highlands Rhythm. It is anticipated that November 2022 will have an even higher increase.

Virginia Statewide Rail Plan Update

Presented by Emily Stock, Chief of Rail, DRPT

Mrs. Stock provided an overview of DRPT's statewide rail plan which is currently in its final stages. The 2022 Virginia Statewide Rail Plan (SRP) is the commonwealth's comprehensive rail plan for short- and long-range projects. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requires each state to update its SRP every four years. This updated document is necessary to apply for and receive federal rail funding for passenger and freight projects. The SRP includes 6 and 20-year time horizons. The 2022 Virginia SRP aligns with VTrans goals and objectives and has been completed in close coordination with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA), the Virginia Railway Express (VRE), the FRA, and other rail stakeholders. Progress can be measured and tracked between the updated and previous rail plans and comparisons can be made to work being done in other states across the country. The 2022 Statewide Rail Plan is hosted on an online StoryMap to make the data more accessible and interactive to the public.

Key components of the 2022 SRP include: The Role of Rail on Statewide Transportation, Virginia's Existing Rail System, Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments, Freight Rail Improvements and Investments, Virginia's Rail Service and Investment Plan, and Public Involvement and Coordination. A policy framework for freight rail and passenger station development is included in the updated plan. DRPT's strategies for improving and maintaining rail excellence in Virginia include funding access and capacity improvement projects, maintaining and fostering partnerships, ensuring effective program delivery, and planning based on best practice research and recommendations. Public benefit for all freight and passenger rail projects and initiatives can be found within the Virginia Statewide Rail Plan and status updates for ongoing work.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Robert Whitfield of Fairfax provided public comment to the Subcommittee.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair DeBruhl adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m. All presentations to the Board and meeting video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9uvU8vO09umEWIdES2lvow>

Respectfully Submitted: Sheila Beard, Executive Assistant



Director's Report

March 2023



Administrative Highlights

- **Maximum Employment Level: 72**

- Vacancy Rate: 14 percent, including Chief Financial Officer
- New Hire: Carrie Bolton, Office Assistant

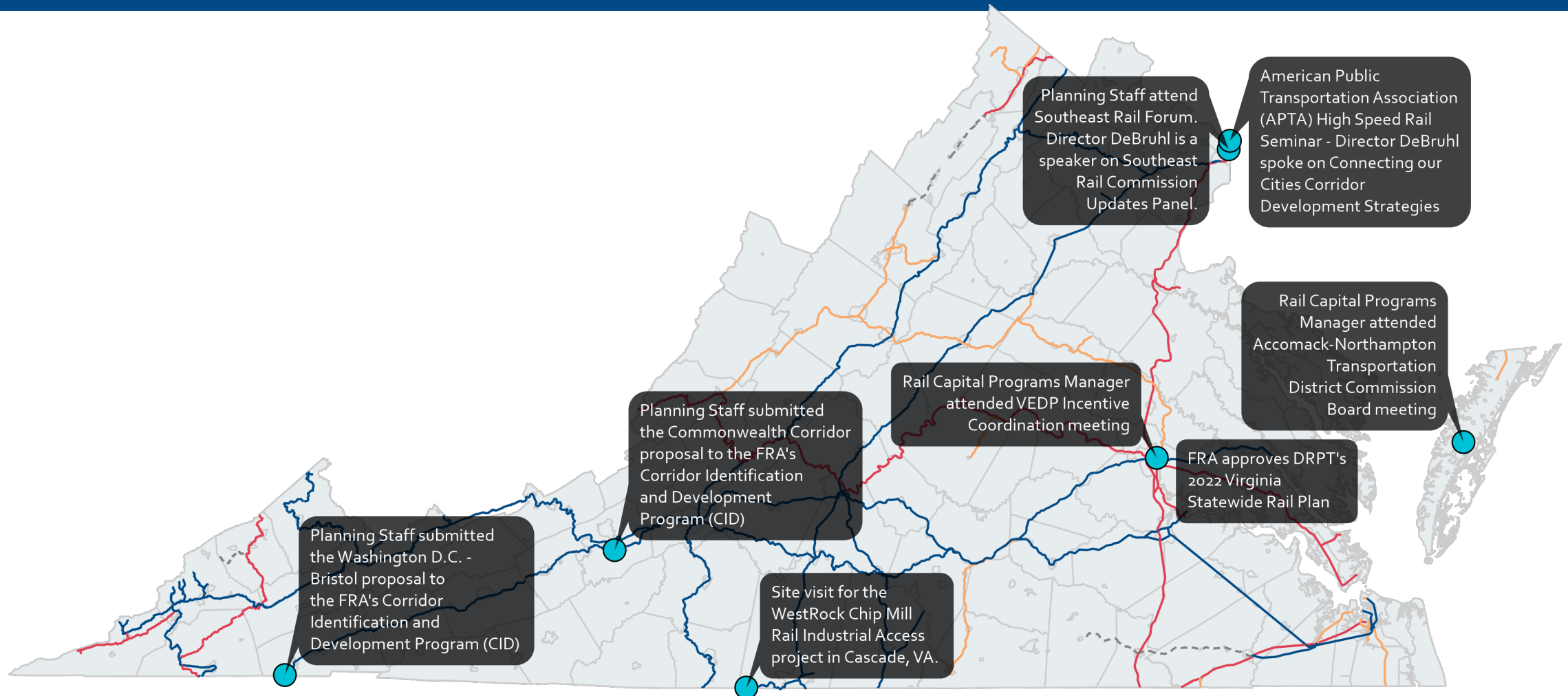
- **Agency Budget**

- DRPT has reduced its IT costs by nearly \$147,000 annually. These savings are attributed to getting rid of extra laptops and cellphones while simultaneously upgrading circuits at the Northern Virginia office to improve performance.

- **Website Modernization**

- DRPT staff met with VITA to discuss the Governor's website modernization program. DRPT has minimal follow up as the agency website already meets the Governor's accessibility standards.

Rail Highlights



Rail Safety Review

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is responsible for enforcing state and federal statutes related to railroads in conjunction with the **Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC)**

FRA

Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 103) requires FRA to **promulgate and enforce rail safety regulations.**

Office of Railroad Safety has over 400 safety inspectors responsible for compliance and enforcement of:

- Grade Crossings
- Hazardous Materials
- Motive Power and Equipment
- Operating Practices
- Signal and Train Control
- Track

Other

- **National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)** has the right to investigate. When NTSB shows up, then FRA/SCC will assist as needed.
- **DRPT** has **no** rail regulatory authority.

