

# 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).

## Connection to the Countywide Strategic Plan

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the first-ever Countywide Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021. The Countywide Strategic Plan serves as a road map to help guide future work, focusing on the 10 Community Outcome Areas that represent the issues of greatest importance to the community, and uses our One Fairfax equity policy to invest in people and places that have limited access to opportunity. On February 20, 2024, the second Annual Report on the work of the strategic plan was released to the public. The report contains point-in-time progress highlights for each of the community outcome areas, plus three data dashboards and data stories that are being replicated across all of the outcome areas, and a number of additional initiatives to embed the elements of the plan within department-level work. The report also includes a Year Three Implementation Model, which will engage hundreds of County subject-matter experts to identify and champion the specific strategies that will move forward to implementation under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors. For more information on the Countywide Strategic Plan, please visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan). Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, primarily supports the following Community Outcome Area:



Community Outcome Area	Vision Statement
<b>Mobility and Transportation</b>	<i>All residents, businesses, visitors and goods can move efficiently, affordably and safely throughout the county and beyond via our well-designed and maintained network of roads, sidewalks, trails and transit options.</i>

## 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 2023 operated 93 routes, providing primarily intra-county service and access to Metrorail stations serving County residents. The system includes an authorized fleet of 345 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, as well as local service in the Mount Vernon and Lorton areas. The Division also provides express service to the Pentagon Metrorail station.

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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 Transit Development Plan (TDP) was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in March 2016 and guides future investments and changes to the Fairfax Connector system. The TDP goals and objectives focus on expanding transit service and improving access and mobility. To that end, FCDOT implemented a free student pass program, new express services and cross-county linkages, and other transit route improvements.

The FY 2024 TDP includes a planning horizon of ten years, and the document will be renamed the Transit Strategic Plan (TSP). To complete the TSP, FCDOT developed a route optimization planning process which incrementally reviews five sections of the Fairfax Connector bus network over a three-year timeframe. Each section review is based on a major Metrorail Station or activity center served by the Fairfax Connector. These include Franconia–Springfield, Reston, Herndon, Vienna, Tysons, and Huntington Metrorail Stations.

As part of the planning for Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), FCDOT completed a route optimization review for Huntington area service. Vienna, Tysons, and Huntington planning efforts were completed in FY 2022.

In September 2015, in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), Fairfax Connector initiated the Student Free Fare Pilot Program (SFFPP), which provides free bus rides to County middle and high school students. For the 2022 – 2023 school year, monthly ridership averaged over 43,000 student trips, representing a significant increase over the FY 2021 – 2022 school year average of 28,550 trips per month. The student bus pass program accounts for approximately 6 percent of the total weekday ridership.

Since 2017, FCDOT has been awarded six Commuter Choice grants from the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) for implementation of express bus service along the I-66 and I-395 corridors using the managed High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. Funding for express bus services is generated from toll revenue with a goal of reducing congestion within the I-66 corridor inside the Beltway and along I-395. These express routes account for approximately 4.3 percent of the total weekday ridership.

In November 2022, the County implemented the Herndon – Reston bus service plan in coordination with the opening of the Silver Line Metrorail Phase 2 extension. The plan involved a significant realignment of the transit services in the Herndon and Reston areas of the County. This resulted in an overall ridership improvement of approximately 9 percent.

In 2023, FCDOT implemented Route 660, which operates along I-66 using the new express lanes. The route improves connectivity between Centreville and Tysons and provides additional connections for passengers at the Government Center and Vienna Metrorail Station. Route 660 provides weekday commuter service with ten-minute frequency during peak periods and reduces travel time from Centreville to Tysons by approximately 30 percent. This route is funded through a Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) grant using I-66 Outside the Beltway (OTB) toll revenue.

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To further improve system efficiency and reliability, in FY 2024 FCDOT will make service adjustments along the I-66 corridor, Vienna, and Tysons as recommendations to the TSP. In addition, new Routes 598 and 798 will be implemented to increase regional connectivity.

