

Overview of Local and Regional Transit Systems Serving the Washington Metropolitan Area

National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board
September 15th, 2010

Regional Perspective on Transit

- At the **March 17 TPB meeting**, information was requested on the ridership and costs of the local and regional bus transit systems serving the metropolitan area.
- The Committee will be briefed on a draft **overview of the local and regional transit systems** prepared by the Regional Bus Subcommittee.

Regional Bus Subcommittee

- **Mission**

“ To provide a permanent process for the coordination of bus planning throughout the Washington region, and for incorporating regional bus plans into the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). ”

Regional Bus Subcommittee

- **Participation**

District of Columbia
District of Columbia DOT
Metrobus
Metrorail
DC Circulator
DC Streetcar

Maryland
Maryland DOT
Maryland Transit Administration
Frederick County TransIT
Laurel Connect-a-Ride
Montgomery County Ride On
Prince George's County TheBus
MTA Commuter Bus
Maryland Commuter Rail

Virginia
Virginia DOT
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Alexandria DASH
Arlington Transit (ART)
City of Fairfax CUE
Fairfax Connector
Loudoun Commuter Transit
Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
PRTC OmniRide
Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission
Virginia Railway Express

regional
rail/bus

- **Metrorail**
- **Metrobus**
- **Circulator**
- **Ride On**
- **TheBus**
- **TransIT**

