

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 2021 operated 93 routes providing primarily intra-county service and access to Metrorail stations serving County residents. The system includes an authorized fleet of 329 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 2022.

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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 1.8 million student passenger trips. In FY 2020, approximately 12,500 student SmartTrip cards were distributed to schools. 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 awards from 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 Washington D.C. As of March 2020, Route 699 provided over 3,000 passenger trips per week, resulting in over 238,600 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 March 2020, this route provided over 1,500 weekly trips and has provided approximately 67,800 passenger trips since inception. In January 2020, Fairfax Connector implemented an additional route, Route 396, along the I-395 corridor that improves connectivity from Springfield to the Pentagon. As of March 2020, Route 396 provided over 1,000 passenger trips per week. Subsequently, in August 2020, the Fairfax Connector implemented Route 697 along the I-66 corridor with service to the L'Enfant Plaza area. The above ridership information is pre-COVID data, and the above routes had suspended operations from April to August 2020.

Phase II ITS projects are planned for FY 2022 include final testing and implementation of the voice over internet protocol (VOIP) to replace the legacy radio system; deployment of mobile supervisor technology to assist station and field supervisors with providing enhanced customer services; and evaluation of electronic vehicle inspection.

FCDOT continues its commitment to environmental protection practices. As part of this effort, Fairfax Connector buses will continue to use 'Clean Diesel Technology' that allows for cost efficient compliance with the federal government's stringent emissions standards for urban buses. To further reduce emissions, Fairfax Connector also has a very strict idling policy combined with technology to reduce excessive idling. Within County facilities, FCDOT adheres to best practices and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) standards for monitoring and testing. For these programs, the bus operational garage renovations included storage areas for contaminated parts, enhanced stormwater collection areas, and bio-tree filters.

FCDOT continues to invest in infrastructure with major construction projects. As part of the Silver Line extension, several intermodal and parking facilities have been built. The new Metrorail stations will have new bays and Kiss-and-Ride spaces. New parking garages at Herndon-Monroe and Innovation Stations were finished providing alternatives to commuters who need access to Metrorail and the Connector bus system. In late-2020, construction of the new Springfield Parking Garage began. This facility will replace the Old Keene Mill Park-and-Ride Lot. In addition, FCDOT and DPWES are currently working on finalizing the design for the Monument Drive Commuter Parking

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Garage and Transit Center. Construction of this facility is expected to start in late 2021 and completed in 2023.

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 2022, this amount totals \$37.4 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 2022 General Fund transfer to Fund 40000 is \$40.6 million, equivalent to the FY 2021 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. These funds will support scheduled purchases in FY 2022 and most of the purchases for FY 2023.

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 2022 Fairfax County subsidy is estimated at \$6.4 million, an increase of \$125,995 over the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan level.

Pandemic Response and Impact

In response to COVID-19, Fairfax Connector adjusted service to continue to provide essential trips while mitigating public health concerns while experiencing an expected significant drop in ridership. From March 2020 through August 2020, Fairfax Connector operated at a reduced level of service and suspended fare collection and front door boarding from March 2020 until January 2021 to minimize contact between drivers and passengers. Since January 2021, the Connector has continued to provide full-service levels and passengers are required to wear a mask or face covering, as federally mandated, when taking public transit in Fairfax County. Fairfax Connector received relief under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and 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. Additionally, the economic impacts of the pandemic have adversely affected both state transportation revenues, such as gas tax, and local transportation revenues. County staff continue to monitor these revenues to meet its ongoing regional transit requirements.

FY 2022 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2022 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 4, 2021.

Increased Expenditure Requirements	\$29,935,455
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An increase of \$29,935,455 in expenditures is reflected. This includes a net increase of \$10,253,960 in operating requirements for the Connector system associated with a contract rate increase included in the five-year operating contract; the full-year impact of expanded North County service; the full-year impact of providing Springfield circulator service previously operated by Metrobus; the takeover of five additional Metrobus routes (3A, 3T, 15k, 29C, and 29W), service adjustments to complement the opening of Phase 2 of Metrorail Silver Line; and an anticipated reduction in cash fares based on reduced ridership from the pandemic. Reimbursements from WMATA for use of the West Ox Bus Facility are expected to be reduced by \$1,250,000 due to reduced bus operations and maintenance at that facility. A further \$125,995 is required for the County's operating share to the VRE. In addition, there is an increase of \$20,805,500 in capital projects due primarily to the cost associated with scheduled bus replacements.

Changes to FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2020 Carryover Review, FY 2021 Mid-Year Review, FY 2021 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2021.

Carryover Adjustments	\$14,873,712
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As part of the FY 2020 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$14,873,712 primarily due to the carryover of balances from FY 2020, including unspent capital project balances totaling \$7,002,337 and \$2,099,785 in operating encumbrances. An increase of \$5,645,595 supports Fairfax Connector service, including \$3,425,000 to offset an anticipated decrease in cash fares credited to the contracted service provider, \$1,173,457 to absorb bus routes in the Huntington area transferred from WMATA, and \$1,047,138 to expand revenue hours for North County Bus Service connecting the George Bush Center for Intelligence with the McLean Metrorail Station. Additionally, a \$125,995 increase is required to satisfy Fairfax County's share of the subsidy for Virginia Railway Express (VRE).

