CEO REPORT

APRIL 2019



OUR MISSION

The Virginia Railway Express, a joint project of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission, will provide safe, cost-effective, accessible, reliable, convenient, and customer responsive commuter-oriented rail passenger service. VRE contributes to the economic vitality of its member jurisdictions as an integral part of a balanced, intermodal regional transportation system.



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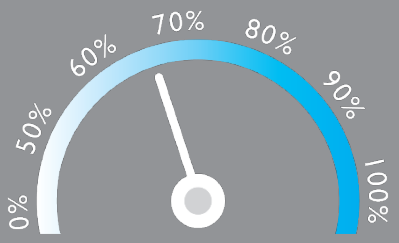
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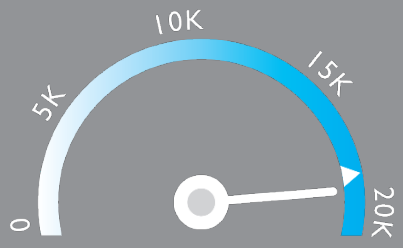


SUCCESS AT A GLANCE



PARKING UTILIZATION

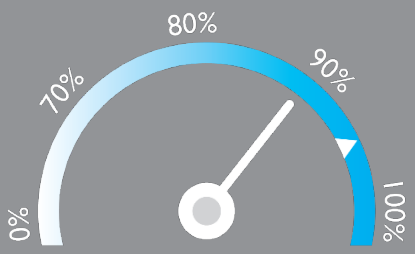
The total number of parking spaces used in the VRE system during the month, divided by the total number of parking spaces available.



AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP

The average number of boardings each operating day inclusive of Amtrak Step-Up boardings but excluding "S" schedule operating days.

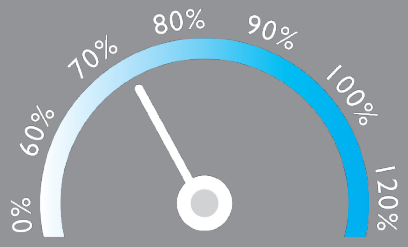
▲ Same month, previous year.



ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

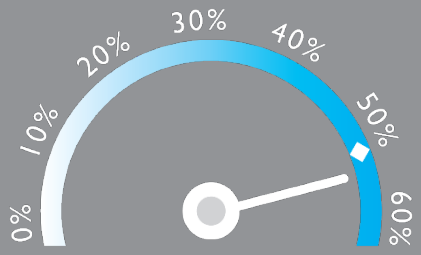
Percentage of trains that arrive at their destination within five minutes of the schedule.

▲ Same month, previous year.



SYSTEM CAPACITY

The percent of peak hour train seats occupied. The calculation excludes reverse flow and non-peak hour trains.



OPERATING RATIO

The monthly operating revenues divided by the monthly operating expenses, which depicts the percent of operating costs paid by the riders.

◆ Board-established goal.

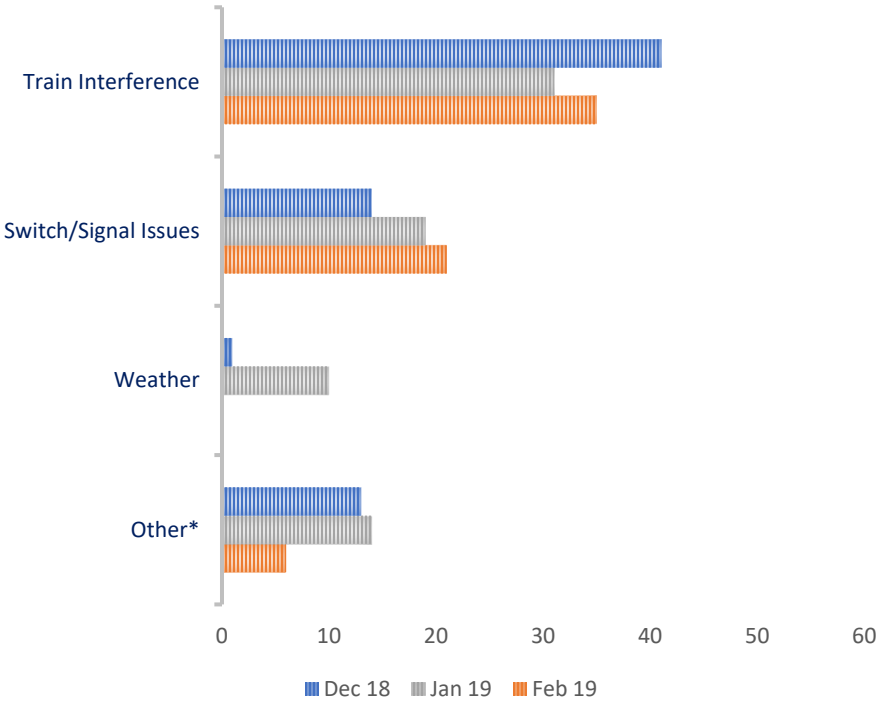
FEBRUARY 2019

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

OUR RECORD

	February 2019	January 2019	February 2018
Manassas Line	89%	88%	96%
Fredericksburg Line	90% (89.9%)	89%	95%
System Wide	89%	88%	95%

PRIMARY REASON FOR DELAY



*Includes trains that were delayed due to operational testing and passenger handling.

VRE operated 576 trains in February.

Our on-time rate for February was 89%.

Sixty-two of the trains arrived more than five minutes late to their final destinations. Thirty-three of those late trains were on the Manassas Line (89%), and 29 of those late trains were on the Fredericksburg Line (89.9%).

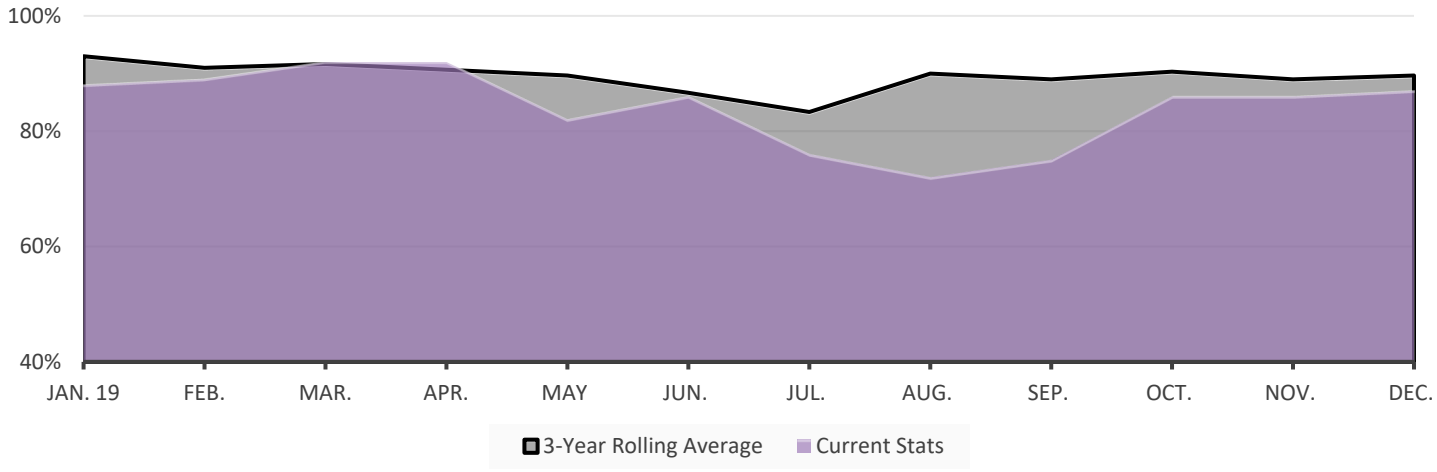
The Fredericksburg and Manassas Lines both finished the month just below goal. Snow caused a service cancellation on the 20th, but weather was not a factor affecting on-time performance this month. While train interference continues to be the largest cause for delays, we also experienced an increase in switch/signal issues in February.

LATE TRAINS

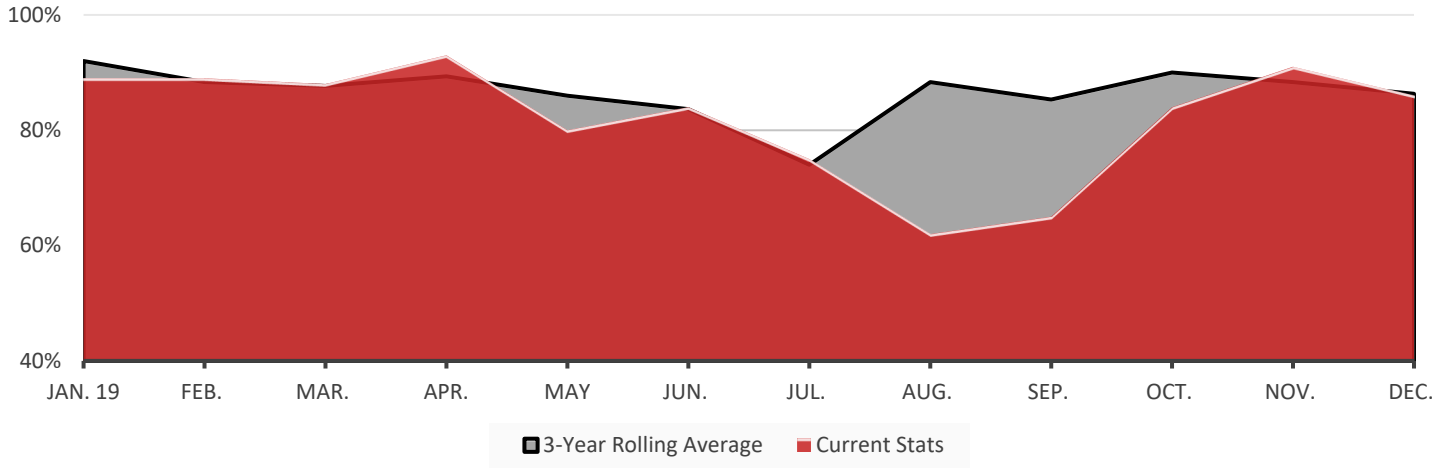
	System Wide			Fredericksburg Line			Manassas Line		
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Total late trains	69	74	62	37	36	29	32	38	33
Average minutes late	14	23	13	15	29	11	14	17	14
Number over 30 minutes	5	10	2	3	6	0	2	4	2