local
bus

- **Connect-A-Ride**
- **Connector**
- **ART**
- **Dash**
- **CUE**

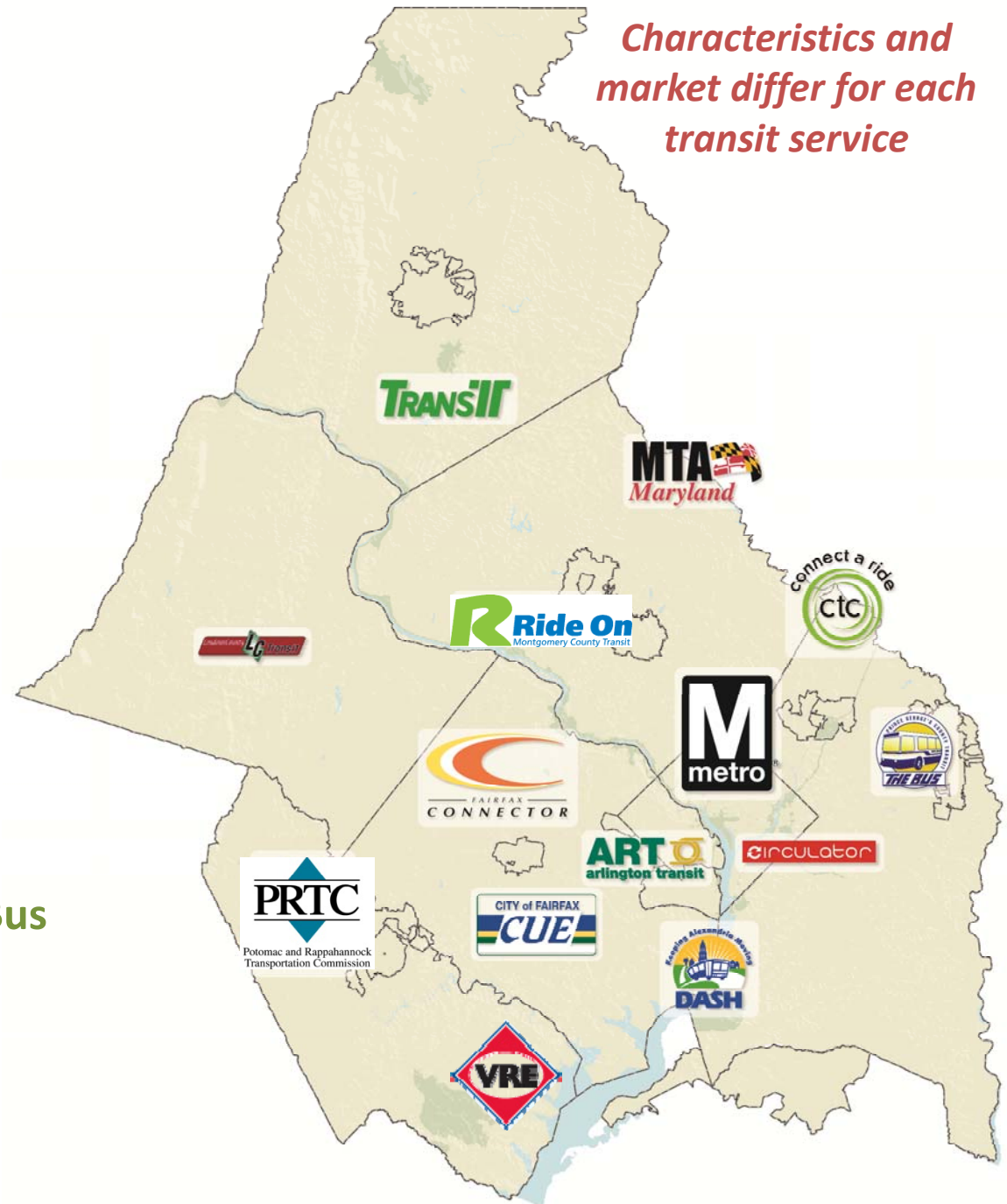
commuter
bus

- **OmniLink (PRTC)**
- **George**
- **MTA Commuter Bus**
- **LC Transit**
- **OmniRide (PRTC)**

