



VPRA Project Fact Sheet

Project Name: Long Bridge

VPRA Overview:

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) is responsible for promoting, sustaining, and expanding the availability of passenger and commuter rail service in the Commonwealth. Created in 2020, VPRA administers all capital expansion projects, infrastructure, and land acquisitions related to the Transforming Rail in Virginia Program, which will double Amtrak state-supported service and increase Virginia Railway Express (VRE) service in Virginia over the next decade.

Facts:

- Virginia is quickly becoming a leader in transportation planning as this is the first time a state has taken the initiative to purchase right-of-way from the freight railroads to build their own rail infrastructure. We are doing this to expand passenger rail service and provide Virginians with an alternative to sitting in traffic.
- Ridership on Amtrak Virginia, the Commonwealth's state-supported Amtrak service, continues to grow.
- 1.26 million passengers traveled on the service during the state's fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), setting an all-time record for fiscal year ridership. The total – 1,256,123 – beat the previous record of 894,065 set during fiscal year 2015.
- Amtrak Virginia set another ridership record in July with 125,488 passengers traveling. This was the highest ridership ever for one month since the start of state-supported service in 2009. July beat the previous record of 119,280 set in August of 2022. July also saw a 13.8% increase in ridership year-over-year.

Long Bridge Overview:

The existing Long Bridge is a railroad bridge owned and operated by CSX Transportation (CSXT) that crosses the Potomac River from Northern Virginia into Washington, DC. It was built in 1904 and has been used, exclusively, for rail traffic. The bridge currently operates at 98% capacity as close to 80 CSXT,

Amtrak and VRE trains cross it daily, accounting for approximately 1.3 million Amtrak passengers and 4.5 million VRE commuters annually.

VPRA's Long Bridge Project will alleviate rail congestion across the Potomac by building a new, two-track railroad bridge next to the existing Long Bridge which will create a four-track corridor and double the rail capacity across the river. This will relieve a bottleneck that affects rail traffic up and down the East Coast.

Estimated Cost: \$2.3 billion – The project is not currently fully funded.

- Current Federal Grants:
 - VPRA applied for a Federal State Partnership last year and a Multimodal Project Discretionary Program Grant this year for Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) Phase 2 project (made possible by the bipartisan infrastructure bill) that includes the Long Bridge Project.
 - Total grant request is \$729 million.

Construction: Estimated 2024 - 2030

Facts:

- The Long Bridge Project will encompass improvements to 1.8 miles of right-of-way.
- The project began with an FRA ARRA Grant to DDOT in 2011.
- The new Long Bridge will be built between the existing Long Bridge and the WMATA Yellow Line Bridge.
- The new bridge will allow for an increase in Amtrak as well as VRE frequencies over the next decade.
 - The number of state-supported Amtrak Virginia frequencies will increase with nearly hourly service between Richmond and Washington, DC.
 - VRE Fredericksburg Line service will increase by 75%.
- It will also separate passenger and freight train traffic, which is expected to improve service reliability.
- The new bridge will include many of the features of the existing bridge including structure, material, and form to make it compatible with the existing bridge.
- The Long Bridge Project also includes the construction of a bicycle and pedestrian crossing that will connect Long Bridge Park and the Mount Vernon Trail in Arlington to the East and West Potomac Parks in Washington, DC.

- The bicycle and pedestrian structure will be 2,300 feet long and 16 feet wide and will be built next to Long Bridge but will be a separate structure to allow bicycle and pedestrian traffic to cross the river safely.
- Preliminary site plans for the entire Long Bridge Project were approved by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) in July 2022.

Current Status:

- The Long Bridge Project is currently in the preliminary engineering stage. This is expected to continue through 2023.
- A piling project to test the soil conditions at the bottom of the Potomac River is scheduled to begin in late September or early October.

More Information:

[Long Bridge Project - TRV \(transformingrailva.com\)](https://transformingrailva.com)

Recent VPRA Press Releases

[VPRA Seeking Construction Partners for Long Bridge Project - VPRA \(vapassengerrailauthority.org\)](https://vapassengerrailauthority.org)

[VPRA Receives RAISE Grant for Long Bridge Pedestrian Crossing Project - VPRA \(vapassengerrailauthority.org\)](https://vapassengerrailauthority.org)

The Stephen S. Fuller Institute at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government did a study in November 2019 on the impact of building a new Long Bridge.

[Long Bridge Expansion – The Stephen S. Fuller Institute \(gmu.edu\)](https://gmu.edu)

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