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

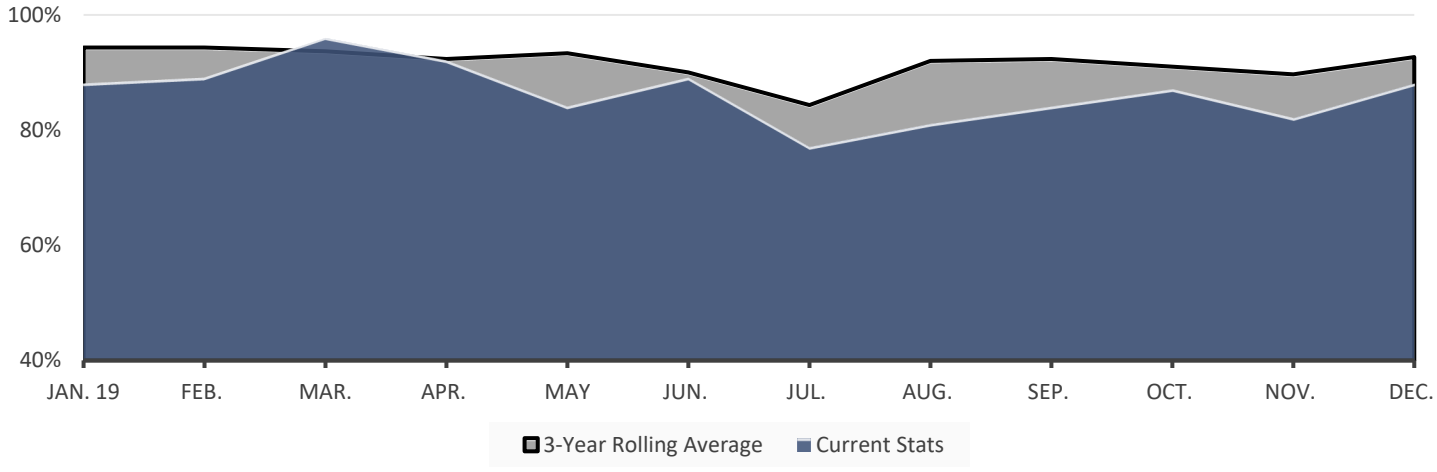
VRE SYSTEM



FREDERICKSBURG LINE

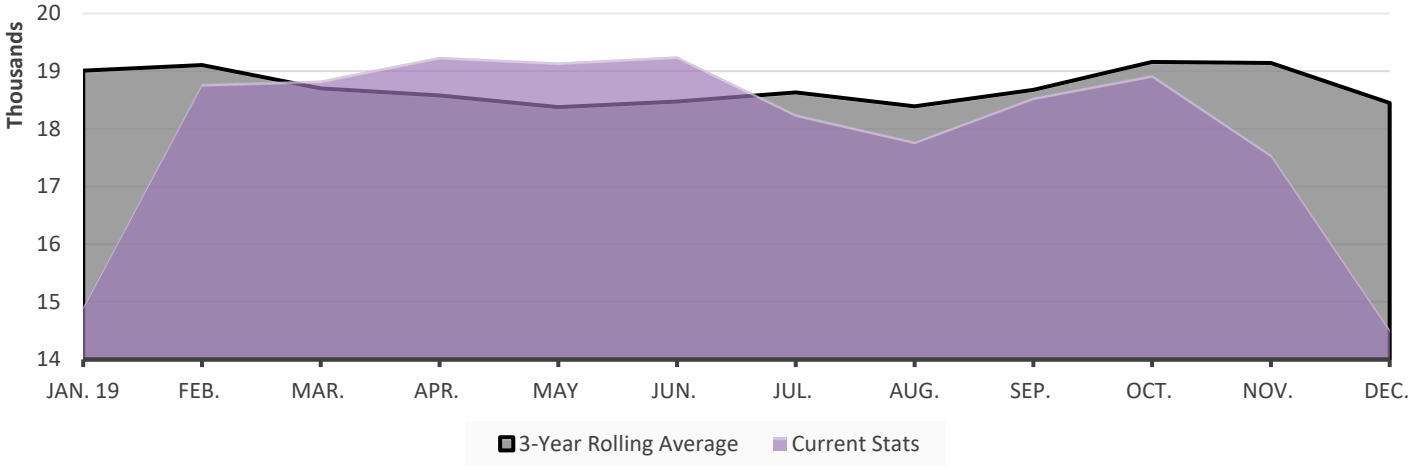


MANASSAS LINE

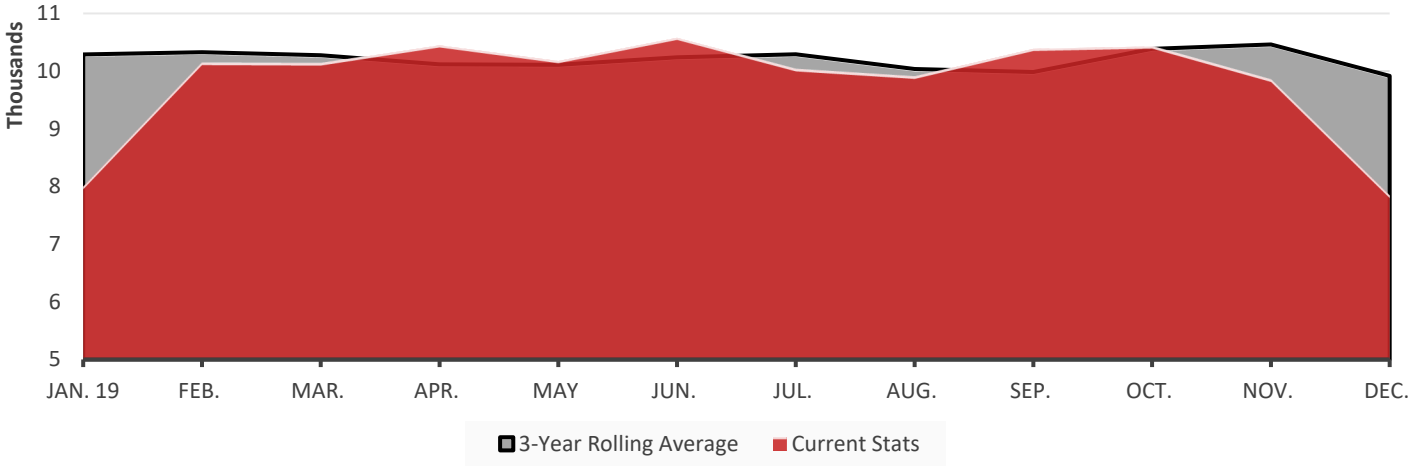


AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP

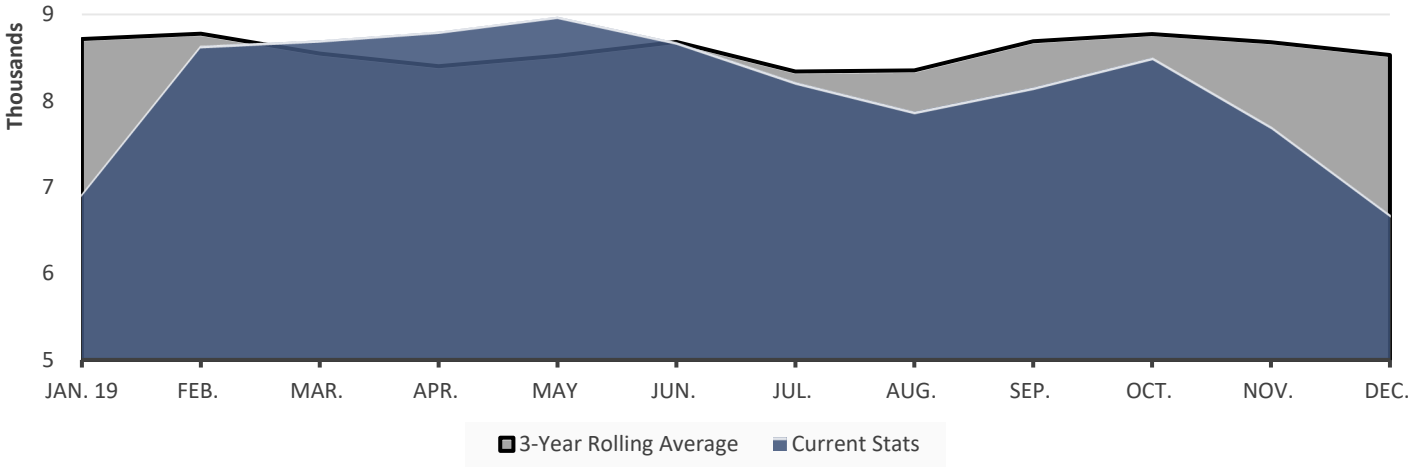
VRE SYSTEM



FREDERICKSBURG LINE



MANASSAS LINE



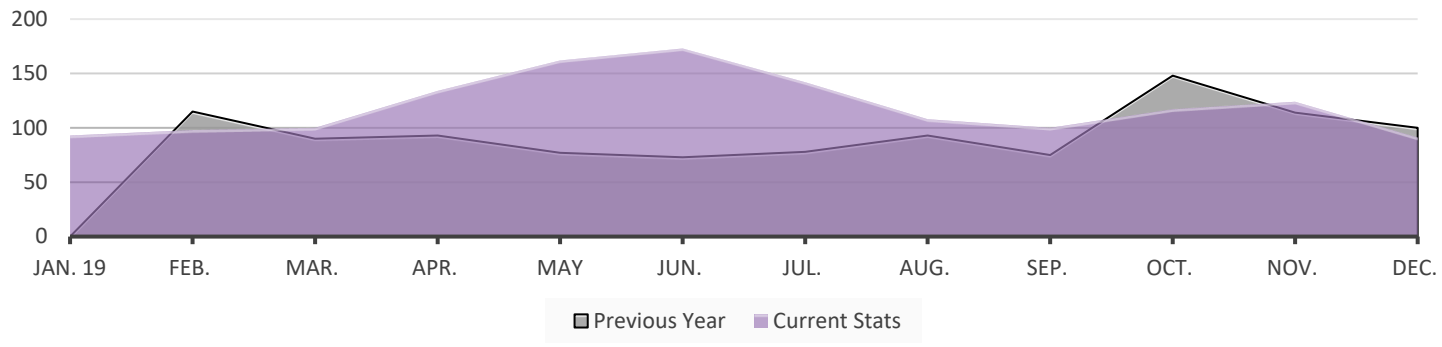
RIDERSHIP UPDATES

Average daily ridership (ADR) in February was approximately 18,800.