commuter
rail

- **VRE**
- **MARC**

*Characteristics and
market differ for each
transit service*

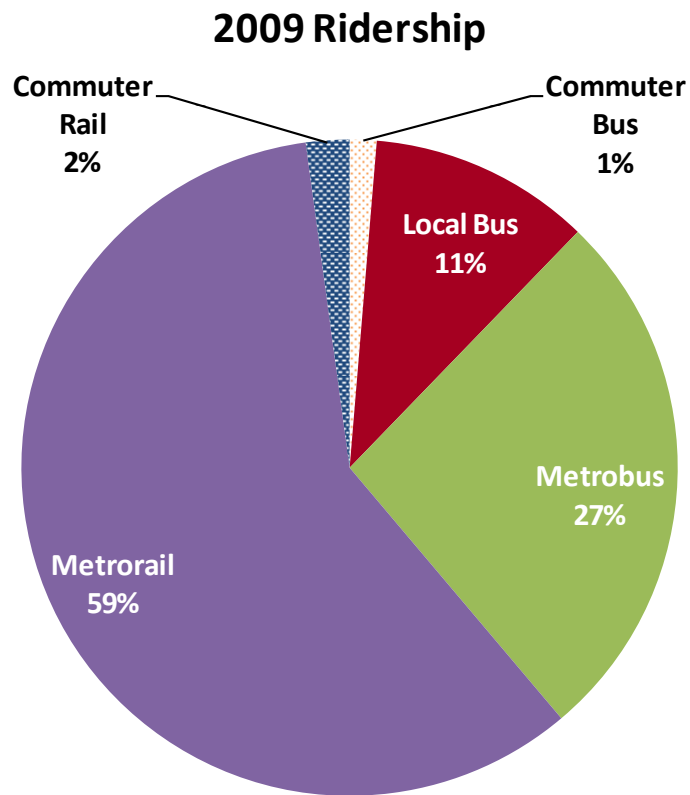


Brief Historical Timeline of Bus Transit

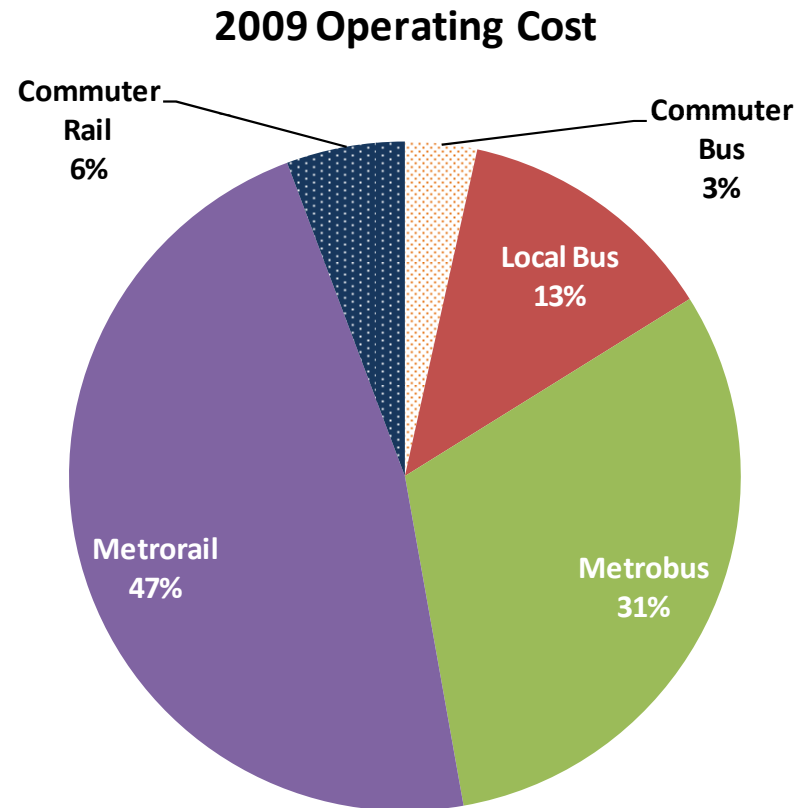
- **1973: Private bus services** serving city core and inner suburbs folded into **Metrobus**.
- **1975: First local bus** service (Ride On) established to provide transit service in new areas.
- **1976-Present: Metrorail** opens and expands.
 - **Metrobus restructured** to feed Metrorail and operate regional routes.
 - **Additional bus** services created by regional jurisdictions to meet local needs and fill gaps in Metrobus service.
 - **Commuter bus services** established between outer suburban areas and the region's core as populations grow.

Regional Perspective on Transit

Buses are a major part of the transit system, providing a total of 40% of the transit trips in the region and accounting for 47% of transit operating costs...



494 million trips (2009)

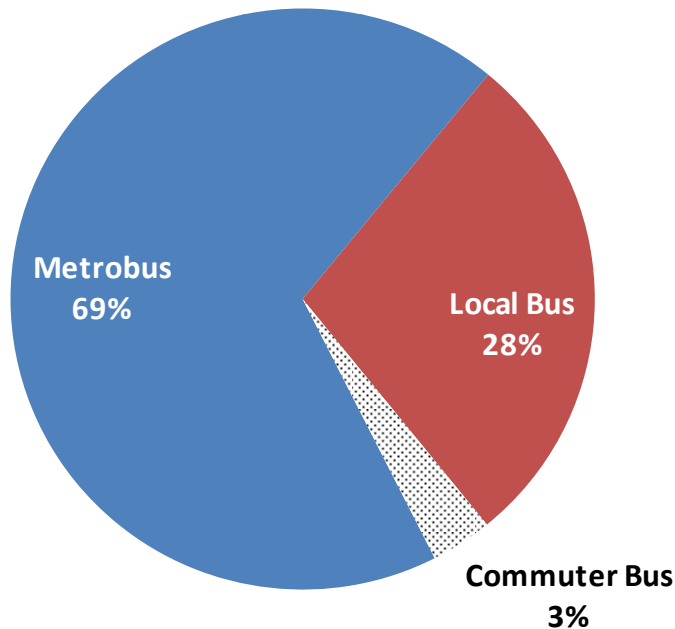


\$1.6 billion (2009)

Ridership of Bus Systems

The various locally provided bus systems, offering local and commuter service, deliver a sizeable number of transit trips annually...