Virginia SCC

Railroad Regulation section works in concert with FRA to ensure safe operations of railroads per Title 56, Chapter 13, of the Code of Virginia.

Inspection staff, certified by FRA under a state participation agreement, supplements the FRA's inspectors to cover railroad safety aspects listed to the left: grade crossings, hazardous materials, etc.

Conducts inspections per FRA regulations; FRA has enforcement authority.

Uses a data-driven system to determine locations for upcoming inspections and coordinates inspections with the FRA.



Responds to and investigates rail accidents within the state, such as derailments, fatalities, crossing accidents, blocked crossings, and chemical/hazmat spills.

Public Transportation Highlights

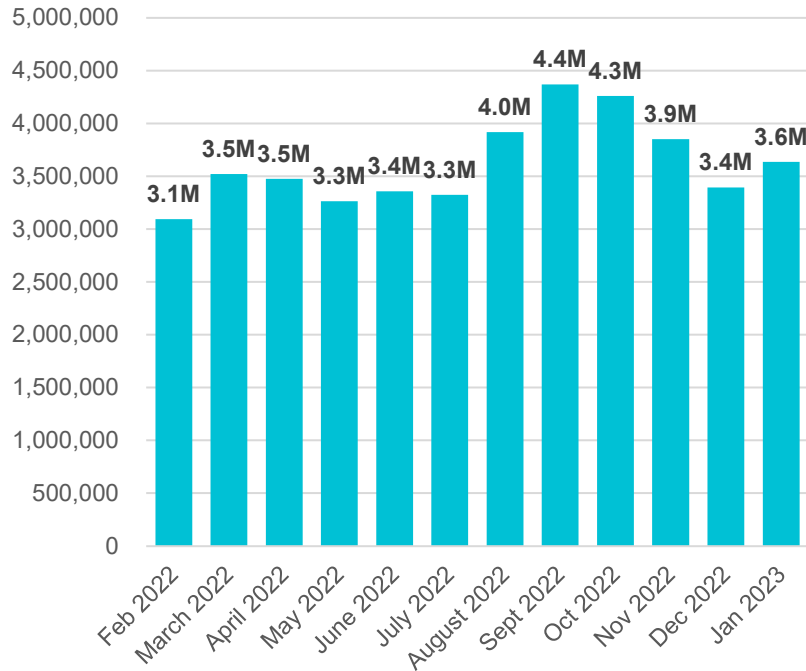
- The construction of a refurbished transfer center for **Valley Metro (Roanoke)** is four-five months ahead of schedule and a ribbon cutting is being scheduled for a date sometime in mid-May 2023.
- **Omniride** was recently awarded the Prince William Chamber of Commerce's 2023 Excellence in Business Award. The award recognized Omniride's response to the significant challenges presented by telework and transit operator shortages.
- The **VRE** Operations Board awarded a contract on March 17 for the Manassas Park Parking Garage to Manhattan Construction for \$27,495,923.
- In April, DRPT will launch the **Discover Transit** campaign that will be advertising statewide to reinforce the benefits of transit to communities. Targeted campaigns will also be directed to communities that suffered the largest transit usage declines due to the pandemic.

Federal Funding Applications Pending (IIJA)

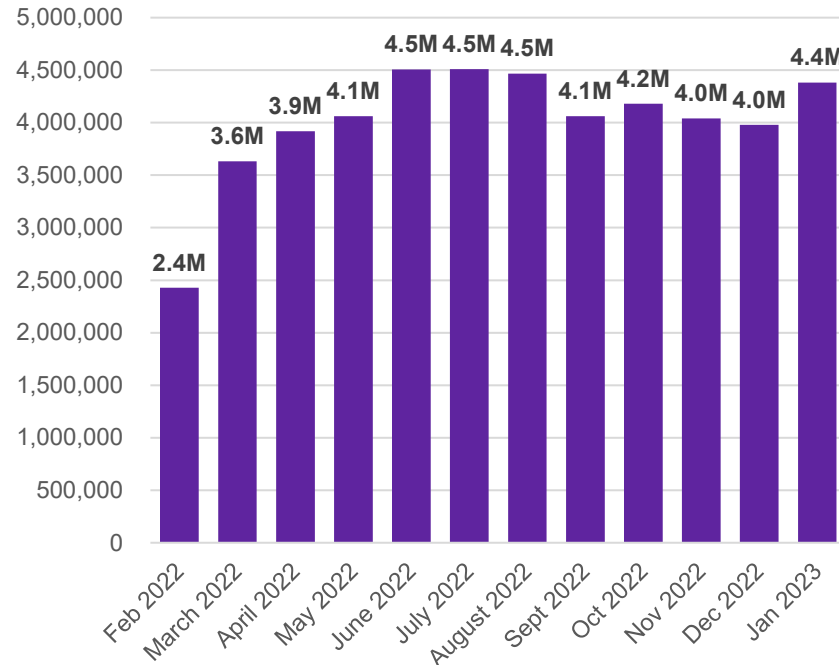
- **Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program**
 - Long Bridge & I-95 Phase 2 Projects-\$350M (VPRA)
- **Corridor Identification and Development Program**
 - Commonwealth Corridor
 - DC to Bristol Corridor
 - DC to Charlotte Corridor (VPRA/NCDOT)
- **Rail Crossing Elimination Program**
 - Multiple, specific projects TBD
- **Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)**
 - Bedford Passenger Stop
- **Transit Federal Discretionary Programs**
 - Comprehensive Operational Analysis of Petersburg paratransit services and accessibility
 - 39 replacement buses for rural transit agencies
- **Letters of support/technical assistance for the following applications**
 - PRTC/Omniride: electric vehicle & charging infrastructure
 - DASH: electric buses & charging infrastructure
 - WinTran (Winchester): maintenance facility replacement
 - GRTC: bus shelters and CNG buses
 - HRT: new southside operations facility