	February 2019	January 2019	February 2018
Monthly Ridership	337,964	298,263	363,591
Average Daily Ridership	18,776	14,913	19,136
Full Service Days	18	20	19
"S" Service Days	0	0	0

SUMMONSES ISSUED

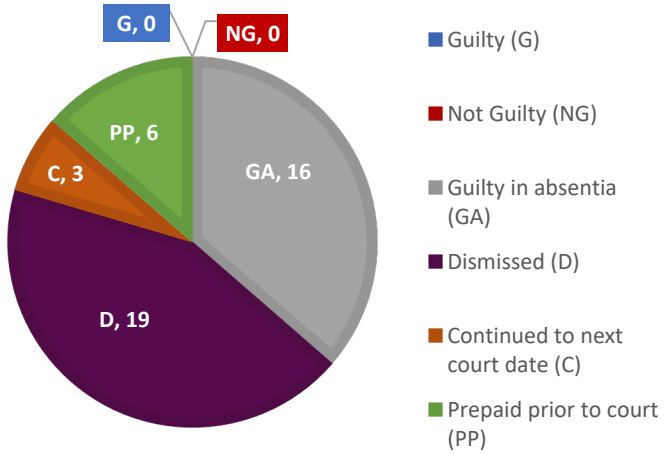
VRE SYSTEM



SUMMONSES WAIVED OUTSIDE OF COURT

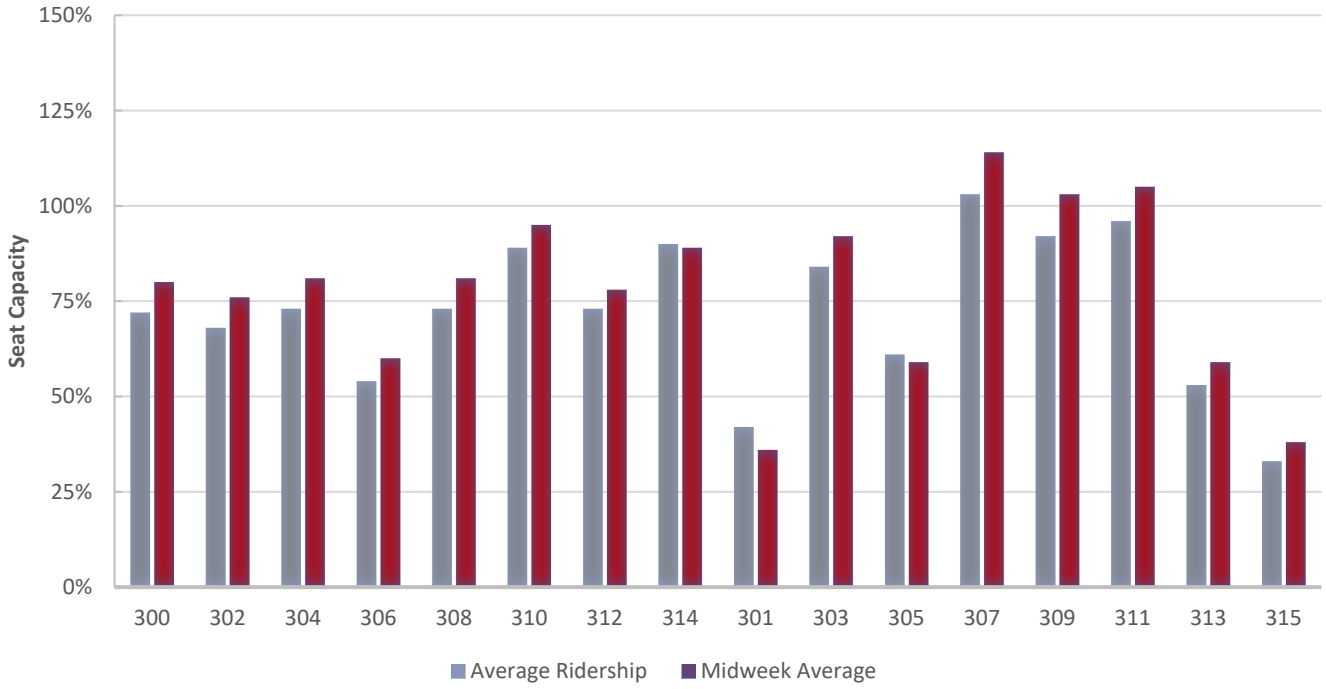
Reason for Dismissal	Occurrences
Passenger showed proof of a monthly ticket	20
One-time courtesy	5
Per the request of the conductor	17
Defective ticket	0
Per Ops Manager	0
Unique circumstances	0
Insufficient information	3
Lost and found ticket	0
Other	0
Total Waived	45

