

# Fund 40000: County Transit Systems

**Mission** To provide safe, reliable, clean, and effective public transportation service that complements the other elements of the multi-modal transportation system in Fairfax County and provides a cost-saving alternative to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrobus service. To fund the County's share of operating costs for the Virginia Railway Express (VRE).

**Focus** Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, provides funding for operating and capital expenses for the Fairfax Connector bus system. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) manages, oversees, and coordinates the activities of the Fairfax Connector bus system, which in FY 2019 operated 90 routes providing primarily intra-county service and access to Metrorail stations serving County residents. The system includes an authorized fleet of 312 buses.

Fairfax Connector bus service is operated by a private contractor from three operating facilities.

The Huntington Division provides local service to the Huntington, Van Dorn Street and Franconia-Springfield Metrorail stations and in the Mount Vernon and Lorton areas and express service to the Pentagon Metrorail station.

The Reston-Herndon Division includes service in the Reston, Herndon, McLean and Tysons areas to the Wiehle-Reston East, McLean, Spring Hill, and Tysons Corner Metrorail stations; express service between Reston, the Pentagon Metrorail station, and Crystal City; local service between Herndon, Reston, and Tysons, and cross-county service between Fair Oaks and Reston.

The West Ox Division provides service primarily in the I-66 Corridor between the Vienna Metrorail station and the Centreville, Chantilly, Fair Oaks, Oakton, and Fairfax Center areas; and 495 Express service between Tysons, Burke Centre, and Springfield.



The most recent Comprehensive Transit Plan (CTP) was completed in the spring of 2016 and the companion Transit Development Plan (TDP) was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in March 2016. The fiscally constrained TDP guides future investments and changes to the Fairfax Connector system. The TDP goals and objectives focused on expanding and improving access and mobility. To that end, FCDOT has made investments in a student pass program, express services, cross-county linkages, transit route improvements, an Intelligent

Transportation System (ITS), the bus fleet, infrastructure, and improvements to transit facilities.

The TDP is scheduled for a full update in FY 2022. FCDOT has developed a route optimization planning process to update the TDP incrementally over the next three years. This process involves reviewing the Fairfax Connector network in five regional sections. Each section is based on a major Metrorail Station or activity center used as a transit center by Fairfax Connector. These include the Franconia-Springfield, Reston-Herndon, Vienna, Tysons, and Huntington Metrorail Stations. In FY 2019 FCDOT began working on the Franconia-Springfield and Reston-Herndon sections, which contain over 51 routes.

In FY 2020, FCDOT started the planning process for optimizing routes in Vienna and Tysons. As part of the planning for Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), FCDOT will also complete route optimization for the Huntington routes. The Vienna, Tysons, and Huntington planning efforts are estimated to be completed by the end of FY 2021.

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In FY 2016, Fairfax Connector, in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), initiated the Student Free Fare Pilot Program (SFFPP), which provides free bus rides to the County's middle and high school population. Since program inception in September 2015, the program has provided over 1.7 million student passenger trips. In FY 2020, approximately 17,000 student SmartTrip cards have been distributed to schools. As of December 2019, monthly usage was approximately 40,000 passenger trips. Building on prior success, the program is now offering access to Metrobus service to Justice High School students; replacing special bus passes with regional SmartCards to improve tracking, connectivity and security; and increasing outreach at local schools served by transit.



Since FY 2017, FCDOT has received four grant applications to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) for implementation of express bus service along I-66 and I-395 using the managed High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. Funding for these express bus services is generated from the HOT lanes' toll revenue. The goal of the routes is to reduce congestion within the I-66 corridor inside the Beltway and along I-395. Route 699 began operating in December 2017, providing a direct link between the Fairfax County Government Center and downtown. As of December 2019, Route 699 provided over 2,700 passenger trips

per week, resulting in over 170,300 passenger trips since route inception. In January 2019, Route 698 began passenger service, providing a direct link from the Vienna Metrorail Station to the Pentagon. As of December 2019, this route provided over 1,380 weekly trips and has provided approximately 32,500 passenger trips since inception. In FY 2020, Fairfax Connector anticipates an additional route, Route 396, along the I-395 corridor that will improve connectivity from Springfield to the Pentagon. Subsequently, in July 2020, the Fairfax Connector is planning to implement Route 697 along the I-66 corridor with service to L'Enfant Plaza.

As an effort to improve cross-county linkage, Fairfax Connector implemented Route 308 in March 2019, linking the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail/VRE Station to Mount Vernon Hospital via Richmond Highway and Jeff Todd Way. As of August 2019, Route 308 provided approximately 2,000 weekly passenger trips. To further improve system efficiency and reliability in FY 2020, several adjustments were made to existing Routes 306, 395, and 950.

