



# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022



*Transforming Rail*

919 East Main Street  
Suite 2400  
Richmond, VA 23219

[vapassengerailauthority.org](http://vapassengerailauthority.org)

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**The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority is an independent authority created by the Virginia General Assembly in 2020 to promote, sustain, and increase the availability of passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth. We are changing the future of rail transportation in Virginia by expanding high-quality, modern passenger rail service across the Commonwealth, making it more frequent, reliable, and convenient.**



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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



JENNIFER DEBRUHL,  
CHAIR



THE HONORABLE  
SHARON BULOVA



VICTOR  
CARDWELL



RICH  
DALTON



JOHN  
DELANDRO III



PATRICIA DOERSCH



THE HONORABLE  
THELMA DRAKE



THE HONORABLE  
JAY FISETTE



RODERICK "ROD" HALL



BRUNO MAESTRI



CHARLES "WICK"  
MOORMAN



CYNTHIA MOSES-NEDD



CHARLES "CHARLIE"  
PAYNE



JAMES SPORE



THE HONORABLE  
JOHN WATKINS

# JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

When creating the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRRA) during the 2020 Legislative Session, the General Assembly identified passenger rail as “integral to the economic development and expansion of the Commonwealth’s economy.” Through the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative, we are focused on the delivery of major projects, among them the building of a new railroad bridge crossing the Potomac River, securing dedicated passenger rail access, and improving the reliability and increasing the frequency of passenger rail in the Commonwealth.


Creating something from nothing can be daunting, but we have built a team of professionals ready to build a legacy for generations to come.

Our fiscal year 2021 and 2022 highlights include:

- Expanding service to Washington, D.C., and points north from Roanoke, Norfolk, and Downtown Richmond’s Main Street Station.
- Finalizing a Comprehensive Rail Agreement with CSXT through which VPRRA acquired 400 miles of railroad corridor paralleling I-95, I-64, and I-81.
- Finalizing the Western Rail Initiative with a Comprehensive Rail Agreement with Norfolk Southern Railway Company to add a second train on the Roanoke Route and expand service into the New River Valley by 2026.
- Securing \$58 million in federal funding with our partners at the North Carolina Department of Transportation to improve the rail corridor between Richmond and Raleigh.
- Creating a diverse team of skilled and talented professionals with decades of experience – all working towards a common vision.

As we continue to recover from the pandemic, it is important that VPRRA maintains focus on our long-term vision, while working today to improve the day-to-day lives of Virginians. We are doing that now by increasing the frequency of trains along existing routes to give more Virginians greater choices, as they increasingly choose rail. Ridership on all four of our state-supported corridors has steadily increased in recent months to record high ridership levels, and we must work to ensure that trend continues.

Our mission is clear, and we are committed to delivering on that vision every day.



**DJ Stadler**  
Executive Director  
Virginia Passenger Rail Authority



**Jennifer DeBruhl**  
VPRRA Board Chair  
Director, Department of Rail and  
Public Transportation

# OUR CULTURE

## MISSION

Promote, sustain, and expand the availability of passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth.

## VISION

To deliver passenger rail service as an integrated, affordable, convenient travel option that benefits the Commonwealth.

## VALUES



**Foster Leadership  
and Public Service**



**Promote Innovation  
and Excellence**



**Ensure Safety  
and Reliability**



**Advance Environmental  
Sustainability**



**Demonstrate  
Financial Stewardship**



**Champion Equity  
and Inclusion**

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM



**DJ STADLER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN**  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



**STEVE PITTARD**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



**JOAN PANIK**  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER








**MICHAEL WESTERMANN**  
GENERAL COUNSEL








# FINANCIAL PLAN SUMMARY

## FINANCIAL PLAN USES

	<b>CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$4,118M</b>
	<b>OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$1,507M</b>
	<b>CAPITAL AND OPERATING GRANTS</b>	<b>\$640M</b>
	<b>MANAGEMENT RESERVE</b>	<b>\$78M</b>
	<b>FINANCING COSTS</b>	<b>\$8M</b>
<b>TOTAL USES</b>		<b>\$6,351M</b>