MONTHLY SUMMONSES COURT ACTION

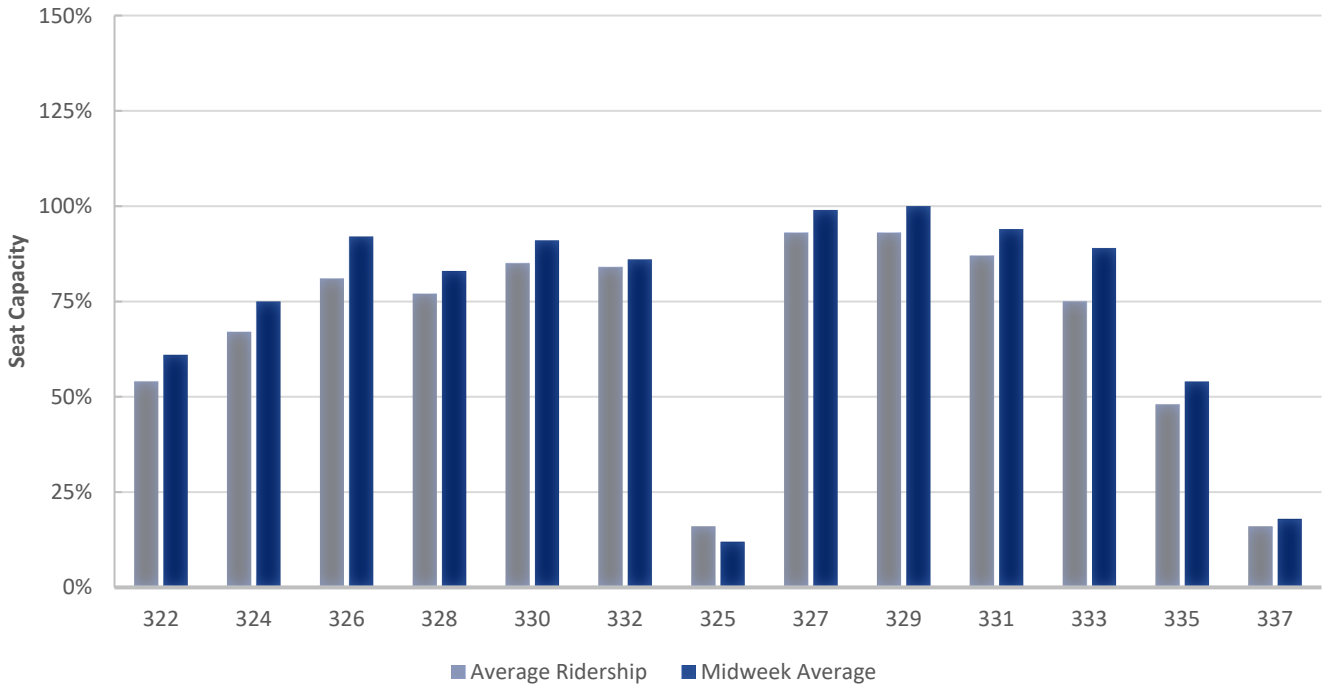


TRAIN UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE

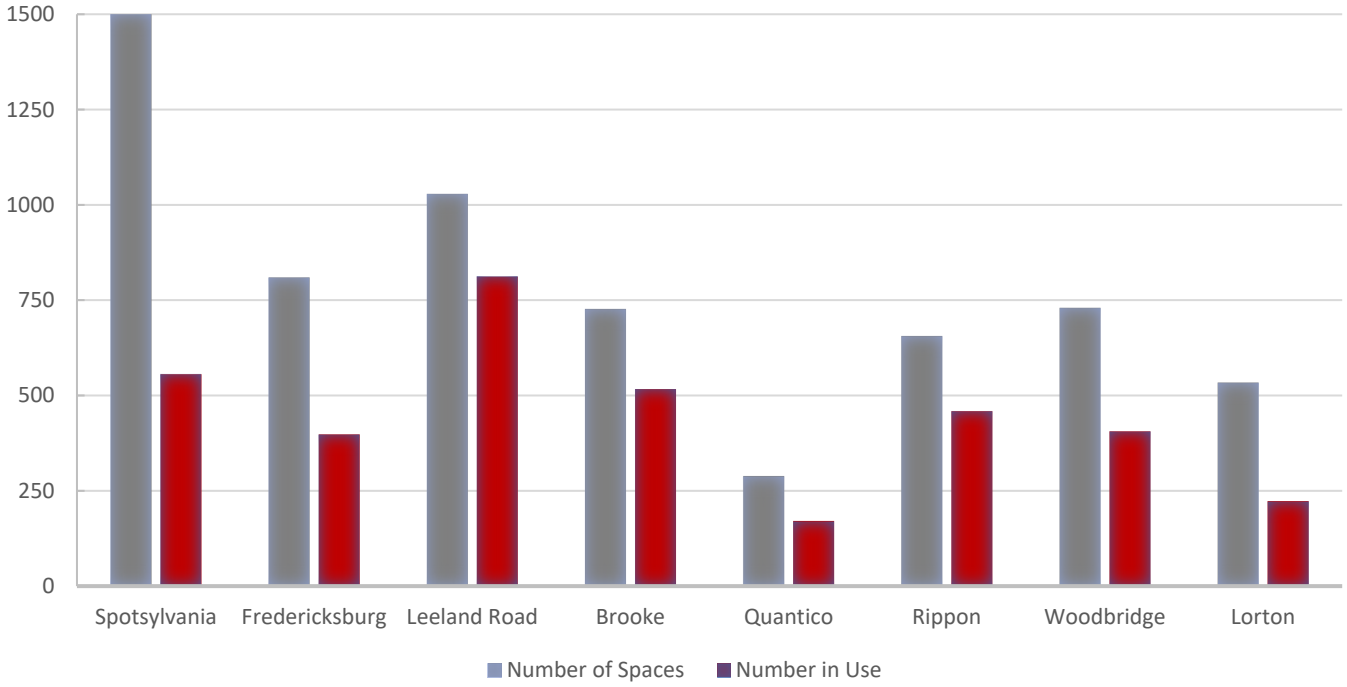


MANASSAS LINE

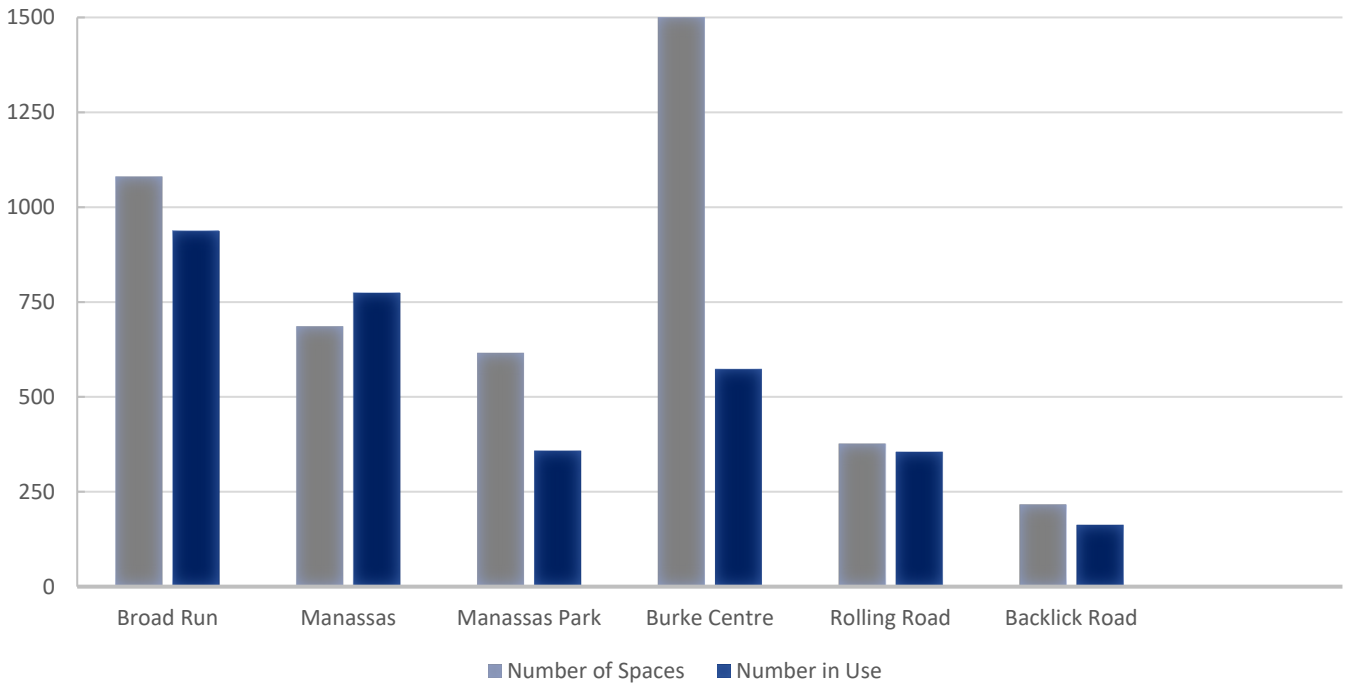


PARKING UTILIZATION

FREDERICKSBURG LINE



MANASSAS LINE



FINANCIAL REPORT

Fare revenue through the first eight months of FY 2019 is approximately $360,000 below budget (an unfavorable variance of -1.3%) and is 1.9% below the same period in FY 2018.

Ridership for most of January was down approximately 20-25% from normal levels due to the partial federal government shutdown from December 22, 2018 through January 25, 2019. However, revenue for the month was down only 5-10% due to the significant majority of customers who had preordered multi-ride passes. Since late January, ridership and revenue have returned to pre-shutdown levels.

The operating ratio through February is 54%, which is above VRE's budgeted operating ratio of 52% for the full twelve months of FY 2019. VRE is required to budget a minimum operating ratio of 50%.

A summary of the FY 2019 financial results through February follows, including information on major revenue and expense categories. Please note that these figures are preliminary and unaudited.

FY 2019 Operating Budget Report
Month Ended February 28, 2018

	CURR. MO. ACTUAL	CURR. MO. BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD $ VARIANCE	YTD % VARIANCE	TOTAL FY19 BUDGET
Operating Revenue							
Passenger Ticket Revenue	3,341,481	3,222,400	27,623,593	27,984,000	(360,407)	-1.3%	42,400,000
Other Operating Revenue	4,007	17,100	304,847	148,500	156,347	105.3%	225,000
Subtotal Operating Revenue	3,345,488	3,239,500	27,928,441	28,132,500	(204,059)	-0.7%	42,625,000
Jurisdictional Subsidy (1)	-	-	17,767,748	17,767,748	-	0.0%	13,116,039
Federal/State/Other Jurisdictional Subsidy	2,459,271	2,513,832	20,451,741	20,627,997	(176,256)	-0.9%	31,388,025
Appropriation from Reserve/Other Income	-	75,240	-	653,400	(653,400)	0.0%	990,000
Interest Income	137,453	15,200	876,189	132,000	744,189	563.8%	200,000
Total Operating Revenue	5,942,211	5,843,772	67,024,118	67,313,645	(289,527)	-0.4%	88,319,064
Operating Expenses							
Departmental Operating Expenses	6,382,813	6,013,546	51,350,947	54,664,537	3,313,591	6.1%	82,050,714
Debt Service	510,344	510,273	4,082,919	4,082,185	(734)	0.0%	6,222,350
Other Non-Departmental Expenses	-	3,496	11,737	30,360	18,623	0.0%	46,000
Total Operating Expenses	6,893,156	6,527,315	55,445,602	58,777,083	3,331,480	5.7%	88,319,064
Net income (loss) from Operations	(950,945)	(683,543)	11,578,516	8,536,562	3,041,953		-
						Budgeted	***52%***
Operating Ratio			**54%**	**51%**		***Goal***	***50%***

(1) Total jurisdictional subsidy is $17,767,748. Portion shown as budgeted is attributed to Operating Fund only.

FACILITIES UPDATE

The following is a status update of VRE facilities projects:

Completed projects:

1. Repairs to fascia and soffit at Woodbridge Station east building
2. Replacement of gutters and downspouts at Rippon Station
3. Replacement of Spotsylvania Station poster case
4. Manassas Park Station parking lot pothole repairs

Projects scheduled to be completed this quarter:

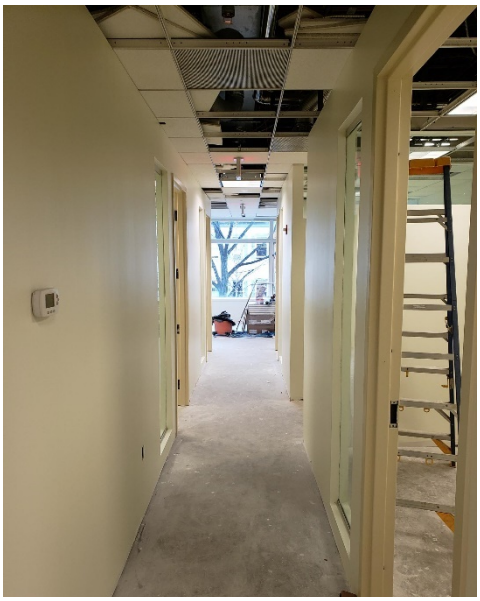
1. Replacement of tactile warning strip at L'Enfant Station
2. Repairs to platform concrete at L'Enfant Station
3. Issuance of IFB for painting of Franconia-Springfield Station
4. Repairs to erosion near Leeland Road Station retaining walls
5. Repairs to platform concrete at Manassas Station
6. Issuance of IFB for pavement repairs and striping at Rippon and Leeland Road Stations and Fredericksburg Lot G
7. Installation of automated parking count system at stations with parking lots

Projects scheduled to be initiated this quarter:

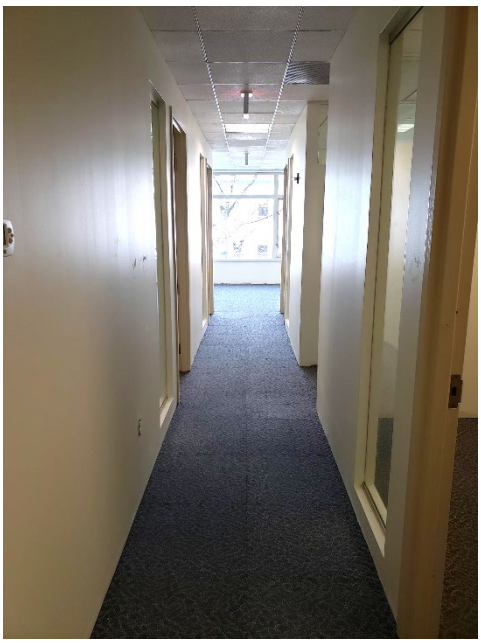
1. Design of Phase 2 renovations to Alexandria Headquarters Suite 202
2. Design of platform widening at L'Enfant Station
3. Replacement of signage at additional stations (locations TBD)

