

County Transit Systems

100-01-County Transit Systems

Fund/Agency: 100/40	County Transit Systems	
Personnel Services	\$0	This CAPS accounts for 100 percent of total expenditures.
Operating Expenses	\$22,530,523	
Recovered Costs	\$0	
Capital Equipment	\$1,720,023	
Total CAPS Cost:	\$24,250,546	
Federal Revenue	\$0	
State Revenue	\$5,860,160	
User Fee Revenue*	\$46,200	
Other Revenue	\$0	
Total Revenue:	\$5,906,360	
Net CAPS Cost:	\$18,344,186	
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS	0/0	

* The User Fee total in this chart reflects only bus farebox revenue received as passes, tickets and tokens by FAIRFAX CONNECTOR. Additional cash farebox revenue, estimated in FY 2002 at \$2,386,153, is used to directly offset contractor costs, and thus reduces the Operating Expenses total cited above. It should also be noted that the Operating Expenses total includes \$2.5 million associated with the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter rail system.

► CAPS Summary

This CAPS includes the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR and the County's contribution to the Virginia Railway Express (VRE).

The FAIRFAX CONNECTOR portion includes the operation, capital equipment and facilities of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR bus system. The County provides buses, ancillary equipment, and facilities to private contractors who supply the labor and day-to-day management of the bus service. The costs and revenues associated with these efforts are included in this CAPS. A separate CAPS entitled FAIRFAX CONNECTOR includes the County staff responsible for carrying out the County's portion of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR work.

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FAIRFAX CONNECTOR started in 1985 as a 33-bus operation in the southeastern part of the County. During the next several years the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR grew in southeast Fairfax County. In 1994 the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR experienced a substantial expansion when service to the Reston and Herndon areas was added. In 1999 FAIRFAX CONNECTOR service in the Dulles Corridor was more than doubled when Dulles Corridor Express Bus was implemented. Today, the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR is operated with 163 buses in various areas of the County.

In FY 1990 the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR operated 55 buses on 14 routes providing 1,222,768 revenue miles of service to 2,332,135 passengers. By FY 2000 the CONNECTOR operated 154 buses on 58 routes providing 4,966,133 revenue miles of service to 5,586,462 passengers. The most recent growth of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR is shown in the following table:

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Buses Operated	127	130	154	163	163
Routes Served	52	52	58	58	58
Passengers Transported	4,736,026	4,773,876	5,586,462	6,100,000	6,400,000
Revenue Hours Provided	216,286	220,077	324,185	335,491	335,491
Revenue Miles Provided	3,525,830	3,571,467	4,966,133	4,984,519	5,107,068

Much of the recent growth of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR is associated with the County's implementation of the Dulles Corridor Express Bus Service in CY 1999. This initiative more than doubled the amount of bus service in the Dulles Corridor and was complemented by the construction of 3000 commuter parking spaces at two park-and-ride lots, the construction of the Tysons-West*Park Transit Station, and the openings of three Connector Stores. In order to implement this service expansion the County purchased 20 buses and the Herndon Operations Center was expanded. This major transit initiative was a cooperative effort among Fairfax County, the Federal Government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and included \$48.7 million in capital improvements. Fairfax County and the State, through the use of Dulles Toll Road revenues, pay for the operating costs of the bus service. Average weekday ridership in the Dulles Corridor increased from 6,233 passengers in FY 1999 to over 10,000 passengers in FY 2001.

The Dulles experience highlights a major issue of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR and bus service in general. Effective service improvements and expansions will result in increased bus riders, but additional funding and capital resources are required for these enhancements to take place. The County has concentrated on bus service improvements in the Dulles Corridor in recent years. The current Regional Bus Mobility Study is expected to identify beneficial FAIRFAX CONNECTOR and Metrobus service improvements in other areas of the County. For example, the Richmond Highway corridor is an area that would generate additional bus riders with the implementation of effective bus service and facility improvements and expansions. Such initiatives require funding for operations, buses, facilities, and ancillary equipment. Unlike the Dulles Corridor which generates revenues from the Dulles Toll Road, most other areas in the County have limited opportunity to obtain outside funding for transit improvements, particularly operating funding.