## SOURCE OF FUNDS

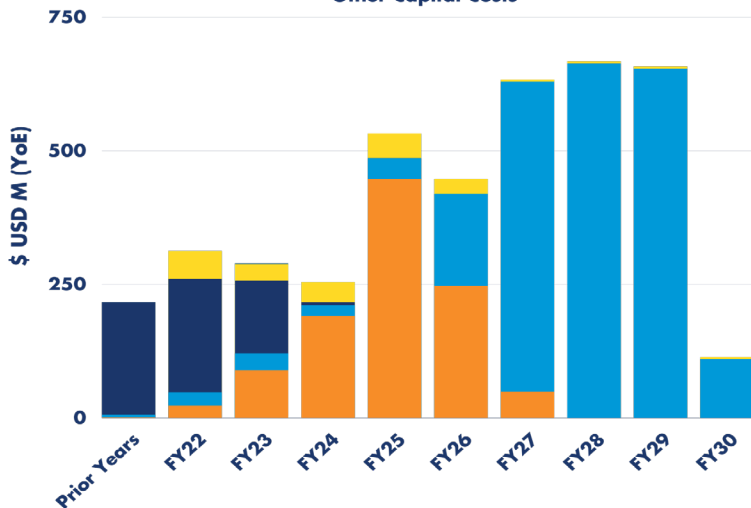
	<b>PAYGO</b>	<b>\$3,564M</b>
	<b>PROCEEDS AND FINANCING</b>	<b>\$1,001M</b>
	<b>AMTRAK</b>	<b>\$944M</b>
	<b>FEDERAL AND LOCAL GRANTS AND MATCHES</b>	<b>\$458M</b>
	<b>TOLLS AND CONCESSION PAYMENTS</b>	<b>\$384M</b>
<b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>		<b>\$6,351M</b>

VPRA Ten Year Financial Plan – Sources and Uses

\*Note that each source on the right hand side is not directly allocated to each use on the left hand side.

## CAPITAL PROJECTS EXPENDITURES BY YEAR

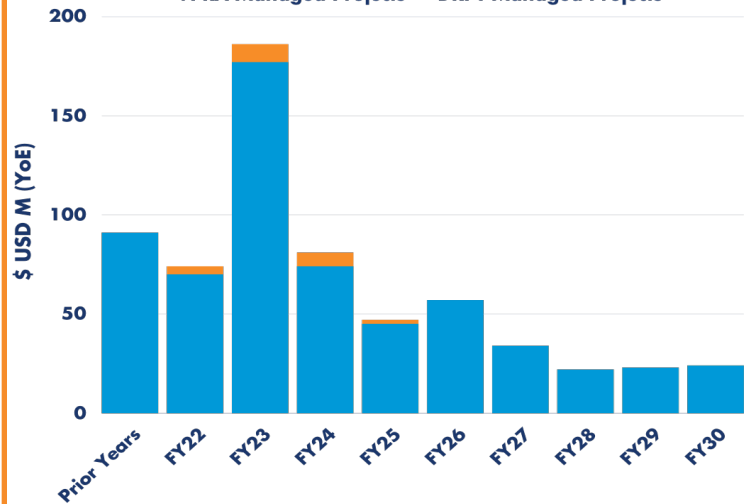
- I-95 Corridor - Phase 1
- I-95 Corridor - Phase 2
- CSX Right of Way Acquisition
- Western Rail Corridor
- Other Capital Costs



For Capital Projects, VPRA will control construction and will have ownership interest.

## CAPITAL AND OPERATING GRANTS BY YEAR

- VPRA Managed Projects
- DRPT Managed Projects



For Capital and Operating Grants, VPRA provides capital funding to a third party that executes design, construction, and operations.



# OUR STORY

## THE COMMONWEALTH'S RAIL VISION

Virginia has long recognized that it cannot pave its way out of traffic congestion and multimodal solutions are required to address our transportation and economic needs. For several decades, the Commonwealth has been a leader in investing in passenger and freight rail, consistently setting aside dedicated resources to preserve, enhance, and improve rail infrastructure.