Ongoing projects:

1. Renovations to Alexandria Headquarters Suite 201
2. Development of specifications for modernization of east elevator at Woodbridge Station
3. Development of IFB for canopy roof replacement at Backlick Road Station
4. Replacement of parking lot entrance signs at various stations
5. Replacement of waste and recycling receptacles at various stations



VRE Suite 201 Renovations In Progress



VRE Suite 201 Renovations Nearly Complete

UPCOMING PROCUREMENTS

- Purchase of Passenger Elevators
- Construction of the Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade Facility
- Construction Management Services for the Lifecycle Overhaul and Upgrade Facility
- Program Management Services
- Graphic Design Services
- Canopy Roof Replacement at the Backlick Road Station
- Modernization of VRE Woodbridge Station East Elevator
- Passenger Car Wheelchair Lift Assemblies
- Seat Bottoms for Passenger Cars
- Construction of Benchmark Road Slope Stabilization
- Construction of Rolling Road Platform Extension
- Purchase of LED Light Fixtures
- Construction of L'Enfant South Storage Track Wayside Power
- Variable Messaging System Replacement
- Tactile Strip Replacements
- Pavement Repairs and Striping at the Rippon and Leeland Road Stations and Fredericksburg Lot G
- Franconia-Springfield Station Painting Services
- State Government Relations Services
- Engineering and Environmental Services for the VRE Crystal City Station Improvements

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATES

The following is a status update of VRE capital projects:

Completed projects or major project milestones:

1. VRE Transit Development Plan (TDP) Update
2. New York Avenue Midday Storage Replacement Facility—Amtrak comments on concept design will be addressed during preliminary design; environmental documentation submitted to FTA for approval

Projects or project phases scheduled to be completed this quarter:

3. Brooke Station Improvements – Draft 30% Complete Plans
4. Lorton Station Improvements – Draft 60% Complete Plans
5. Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements – Draft 60% Complete Plans

Projects or project phases scheduled to be initiated this quarter:

6. Invitation for Bids (IFB) for Rolling Road Station Improvements
7. Final design and construction of temporary platform for Quantico Station Improvements
8. Project Development for L'Enfant Station Improvements
9. RFP advertised for LOU Construction Management

Ongoing projects:

10. Broad Run Expansion (BRX)
11. Manassas Park Parking Improvements
12. Rolling Road Station Improvements
13. Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) – Land Acquisition
14. Lifecycle Overhaul & Upgrade Facility (LOU)
15. Leeland Road Station Improvements
16. Brooke Station Improvements
17. Quantico Station Improvements
18. Rippon Station Improvements
19. Lorton Station Improvements
20. Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements

21. Alexandria Station Improvements
22. Alexandria Station Track 1 Access (Slaters Lane)
23. Crystal City Station Improvements
24. L'Enfant Train Storage Track - South
25. L'Enfant Station Improvements
26. New York Avenue Midday Storage Facility
27. Potomac Shores VRE Station – *design by others*
28. Long Bridge Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - *study by others*
29. Washington Union Station Improvements Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - *study by others*
30. DC2RVA Environmental Impact Statement – *study by others*

Projects Progress Report to Follow

PASSENGER FACILITIES

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	PHASE CD	PD	EC	RW	FD	CN
Alexandria Station Improvements	Eliminate at-grade track crossing, add elevators, modify platforms.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
	Modify Slaters Lane Interlocking for passenger trains on Track #1.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
	Extend and widen East Platform and elevate West Platform.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Franconia-Springfield Station Improvements	Extend both platforms and widen East Platform for future third track. ⬟	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Lorton Station Improvements	Construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. ⬟	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Rippon Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. ⬟	◆	●	●	N/A		
Potomac Shores Station Improvements	New VRE station and parking in Prince William County provided by private developer.	◆	●	◆	N/A		
Quantico Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Brooke Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. ⬟	◆	●	●	N/A		
Leeland Road Station Improvements	Extend existing platform, construct new second platform with pedestrian overpass. ⬟	◆	●	●	N/A		
Manassas Park Parking Improvements	Parking garage to increase parking capacity to 1,100 spaces.	◆	◆	●	N/A		
Rolling Road Station Improvements	Extend existing platform and rehabilitate existing station	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	
Crystal City Station Improvements	Replace existing side platform with new, longer island platform.	◆	●	●	N/A		
L'Enfant Station Improvements	Replace existing platform with wider, longer island platform. Add fourth track (VA-LE)	◆			N/A		

PHASE: CD - Conceptual Design PE - Preliminary Engineering EC - Environment Clearance RW - Right of Way Acquisition FD - Final Design CN - Construction

STATUS: ◆ Completed ● Underway ■ On Hold ⬟ part of the "Penta-Platform" program

[1] Total project cost estimate in adopted FY2020 CIP Budget; percentage complete based on VRE Operations Board authorization

2 Does not include minor (< $50,000) operating expenditures

* $2,181,630 authorization divided across five "Penta-Platform" program stations

ESTIMATED COSTS ($)							STATUS
Total[1]	Funded	Unfunded	Authorized	Expended[2]	Percent Complete[1]	Project Completion Date	
31,875,014	31,875,014	-	2,382,759	2,193,257	90%	4th QTR 2020	VRE Ops. Board approved revised design contract; design underway.
7,000,000	7,000,000	-	467,500	270,000	60%	2nd QTR 2019	Materials being delivered to site.
2,400,000	400,000	2,000,000	-	-	5%	4th QTR 2020	Design work on east platform only; west platform improvements unfunded.
13,000,000	13,000,000	-	*	341,361	30%	4th QTR 2022	PE design and EC complete; FD start pending with anticipated completion 4th QTR 2019.
16,150,000	16,150,000	-	*	417,438	30%	4th QTR 2022	PE design and EC complete; FD start pending with anticipated completion 4th QTR 2019.
16,634,793	16,634,793	-	*	382,584	20%	4th QTR 2023	PE design/EC completion pending CSXT design review with anticipated completion in 3rd QTR 2019.
No costs for VRE. Private developer providing station.					10%	TBD	Potomac Shores VRE Station 30% re-design initiated to include parking structure.
18,372,949	18,372,949	0	-	-	30%	TBD	FD start 1st QTR 2019. SMART SCALE grant agreement pending.
23,391,019	23,391,019	-	*	298,998	20%	4th QTR 2023	DRPT LONP received; REF grant pending. PE design/EC anticipated completion 3rd QTR 2019.
15,527,090	15,527,090	-	*	311,604	20%	4th QTR 2023	DRPT LONP received; REF grant pending. PE design/EC anticipated completion 3rd QTR 2019.
25,983,000	25,983,000	0	2,238,144	670,225	30%	4th QTR 2022	FD underway. Meeting scheduled with Governing Body to discuss value engineering recommendations.
2,000,000	2,000,000	-	442,900	335,534	80%	3rd QTR 2020	Invitation for Bids (IFB) pending start 2019 construction season and NS Construction Agreement.
49,940,000	5,410,000	44,530,000	399,121	393,642	100%	2nd QTR 2023	DRPT LONP received. Completion of PE design & EC pending excution of REF grant by DRPT.
70,650,000	3,226,000	67,424,000	2,980,000	58,793	2%	2nd QTR 2023	DRPT LONP received. Real estate research in progress under LONP.

TRACK AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	PHASE					
		CD	PD	EC	RW	FD	CN
Hamilton-to-Crossroads Third Track	2¼-miles of new third track with CSXT design and construction of signal and track tie-ins.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	◆	◆

MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE FACILITIES

L'Enfant Train Storage Track - South	Conversion of CSXT Temporary Track to VRE Storage Track (1,350 feet) and Associated Signal Work and	◆	◆	◆	N/A	●	●
Lifecycle Overhaul & Upgrade Facility	New LOU facility to be added to the Crossroads MSF.	◆	◆	◆	N/A	◆	■
Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility - Land Acquisition	Acquisition of 16.5 acres of land, construction of two storage tracks and related site improvements.	◆	N/A	N/A	●	N/A	N/A
New York Avenue Midday Storage Facility	Midday storage facility replacement for Ivy City storage facility.	◆	●	●	●		

ROLLING STOCK

Passenger Railcar Procurement	Acquisition of 29 new railcars.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	◆
Positive Train Control	Implement Positive Train Control for all VRE locomotives and control cars.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	●

PLANNING, COMMUNICATIONS AND IT

Broad Run Expansion (was Gainesville-Haymarket Extension)	NEPA and PE for expanding commuter rail service capacity in Western Prince William County	◆	●	●	-	-	-
Mobile Ticketing	Implementation of a new mobile ticketing system.	◆	N/A	N/A	N/A	◆	●

PHASE: CD - Conceptual Design PE - Preliminary Engineering EC - Environment Clearance RW - Right of Way Acquisition FD - Final Design CN - Construction

STATUS: ◆ Completed ● Underway ■ On Hold

[1] Total project cost estimate in adopted FY2020 CIP Budget; percentage complete based on VRE Operations Board authorization

2 Does not include minor (< $50,000) operating expenditures

ESTIMATED COSTS ($)							STATUS
Total[1]	Funded	Unfunded	Authorized	Expended[2]	Percent Complete[1]	Project Completion Date	
32,500,000	32,500,000	-	33,285,519	30,578,003	90%	3rd QTR 2018	Close-out pending repair of storm damage to embankment.
3,965,000	3,965,000	-	2,937,323	1,699,610	60%	3rd QTR 2019	CSXT Construction Agreement received. CM underway.
38,183,632	38,183,632	-	3,176,039	2,143,583	70%	TBD	Completion of FD pending completion of land acquisition.
2,950,000	2,950,000	-	2,950,000	139,154	5%	TBD	On-going discussions with property owner; purchase offer to the owner pending.
89,666,508	89,666,508	-	3,588,305	1,467,308	40%	4th QTR 2020	Amtrak comments on concept design to be addressed as PE progresses. NEPA documentation submitted to FTA for approval.
75,264,693	75,264,693	-	69,457,809	47,915,644	70%	4th QTR 2020	All cars received. Completion date reflects end of warranty period.
14,191,833	14,191,833	-	10,294,079	7,984,451	80%	4th QTR 2018	Onboard installations ongoing.
137,230,000	83,825,501	53,404,499	5,222,796	4,468,476	90%	4th QTR 2022	Completion of PE design and EC underway.
3,510,307	3,510,307	-	3,510,627	2,282,853	70%	3rd QTR 2019	Big Commerce/Moovel collaboration undeway for web based ticketing portal. Uplift to new platform scheduled for mid-summer.