Phase II ITS projects are planned for FY 2020, including an upgrade of the Driver Monitoring Technology (Drive Cam), development of a voice over internet protocol (VOIP) project to replace the legacy radio system, and deployment of mobile supervisor technology to assist station and field supervisors with providing enhanced customer service.

FCDOT continues its commitment to environmental protection practices. As part of this effort, Fairfax Connector buses are equipped with Engineered Machine Products (EMP), which increase miles per gallon and reduce emissions. Additionally, all new buses have an electric air conditioning system and a green fire suppression system. Fairfax Connector also has a very strict idling policy to reduce emissions. Within County facilities, FCDOT adheres to best practices and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) standards and testing. For these programs, the bus operational garage renovations included storage areas for contaminated parts, enhanced stormwater collection areas, and bio-tree filters.

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FCDOT continues to invest in infrastructure with major construction projects. Recently, major projects were completed at the three operational garages to increase efficiencies and capacity. FCDOT is also adding and improving parking facilities. In mid-2020, construction of the new Springfield Parking Garage will begin, which will replace the Old Keene Mill Park-and-Ride Lot. In addition, FCDOT and DPWES are currently working on designing the Fairfax Corner Commuter Parking Garage and Transit Center.

### FY 2021 Bus Services Funding

Total FY 2021 funding of \$100.0 million is provided for bus services, including funding for the mid-life bus rebuild program, and other capital equipment. A breakdown of the \$100.0 million is included in the table below.

Bus Services	\$96.4
Mid-Life Rebuild	2.9
Capital Equipment Purchases	0.5
West Ox Building Renovation	0.2
<b>Total (\$ in millions)</b>	<b>\$100.0</b>

### County and Regional Transportation Projects

Commercial and Industrial (C&I) real estate tax revenue and Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) local 30 percent funds are collected in Fund 40010, County and Regional Transportation Projects, and then a portion is transferred to the County Transit Systems budget. In FY 2021, this amount totals \$38.4 million. This amount will be used to:



- Support West Ox Division rush hour and midday service
- Increase frequencies on overcrowded priority bus routes (Routes 171, 401/402, 950)
- Support Route 981 from Wiehle-Reston East to Dulles Airport
- Improve the frequency of Richmond Highway corridor routes and Route 310 servicing Franconia Road to Rolling Valley

### General Fund Support / Use of Balances

General Fund support is provided to Fund 40000 for Fairfax Connector requirements and for the County share of the subsidy for commuter rail services operated by the Virginia Railway Express (VRE). The FY 2021 General Fund transfer to Fund 40000 is \$40.6 million, equivalent to the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan level.

### Fairfax Connector Bus Replacement Reserve

A significant long-term issue in transportation concerns the bus replacement needs for the Fairfax Connector fleet. To help minimize the fiscal impact of future bus replacement needs, funding is being reserved at the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC). Between FY 2022 and FY 2025, 139 buses are expected to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$75.3 million.

## Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, includes the County's share of the subsidy for commuter rail services operated by VRE. The service is a joint effort among NVTC, the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and the participating jurisdictions of Fairfax County, City of Manassas, City of Manassas Park, Fredericksburg, Prince William County, Spotsylvania County and Stafford County. The City of Alexandria and Arlington County are also contributing jurisdictions.

The 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 local jurisdictions. According to the VRE Master Agreement, at least 50 percent of the operating costs must be paid by passenger fares, with the remainder funded by the participating jurisdictions according to a funding formula. The FY 2021 Fairfax County subsidy remains unchanged from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan level of \$6.3 million.

## Pandemic Response and Impact

In response to COVID-19, Fairfax Connector and VRE have adjusted service to continue to provide essential trips while mitigating public health concerns. As of May 2020, both systems are operating at a reduced level of service and have experienced a significant drop in ridership. Both transit systems will continue to serve passengers and options to return to a typical level of service will be evaluated as the situation evolves and restrictions are changed or lifted. Budget adjustments as a result of the ridership and service changes in Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, will be considered as part of the *FY 2020 Carryover Review*.

## FY 2021 Funding Adjustments

*The following funding adjustments from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2021 program. Included are all adjustments recommended by the County Executive that were approved by the Board of Supervisors, as well as any additional Board of Supervisors' actions, as approved in the adoption of the Budget on May 12, 2020.*

**Increased Expenditure Requirements** **\$5,645,429**

An increase of \$5,645,429 in expenditures includes an increase of \$4,900,429 in operating requirements, and an increase of \$3,545,000 in capital projects, partially offset by a \$2,800,000 decrease in capital equipment requirements.