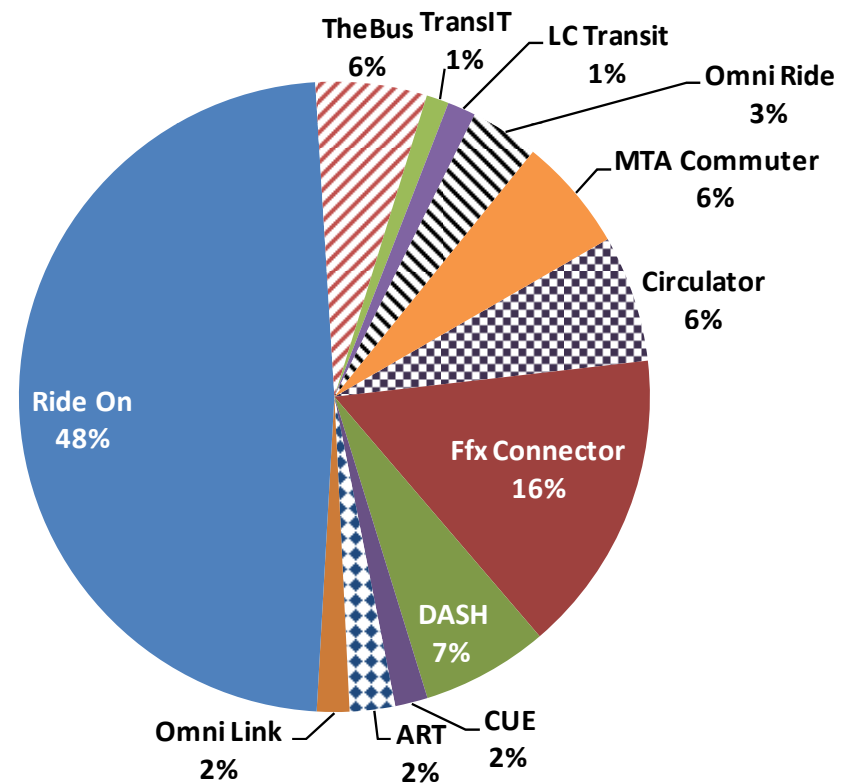
2009 Bus Ridership



Annual trips (2009): 195 million

31% of bus trips

2009 Bus Ridership - Local Systems



Annual trips (2009): 61 million

Bus System Accomplishments

- Investment in **alternative fuels** (CNG, Clean diesel, hybrid) to improve environment
- Integrated **SmarTrip**[®] fare card across bus services
- **Fleet renewal**, improving service quality and reliability
- **Commuter bus** service significantly expanded
- **Limited stop**, express services introduced in core
- **Customer information** provided in real time via web services, text messages, automated voice response and information displays (e.g., NextBus, SmartTraveler)
- **Bus stops** inventoried and improved with ADA access and more shelters
- Recommendations of **Regional Mobility Panel** report to Congress (1999) implemented to coordinate transit in the Metropolitan Washington area

Current Challenges for Bus Systems

- Increasing **demand** – bus ridership continues to grow
- **Capacity constraints** – garage space maxed out and old garages need to be rehabilitated, cannot increase fleet size (Ride On, WMATA)
- **Other infrastructure** also needs **repair and expansion**, such as bus bays at Metrorail stations and transit centers
- **Traffic congestion** reduces service quality and increases operating costs
- Tight budgets
 - Recent and proposed **service cuts**
 - Recent **fare increases**
 - Proposed **staff reductions**
- **Unmet customer demand** in outer suburbs which have little or no transit services (including reverse commute)

Subcommittee Activities

- The **Regional Bus Subcommittee** will continue to work to address common challenges and objectives
 - Coordinate bus service **planning** input to CLRP
 - Improve regional **coordination** of bus services, including
 - WMATA Priority Corridor Network, TIGER Priority Bus grant
 - Development of coordinated **Priority Bus treatments** (e.g., Transit Signal Priority, bus lanes and queue jumpers) for BRT and Transitway projects (Montgomery County, City of Alexandria)
 - **Update** *Moving Forward: Status of the Bus Systems in the National Capital Region (2008)*.