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

RIDE

ISSUE 1, 2019



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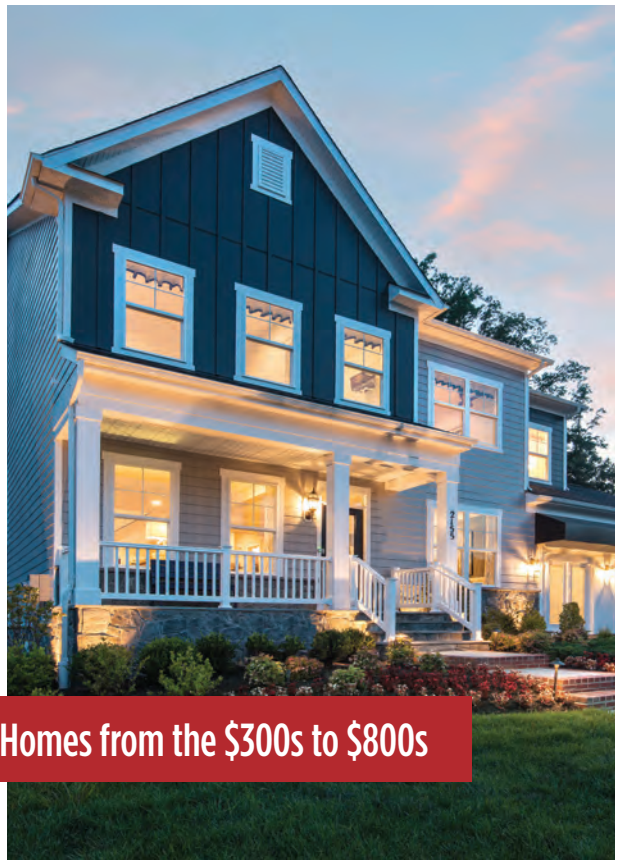
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IT'S THE LAW: VALIDATE BEFORE BOARDING

Don't wait to validate on VRE Mobile until the conductor asks for tickets. Your screen flashes for five minutes after validating to alert the conductor of your validation time.



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Editor in Chief: Cindy King

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Access RIDE online at VRE.org/RIDE

FROM THE CEO

NEW YEAR, NEW COMMUNICATION EFFORTS



DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer

Some riders feel we send too many Train Talk e-mails, others say we don't send enough ... while of course for others, we send just the right amount. As part of our New Year, New Communications efforts, we're sending more update e-mails, however we're also giving you more control over the type of information you receive from us. As we move further into 2019 and categorize our alert e-mails, you can more easily update your subscription preferences from the "subscription preferences" link in the footer of all Train Talk emails. If you're someone who does not care to receive system VRE News, simply opt out. Or if you do not follow when a train's GPS is not working, opt out of the support system notifications.

You'll also notice this year that we're incorporating courtesy reminders, FAQs, and safety guidelines in Train Talk e-mails and into our social media posts. This is in response to rider requests, and we hope the additional exposure of the messages increases awareness of these topics among all riders.

Additionally, you may have noticed that our website, vre.org, has a new look. Our new menu allows you to dive deeper into our site with less clicks, and you can now get a quick overview of holidays, special events and more through the operational calendar on the homepage. Additional website improvements are coming, so please be on the lookout for those in the coming months.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express



RIDE

MONTHLY VRE RIDER E-NEWSLETTER



Train Talk meets RIDE magazine. Look for the next newsletter in your inbox.

Cover image: RIDE magazine enthusiasts boarding in Spotsylvania.



LONG BRIDGE

STUDY TO IMPROVE RAILROAD CAPACITY

WHAT IS THE LONG BRIDGE?

The Long Bridge is the only railroad bridge connecting Virginia to Washington, D.C. As such, our trains must use the bridge between Crystal City, L'Enfant and Washington Union Station. This steel truss bridge built in 1904 has only two tracks, resulting in a system bottleneck with the competing rail time needs of CSX freight trains, Amtrak intercity passenger trains, and our commuter rail service.

THE LONG BRIDGE PROJECT

The Long Bridge Project aims to provide additional railroad capacity as the need to increase the number of trains in the region grows, as well as improve the reliability of railroad service through the area. To address the capacity issues and improve resiliency long-term, the project consists of potential improvements to the Long Bridge and related railroad infrastructure located between the Rosslyn (RO) Interlocking near Long Bridge Park in Arlington, Virginia and the L'Enfant (LE) Interlocking near 10th Street SW in the District.

LONG BRIDGE AND NEPA

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. NEPA is an "umbrella" law that encourages integrated compliance with other environmental laws so that a proposed project's impacts are comprehensively evaluated before implementation.

The Long Bridge Project's compliance with NEPA will include preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be made available for public comment. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead Federal agency for the EIS. The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is the local lead agency.

PROJECT ACTIVITY

In November 2018, the FRA and DDOT announced a project approach to be analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) currently under development. The DEIS will analyze retaining the current two-track bridge in addition to building a new two-track crossing upstream (from the existing bridge) – providing a total of four tracks in the Long Bridge corridor.

A separate bicycle and pedestrian bridge between the proposed new Long Bridge and the existing WMATA Yellow Line bridge will also be analyzed in an effort to mitigate impacts to publicly-owned park land.

VRE'S INVOLVEMENT

VRE is a cooperating agency in the environmental process and continues to collaborate with the FRA, DDOT, CSX Transportation (the owner of the bridge), and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

VRE will continue to work with the DEIS study partners, with the goal of publishing a Draft EIS in the Summer of 2019. This will be followed in the Spring of 2020 by a Final EIS and Record of Decision signaling the completion of the environmental process.

For more, visit:

longbridgeproject.com



DEIS Alternatives Recommended

1. Satisfy Purpose and Need:
   a. Add railroad capacity
   b. Provide network connectivity
   c. Enhance Railroad resiliency and redundancy

2. Retain existing two track bridge and construct new two track bridge upstream. Estimated conceptual costs: $1.3 to $1.6 B; 5 years to construct

3. Potential Section 4(f) Mitigation

Mitigation

Construct new and independent bike/pedestrian crossing between new Long Bridge and existing WMATA Yellow Line bridge

Schedule

1. Publish Draft EIS Summer 2019

2. Publish Final EIS Spring 2020 and execute Record of Decision (Includes mitigation commitments)

Funding/Project Delivery Options

1. Identify project sponsor

2. Find funding for final design and construction

3. Explore project delivery options



A WORLD AT WAR ART EXHIBIT (FREE)

Through April
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
The National Museum of the Marine Corps,
18900 Jefferson Davis Hwy.,
Triangle, VA 22172
Learn more: usmcmuseum.com

OCCOQUAN PEEP SHOW (FREE)

April 20 from 11 AM - 4 PM

Over 20 businesses display creative dioramas using Easter peeps. Visit each participating shop (designated with yellow balloons) to view what amazing things the peeps will be doing and vote for your favorite display! Hosted by the Occoquan Merchant Guild. The Town invites the Occoquan community to participate in crafting and displaying their own Peep diorama creations with the Town of Occoquan Community Peeps Contest! Winners will receive a $25 gift certificate to any business in town!

WASHINGTON'S MONUMENTS CRUISE TO THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS

Recurring weekly on Saturday and Sunday until April 28
Departs from Cameron & Union Streets, Alexandria, VA

Traverse the Potomac River from Old Town Alexandria and cruise past the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C. on the Washington's Monuments Cruise by Potomac Riverboat Company. View and listen to the history of the iconic monuments, memorials and bridges as the D.C. region awakens to spring. See beautiful cherry blossom trees as you glide past Hains Point and head onward to Georgetown. The cruise is 45 minutes one-way and approximately 90 minutes round-trip and is offered Saturdays and Sundays beginning March 23, 2019 and throughout peak cherry blossom season.

ONE LOVE: CELEBRATION OF LIFE WITH THE ARTS (FREE)

April 26 from 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

One Love is a trans-formative 3-day multi-media art event that is a celebration of life and our diverse artistic community. The event is designed to give artists a platform to perform, share and leverage their art to the betterment of the community, while raising awareness and inspiring hope for the love of all artistic platforms.



PROJECTS FOR THE RIDE ...

TO KNIT OR CROCHET?

One of our conductors asked us to write a story about the types of projects people do while riding the train. He commented he's seen a number of people over the years knitting, crocheting, and working on needlepoint projects. Here's a shout out to our experienced crafters onboard – way to enjoy your ride by creating something!

If you're not yet using your ride to craft, but would like to, we'd like to offer some insight on the differences between knitting and crocheting to help guide your choice on a first project.

Knitting

Both knitting and crocheting use yarn, but knitting is done with two knitting needles and the stitches are loops. Knitting can be easier to learn than crocheting, and produces smaller stitches. Only two stitch types are used: the knit and purl. The process requires moving stitches from one needle to the other, then back again. Knitting requires patience, but many patterns are available.

Crocheting

Crocheting is performed with just one crochet hook and the stitches look bumpier than knitting. Crochet stitches build from each other and range from short and small to tall and twisty. The most common stitches are the single crochet and double crochet stitches. Crocheting is perfect for creative types who don't mind making mistakes.