## Changes to FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan

*The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, FY 2020 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2020.*

**Carryover Adjustments** **\$12,417,907**

As part of the *FY 2019 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved an increase of \$12,417,907 including \$4,347,491 in encumbered carryover and \$8,070,416 in unspent Capital Projects funds. Revenues decreased by \$85,756 in State Aid revenue.

## Performance Measurement Results

Total Fairfax Connector ridership for FY 2019 exceeded the total ridership for FY 2018. In FY 2019, Fairfax Connector provided 8,334,616 passenger trips, an increase of 0.26 percent from the FY 2018 total of 8,312,983. This may indicate that the ridership losses seen in prior years are leveling off. Additionally, the Free Student Bus Pass Program has contributed to improving ridership, with student ridership now representing over six percent of all Fairfax Connector passenger trips.

While ridership has shown improvement, the same factors driving declines in public transportation usage across the region still exist, including Metrorail service disruptions due to WMATA's capital maintenance program, increased usage of on-demand ride-hailing services (such as Uber and Lyft), bikeshare, scooters, teleworking and alternative work schedules, and (in particular) declining fuel prices encouraging automobile use. June 2019 saw a decrease in ridership as compared to June 2018 due to the impact of the WMATA station platform rebuilding effort, which began on May 25, 2019, and closed six Metrorail Stations south of National Airport until September 9, 2019.

FCDOT's strategic planning efforts will use results of the previously mentioned TDP and route optimization studies to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of routes, conduct public outreach and solicit stakeholder input, and shift limited resources to improve service and attract riders back to the system.

Many commuters in the region have expressed interest in new technologies that allow more interaction with bus services. Fairfax Connector has implemented advanced ITS technology on the bus fleet. New technology includes near real-time bus arrival information to enhance the travel experience of Fairfax Connector riders.

Indicator	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimate/Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Estimate
<b>Fairfax Connector</b>					
Percent change in Fairfax Connector passengers	(3.92%)	(3.69%)	0.00% / 0.26%	0.25%	1.00%
Percent change in service provided for platform hours	2.05%	2.01%	2.24% / 0.49%	1.98%	1.73%
Percent change in service provided for platform miles	9.03%	(0.38%)	4.69% / 1.78%	2.93%	3.87%
<b>Commuter Rail</b>					
Percent change in VRE passengers boarding at stations in Fairfax County	7.3%	1.6%	0.0% / (3.6%)	2.12%	2.09%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2021-adopted-performance-measures-pm>

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## FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2021 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$11,200,115</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$12,623,663</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Revenue:</b>					
Miscellaneous Revenue <sup>1</sup>	\$39,245	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
SmarTrip Revenue <sup>2</sup>	5,753,408	6,100,000	6,100,000	6,100,000	6,100,000
Bus Advertising	353,212	250,000	250,000	300,000	300,000
Bus Shelter Program	103,038	132,000	132,000	156,750	156,750
WMATA Reimbursements, West Ox Bus Operations Center <sup>3</sup>	1,591,565	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000
State Aid (NVTC) Operating <sup>4</sup>	6,701,147	11,354,258	11,273,502	12,410,000	14,331,674
State Aid (NVTC) Capital <sup>4</sup>	2,041,068	0	0	0	0
I-66 Inside the Beltway Tolls (NVTC) Operating	1,320,888	1,598,145	1,598,145	2,739,360	2,739,360
VA Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) Operating for I-95 Express Service <sup>5</sup>	299,866	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$18,203,437</b>	<b>\$21,584,403</b>	<b>\$21,503,647</b>	<b>\$23,856,110</b>	<b>\$25,777,784</b>
<b>Transfers In:</b>					
General Fund (10001)	\$36,151,131	\$40,633,472	\$40,633,472	\$42,555,146	\$40,633,472
Metro Operations & Construction (30000)	2,915,530	3,032,151	3,032,151	3,153,437	3,153,437
County and Regional Transportation Projects (40010) <sup>6</sup>	35,065,066	36,974,719	36,974,719	38,430,481	38,430,481
<b>Total Transfers In</b>	<b>\$74,131,727</b>	<b>\$80,640,342</b>	<b>\$80,640,342</b>	<b>\$84,139,064</b>	<b>\$82,217,390</b>
<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$103,535,279</b>	<b>\$102,349,745</b>	<b>\$114,767,652</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>					
<b>Fairfax Connector</b>					
<b>Fairfax Connector Operating Expenses</b>					
Transit Administration	\$275,728	\$0	\$395,347	\$3,519,220	\$3,519,220
Huntington Division	32,686,485	36,075,226	33,219,050	36,745,798	36,745,798
Reston-Herndon Division	28,388,058	32,645,364	32,480,791	32,788,129	32,788,129
West Ox Division, County Connector	18,964,069	22,826,133	22,991,592	23,394,005	23,394,005
<b>Subtotal - Connector Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$80,314,340</b>	<b>\$91,546,723</b>	<b>\$89,086,780</b>	<b>\$96,447,152</b>	<b>\$96,447,152</b>
Capital Equipment	\$1,348,970	\$2,800,000	\$1,280,972	\$0	\$0
Capital Projects	1,020,947	0	16,396,878	3,545,000	3,545,000
<b>Total Connector Service</b>	<b>\$82,684,257</b>	<b>\$94,346,723</b>	<b>\$106,764,630</b>	<b>\$99,992,152</b>	<b>\$99,992,152</b>
Total WMATA Service	\$1,591,565	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000
<b>Total Bus Services, Connector &amp; WMATA</b>	<b>\$84,275,822</b>	<b>\$96,096,723</b>	<b>\$108,514,630</b>	<b>\$101,742,152</b>	<b>\$101,742,152</b>
Commuter Rail <sup>7</sup>	\$5,385,794	\$6,253,022	\$6,253,022	\$6,253,022	\$6,253,022
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$89,661,616</b>	<b>\$102,349,745</b>	<b>\$114,767,652</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>