Statewide Transit Ridership

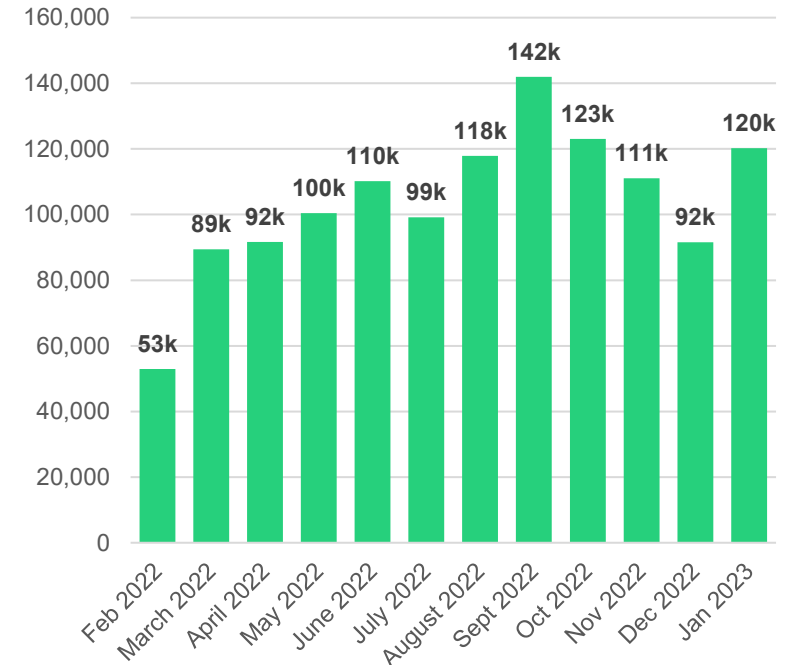
Statewide Transit Ridership – February 2022 to January 2023



Virginia Agencies



WMATA



VRE

Agencies	Feb 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	August 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Total
Virginia Agencies	3,095,840	3,520,985	3,475,905	3,264,947	3,357,208	3,325,328	3,918,682	4,370,401	4,261,450	3,850,933	3,393,853	3,635,189	43,470,721
VRE	52,916	89,455	91,685	100,424	110,208	99,120	117,880	141,963	122,984	111,028	91,597	120,228	1,249,488
WMATA	2,428,198	3,631,074	3,918,027	4,062,153	4,505,702	4,509,235	4,466,511	4,061,584	4,178,637	4,040,866	3,979,130	4,380,844	48,161,961
All Agencies + VRE + WMATA	5,576,954	7,241,514	7,485,617	7,427,524	7,973,118	7,933,683	8,503,073	8,573,948	8,563,071	8,002,827	7,464,580	8,136,261	92,882,170

January Statewide Ridership Comparison: Year-to-Year

Transit ridership for Virginia agencies in January 2023 was 40% higher than January 2022.

- Bus ridership was 42% higher

January 2023 ridership for Virginia agencies was 79% of pre-pandemic January 2020 levels.

- Bus ridership was 76% of 2020 levels

VRE ridership in January 2023 was 221% higher than January 2022 and 32% of pre-pandemic January 2020 levels.

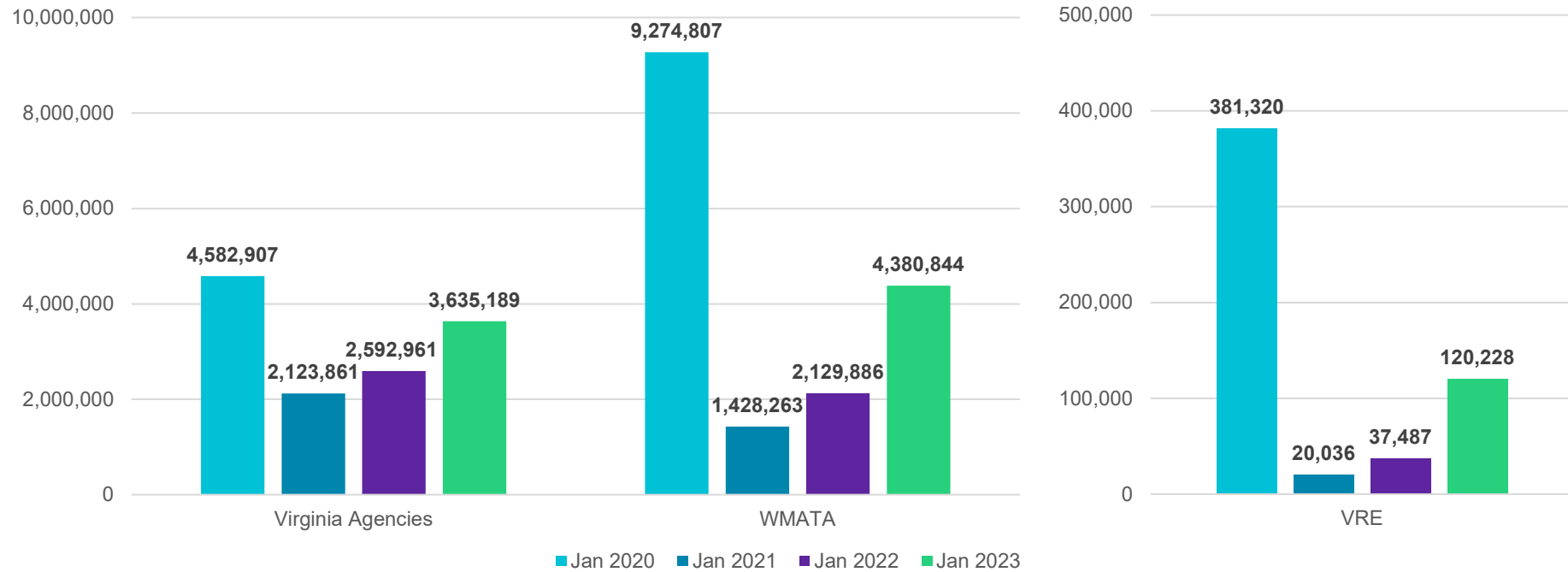
WMATA ridership in January 2023 was 106% higher than in January 2022.

- Bus ridership was 68% higher
- Heavy rail (Metro) was 119% higher

January 2023 WMATA ridership was 47% of pre-pandemic January 2020 levels.

- Bus ridership was 71% of 2020 levels
- Heavy rail (Metro) is 43% of 2020 levels

January Ridership Comparison: Year-to-Year
2020 – 2023



Mode	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	Jan 2023 vs 2020	Jan 2023 vs 2021	Jan 2023 vs 2022
Virginia Agencies	4,582,907	2,123,861	2,592,961	3,635,189	-21%	71%	40%
VRE	381,320	20,036	37,487	120,228	-68%	500%	221%
WMATA	9,274,807	1,428,263	2,129,886	4,380,844	-53%	207%	106%
All Agencies + VRE + WMATA	14,239,034	3,572,160	4,760,334	8,136,261	-43%	128%	71%

Virginia Breeze Ridership - January

In January 2023, ridership on VA Breeze routes totaled 4,043 which was:

- 141% higher than original estimates, and
- 50% higher than January 2022

Overall on-time-performance (OTP) was 74% and the overall farebox recovery was 41%

For the month of January 2023, the VA Breeze contributed to a reduction of 136 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions.