FCDOT is working on Phase II of the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) project. As part of this effort, the Fairfax Connector Bus Tracker website will be updated, and Clever Mobile will be implemented to allow Connector supervisory staff to monitor and adjust operational concerns in real time.



FCDOT continues its commitment to environmental protection. As part of this effort, FCDOT received DRPT and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) funds to partially fund the purchase of eight battery electric buses and charging infrastructure. Additional zero-emission buses will be included in the electric bus pilot program in FY 2024. To further reduce emissions, the Fairfax Connector has a strict idling policy and utilizes clean technology on the diesel bus fleet to meet stringent

emission standards for urban buses. FCDOT adheres to stormwater management best practices and the DEQ standards for testing and monitoring at transportation sites.

As of 2024, the new Springfield and Monument Drive Commuter Parking Garages are under construction.

### 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 a portion is transferred to the County Transit Systems budget. In FY 2025, this amount totals \$40.9 million. These funds are used to provide continued support for:

- West Ox Division rush hour and midday service
- High ridership/ priority bus routes
- Service between Wiehle-Reston East to Dulles Airport
- Richmond Highway corridor routes

### 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 2025 General Fund transfer to Fund 40000 is approximately \$45.1 million. This represents a \$2.1 million increase over prior year funding levels associated with inflationary increases for providing service.

### 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, DRPT, and the participating jurisdictions of Fairfax County, the City of Manassas, the City of Manassas Park, the City of Fredericksburg, Prince William County, Spotsylvania County, and Stafford County. The City of Alexandria and Arlington County are also contributing jurisdictions.

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The operating 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 2025 Fairfax County subsidy is estimated at almost \$5.5 million, a decrease of approximately \$128,000 from the FY 2024 Adopted

Budget Plan.

### **FASTRAN Human Services Transportation**

As part of the FY 2025 budget process, operation of the FASTRAN Human Services Transportation service is transferred from Agency 79, Neighborhood and Community Services. F offers specialized transportation services for residents of Fairfax County and the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church participating in human services agency programs, including access to critical medical care, adult day health care, senior centers, senior residences, therapeutic recreation services, and transport to and from Community Services Board (CSB) support services and worksites. The operating functions are transferred to better align transit functions and leverage route optimization expertise.

## **FY 2025 Funding Adjustments**

*The following funding adjustments from the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2025 program:*

### **Increased Operating Expenditure Requirements \$8,421,434**

An increase of \$8,421,434 in expenditures is reflected. This includes a net increase of \$8,487,875 in operating requirements for the Connector system associated with estimated inflationary increases and an increase of \$62,000 for WMATA expenses for bus operations and maintenance costs at the West Ox Bus Facility. These increases are partially offset by a decrease in subsidy requirements for VRE of \$128,441.

### **Transfer of FASTRAN Operations \$1,207,796**

An increase of \$1,207,796 is included for the transfer of FASTRAN operations from Agency 79, Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS). FASTRAN offers specialized transportation services for residents of Fairfax County and the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church participating in human service agency programs. Operating functions are transferred to Agency 40, Department of Transportation, and Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, in order to leverage route planning expertise and contracting opportunities.

### **Department of Vehicle Services Charges \$74,939**

An increase of \$74,939 in Department of Vehicle Services charges is based on anticipated billings for fuel, maintenance, and operating-related charges.

### **Capital Requirements \$25,033,194**

Capital project funding of \$38,645,644 is included, an increase of \$25,033,194 when compared with the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan and is primarily associated with the purchase of hybrid and electric buses replacing existing fleet assets aging out of service.

## Changes to FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review and all other approved changes through December 31, 2023.

### Carryover Adjustments \$46,116,888

As part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$46,116,888 primarily due to an increase of \$28,184,420 for the purchase of replacement buses. The remaining increase is attributable to \$15,862,440 in capital project balances, primarily associated with the purchase of buses, farebox upgrades and facility renovations, along with \$2,661,070 encumbered for operating activities including contracted transit operation services, vehicle and facilities maintenance, transit studies, and security services. These increases are partially offset by a \$591,042 reduction in the required Virginia Railway Express (VRE) subsidy.