## GENERATIONAL INVESTMENTS AND HISTORIC PARTNERSHIPS

With the creation of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPR) in 2020, the Commonwealth built upon its decades of leadership to establish a national model for state-supported, inter-city passenger rail. Combining dedicated state revenue streams, historic strategic partnerships with Amtrak, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), CSX Transportation (CSXT) and Norfolk Southern Railway (NS), and a codified rail authority, Virginia has achieved a successful blueprint for the expansion of state-supported passenger rail through the acquisition of right-of-way and generational investment in capital infrastructure.

## ADDRESSING INCREASING PASSENGER AND FREIGHT DEMAND

Recent passenger and freight rail studies and improvement projects reveal a need for enhanced reliability and increased rail capacity. The Commonwealth of Virginia promotes multimodal solutions to moving people and goods efficiently through transportation corridors.

Demand for freight movement through and within the Commonwealth is growing. The Port of Virginia is the eighth-largest port by tonnage in the United States and one of the fastest-growing ports on the East Coast.

In 2021, 33 percent of the cargo that entered the Port of Virginia was transported by rail thus removing it from the state's highways. At the same time, the demand for additional passenger service continues to increase as Virginia's population continues to grow.

## TIMELINE

**2006**  
RAIL ENHANCEMENT  
FUND (REF) CREATED AS  
DEDICATED REVENUE  
FOR RAIL PROJECTS

**2010**  
RICHMOND  
SERVICE  
BEGINS

**2012**  
NORFOLK  
SERVICE  
BEGINS

**2009**

LYNCHBURG  
SERVICE BEGINS



**2011**

IPROC FUND  
CREATED

VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
NEWPORT NEWS



# BECOMING A NATIONAL MODEL



## TRANSFORMING RAIL

VPRA is changing the future of rail transportation through revolutionary agreements and partnerships with Amtrak, VRE, CSXT, and NS and purchasing hundreds of miles of right-of-way in rail corridors across the Commonwealth.

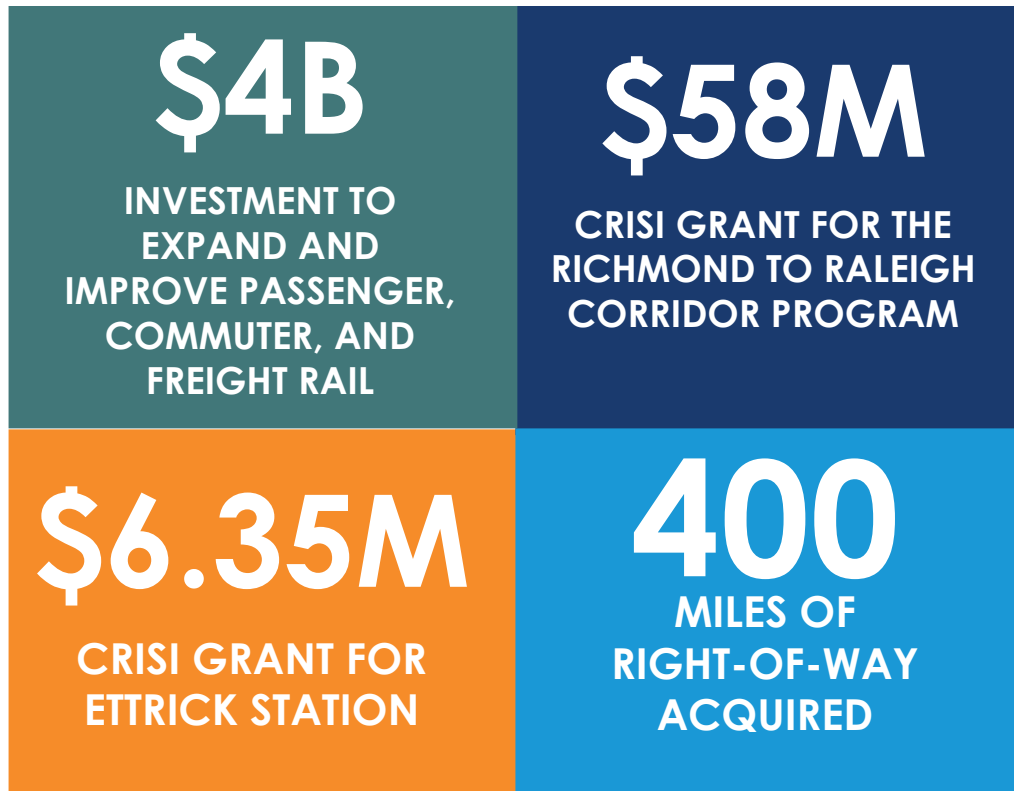
This investment will deliver on Virginia's vision to provide high-performance passenger rail service that connects our communities and increases economic growth. It will change the way Virginians travel, removing traffic from roads, increasing rail service and commuting options in all corners of the state, while improving performance and reliability.

