



# Director's Report

January 2024



# DRPT Next Stop 2030

# Next Stop: 2030

## DRPT's Strategic Plan

- **Create a positive impact on the Commonwealth:** Provide support and solutions to positively impact the lives of Virginians, the economy, and the environment
- **Foster innovative practical solutions:** Challenge the status quo, creating solutions while sharing new ideas and innovative practices that contribute to better transportation outcomes
- **Convene with partners and stakeholders:** Bring together the right people at the right time to leverage resources, address important transportation issues, and create the best solutions collaboratively
- **Cultivate a sustainable well-managed organization:** Deliver exceptional service with an engaged workforce that effectively manages public assets and promotes transparency

# Creating a positive impact on the Commonwealth

- **Promote factors driving economic vitality and development.**
  - DRPT has kicked off a study looking at feasible options for rail-centric economic development in the Lynchburg-Bedford-Campbell area.
- **Increase throughput of people and goods.**
  - In October 2023, transit provided more than 11 million trips – for the first time since February 2020.
  - The Virginia Breeze intercity bus service had its best month ever in November with over 7,800 riders and record ridership on all four routes. This is a 19 percent increase over November 2022.
  - The MicroCAT service in the Charlottesville-Albemarle area that launched at the end of October has provided over 1,000 rides by December.
- **Increase access to reliable transportation.**
  - The Federal Railroad Administration announced two Corridor ID grants to DRPT to guide passenger rail expansion on the Commonwealth Corridor and on the Western Rail Corridor.
  - DRPT is studying an east-west Virginia Breeze bus route that will connect Hampton Roads to Richmond and west to the Shenandoah Valley. This study will be completed in the first half of CY2024.
  - DRPT has completed two studies on expanding transit service in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO area and in the Franklin City-Isle of Wight County-Southampton County, the latter resulting in a demonstration project that will begin in mid-2024.

# Foster innovative practical solutions

- **Be the ‘go-to’ organization for best practices, technical assistance, and implementation of innovative transportation solutions.**
  - DRPT completed the Virginia Rural Transit Technology Assessment and Toolkit, which is divided into a technology solution assessment and a technical guidance toolkit.
  - DRPT engineering and transit leadership met with a small group of VDOT staff and local officials to discuss contact with local building officials regarding the permitting and construction of transit shelters within VDOT right-of-way. DRPT has sent a letter to building officials regarding the process that will allow the process to be expedited.
- **Minimize complexities and facilitate pragmatic solutions.**
  - DRPT planning staff held a webinar on November 30 to update transit agencies on a new process for reporting monthly performance data. The new process has been simplified and updated to collect data in a more usable format.
- **Align program and funding criteria to support practices to revolutionize transportation.**
  - DRPT participated in a December 5 launch of OnTrack2025 convened by the North American Freight Forum to establish measures, goals, and design principles for advancing North American freight railroads' role within a balanced and sustainable multi-modal industrial supply chain.

# Convene with partners and stakeholders

- **Clarify roles and responsibilities when engaging with our partners and stakeholders.**
  - DRPT staff continues to work with partner Metropolitan Planning Organizations and transit agencies to improve the process of making amendments and adjustments to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP is updated throughout the year to ensure that the Commonwealth and its partners can access available federal funding.
- **Collaborate proactively with partners and stakeholders.**
  - On December 11, DRPT and the North Carolina Department of Transportation hosted the VA-NC High-Speed Rail Compact. The Compact was created by state legislation in Virginia and North Carolina and is comprised of legislators from both states. DRPT and NCDOT highlighted their joint efforts to grow passenger rail in the region.
  - Director DeBruhl addressed the NVTC/PRTC Legislative Forum on December 1 in Northern Virginia. She praised the agency's partners for returning ridership to 90 percent of pre-pandemic levels and pushed for a cohesive return to the office policy in Northern Virginia to aid WMATA and VRE ridership.
- **Engage with partners and stakeholders at the right time to maximize DRPT's influence.**
  - On December 15, WMATA provided an update on their strategic plan, *Your Metro, The Way Forward*. Items of note include Zero-Emission Bus Transition, Rail Automation, and Technology-Enabled Efficiencies.