## Performance Measurement Results by Community Outcome Area

### Mobility and Transportation

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairfax Connector ridership decreased by 18.6 percent to approximately 6.7 million in FY 2020, as compared to FY 2019. Ahead of many transit agencies, the Fairfax Connector resumed full service on all routes on August 29, 2020, with some service enhancements, including a new commuter route from the Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride Lot to Southwest Washington, D.C. Ridership continued to decline in FY 2021 to 4.6 million. In FY 2022, ridership improved by nearly 14 percent with an annual ridership of 5.2 million, returning to approximately 62 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

Due to health and safety concerns stemming from the pandemic, the VRE ridership surveys used to gather this data have not been conducted since 2019. However, ridership surveys were undertaken in 2022 and will be utilized for future estimates.

Performance measures for Human Services Transportation are included for informational purposes since the service operation is transferring from Agency 79, NCS, in FY 2025. Please refer to Agency 79, Neighborhood and Community Services narrative for information on FY 2023 Performance Measurement Results.

Community Outcome Area	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate
<b>Mobility and Transportation</b>						
<b>Efficient and Varied Transportation Options</b>						
Percent change in FAIRFAX CONNECTOR passenger trips	(32.69%)	13.70%	15.57%	61.20%	6.56%	3.00%
Percent change in service provided for platform miles	7.55%	11.10%	4.46%	1.07%	12.00%	0.09%
Percent change in service provided for platform hours	5.28%	8.70%	2.84%	0.74%	6.10%	0.10%
<b>Increased Accessibility, Affordability and Equity</b>						
Percent change in Human Services Agency client rides on rideshare buses	9.5%	(49.5%)	147.9%	16.8%	0.0%	0.0%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2025-advertised-performance-measures-pm>