Metro CARES Funding - Transit Systems

In addition to reducing operating subsidy requirements to local jurisdictions in FY 2021, the Metro Board on April 23, 2020 agreed to provide a portion of their CARES funding to support regional transit systems. As a result, the County received \$26.3 million in CARES Act credits allocated by Metro to support the County's transit system. These credits can be used toward capital, operating, and other transit-related expenses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the loss of passenger fare revenues. The CARES credits are held at the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) until spent. As part of the *FY 2020 Carryover Review*, \$8 million of these credits were appropriated in Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, to offset an anticipated reduction in Fairfax Connector fare revenue, and an additional \$2.9 million will be used for the same purpose in FY 2022. The remaining \$15.4 million will be held in reserve for future unanticipated issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Fund 40000.

Performance Measurement Results

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership for FY 2020 has been significantly impacted. Total Fairfax Connector ridership in FY 2020 was 6,783,112, which is a decrease of 19 percent from the FY 2019 ridership level 8,334,616. From March 2020 to the end of the fiscal year, ridership declined by 75 percent from the normal daily average. Fairfax Connector resumed full service on all routes starting Saturday, August 29, 2020, with service enhancements including a new commuter route from the Stringfellow Road Park-and-Ride Lot to Southwest Washington, D.C. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairfax Connector maintained approximately 70 percent of its service to ensure customers dependent on transit had access to essential jobs and vital services and could practice social distancing on Fairfax Connector buses.

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.

Due to health and safety concerns stemming from the pandemic, the VRE ridership surveys used to gather this data were not conducted per standard practice. As a result, the percent change in VRE passenger boardings is not available for FY 2020 and cannot be estimated for FY 2021 and FY 2022 at this time. DOT will work with VRE to either develop an estimate or a new indicator based on data available from VRE.

Indicator	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Estimate	FY 2022 Estimate
Fairfax Connector						
Percent change in FAIRFAX CONNECTOR passengers	(3.69%)	0.26%	0.25%	(18.62%)	4.67%	0.00%
Percent change in service provided for platform miles	(0.38%)	1.78%	2.93%	(6.22%)	14.00%	8.57%
Percent change in service provided for platform hours	2.01%	0.49%	1.98%	(4.26%)	8.36%	10.02%
Commuter Rail						
Percent change in VRE passengers boarding at stations in Fairfax County	1.6%	(3.6%)	0.0%	NA	NA	TBD

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2022-adopted-performance-measures-pm>

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FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2022 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2022 Adopted Budget Plan
Beginning Balance	\$12,623,663	\$0	\$10,118,656	\$18,300,000	\$18,300,000
Revenue:					
Miscellaneous Revenue ¹	\$199,614	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
SmarTrip Revenue ²	4,438,310	6,100,000	1,525,000	4,737,702	4,737,702
Bus Advertising	319,871	300,000	300,000	250,000	250,000
Bus Shelter Program	80,500	156,750	156,750	156,750	156,750
WMATA Reimbursements, West Ox Bus Operations Center ³	1,083,354	1,750,000	1,750,000	500,000	500,000
State Aid (NVTC) Operating ⁴	6,211,927	14,331,674	14,614,592	23,323,250	23,323,250
State Aid (NVTC) Capital ⁵	0	0	0	19,416,000	19,416,000
State Aid (CARES Credit) ⁶	0	0	26,300,000	0	0
Tolls Revenues (NVTC) Operating	7,973,877	2,739,360	2,739,360	3,487,122	3,487,122
North County Bus Service - CIA ⁷	0	0	1,047,138	1,254,052	1,254,052
VA Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) Operating for I-95 Express Service ⁸	295,900	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Commonwealth Transportation Board Offset Funding ⁹	1,848,416	0	0	0	0
Total Revenue	\$22,451,769	\$25,777,784	\$48,832,840	\$53,524,876	\$53,524,876
Transfers In:					
General Fund (10001)	\$40,633,472	\$40,633,472	\$40,633,472	\$40,633,472	\$40,633,472
Metro Operations & Construction (30000)	3,032,151	3,153,437	3,153,437	3,279,574	3,279,574
Contributed Roadway Improvements (30040) ¹⁰	0	0	0	181,732	181,732
County and Regional Transportation Projects (40010) ¹¹	36,974,719	38,430,481	38,430,481	37,400,000	37,400,000
Total Transfers In	\$80,640,342	\$82,217,390	\$82,217,390	\$81,494,778	\$81,494,778
Total Available	\$115,715,774	\$107,995,174	\$141,168,886	\$153,319,654	\$153,319,654