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Another major issue of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR is the need to provide an effective fleet of transit buses for existing service. Buses last approximately 12 years and with a fleet of 163 buses further consideration should be given to setting aside money for about 15 replacement buses per year. To date, the County has kept pace with bus replacement on a pay-as-you-go basis. This approach will become increasingly difficult to use in the future, especially when replacement buses associated with the major expansions of the mid to late 1990's are needed.

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) portion of this CAPS includes the County's share of VRE costs. VRE began commuter rail service in 1992 as a cooperative effort among local jurisdictions in Northern Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission, and several railroads. The County and other local jurisdictions have entered into a Master Agreement, which stipulates how costs will be shared.

VRE provides service on two lines: the Manassas Line which includes the Burke Centre, Rolling Road, and Backlick Road stations in the County; and the Fredericksburg Line which includes the Lorton and Franconia-Springfield stations in Fairfax County.

► **Method of Service Provision**

The FAIRFAX CONNECTOR portion of this CAPS includes the operation, capital equipment and facilities of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR bus system. The County provides buses, ancillary equipment, and facilities to private contractors who supply the labor and day-to-day management of the bus service. Currently, the County has three contracts (Huntington Division, Reston/Herndon Division, and Community Bus Services Division) whereby private companies operate the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR. These contractors employ bus operators, mechanics, street supervisors, dispatchers, managers, support staff, and others who operate and maintain FAIRFAX CONNECTOR buses.

In addition, the County contracts with other entities to provide FAIRFAX CONNECTOR telephone information service; sell fare media and help customers at four Connector Stores; disseminate timetables to neighborhood outlets; print marketing materials; and install/maintain bus stop signs.

The costs and revenues associated with the activities outlined above are included in this CAPS.

Other CAPS of the County Department of Transportation include County staff carrying out the County's portion of the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR work; contract management, operations planning, quality assurance, customer service, marketing, capital needs identification and budgeting.

The Virginia Railway Express service is provided by the Virginia Operations Board through contracts with Amtrak and operating agreements with several railroads.

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► Performance/Workload Related Data

The performance indicators for the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR, as indicated in the County's FY 2002 Adopted Budget Plan, are shown below.

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Output:					
Buses Operated	127	130	154	163	163
Routes Served	52	52	58	58	58
Passengers Transported	4,736,026	4,773,876	5,586,462	6,100,000	6,400,000
Platform Hours Provided	275,224	291,261	389,407	404,469	412,837
Platform Miles Provided	4,193,411	4,627,034	6,041,201	6,191,612	6,342,261
Revenue Hours	216,286	220,077	324,185	335,491	335,491
Revenue Miles Generated	3,525,830	3,571,467	4,966,133	4,984,519	5,107,068
Timetables Distributed	1,099,814	1,507,612	1,424,000	1,537,200	1,614,060
Information Sites	138	87	105	110	115
Maps Distributed	12,400	21,000	21,000	22,000	25,000
Efficiency:					
Operating Costs	\$12,948,719	\$14,178,681	\$18,926,217	\$20,897,519	\$22,416,676
Fare Box Revenue	\$2,728,918	\$2,664,402	\$2,386,153	\$2,386,153	\$2,386,153
Operating subsidy	\$10,219,801	\$11,514,279	\$16,540,064	\$18,511,366	\$20,030,523
Operating cost/passenger	\$2.73	\$2.97	\$3.39	\$3.43	\$3.50
Operating cost/platform mile	\$3.09	\$3.06	\$3.13	\$3.38	\$3.53
Operating cost/platform hour	\$47.05	\$48.68	\$48.60	\$51.67	\$54.30
Operating subsidy/passenger	\$2.16	\$2.41	\$2.96	\$3.03	\$3.13