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## FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$25,512,691</b>	<b>\$5,111,457</b>	<b>\$10,990,551</b>	<b>\$1,851,050</b>
<b>Revenue:</b>				
<b>Local Revenue</b>				
Miscellaneous Revenue <sup>1</sup>	\$321,091	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
SmarTrip Revenue <sup>2</sup>	4,112,292	3,214,958	3,214,958	4,491,351
Bus Advertising	279,975	165,000	165,000	289,000
Bus Shelter Program	229,575	184,500	184,500	207,000
WMATA Reimbursements, West Ox Bus Operations Center <sup>3</sup>	437,879	380,000	380,000	442,000
<b>Subtotal - Local Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,380,812</b>	<b>\$4,044,458</b>	<b>\$4,044,458</b>	<b>\$5,529,351</b>
<b>Revenue from the Commonwealth</b>				
State Aid (NVTC) Operating <sup>4</sup>	\$11,986,270	\$27,553,975	\$15,193,807	\$29,415,090
State Aid (NVTC) Capital <sup>5</sup>	23,743,526	9,587,450	53,634,310	38,645,644
Toll Revenue for Operating - NVTC Commuter Choice Program	2,271,179	1,871,317	3,188,430	5,055,551
Toll Revenue for Capital - NVTC Commuter Choice Program	0	4,025,000	4,025,000	0
VDRPT Express Lane Service Operating Assistance <sup>6</sup>	1,201,918	2,785,639	6,088,193	3,549,999
VDRPT Express Lane Service Capital Assistance <sup>6</sup>	4,544,628	0	0	0
DRPT TRIP <sup>7</sup>	20,885	1,939,320	3,870,755	969,660
Commonwealth of Virginia Transportation Management Plan - Rt 798 <sup>8</sup>	0	0	2,000,000	0
North County Bus Service - CIA <sup>9</sup>	1,259,074	1,184,861	1,184,861	1,203,082
<b>Subtotal - Revenue from the Commonwealth</b>	<b>\$45,027,480</b>	<b>\$48,947,562</b>	<b>\$89,185,356</b>	<b>\$78,839,026</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$50,408,292</b>	<b>\$52,992,020</b>	<b>\$93,229,814</b>	<b>\$84,368,377</b>
<b>Transfers In:</b>				
General Fund (10001) to Connector and VRE	\$42,965,059	\$42,965,059	\$42,965,059	\$45,113,312
General Fund (10001) to FASTRAN Human Services Transit	0	0	0	1,282,735
Metro Operations and Construction (30000)	3,410,757	3,547,187	3,547,187	3,689,074
Contributed Roadway Improvements (30040) <sup>10</sup>	134,000	179,192	179,192	186,350
County and Regional Transportation Projects (40010) <sup>11</sup>	38,522,000	39,677,660	39,677,660	40,867,990
<b>Total Transfers In</b>	<b>\$85,031,816</b>	<b>\$86,369,098</b>	<b>\$86,369,098</b>	<b>\$91,139,461</b>
<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$160,952,799</b>	<b>\$144,472,575</b>	<b>\$190,589,463</b>	<b>\$177,358,888</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
<b>Fairfax Connector</b>				
<b>Fairfax Connector Operating Expenses</b>				
Transit Administration	\$3,133,225	\$4,750,286	\$5,698,057	\$4,435,061
Huntington Division	40,475,294	44,583,101	45,320,959	48,001,640
Reston-Herndon Division	32,948,668	39,145,361	39,591,503	41,929,162
West Ox Division, County Connector	31,195,490	34,553,738	35,083,038	37,154,498
<b>Subtotal - Connector Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$107,752,677</b>	<b>\$123,032,486</b>	<b>\$125,693,557</b>	<b>\$131,520,361</b>
Capital Projects	\$37,050,681	\$13,612,450	\$57,659,309	\$38,645,644
<b>Total Connector Service</b>	<b>\$144,803,358</b>	<b>\$136,644,936</b>	<b>\$183,352,866</b>	<b>\$170,166,005</b>

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## FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan
Total WMATA Service	\$437,879	\$380,000	\$380,000	\$442,000
<b>Total Bus Services, Connector and WMATA</b>	<b>\$145,241,237</b>	<b>\$137,024,936</b>	<b>\$183,732,866</b>	<b>\$170,608,005</b>
Commuter Rail <sup>12</sup>	\$4,721,011	\$5,596,589	\$5,005,547	\$5,468,148
FASTRAN Human Services Transit	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,282,735
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$149,962,248</b>	<b>\$142,621,525</b>	<b>\$188,738,413</b>	<b>\$177,358,888</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$10,990,551</b>	<b>\$1,851,050</b>	<b>\$1,851,050</b>	<b>\$0</b>
State Aid CARES Credit Reserve <sup>13</sup>	\$5,111,457	\$1,851,050	\$1,851,050	\$0
Transportation-Related Requirements	5,879,094	0	0	0
<b>Unreserved Balance</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. Funding is increased based on projected costs and utilization by WMATA.

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

<sup>5</sup> State Aid to support the Fairfax Connector Bus Replacement Program. Funds will be transferred to the County and appropriated for the purchase of replacement buses as scheduled in the multi-year replacement cycle.

<sup>6</sup> Reimbursement from the Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) in the amount of \$3.5 million supports operating assistance for I-95 Express Lanes (Route 393), I-66 Outside the Beltway (Route 660), and I-495 NEXT (Route 798) bus service.

<sup>7</sup> DRPT's Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) is a statewide grant program designed to support improvements to regional connectivity and ridership by supporting zero fare and subsidized fare pilot programs. Fairfax County has received a three-year grant to support a pilot low-fare program for income eligible riders.

<sup>8</sup> Reimbursement from Virginia's Transportation Management Plan (TMP) through VDRPT to support Route 798 service on I-495 while toll collection is disrupted for construction of the 495 Next project.

