

Transit Service in Prince William County

The Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) is a multi-jurisdictional agency representing Prince William, Stafford, and Spotsylvania Counties, and the Cities of Manassas, Manassas Park, and Fredericksburg. Located in Virginia about 25 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., PRTC provides commuter bus service along the busy I-95 and I-66 corridors to points north (OmniRide Express) and local bus services in the County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park (OmniRide Local).

PRTC also offers OmniRide Ridesharing Services, a free ridesharing service. Operated by PRTC in partnership with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) provides commuter rail service along the Manassas and Fredericksburg lines, connecting to transit providers at stations in Virginia and the District of Columbia.

For more information, go to OmniRide.com and Vre.org.



Mandates

There is no state or federal mandate requiring the provision of mass transit services. Some federal and state transportation funds require certain activities to be performed; however, these are not considered mandates since the County is not obligated to accept the funding.

General Overview

- A. **Continuing Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic** – Both transit service and revenue continue to be significantly impacted by the pandemic. This disruption will have longer term impacts on future budgets that will need to address how the pandemic changes transit service delivery and the revenue that supports those services. PRTC and VRE have received a portion of the \$25.0 billion included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act for public transit agencies that provides operating and capital grants to prepare and respond to the pandemic. Although CARES Act support is one-time funding, these funds continue to support both PRTC and VRE operations during the pandemic.
- B. **PWC Proposed FY2022 Budget Allocations to Transit Services** – The following funding allocations are proposed in FY22:
 - 1. **Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax Revenue** – The proposed budget continues allocation of the 2.1% motor vehicle fuels tax collected by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) from wholesale fuel distributors and remitted monthly to PRTC. The tax will support the operating and capital expenditures in the Proposed PRTC FY2022 Budget. The designation of the motor vehicle fuels tax revenue to PRTC is consistent with prior practice.

Transit Subsidy

2. **Jurisdictional Subsidy to VRE** – The proposed budget includes \$5,930,777 of Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) 30% funding to support FY22 operating and capital expenses at VRE. The amount is unchanged from the FY2021 Budget.
 3. **Support for PRTC Wheels-to-Wellness** – The proposed budget includes \$150,000 of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) funds designated for transportation purposes to support the Wheels-to-Wellness program. The program is a medical transportation assistance program to help eligible residents access health services and is sponsored by PRTC through support from community partners including medical service providers and the County.
- C. **PRTC FY2022 Budget Proposal** – The Proposed PRTC FY2022 Budget is scheduled to be presented on February 11, 2021 which could not be completed in time for inclusion in the County Executive’s Proposed FY2020 Budget. After PRTC’s budget is proposed it will be transmitted to the Board of County Supervisors for consideration during the FY22 budget process. The Proposed PRTC FY2022 Budget will be a single year budget proposal due to continuing uncertainty surrounding the pandemic and its impact on motor vehicles tax revenue and PRTC ridership.
- D. **VRE FY2022 Budget Proposal** – The VRE Operations Board recommended the Proposed VRE FY2022 Budget on December 18, 2020 and forwarded it to NVTC and PRTC for adoption. On January 14, 2021, the PRTC Commissioners adopted the VRE FY2022 Budget and referred it to the local jurisdictions for inclusion in their budget and appropriations in accordance with the VRE Master Agreement.

The adopted VRE budget is supplemented using \$24.9 million of CARES funding to achieve a balanced budget without requiring fare increases, service reductions, or increases in jurisdictional subsidy. As part of the adopted budget, the VRE Operations Board directed that all jurisdictional subsidy amounts remain at FY21 levels, therefore PWC’s subsidy amount remains \$5,930,777. The PWC subsidy amount is approximately 32% of VRE’s total jurisdictional subsidy revenue. Ridership revenue is forecasted to be half of normal revenue levels. The budget does not assume additional federal relief funds. The adopted VRE budget does not include a six-year outlook, due to ongoing uncertainties caused by the pandemic.

VRE has been allocated \$86.1 million in CARES Act funding. VRE has projected the use of CARES Act funds and will submit reimbursements throughout the current, next, and future fiscal years to support operations. There is no deadline for VRE to draw down the CARES Act funding allocation. Copies of the VRE FY2022 Budget may be viewed on the VRE [website](#).