VPRA's partnerships, capital projects, and infrastructure enhancement programs will grow the Commonwealth's rail network by adding additional passenger and commuter service including:

- Doubling the state-supported Amtrak service between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, resulting in near-hourly service along this corridor;
- Increasing Amtrak service to Roanoke, Newport News, and Norfolk;
- Extending Amtrak service from Roanoke to the New River Valley (Christiansburg) and constructing a new passenger station and platform;
- Increasing VRE Fredericksburg Line service by 75 percent and adding new late night and weekend service.

# KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## HISTORIC INVESTMENTS IN PASSENGER RAIL



## HISTORIC GROWTH





# LANDMARK COOPERATION AMONG RAIL STAKEHOLDERS



**CSX**

**NS**  
NORFOLK SOUTHERN®

**AMTRAK**®



## INCREASED SERVICE ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

As a result of the agreements with CSXT and NS, VPRa has launched new passenger rail service, including:

- An early morning train from Main Street Station in Downtown Richmond;
- A second daily roundtrip between Roanoke;
- A third daily roundtrip from Norfolk;
- Resumption of previously suspended roundtrip service from Newport News.

Photo: July 12, 2021 - VPRa's New Service Launch at the Norfolk Amtrak Station with VPRa Board Chair Jennifer DeBruhl, Executive Director DJ Stadtler, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shep Miller, Mayor Kenneth Alexander, Delegate Jackie Glass, Vice Mayor Martin Thomas, Jackie Corletto (NS), and Randy Marcus (CSXT).

## ALL ABOARD!

As a result of the rail agreements signed with CSXT and Virginia's purchase of the Buckingham Branch from Doswell to Clifton Forge, the Buckingham Branch Railroad was able to launch excursion service, the Virginia Scenic Railway, near Staunton in early August 2022. This popular, twice-daily weekend attraction sold out about 4,000 seats in a four-week period.



# INVESTING IN CAPACITY

## CONNECTING COMMUNITIES



Aerial Photos: (Top right) Train through Main Street in Ashland (Top left) Train entering Norfolk (Bottom left) Train departing Richmond Main Street



By purchasing rail right-of-way and improving the associated rail infrastructure, VPRA has a unique opportunity to own these valuable resources and develop its own rail corridors, allowing for increased passenger service.

VPRA has acquired, or will soon acquire, approximately 400 miles of railroad right-of-way in rail corridors along I-95, I-64, I-85, I-81, and I-66. These acquisitions amount to:

- Half of the CSXT-owned railroad right-of-way between Washington, D.C., and Petersburg (RF&P);
- All of CSXT-owned (but out of service) right-of-way between Petersburg and Ridgeway, N.C. (S- Line);
- Nearly all of the CSXT-owned right-of-way between Doswell, and Clifton Forge (Buckingham Branch Railroad);
- All of the NS-owned right-of-way (V-Line) from immediately east of the Salem Crossovers to Merrimac (Christiansburg).