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Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Farebox revenue as a percent of operating cost	21%	19%	13%	11%	11%
Passengers/revenue mile	1.34	1.34	1.12	1.22	1.25
Service Quality:					
Complaints per 100,000 passengers	39	34	41	38	30
Outcome:					
Percent change in FAIRFAX CONNECTOR passengers	6.6%	0.8%	17.0%	9.2%	4.9%
Percent change in service provided for:					
Platform Miles	2.3%	10.3%	30.6%	2.5%	2.4%
Platform Hours	23.6%	5.8%	33.7%	3.9%	2.1%

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The performance measures for the County's portion of the VRE, as indicated in the County's FY 2002 Adopted Budget Plan, are shown below.

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Estimate
Output:					
Annual Fairfax County VRE subsidy	\$2.45 M	\$2.37 M	\$2.29 M	\$2.5 M	\$2.5 M
Daily Trains Operated	26	24	30	30	30
Stations maintained in Fairfax County	5	5	5	5	5
Parking spaces provided in Fairfax County	1,860	1,860	1,860	1,860	1,860
Daily A.M. boardings at Fairfax County stations	700	970	1,030	1,030	1,060
Estimated annual boardings/Alightings at Fairfax County stations	351,400	429,300	515,610	515,610	531,078
Efficiency:					
Cost per County VRE trip	\$6.98	\$5.52	\$4.44	\$4.85	\$4.71
Outcome:					
Percent change in VRE passengers boarding at stations in Fairfax County	(30.0%)	38.6%	6.2%	0.0%	2.9%

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► User Fee Information

User fee information for the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR is contained in the table below.

Subsubject Code	Fee Title	FY 2002 ABP Fee Total
N/A	Bus farebox revenue received as cash and used to directly offset contractor costs (Operating Expenses)	*\$2,386,153
0791	Bus farebox revenue received as passes, tickets, and tokens	\$46,200
Current Fee		Maximum Allowable Fee Amount
Fairfax Connector Routes 101-305 -	\$0.50	
Fairfax Connector Routes 383-385 -	\$2.00	
Fairfax Connector Routes 401-403 -	\$0.50	
Fairfax Connector Routes 306 & 404 -	\$1.00	
Fairfax Connector Routes 425-984 -	\$0.50	
Fairfax Connector Route 989 -	\$2.50	
Fairfax Connector Routes RIBS 1-4 -	\$0.50	
Purpose of Fee:		
Help offset cost of providing service.		
Levy Authority	Requirements to Change the Fee	Year Fee Was Last Adjusted
	Board of Supervisors Action	2000
Other Remarks:		
<p>The County has agreed to participate in the uniform fare structure developed by the transit providers and jurisdictions of the Washington Metropolitan area. This uniform fare structure allows the County to provide \$0.50 fares on many of its bus routes, although the base Metrobus fare is \$1.10. Low fares for both FAIRFAX CONNECTOR and Metrobus feeder bus routes in Fairfax County were established in 1987 to encourage bus ridership. The County has continued to have lower fares since that time.</p> <p>In addition, operation and maintenance costs associated with the commuter rail system are funded from a combination of ridership revenues, State contributions, and contributions from the participating and contributing jurisdictions. VRE has single-ride, ten-trip and monthly fares. These fares are distance-based. As an example, the fares between Burke Centre, Rolling Road, or Lorton Station and L'Enfant Station are \$4.95 for a single-ride, \$41.15 for a ten-trip ticket, and \$142.25 for a monthly pass. The VRE Operations Board, in conjunction with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), establish VRE fares. These fares were last raised effective July 1, 2001. Fare revenues accrue directly to VRE and are thus are not reflected in County user fee totals.</p>		

* It should be noted that the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR receives substantial cash farebox revenue that is not reflected as revenue in the FY 2002 Adopted Budget Plan. This revenue, estimated in FY 2002 at \$2,386,153, is used to directly offset contractor costs. Please refer to the Performance/ Workload section under "Efficiency" for additional information.