SHARE WITH US! #VRECRAFTS



FREDERICKSBURG STATION HISTORY

Fredericksburg sits on the banks of the Rappahannock, at the head of river navigation, which has made it an important site since colonial times. The Virginia General Assembly established a fort in the area in 1676, just south of the present city. In 1720, the Assembly established a new county, Spotsylvania (after the governor) and established Fredericksburg in 1728 as a river port for the 18-century settlers. Named for Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II, the streets bore names of the royal family.

The city is closely associated with George Washington, whose family moved in 1738 to a farm in Stafford County, across the Rappahannock from Fredericksburg, so that Augustine Washington could live closer to the Accokeek Creek Iron Furnace, which he managed. The house—uncovered finally in an archaeological dig in July 2008—was central to the Washington family from the 1740s until 1772, when Mary Washington moved across the river to Fredericksburg.

Rail service has been important in Fredericksburg since the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P) was chartered in 1834 to run a line from Richmond up to the Potomac River at Aquia Creek. The original Fredericksburg train station was a ground-level stationhouse, and the area adjacent to the tracks was once Fredericksburg's industrial and commercial corridor.

Throughout the Civil War, control of the railroad through Fredericksburg was of strategic importance due to its position midway between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia, the opposing capitals.

During the Battle of Fredericksburg in early December of 1862, the town sustained significant damage due to bombardment and looting at the hands of Federal troops, who were in turn devastated at Confederate hands. After the war, Fredericksburg recovered its position as a center of local trade and expanded.

By 1872, rail connections went through to Washington, D.C., giving this portion of Virginia an all-rail route from Richmond and across the Potomac to Washington.

Concerned about rapid and safe transport of goods during World War I, the Federal Government established the Railway Express Agency (REA) in 1917 to utilize existing railroad for small package and parcel transit. The REA expanded rapidly with small offices across the country, and with railroads as a catalyst for then-modern concepts like standardization of time through time zones and accelerated delivery, many came to depend on the REA for their shipping needs.

The Fredericksburg REA office was constructed around 1927, replacing a two-story wood frame American Railway Express Depot structure and taking on an odd shape as a result of a spur line that branched off the main rail line. Fredericksburg's REA office, or better known as the "Railway Express Depot," used the nearby RF&P tracks until REA dissolved in 1975.

The "Fredericksburg Railway Express Depot" is one in a series of railroad buildings that represents an era of unprecedented national interconnection. The RF&P railroad company buildings in Fredericksburg included architectural detailing reflecting the prosperity and dominance of the railroad in the national economy. The Railway Express Depot, however, was more utilitarian and traditional for a train/warehouse district, although the building exhibits excellent brickwork. The exterior of the building remains relatively unchanged, and the interior has been renovated within the city's historical guidelines.

The Railway Express Depot is recognized as a contributing building to the Fredericksburg Historic District. The Fredericksburg Historic District is listed on both the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

Today, Fredericksburg is a rapidly growing region in Northern Virginia; however, it still retains its 40-block historic district. For example, one block from the Rappahanock River waterfront, sits the 1910 brick railroad station structure built by the RF&P, which has most recently been occupied by the German restaurant, Bavarian Chef. This, along with the surrounding memorial battlefield monuments has led Fredericksburg to be aptly nicknamed, "America's most historic city." RF&P was succeeded by CSX after the RF&P ceased operating in 1991.

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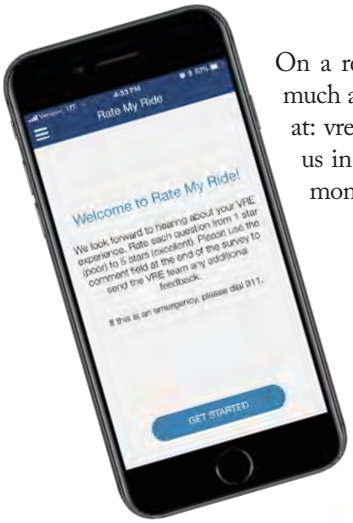
To schedule a phone appointment with a VRE representative, E-mail:
gotrains@vre.org
or call:
703-684-1001

VRE MOBILE UPDATE

VRE is currently working with developers on an updated version of our mobile app, VRE Mobile, to be released later this year. The refreshed app will feature:

- Protection against accidental validation of multiple tickets
- More intuitive process for purposeful multiple ticket validation
- Improved ticket purchase flow

Plus, the app will be designed to more quickly introduce future updates like transportation options and fares for the first and last mile of a trip.



On a related note, we're happy to announce the much awaited results of the Rate My Ride survey at: vre.org/RateMyRide. Please continue to rate us in VRE Mobile, and check the webpage for monthly updates on how we're scoring.



RECENT ONLINE FORUM ACTIVITY



Nathan from VA

Is that bridge slowing us down fixed yet?

VRE Response: If you are referring to the bridge on Track 1 south of Alexandria, it was replaced and back in service in mid December.

If I can get WiFi on an airplane, why is it impossible on the VRE?

VRE Response: The dead spots throughout our service area which you experience when trying to use your cell phone would create an inconsistent, poor quality WiFi experience. We'll look at WiFi when a viable solution for the poor coverage can be found.



Anon from Manassas



Ryder from Spotsylvania

The yellow steps for the short platforms ... they are often stashed in the luggage rack.

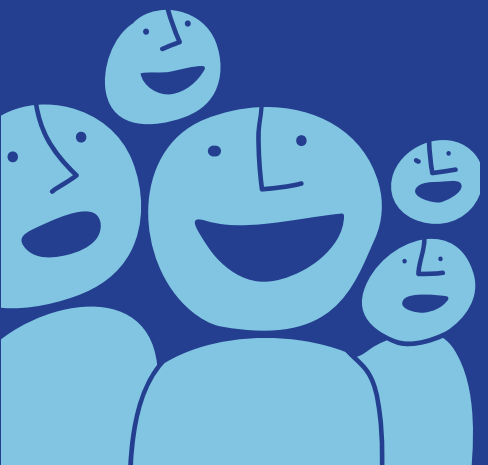
VRE Response: The step boxes should be stored in the luggage rack, however, if the space is needed, the conductor will move it to another location.



Jessica from Woodbridge

Can we have more trains running at different times? Why does it (service) stop going into DC at 8:25am?

VRE Response: Thanks for the questions Jessica. Our current schedules are set-up to match the peak demand for commuters. While we are always reevaluating the service, we have not seen enough demand either later in the mornings for inbound service, or later in the evenings for return service.



Have questions? Join VRE's **Online Forum** the first Wednesday of each month at noon. vre.org/chatterbox

University of Mary Washington
Philharmonic Orchestra
Dr. Kevin P. Bartram, Music Director