**VPRA's capital and infrastructure improvement program consists of more than a dozen projects that will connect communities across the Commonwealth and enhance mobility for all Virginians.**

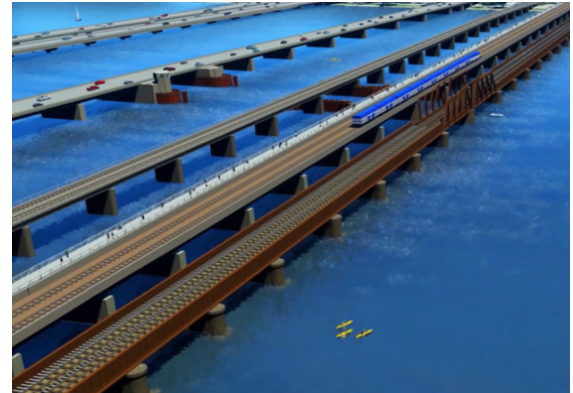


# CAPITAL PROJECTS SPOTLIGHT

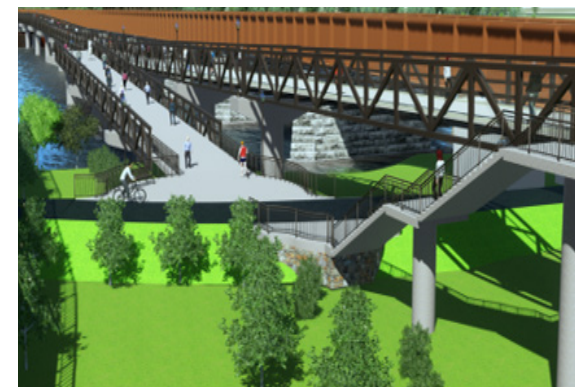
## LONG BRIDGE PROJECT \$2.04B

The existing 117-year old Long Bridge spans the Potomac River from Arlington to Washington, D.C. and operates at full capacity 98 percent of the time during peak hours, resulting in heavy rail congestion impacting both north and southbound train travel.

The Long Bridge Project will eliminate this key rail bottleneck on the East Coast, doubling rail capacity, and improving performance and reliability. VPRRA will construct a new two-track railroad bridge next to the existing bridge owned by CSXT.



(Right: Long Bridge Project Rendering)



The new Long Bridge will accommodate 18,000 passenger and freight train crossings or the equivalent of up to one million trucks and five million cars each year. A new pedestrian-bicycle bridge will also be constructed between the new rail bridge and the Metrorail Yellow Line Bridge, spanning the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Potomac River, connecting Long Bridge Park and the Mount Vernon Trail to East and West Potomac Parks.

(Left: Long Bridge Pedestrian-Bike Bridge Project Rendering)

## NEW RIVER VALLEY (NRV) SERVICE EXPANSION \$209M

### NRV PASSENGER SERVICE

In June 2022, VPRRA completed the New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study to identify feasible locations for a rail station in the NRV. Two sites adjacent or near the New River Valley Mall, Uptown Christiansburg, were identified as the most feasible alternatives.

### FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

In support of enhanced passenger rail service and improved freight rail reliability, railroad infrastructure between Salem and Christiansburg will be improved with plans to construct:

- A new NRV passenger rail platform and connector track between the Blacksburg Branch and the Virginian Line (V-Line);
- A new railroad bypass in the Roanoke Yard so passenger trains can get through the yard;
- Capital improvements to tunnels, tracks, culverts, and bridges.



Photo: Merrimac Tunnel

# ENHANCING THE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

VPRA is committed to delivering high-performance passenger rail service that connects communities and increases economic growth. Through our strategic partnerships, investments, and capital improvements, Virginia will nearly double the state-supported Amtrak and VRE service (including a first-time-ever weekend and late-night service).

VPRA works closely with Amtrak, VRE, and CSXT and strives to provide passenger rail service throughout the Commonwealth that is accessible, convenient, and affordable.