<sup>9</sup> North County Bus Service provides public transit services between the George Bush Center for Intelligence and McLean Metrorail Station.

<sup>10</sup> FY 2025 reflects a transfer of \$186,350 from Fund 30040, Contributed Roadway Improvements, to support shuttle bus service in the Franconia-Springfield area. The transfer is based on actual receipts in the previous fiscal year and may fluctuate as proffer revenue changes. This service was previously provided as a WMATA route and these funds were transferred to Fund 30000, Metro Operations and Construction. Fairfax Connector began operating the service and received the contributions in FY 2022.

<sup>11</sup> The FY 2025 transfer of \$40.9 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, \$28.3 million is from Commercial and Industrial (C&I) real estate revenue and \$12.6 million is from HB 2313 local revenues.

<sup>12</sup> Fairfax County participates in the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Master Agreement and provides an annual subsidy to VRE operations and construction.

<sup>13</sup> As a result of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regional transit services support included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Fairfax County received \$26.3 million in credits allocated by WMATA to support the loss of passenger fare revenue, capital, operating and other County transit-related expenses to prevent, prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This credit is reflected in Fund 30000, Metro Operations and Construction, and reduced the annual state aid contribution for Fairfax County's share of its WMATA subsidy for FY 2022. These credits have remained at NVTC. During FY 2021, \$8.6 million of these credits were utilized and in FY 2022, \$5.6 million of the CARES credits were utilized to offset anticipated reductions in Fairfax Connector SmarTrip and cash fare revenue. An additional \$7.0 million was used for the same purpose in FY 2023 and a further \$3.2 million is being used for FY 2024. The remaining \$1.9 million will be used in FY 2025.

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### SUMMARY OF CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Total Project Estimate	FY 2023 Actual Expenditures	FY 2024 Revised Budget	FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan
Backlick Rd North Park-N-Ride Bike Improvement (TS-000027)	\$121,760	\$0.00	\$116,606.31	\$0
Burke VRE Park and Ride Renovation (2G40-195-000)	575,000	50,266.12	274,733.88	250,000
Bus Garage Facility Renovations (TF-000059)	2,165,000	0.00	1,650,000.00	515,000
Bus Shelter Replacement (TS-000022)	937,466	(28,952.00)	313,325.36	0
Clean Air Communities Program Local (TF-000056)	2,197,261	1,933,388.05	133,581.16	0
Connector Intelligent Transportation Sys (3G40-003-000)	11,318,580	1,855,146.08	516,662.50	203,000
Fairfax Connector 495NEXT Bus DRPT (TF-000058)	5,200,000	0.00	5,200,000.00	0
Fairfax Connector Buses - Capital (TF-000048)	83,281,527	20,427,499.20	29,203,496.33	8,601,363
Fairfax Connector Electric Buses (TF-000057)	11,639,436	9,359,486.36	2,279,949.64	0
Fairfax Connector Hybrid Buses - Capital (TF-000062)	23,807,624	0.00	0.00	23,807,624
Fairfax Connector Support Vehicles (TF-000053)	703,979	234,868.55	230,959.52	77,580
Farebox Upgrade/Replacement (TF-000039)	10,591,021	0.00	7,542,739.23	2,516,077
Mid-Life Overhaul (TF-000040)	21,527,676	2,661,210.06	4,085,001.42	2,500,000
NVTC Commuter Choice I-66 Route 598 Buses (TF-000061)	4,069,500	0.00	4,069,500.00	0
NVTC Commuter Choice I-95/395 Route 391 Buses (TF-000060)	678,250	0.00	678,250.00	0
Shop Equipment (TF-000051)	2,249,597	536,576.82	1,117,124.24	175,000
West Ox Maintenance Renovation (TF-000049)	470,000	21,192.23	247,379.77	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$181,533,677</b>	<b>\$37,050,681.47</b>	<b>\$57,659,309.36</b>	<b>\$38,645,644</b>