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FUND STATEMENT

Category	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2022 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2022 Adopted Budget Plan
Expenditures:					
Fairfax Connector					
Fairfax Connector Operating Expenses					
Transit Administration	\$1,079,583	\$3,519,220	\$4,742,081	\$4,067,685	\$4,067,685
Huntington Division	34,146,841	36,745,798	40,074,118	40,229,259	40,229,259
Reston-Herndon Division	28,987,720	32,788,129	35,418,002	34,627,868	34,627,868
West Ox Division, County Connector	23,468,850	23,394,005	24,458,330	27,776,300	27,776,300
Subtotal - Connector Operating Expenses	\$87,682,994	\$96,447,152	\$104,692,531	\$106,701,112	\$106,701,112
Capital Equipment	\$1,183,207	\$0	\$28,312	\$0	\$0
Capital Projects	9,394,541	3,545,000	10,019,026	24,350,500	24,350,500
Total Connector Service	\$98,260,742	\$99,992,152	\$114,739,869	\$131,051,612	\$131,051,612
Total WMATA Service	\$1,083,354	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Total Bus Services, Connector & WMATA	\$99,344,096	\$101,742,152	\$116,489,869	\$131,551,612	\$131,551,612
Commuter Rail ¹²	\$6,253,022	\$6,253,022	\$6,379,017	\$6,379,017	\$6,379,017
Total Expenditures	\$105,597,118	\$107,995,174	\$122,868,886	\$137,930,629	\$137,930,629
Total Disbursements	\$105,597,118	\$107,995,174	\$122,868,886	\$137,930,629	\$137,930,629
Ending Balance	\$10,118,656	\$0	\$18,300,000	\$15,389,025	\$15,389,025
State Aid CARES Credit Reserve ⁶	\$0	\$0	\$18,300,000	\$15,389,025	\$15,389,025
Transportation-Related Requirements	10,118,656	0	0	0	0
Unreserved Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

¹ 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.

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

³ 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 reduced in FY 2022 because of lower operations and maintenance costs due to decreased utilization by WMATA.

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

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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, reducing the annual state aid contribution for Fairfax County's share of its WMATA subsidy for FY 2021. These credits will be held at NVTC. For the FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan, \$8.0 million of the CARES credits is utilized to offset anticipated reductions in Fairfax Connector SmarTrip and cash fare revenue and an additional \$2.9 million will be used for the same purpose in FY 2022. The remaining \$15.4 million will be held in reserve for future years or unanticipated issues.

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⁷ North County Bus Service to provide public transit services between the George Bush Center for Intelligence and McLean Metrorail Station, as well as McLean Community Business Center for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) riders. Funding in the amount of \$1,254,052 includes \$798,052 in Operating Expenses and \$456,000 for Capital Equipment to support bus acquisition and operations in FY 2022. The purchase price of the buses will be reimbursed over five years.

⁸ Reimbursement from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) for operating assistance in implementing I-95 Express Lane bus services.

⁹ Funding received from the Commonwealth Transportation Board to offset fare revenues lost as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁰ FY 2022 reflects a transfer of \$181,732 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. Beginning in FY 2022, Fairfax Connector will operate the service and receive the contributions.

¹¹ The FY 2022 transfer of \$37.4 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 \$13.5 million is from HB 2313 local revenues.

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

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SUMMARY OF CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Total Project Estimate	FY 2020 Actual Expenditures	FY 2021 Revised Budget	FY 2022 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2022 Adopted Budget Plan
ADA Remediation (TF-000037)	\$1,160,348	\$382,377.00	\$309,164.04	\$0	\$0
Backlick Rd North Park-N-Ride Bike Improvement (TS-000027)	121,760	0.00	121,760.00	0	0
Bus Shelter Replacement (TS-000022)	987,466	175,475.14	288,553.13	150,000	150,000
Connector Intelligent Transportation Sys (3G40-003-000)	10,325,580	716,344.79	2,808,616.14	500,000	500,000
Fairfax Connector Buses - Capital (TF-000048)	25,704,159	5,832,158.86	0.00	19,872,000	19,872,000
Fairfax Connector Studies (2G40-165-000)	421,499	107,314.64	0.00	0	0
Fairfax Connector Support Vehicles (TF-000053)	300,000	0.00	0.00	300,000	300,000
Farebox Upgrade/Replacement (TF-000039)	3,000,000	169.76	2,467,795.43	0	0
Herndon Garage Security (TF-000046)	33,083	33,083.48	0.00	0	0
Hunting Operating Facility (TF-000014)	1,279,678	359,889.37	32,623.61	0	0
Mid-Life Overhaul (TF-000040)	12,338,975	1,787,727.51	3,470,513.15	2,932,500	2,932,500
Shop Equipment (TF-000051)	764,597	0.00	168,596.96	596,000	596,000
Silver Line Snow Removal Equipment (TF-000050)	141,403	0.00	141,403.04	0	0
West Ox Maintenance Renovation (TF-000049)	210,000	0.00	210,000.00	0	0
Total	\$56,788,548	\$9,394,540.55	\$10,019,025.50	\$24,350,500	\$24,350,500