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### FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2021 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan
<b>Transfers Out:</b>					
County and Regional Transportation Projects (40010) <sup>8</sup>	\$1,250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Transfers Out</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$90,911,616</b>	<b>\$102,349,745</b>	<b>\$114,767,652</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>	<b>\$107,995,174</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$12,623,663</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Transportation-Related Requirements	\$12,623,663	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Unreserved Balance</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Miscellaneous revenue includes such items as reimbursement from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) for the value of WMATA tokens collected on Fairfax Connector routes, insurance recoveries, and miscellaneous developer contributions.

<sup>2</sup> Fare revenue is received either directly by the County as SmarTrip fare payments, or indirectly through contractor billings.

<sup>3</sup> WMATA reimburses the County for its share of space at the West Ox Bus Operations Center, a joint use facility for WMATA and the County Connector. WMATA initiated operations from this site in Spring 2009.

<sup>4</sup> State Aid for mass transit is disbursed to NVTC, where it is made available to the County.

<sup>5</sup> Reimbursement from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) for operating assistance in implementing I-95 Express Lane bus services.

<sup>6</sup> The FY 2021 transfer of \$38.4 million from Fund 40010, County and Regional Transportation Projects, is consistent with a transportation funding list periodically updated and approved by the Board of Supervisors. Of this total, \$23.9 million is from Commercial and Industrial (C&I) real estate revenue and \$14.5 million is from HB 2313 local revenues.

<sup>7</sup> Fairfax County participates in the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Master Agreement and provides an annual subsidy to VRE operations and construction.

<sup>8</sup> In FY 2019, a transfer to Fund 40010, County and Regional Transportation Projects, was included to support bus loop repairs and bus shelter repairs at the Herndon Metrorail Station Parking Garage.

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### SUMMARY OF CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Total Project Estimate	FY 2019 Actual Expenditures	FY 2020 Revised Budget	FY 2021 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan
ADA Remediation (TF-000037)	\$1,688,660	\$0.00	\$1,219,853.04	\$0	\$0
Bus Shelter Replacement (TS-000022)	687,466	233,103.36	314,028.27	0	0
Connector Intelligent Transportation Sys (3G40-003-000)	9,825,460	21,632.04	3,524,841.50	0	0
Fairfax Connector Buses - Capital (TF-000048)	5,832,160	0.00	5,832,159.83	0	0
Fairfax Connector Studies (2G40-165-000)	421,500	314,184.70	107,315.30	0	0
Farebox Upgrade/Replacement (TF-000039)	3,000,000	48,672.94	2,467,965.19	0	0
Herndon Garage Security (TF-000046)	33,202	0.00	33,201.94	0	0
Hunting Operating Facility (TF-000014)	1,279,678	(132,690.72)	392,512.98	0	0
Mid-Life Overhaul (TF-000040)	9,528,234	536,044.84	2,505,000.00	2,875,000	2,875,000
Shop Equipment (TF-000051)	150,000	0.00	0.00	150,000	150,000
Silver Line Snow Removal Equipment (TF-000050)	160,000	0.00	0.00	160,000	160,000
Springfield CBD Park-N-Ride Lot (TF-000022)	150,000	0.00	0.00	150,000	150,000
West Ox Maintenance Renovation (TF-000049)	210,000	0.00	0.00	210,000	210,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$32,966,360</b>	<b>\$1,020,947.16</b>	<b>\$16,396,878.05</b>	<b>\$3,545,000</b>	<b>\$3,545,000</b>