Valley Flyer:

- Ridership – 25% higher than Jan 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 38% higher than Jan 2022

Piedmont Express:

- Ridership – 26% higher than Jan 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 26% higher than Jan 2022

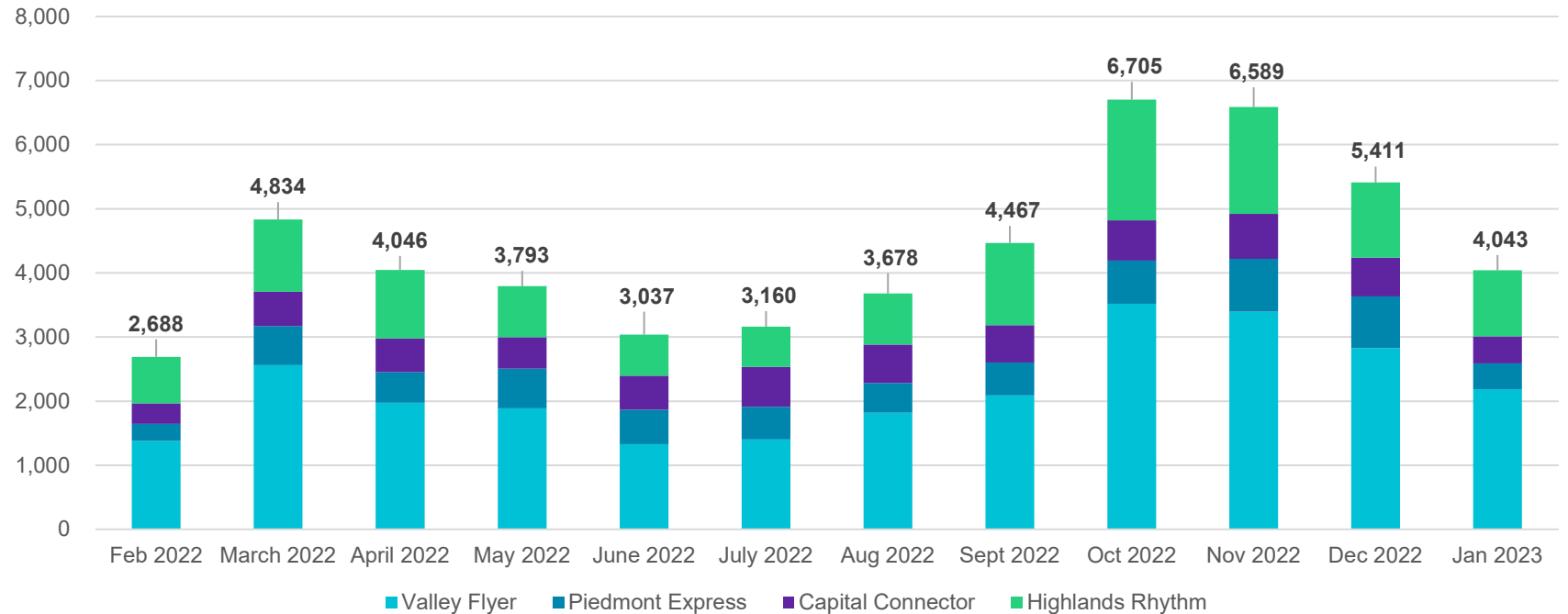
Capital Connector:

- Ridership – 53% higher than Jan 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 61% higher than Jan 2022

Highlands Rhythm:

- Ridership – 99% higher than Jan 2022
- Farebox Rev – 92% higher than Jan 2022

Virginia Breeze Ridership by Route – February 2022 to January 2023



Route	Feb 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	Aug 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Total
Valley Flyer	1,381	2,561	1,975	1,888	1,329	1,405	1,820	2,091	3,519	3,394	2,826	2,187	26,376
Piedmont Express	263	611	475	618	537	507	464	511	672	827	808	402	6,695
Capital Connector	321	536	528	490	533	621	597	581	627	701	606	421	6,562
Highlands Rhythm	723	1,126	1,068	797	638	627	797	1,284	1,887	1,667	1,171	1,033	12,818
All Routes	2,688	4,834	4,046	3,793	3,037	3,160	3,678	4,467	6,705	6,589	5,411	4,043	52,451

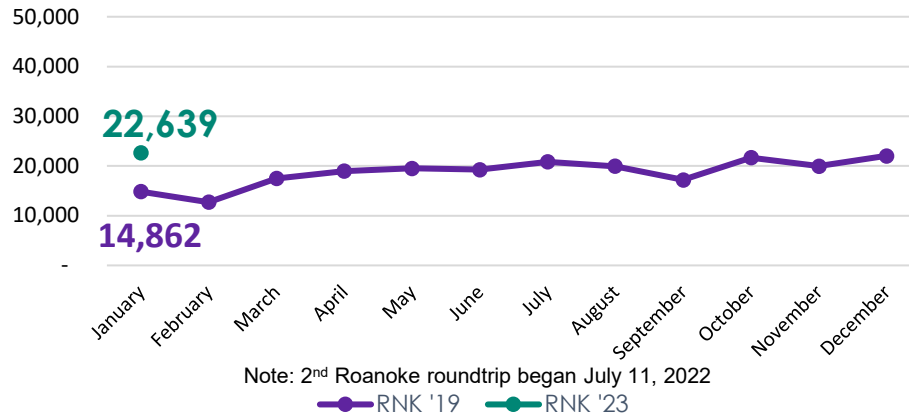
Virginia-Supported Monthly Ridership by Route

2023 vs 2019

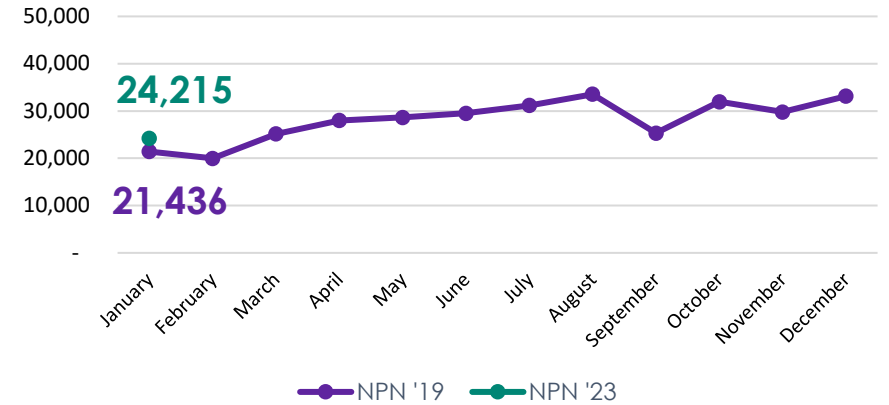
The largest pre-pandemic ridership increase was Route 50: Norfolk at 196.9% (+20,709)

Three of four routes saw an increase in ridership when compared to 2019.