## MORE ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL

VPRA has prioritized accessibility at our stations by partnering with Amtrak, Virginia's localities, the Commonwealth, and the federal government to upgrade train stations and platforms to make rail service an even better option. VPRA is also installing Passenger Information Display Systems (PIDS) at several stations.



Photo: Ribbon cutting for the new ADA platform Ashland's Amtrak Station, pictured Dave Handera (Amtrak), Ashland Mayor Steve Trivett, and Randy Marcus (CSXT).

## Venture trainsets for Amtrak

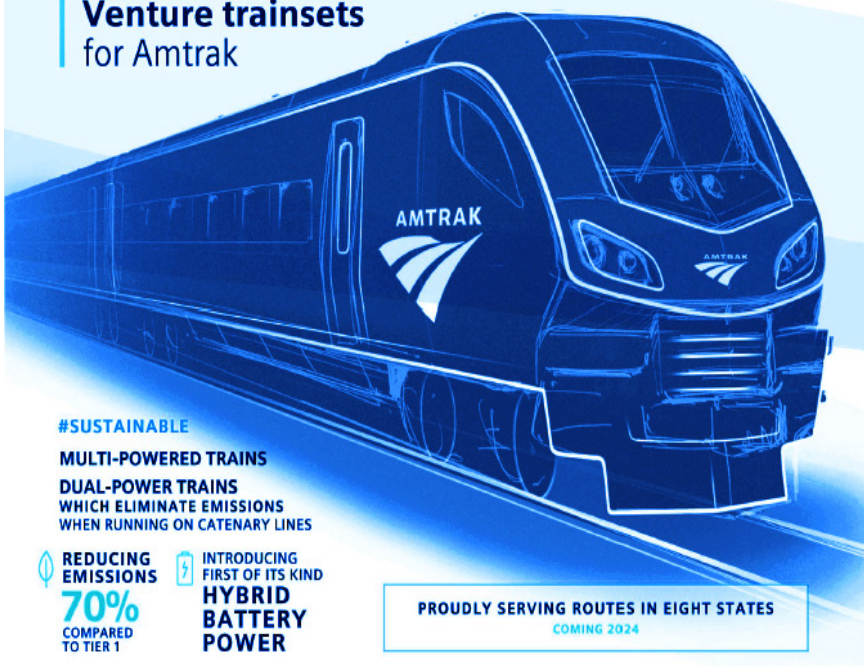


Image: Siemens Mobility hybrid Venture trainset

## MORE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Through our partnership with Amtrak, VPRA is subsidizing the purchase of new, more environmentally-sustainable equipment for state-supported Amtrak routes.

These new American-made trainsets will provide:

- Emission reductions of 70 percent;
- Shorter trip times;
- Enhanced accessibility for food service, restrooms, and a new door solution with wheelchair lifts;
- High-tech, connected, full amenity seating.