Gustav Holst's
THE PLANETS



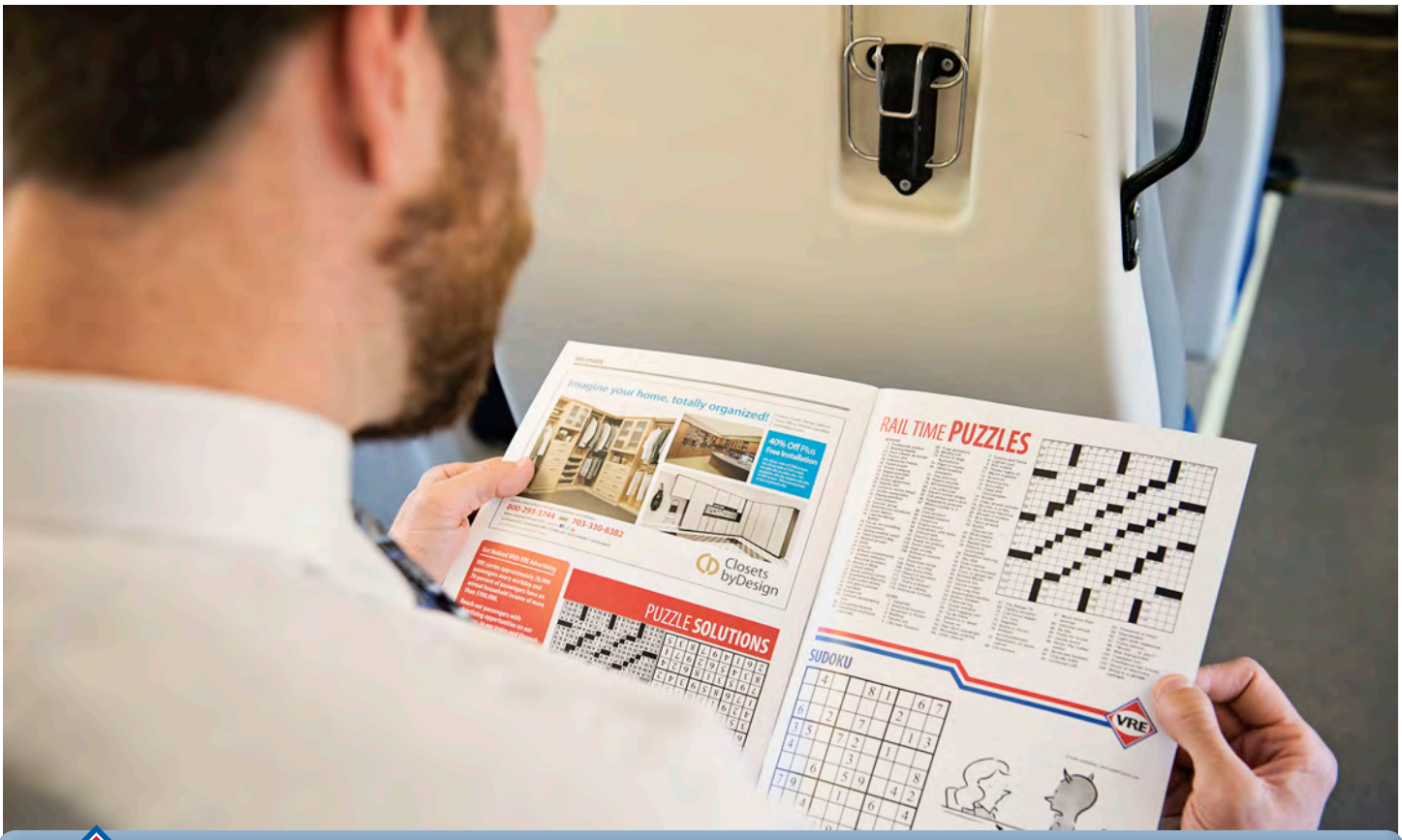
with guest narrator
LeVar Burton

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Dodd Auditorium
UMW Campus

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vre.org/ridesurvey

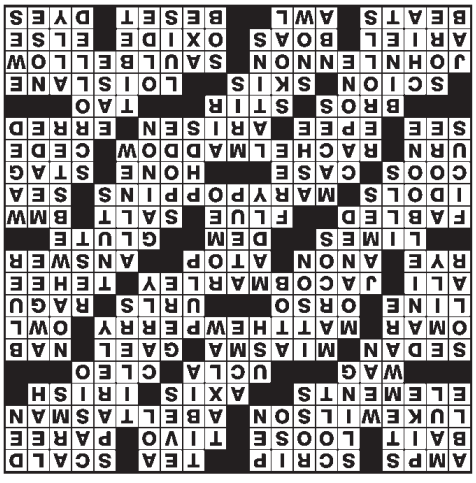
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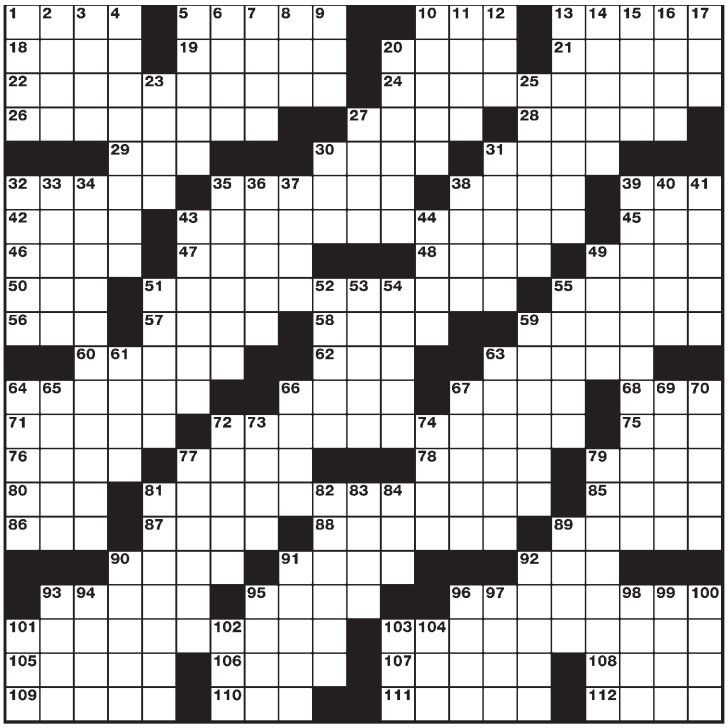
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RAIL TIME PUZZLES



ACROSS

1 Sound boosters
5 Temporary money
10 Beverage made from bags
13 Cookbook direction
18 Angler's buy
19 Like 10 Across not in bags
20 VHS successor
21 Arch city of song
22 *Legally Blonde* actor
24 First European to reach New Zealand
26 Component parts
27 Line of rotation
28 People from Mayo
29 Droll wit
30 The Bruins' sch.
31 Nile queen nickname
32 Roomy auto
35 Unpleasant atmosphere
38 Certain Scot
39 Catch red-handed
42 General Bradley
43 Commodore who visited Japan
45 Symbol of wisdom
46 Bit of dialogue
47 ". . . __ it would seem"
48 WWW addresses
49 Aunt Millie's alternative
50 Common Arab prename
51 Scrooge's partner
55 Snicker sound
56 Some sandwiches' surroundings
57 Poetic "soon"
58 Perched upon
59 Problem's solution
60 Green garnishes
62 "Dose" people
63 Bodybuilder's muscle
64 Legendary
66 Sooty spot
67 Natural deicer
68 Munich automaker
71 Admired ones
72 Andrews Oscar role
75 Neptune's domain
76 Certain bird calls
77 Matter under investigation
78 Improve, as a skill
79 Antlered beast
80 Caterer's vessel
81 MSNBC host
85 Hand over formally
86 Persevere with, with "out"
87 Pentathlete's sword
88 On one's feet
89 Went wrong
90 The Warners, for short
91 Cookbook direction
92 Confucianism concept
93 Descendant
95 Sticks on snow
96 Superman story regular
101 "Imagine" singer
103 *Herzog* novelist
105 Disney mermaid
106 Anaconda cousins
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109 Sounds from stethoscopes
110 Saddler's tool
111 Embattled
112 Turns green, perhaps

DOWN

1 Up to the task
2 Injure severely
3 Toll road
4 Goblets, for instance
5 David's launcher
6 Revolver innovator
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10 Knee-ankle link
11 __ *Diary* (Twain book)
12 Verizon's ISP
13 In a frugal manner
14 Timex competitor
15 Equips for combat
16 Remini of *Kevin Can Wait*
17 Dragon's home
20 CPA's expertise
23 Withdraw gradually
25 Mosaic artists
27 Anvil vendor of cartoons
30 Show to a seat, informally
31 Singer Simon
32 Renewable energy
33 Post of etiquette
34 Early American folk hero
35 Former Philippine leader
36 "Your show is starting"
37 Small step
38 *Pretty Woman* star
39 Legendary lexicographer
40 "That's too bad!"
41 More forlorn
43 Expressed dismay
44 Fruit's edible matter
49 What's left
51 Most common presidential prename
52 With great ardor
53 Enjoyed immensely
54 Beau of the Bard
55 Wide-head fasteners
59 TV promo promise
61 Reformer's targets
63 Draw closer to
64 Fig-bearing tree
65 Venerate
66 Not booked
67 China from England
69 Victor at Gettysburg
70 Carried on
72 Ceremonial clubs
73 ESPN's Arthur __ Courage Award
74 Academia designations
77 *The Untouchables* villain
79 Paged (up or down)
81 Backgammon do-overs
82 Cato and Cassius
83 Sports docs' tests
84 Bubble wrap's interior
89 Lessen, as stress
90 IQ test pioneer
91 Scandinavian toast
92 Himalayan region
93 Carrying a grudge
94 "Pet" that's a plant
95 Chilly powder
96 San __ Obispo, CA
97 Chaucer-era "ancient"
98 One on your side
99 Wine's bouquet
100 Shes in leas
101 Mocking remark
102 Court group
103 Cry audibly
104 Hatchet, for instance

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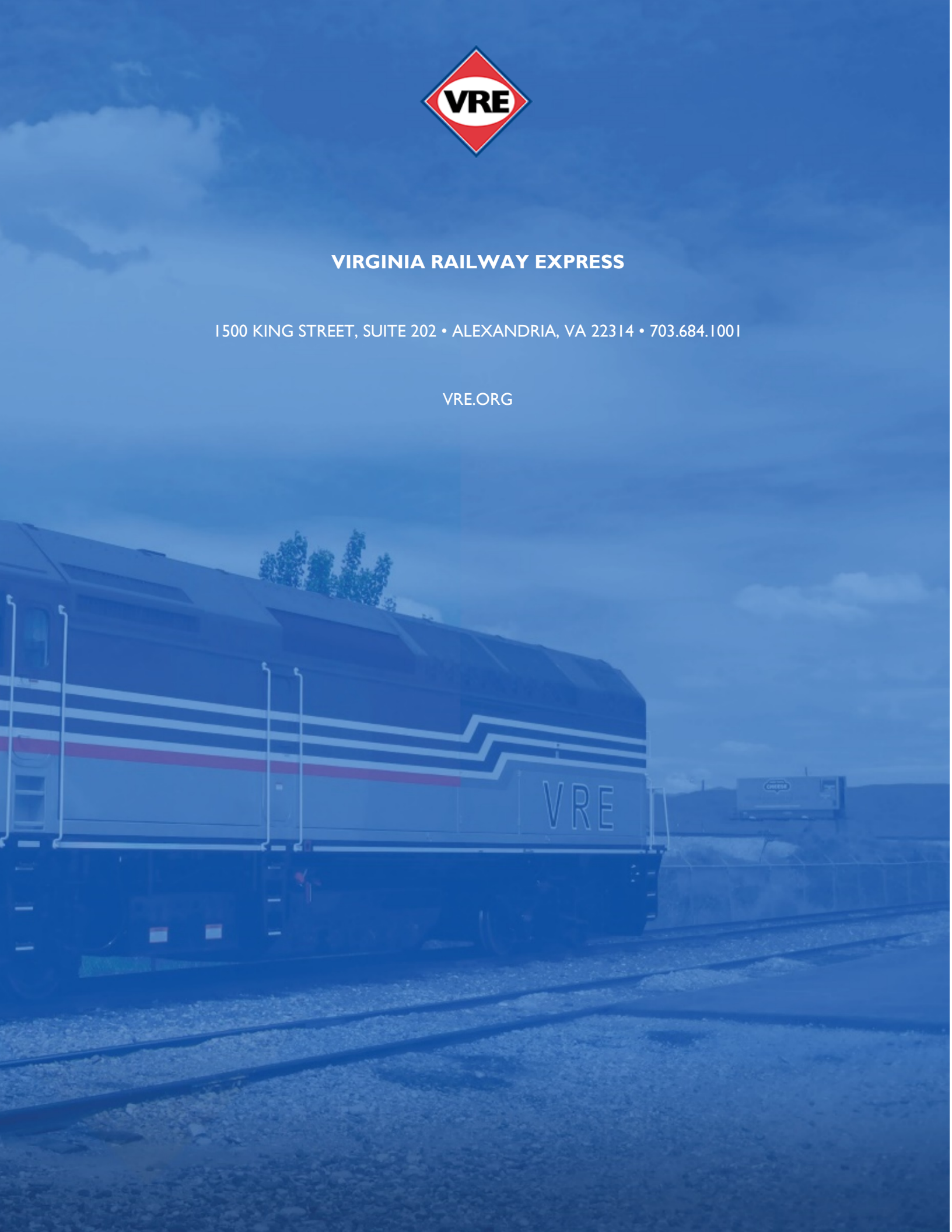
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