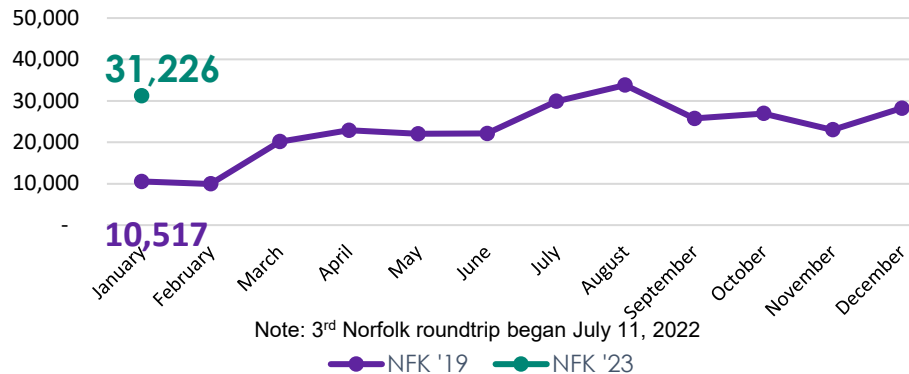
Route 46: Roanoke Ridership



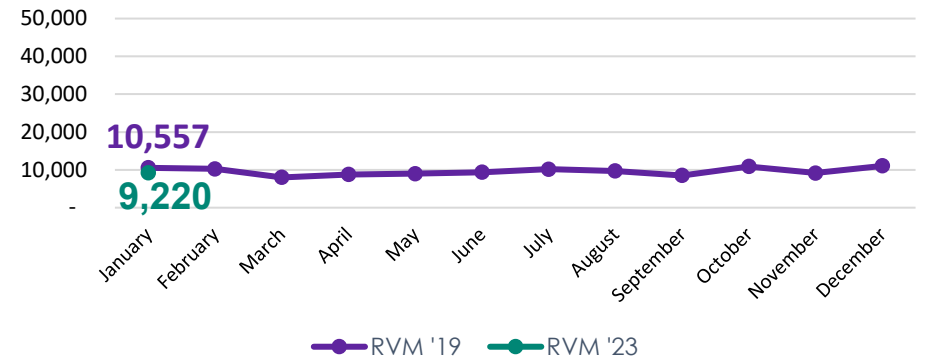
Route: 47 Newport News Ridership



Route 50: Norfolk Ridership



Route 51: Richmond Ridership





Program Overview

Rail Industrial Access

Michael Todd

CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee

March 2023





Agenda

- Schedule / Task Overview
- Program Data Analysis
- Program Purpose
- Program Policies
- Project Scoring
- Comments / Questions

Schedule / Tasks

Purpose: Review and Update Rail Industrial Access Program Guidance and Procedures

January February March April May June July August September October

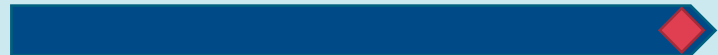
Research



Outreach



Recommendations



Adoption



◆ Subcommittee Touch Points



Program Data Analysis



Program Budget Summary

- **Budget:** \$5.5M VDOT Construction Fund
- **Project Max:** \$450K (30% Match Required)
- **2018 – 2023:**
 - **Application Average:** 4 / Year
 - **2023 Applications:** 6
 - **Total RIA Allocations:** \$8.5M