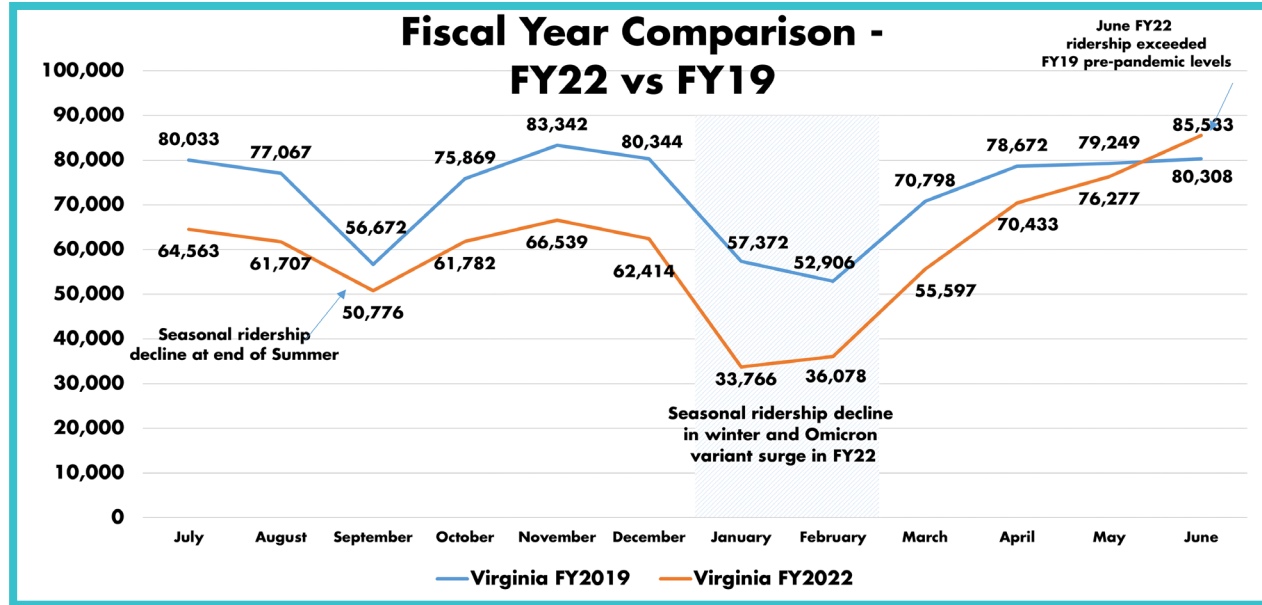
# SERVICE PERFORMANCE

## RIDERSHIP PERFORMANCE

Despite ongoing pandemic-related service challenges, state fiscal year 2022 ridership on Virginia Supported Service was 83 percent of FY19 (pre-pandemic) ridership, surpassing the recovery rate of regional rail transit systems.

Ridership on state-supported trains hit an all-time high in

July with more than 110,000 passengers traveling. This is an increase of 28.9 percent over June of 2022 and an increase of 19.8 percent over pre-pandemic ridership in July of 2019.



### PROMOTING RIDERSHIP

To promote and grow ridership on Virginia's state-supported routes, VPRa works closely with Amtrak to develop and implement marketing and sponsorship campaigns to reach all Virginians. Using website promotions, social media outreach, and flash sales, these campaigns appeal to a broad audience to encourage train travel. As seen in Figures 1 & 2, these promotions have yielded positive results for VPRa by successfully converting advertising and outreach to ridership and revenue.

### SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships and event activations give Amtrak VA the unique opportunity to create engaging, meaningful experiences while connecting directly with the audience

- ✓ College Sports Sponsorships with UVA, ODU, and VCU
- ✓ Children's Museum of Richmond Train Exhibit
- ✓ Amtrak VA Ambassadors
- ✓ Virginia Pride
- ✓ Richmond Folk Festival



### MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Digital marketing campaigns strategically promote Amtrak VA to increase ridership and revenue on state-supported trains

- ✓ Fall Campaign Revenue: \$398K
- ✓ Winter Campaign Revenue: \$439K
- ✓ Spring Campaign Revenue: \$1.1M
- ✓ Summer Campaign Revenue: \$292K\*
- ✓ Flash Sales Revenue: \$90K
- ✓ Misc. Sales Revenue: \$332K