# Cultivate a sustainable well-managed organization

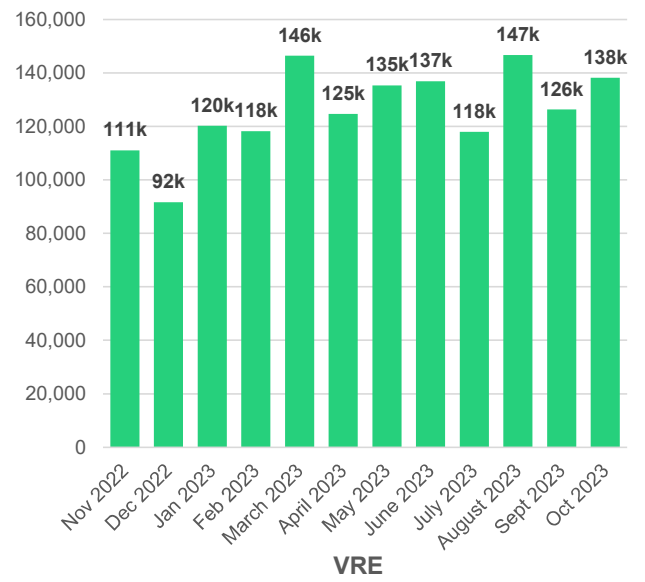
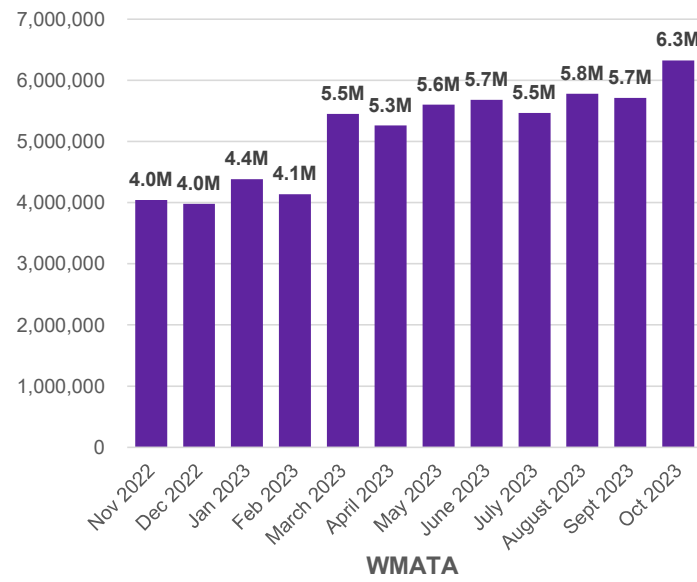
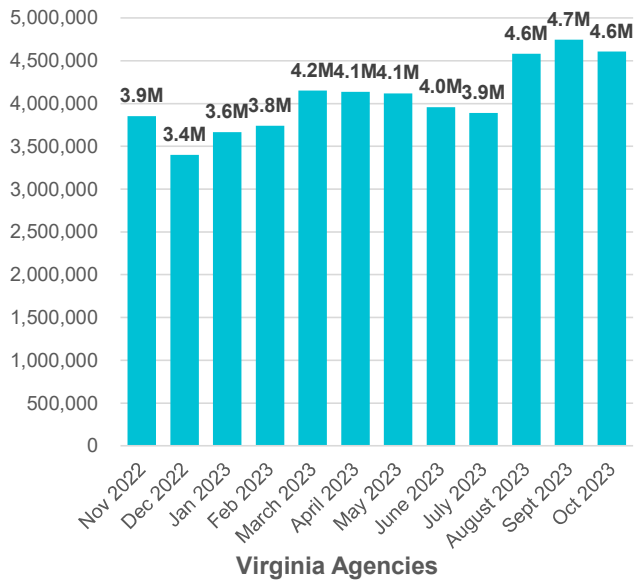
- **Promote DRPT's compelling story and valuable contribution with internal and external stakeholders.**
  - On November 27, Director DeBruhl joined VPRA Executive Director DJ Stadtler and VRE CEO Rich Dalton for the Virginians for High-Speed Rail's "State of Rail" discussion. She addressed the agency's long-term plans for passenger and freight rail throughout the Commonwealth.
- **Attract, develop, and retain a diverse and engaged workforce focused on customer service.**
  - DRPT has hired two senior grant financial analysts, Laura Nash and Sharon Williams.
- **Enhance the customer experience through well-designed processes and systems.**
  - DRPT is implementing a new grants system, WebGrants from Dulles technology to replace our out-dated On-Line Grant Application (OLGA) system. We have migrated the data from our OLGA system into WebGrants.
- **Be good stewards of public resources.**
  - The agency's grant cycle started on December 1. Rail, transit, and TDM partners have until February 1 to submit applications for FY2025 funding.
  - DRPT recently executed two FTA formula grants that will provide leveraged funds for transit shelters in rural areas and for state safety oversight of the HRT light rail system.