Investment Summary: 2018-2023

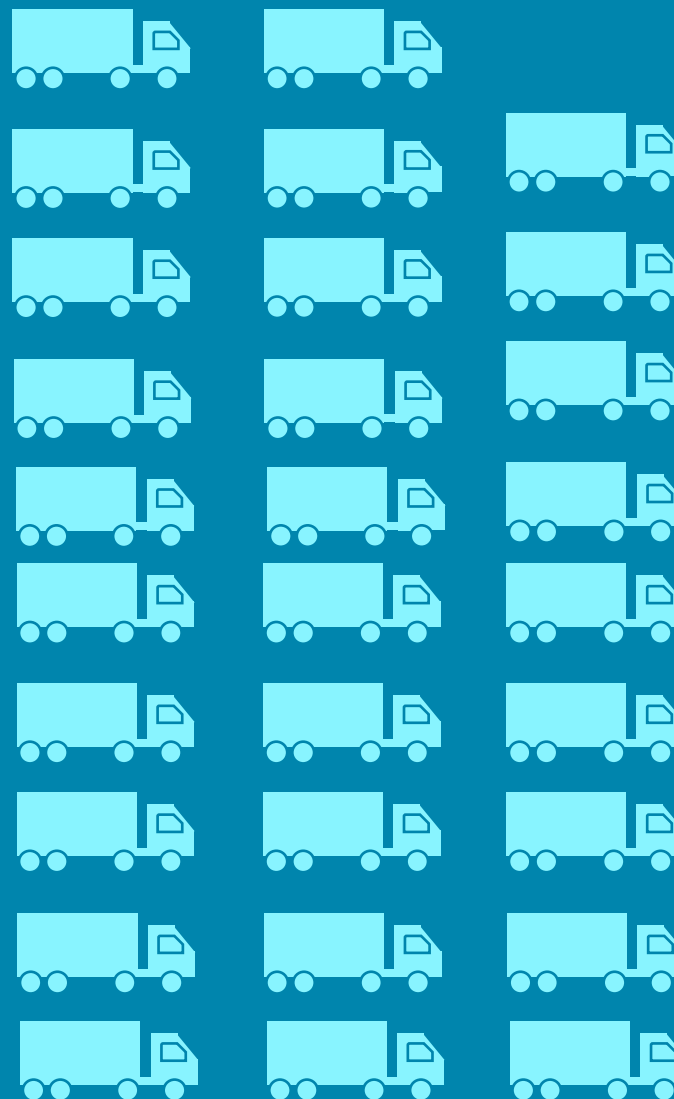
\$1.2B

99.9%
Private



Performance Commitment: 2018-2023

**Carloads:
20,403**



**Trucks:
70,000**

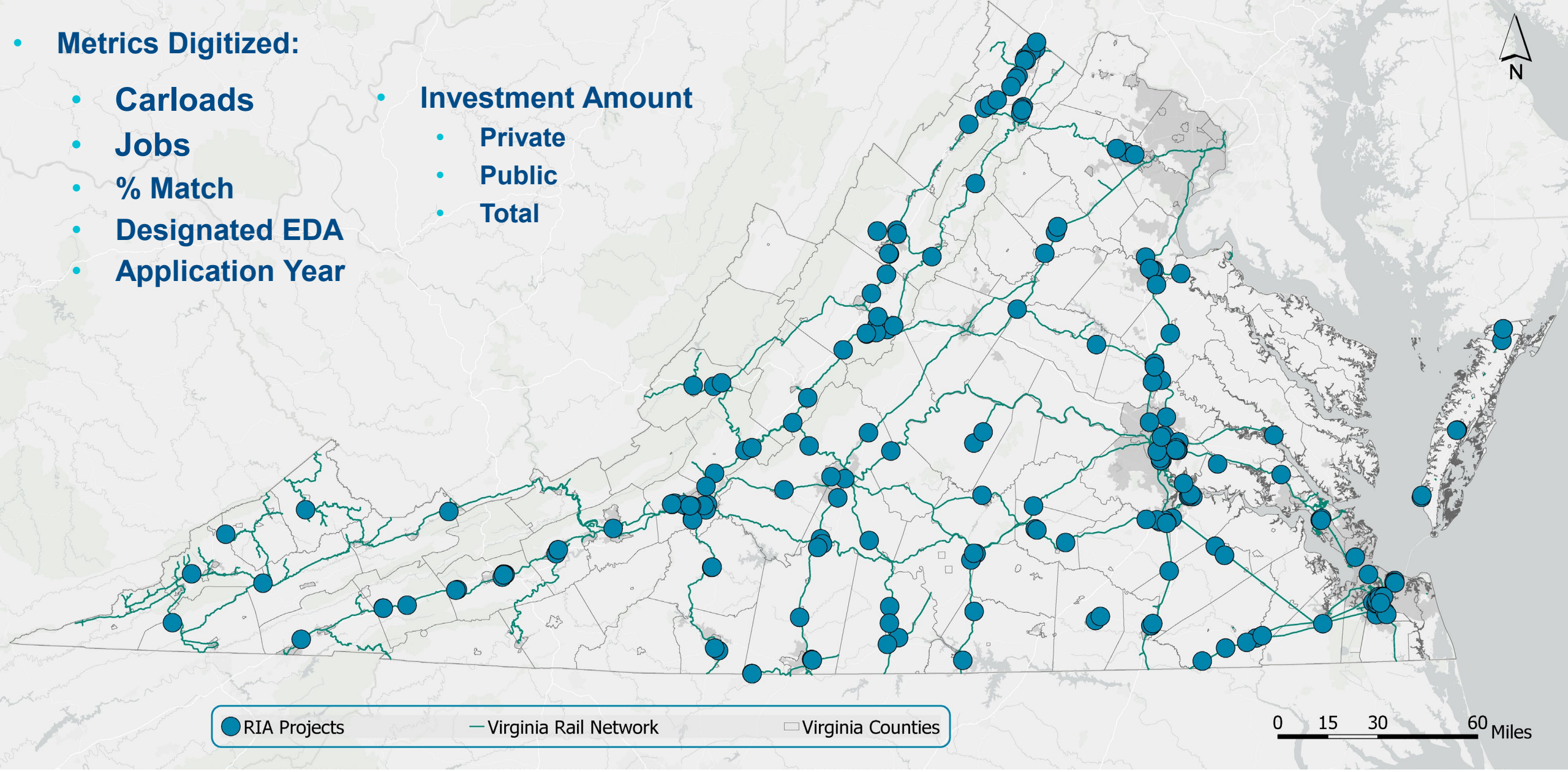
Project Digitization

- **Metrics Digitized:**

- **Carloads**
- **Jobs**
- **% Match**
- **Designated EDA**
- **Application Year**

- **Investment Amount**

- **Private**
- **Public**
- **Total**



● RIA Projects

— Virginia Rail Network

□ Virginia Counties

0 15 30 60 Miles

JLARC Report on Economic Development Incentive Grants

93%
Investment Goal

2020

98%
Investment Goal

2021

101%
Investment Goal

2022

Calculated % of capital investment estimate from project application that was achieved after project implementation

Program Purpose

VEDP Coordination



Code 33.2-1600: Purpose

§ 33.2-1600. Fund for construction of industrial access railroad tracks.

A. The General Assembly declares it to be in the public interest that access railroad tracks and facilities be constructed to certain industrial commercial sites where rail freight service is or may be needed by new or substantially expanded industry and that financial assistance be provided to access seeking to furnish rail freight

life of the project as determined by the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and shall be made available for use by all common carriers using the railway system to which they connect. The landowners or using businesses shall, prior to the commitment of funds by the Director of the Department of

prospective volume of rail traffic, capital investment, potential employment, and other economic and public benefits. The Board shall adopt procedures to encourage widespread use of the funds, shall limit allocation of funds so that no locality receives more than 50 percent of the funds in any one fiscal year unless there are not



Code 33.2-1600: Purpose

Recognizes Benefits of Multimodal Network

- Choice creates competition
- Choice creates resiliency
- Rail Benefits:
 - Safer
 - Less emissions
 - Reduces congestion
 - Reduces Costs

Program Policies

Program Policies

Code



**Lessons
Learned**



**Policy
Input**



**Program
Guidance**



Code 33.2-1600: Policies

D. Funds may be used to construct, reconstruct, or improve part or all of the necessary tracks and related facilities on public or private property currently used or being developed, existent or prospective, for single industries or industrial subdivisions under firm contract or already constructed, including those subdivisions owned or promoted by railroad companies and others. Applications for funds must be approved by the local governing body.