TOTAL REVENUE CONVERSIONS: \$2.6M

FIGURE 1

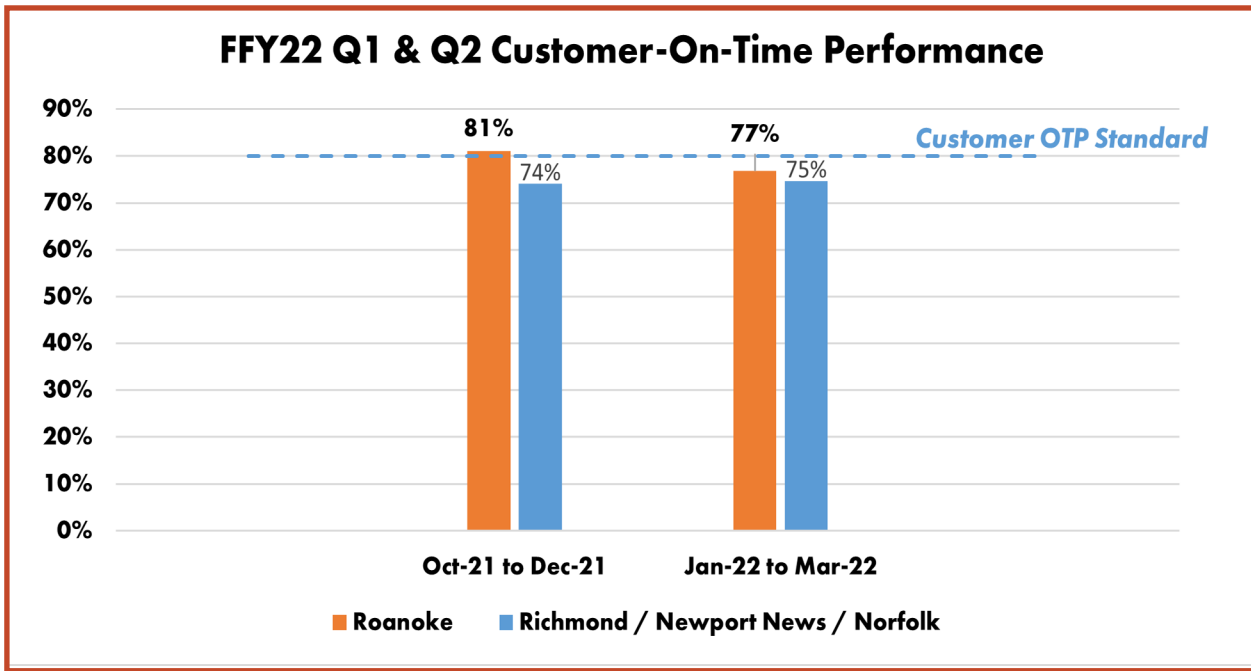
FIGURE 2

\*Only reflects revenue through end of FY22

# SERVICE PERFORMANCE

## ON-TIME PERFORMANCE\*

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has established a minimum standard for Customer-On-Time Performance (OTP) of 80 percent for any two consecutive calendar quarters. Factors impacting OTP include extreme heat, wide-temperature fluctuations, severe weather, track work, and rail congestion, among others. VPRRA has established **Service Performance Committees** with Amtrak, CSXT, and VRE to share data, conduct analysis, and identify root causes of delays.



\*Customer OTP is defined as the percentage of all customers on any intercity passenger rail train who arrive at their detraining point no later than 15 minutes after their published schedule arrival time, reported by train and by route.



Aerial Photo: Train on bridge over James River in Richmond



# THE TRACK AHEAD



Virginia's commitment to the development and expansion of passenger rail is a model for the future of passenger and commuter rail travel for the nation. Over the **next fiscal year**, VPRRA will continue to further develop and implement our transformative infrastructure improvement program, with project milestones across the Commonwealth, from the Peninsula to the Potomac.

## NEWPORT NEWS TRANSPORTATION CENTER CONSTRUCTION

In partnership with the City of Newport News, VPRRA is supporting

the construction of a **Multimodal Transportation Center**, which includes a new Amtrak station. Construction of the new facility is underway and will include a level boarding platform. The site will also serve as a Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) Bus Transfer Facility. The station will be complete in 2023.

## ALEXANDRIA FOURTH TRACK FINAL DESIGN

The **Alexandria Fourth Track Project** will

construct 6 miles of a fourth track of railroad and related infrastructure between Alexandria and Arlington. The project will increase rail capacity between Northern Virginia and the District of Columbia. Partners include CSXT, VRE, Amtrak, and VDOT. The project is in the design phase and construction is expected to begin in 2024.

## LONG BRIDGE PROJECT PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND FINAL DESIGN

The Long Bridge Project will construct a new, two-track railroad bridge dedicated to passenger rail service adjacent to the current Long Bridge. Plans also include building a pedestrian and bike bridge. Project partners include CSXT and VRE. The project is currently in the Preliminary Engineering Stage and is expected to be completed in 2030.