# Performance Measures



# Statewide Transit Ridership

Statewide Transit Ridership – November 2022 to October 2023



Agencies	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Total
Virginia Agencies	3,852,673	3,398,977	3,664,484	3,741,040	4,150,599	4,135,441	4,118,535	3,958,207	3,890,336	4,581,111	4,746,396	4,606,912	48,844,711
VRE	111,028	91,597	120,228	118,181	146,391	124,664	135,314	136,900	117,951	146,686	126,328	138,189	1,513,457
WMATA	4,040,866	3,979,130	4,380,844	4,137,898	5,451,449	5,258,278	5,603,271	5,679,896	5,465,891	5,777,047	5,712,322	6,323,067	61,809,959
<b>All Agencies + VRE + WMATA</b>	<b>8,004,567</b>	<b>7,469,704</b>	<b>8,165,556</b>	<b>7,997,119</b>	<b>9,748,439</b>	<b>9,518,383</b>	<b>9,857,120</b>	<b>9,775,003</b>	<b>9,474,178</b>	<b>10,504,844</b>	<b>10,585,046</b>	<b>11,068,168</b>	<b>112,168,127</b>

# Statewide Ridership Comparison: October Year-to-Year

Transit ridership for Virginia agencies in October 2023 was 8% higher than October 2022.

- Bus ridership was 8% higher

October 2023 ridership for Virginia agencies was 88% of pre-pandemic October 2019 levels.

- Bus ridership was 86% of 2019 levels

VRE ridership in October 2023 was 12% higher than October 2022 and 33% of pre-pandemic October 2019 levels.

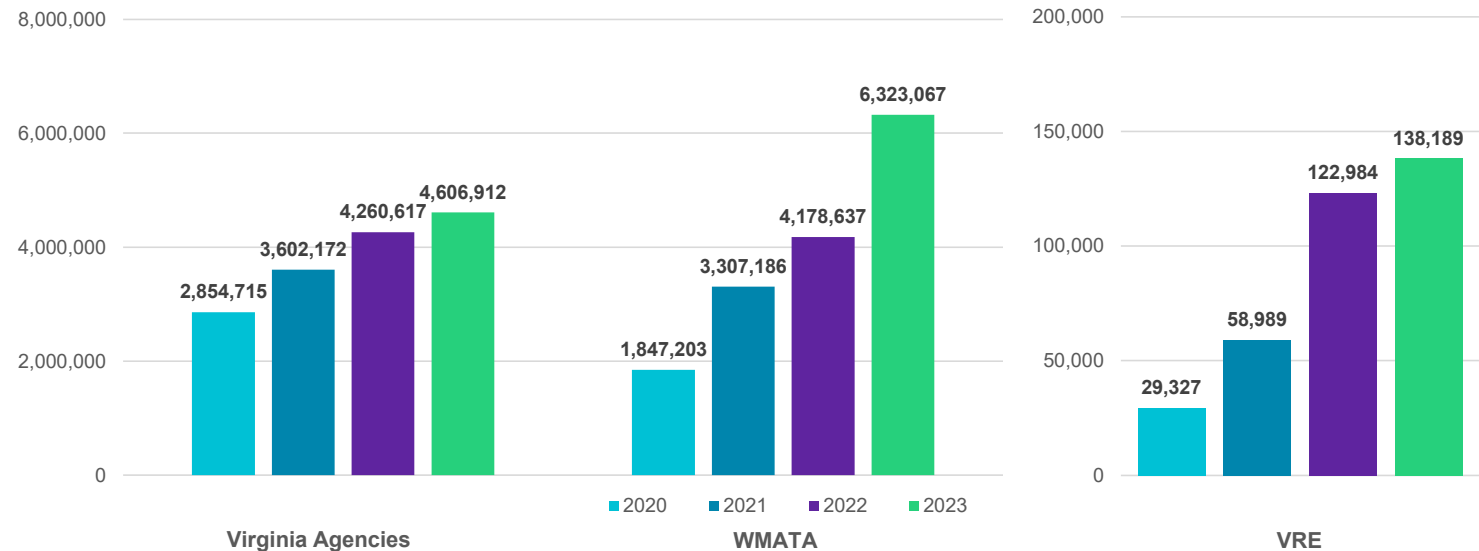
WMATA ridership in October 2023 was 51% higher than in October 2022.

- Bus ridership was 16% higher
- Heavy rail (Metro) was 62% higher

October 2023 WMATA ridership was 59% of pre-pandemic October 2019 levels.

- Bus ridership was 76% of October 2019 levels
- Heavy rail (Metro) was 57% of October 2019 levels

Ridership Comparison: Year-to-Year  
2020 – 2023



Mode	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 vs 2020	2023 vs 2021	2023 vs 2022
Virginia Agencies	2,854,715	3,602,172	4,260,617	4,606,912	61%	28%	8%
VRE	29,327	58,989	122,984	138,189	371%	134%	12%
WMATA	1,847,203	3,307,186	4,178,637	6,323,067	242%	91%	51%
<b>All Agencies + VRE + WMATA</b>	<b>4,731,245</b>	<b>6,968,347</b>	<b>8,562,238</b>	<b>11,068,168</b>	<b>134%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>29%</b>

# Virginia Breeze Ridership - October

In October 2023, ridership on VA Breeze routes totaled 6,930 which was:

- 242% higher than original estimates, and
- 3% higher than October 2022

Overall on-time-performance (OTP) was 66% and the overall farebox recovery was 40%.