Code 33.2-1600: Policies

- **Ensure benefit to Virginia is realized**
 - Not Speculative
 - Resolution from Locality
 - Railroad Letter of Support



Code 33.2-1600: Policies

F. Tracks and facilities constructed with such funds shall be the property of the Commonwealth for the useful life of the project as determined by the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and shall be made available for use by all common carriers using the railway system to which they connect. The landowners or using businesses shall, prior to the commitment of funds by the Director of the Department of

Code 33.2-1600: Policies

- **Safeguard Virginia's Investment**
 - Reimbursement Based Program
 - 15 year Contingent Interest
 - Performance Monitoring
 - Clawback Funding



Application Scoring

Code 33.2-1600: Evaluation Criteria

E. In deciding whether to construct any such access track, the Board shall consider the cost thereof in relation to prospective volume of rail traffic, capital investment, potential employment, and other economic and public benefits. The Board shall adopt procedures to encourage widespread use of the funds, shall limit allocation of

Code 33.2-1600: Evaluation Criteria

CODE	SCORING CATEGORY	POINTS	NOTES
“volume of traffic”	Carloads	20	Highest Weighting
“potential employment”	Jobs	20	
“capital investment”	VA % of Total Investment	10	Ensure Greatest Leverage of Private Funds
	Private Match for Rail Construction	10	
“economic and public benefits”	Economic Development Area	10	Target High Needs Area
	Local Unemployment Rate	20	
“economic and public benefits”	Connects to Shortline	10	Support Smaller / Customer Focused VA Business
TOTAL		100	



SUMMARY

○ Purpose:

- Contribute Capacity to a Multimodal Network that Achieves Statewide Goals

○ Policy:

- Ensure Benefit to Commonwealth is Realized
- Safeguard State Funds
- Maximize Public Funding with Private Match

○ Scoring:

- Objective / Data Driven Evaluation
- Focus on Carloads, Jobs, and High Need Areas

Next Steps

Best Practice
Research



Partner State
Interviews



Draft
Recommendations





Thank You

Questions?



Rail Program Overview

FY24 Applications

Emily Stock, Chief of Rail Transportation
CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee
March 29, 2023



FY 24 Program Summary

FREIGHT

- Commonwealth Rail Fund (7%)
- Approximately \$12M Annually
- Tied to State Revenues
- Shared with Rail Planning
- Capacity Improvements

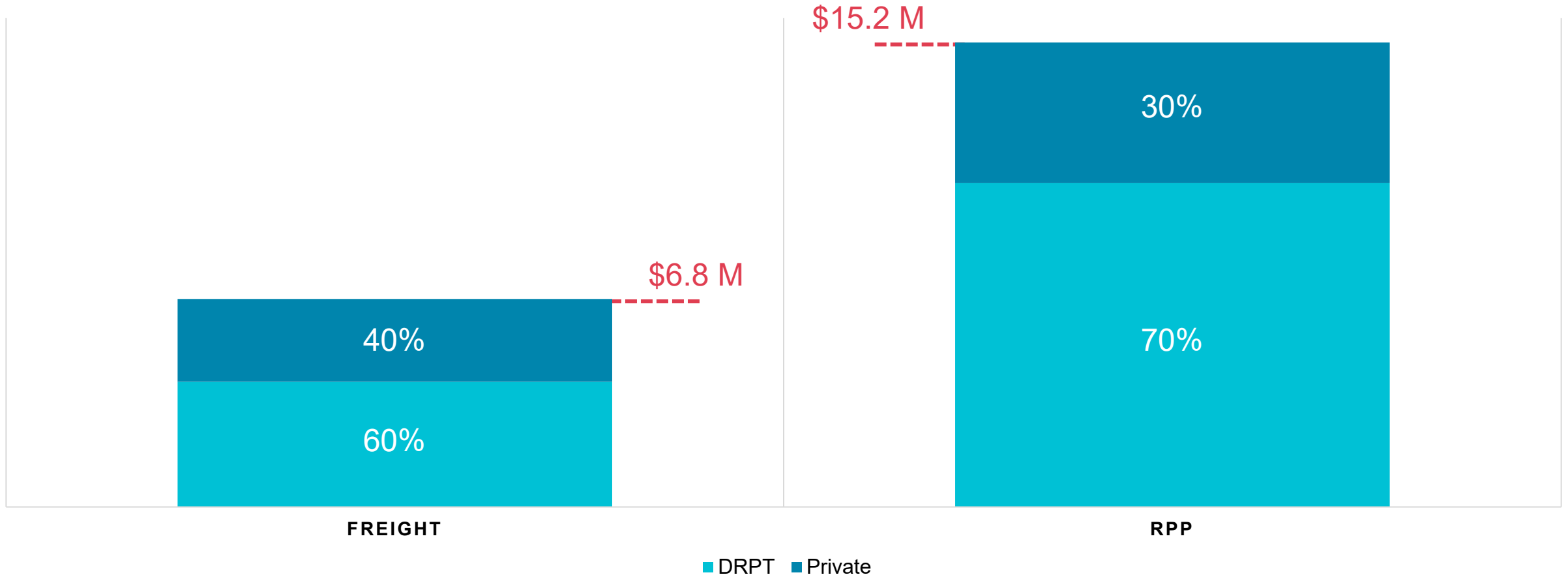
Rail Preservation

- \$4M Appropriation
- \$4M Transfer from CRF
- \$8M Maximum
- Shortline SOGR

FY 24 Application Summary

	Applications	Request	Match	Total
FREIGHT	4	\$4.1M	\$2.7M	\$6.8M
Rail Preservation	16	\$26.9M	\$11.6M	\$38.5M
Total	20	\$31.0M	\$14.3M	\$45.3M

FY 24 Application Recommendation



FY 24 Application Summary

FREIGHT

- Recommend Award to 4 Projects
 - VPA – Norfolk
 - BBRR – Hanover
 - SVRR – Harrisonburg
 - Cathcart – Lynchburg

Rail Preservation

- Limited Funding Available
 - Request: \$39M
 - Recommend Award: \$15M
- 8 of 9 Shortline Railroads Applied
- Recommend Award to Each Railroad

Thank You

Questions?





Transit Programs Funding Update

CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee

Zach Trogdon – Chief of Public Transportation

March 29, 2023



MERIT *(Making Efficient Responsible Investments in Transit)*

- The FY2024 cycle is the fifth year of the program (effective July 1, 2019)
- The program provides a process for allocating Operating, Capital, and other funding to transit partners in the Commonwealth
- The funding flows from the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund as stipulated in 33.2-1526.1

MERIT—Available Funding

- Operating: **\$132M**
- Capital: **\$109M**
- Transit Ridership Incentive Program: **\$26M**
- Special Programs: **\$6.5M**
 - Includes:
 - Technical Assistance
 - Demonstration
 - Workforce Development
 - Commuter Assistance/TDM

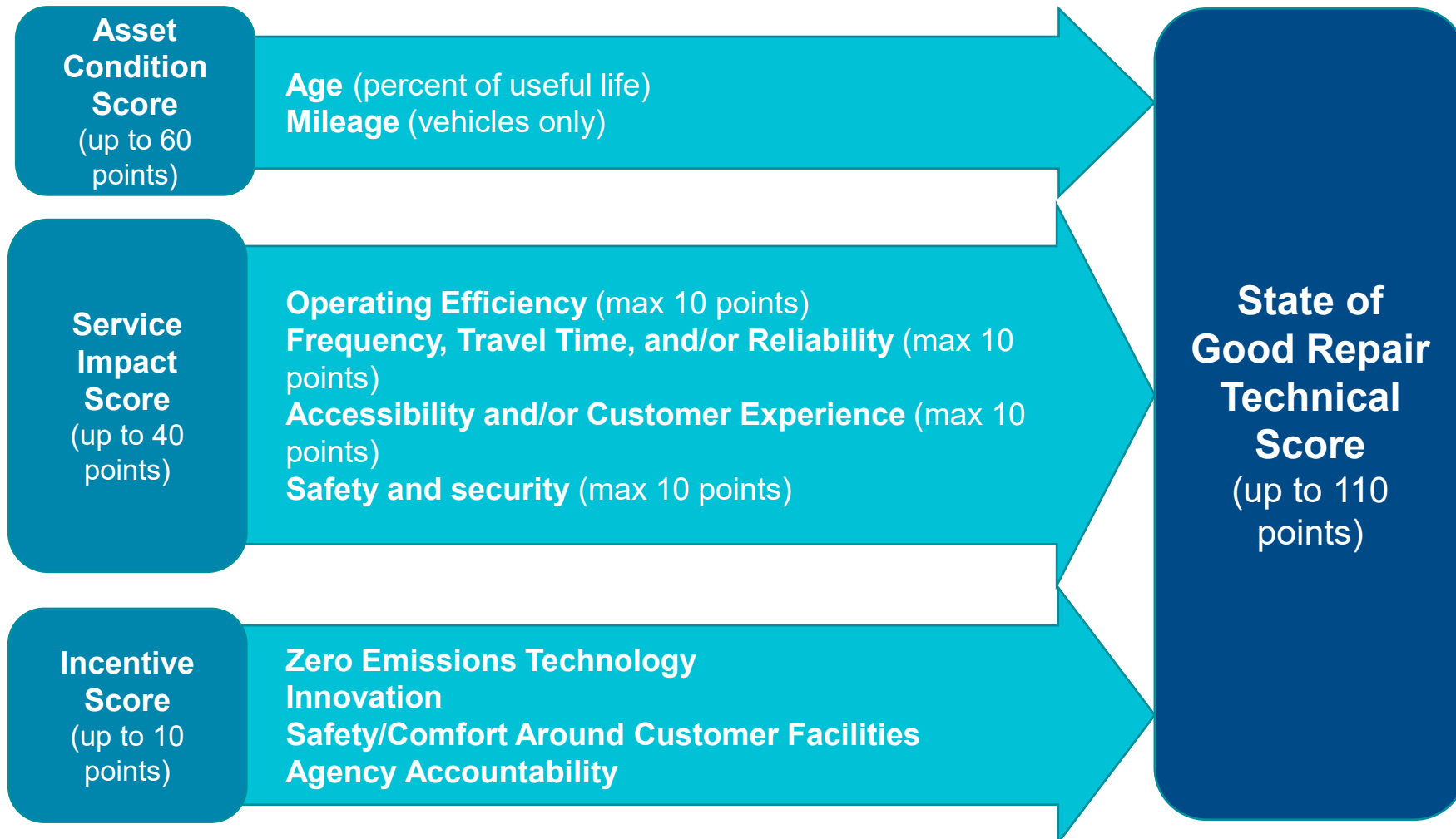
MERIT—Operating

- Operating allocations are performance-based and utilize the following metrics:
 - Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Mile
 - Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle Mile
 - Operating Cost per Passenger
- Projected FY24 operating revenue is \$132M. Recipients may receive no more than 30% of eligible operating costs.

MERIT—Capital Prioritization

- The Commonwealth Transportation Board has developed a Prioritization Process for capital projects to provide objective decision making criteria
- Project categories:
 - **State of Good Repair (SGR):**
 - Based on transit asset management principles, including federal requirements for Transit Asset Management
 - **Minor Enhancements**
 - Based on service impact factors (e.g., operating efficiency, frequency, reliability)
 - **Major Expansions**
 - Based on:
 - Congestion mitigation
 - Economic development
 - Accessibility
 - Safety
 - Environmental quality
 - Land use

Scoring Methodology State of Good Repair Projects



Scoring Methodology: Minor Enhancement Projects



Major Expansion Projects—Measures by Factor Area

Factor	Measure	Measure Weight
Congestion Mitigation	Change in peak-period transit system ridership attributed to the project	100%
Economic Development	Project consistency with regional and local economic development plans and policies, and support for local development activity	100%
Accessibility	Project improvement in accessibility to jobs and select non-work destinations	50%
	Disadvantaged population (low-income, minority, or limited English proficiency) within walking distance of project	50%
Safety	Project contribution to improving safety and security, reducing risk of fatalities or injuries	100%
Environmental Quality	Reduction in daily vehicle miles traveled resulting from project	100%
Land Use	Transit supportive land use served by the project	100%

MERIT— Capital FY24

- Capital Applications: **\$136,145,784** in total state funding
 - State of Good Repair—**306** projects for **\$66M** in state funds
 - Minor Enhancements—**125** projects for **\$37M** in state funds
 - Major Expansions—**3** projects for **\$32M** in state funds





MERIT Special Programs—FY24

- Technical Assistance Program
 - Received the greatest number of applications ever (31). Applicants are using funding to develop plans for microtransit services, plans for zero-emission technology, and TDPs/TSPs.
- Demonstration Program—12 applications
 - Funds are being sought to assist in initial implementation of transit services.
- Commuter Assistance Program/TDM—28 applications
- Workforce Development Program—12 applications

Transit Ridership Incentive Program—FY24

- The TRIP program was created under 33.2-1526.3 of the Code of Virginia. Program goals include regional connectivity, integrated fare collection, and reduced/zero fare projects.
- Applications in FY2024:
 1. Integrated Fare Payment - Fairfax County
 2. Integrated Fare Payment - Loudoun County
 3. Microtransit – Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)
 4. Commuter Service – Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission



Thank you!