For the month of October 2023, the VA Breeze contributed to a reduction of 299 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions.

## Valley Flyer:

- Ridership – 3% lower than October 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 4% lower than October 2022

## Piedmont Express:

- Ridership – 22% lower than October 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 21% lower than October 2022

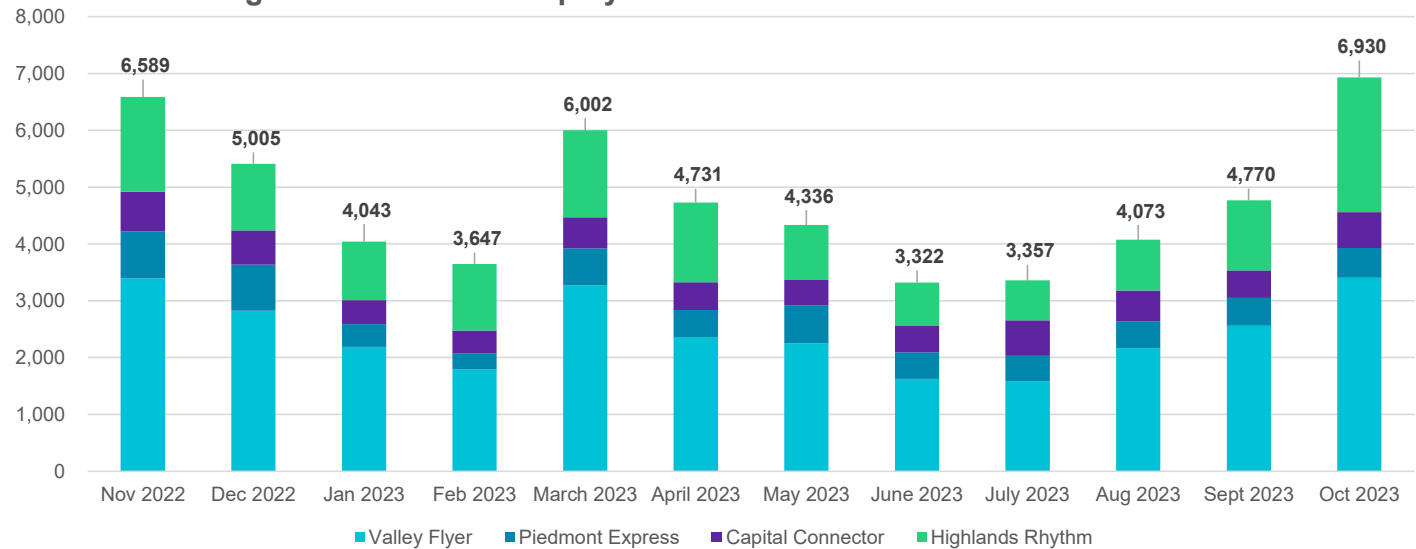
## Capital Connector:

- Ridership – 1% higher than October 2022
- Farebox Rev. – 3% higher than October 2022

## Highlands Rhythm:

- Ridership – 25% higher than October 2022
- Farebox Rev – 24% higher than October 2022

Virginia Breeze Ridership by Route – November 2022 to October 2023



Route	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Total
Valley Flyer	3,394	2,826	2,187	1,793	3,269	2,351	2,248	1,627	1,586	2,166	2,562	3,407	29,416
Piedmont Express	827	808	402	278	656	483	664	468	446	469	486	521	6,508
Capital Connector	701	606	421	404	544	493	455	468	625	545	488	634	6,384
Highlands Rhythm	1,667	1,171	1,033	1,172	1,533	1,404	969	759	700	893	1,234	2,368	14,903
<b>All Routes</b>	<b>6,589</b>	<b>5,411</b>	<b>4,043</b>	<b>3,647</b>	<b>6,002</b>	<b>4,731</b>	<b>4,336</b>	<b>3,322</b>	<b>3,357</b>	<b>4,073</b>	<b>4,770</b>	<b>6,930</b>	<b>57,211</b>

# Amtrak Virginia Ridership (Virginia Passenger Rail Authority)

# Virginia-Supported Monthly Ridership and Station Activity

October saw a 20.1% increase in ridership year over year.

October 2023 saw the highest ever October Virginia-supported ridership, exceeding the previous record of 104,616 set last year.

Staples Mill, Alexandria, and Norfolk were the most popular in state destinations.

Station Ons: The number of passengers who board  
Station Offs: The number of passengers who alight

