

# VRE AT 25

## A QUARTER CENTURY OF SERVICE

National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board  
TPB Technical Committee  
June 2, 2017



A BETTER WAY. A BETTER LIFE.



# WHO WE ARE

A commuter rail system

*Running on existing railroad tracks*

Serving Washington DC and  
Northern Virginia

*Carrying long-distance commuters  
to DC, Arlington & Alexandria*

Two lines, 96 miles

*Adding peak capacity to  
I-95, I-395 & I-66 corridors\**

19,000 daily trips

*Commuters that would  
otherwise drive alone in cars\**



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

# WHAT WE ARE

- Virginia Railway Express is a “joint project” of:
  - Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
  - Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS



# WHAT WE ARE KNOWN FOR

Safe Operations

High Customer  
Satisfaction

Quality Service

Reliable Service

Strong Partnerships  
with Host Railroads



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# WHERE WE OPERATE

- VRE operates on tracks owned and controlled by its three “host railroads”:

- CSX Transportation (CSXT)



- Norfolk Southern (NS)



- National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)



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# OUR IMPORTANCE TO NORTHERN VIRGINIA

- Part of a balanced system
- Reduce peak congestion
- Cost-effective means of adding peak capacity
- An investment paying long-term dividends for generations



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# VRE ORIGINS

Prior service abandoned in 1950s

*Really intercity train service  
with local Northern Virginia stops*

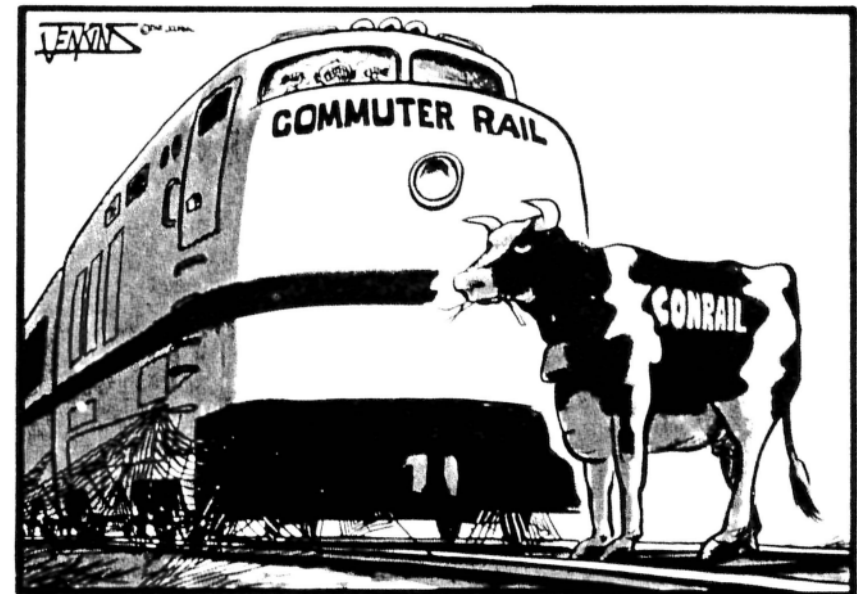
MWCOG feasibility study in 1984

VRE Operations Board established in  
1988 (NVTC & PRTC)

Master Agreement with  
Other Jurisdictions 1989 – 1992

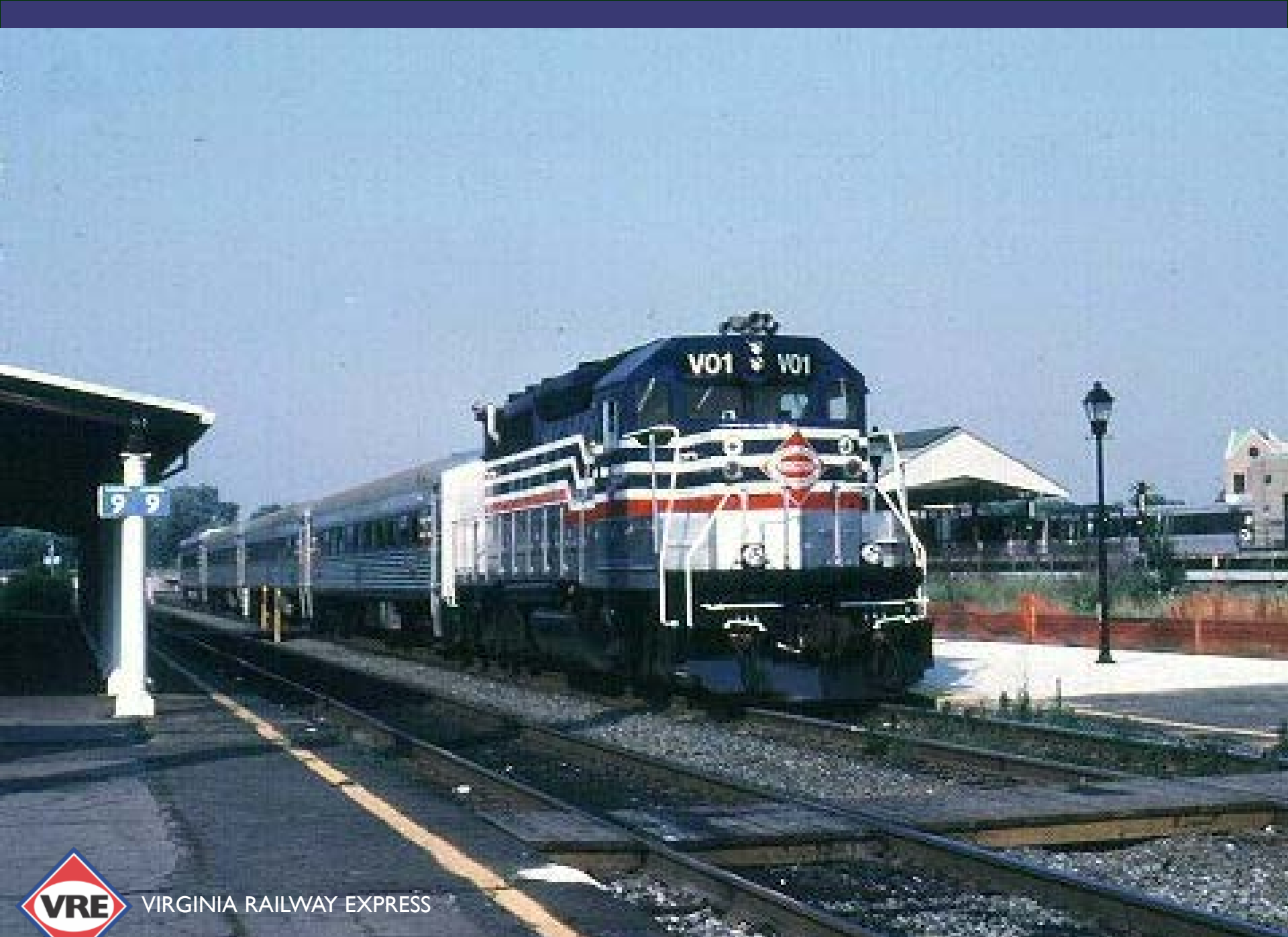
Resolution of Liability Issues  
(Entry into DC) in 1992

*Literally took an Act of Congress  
to overcome opposition*



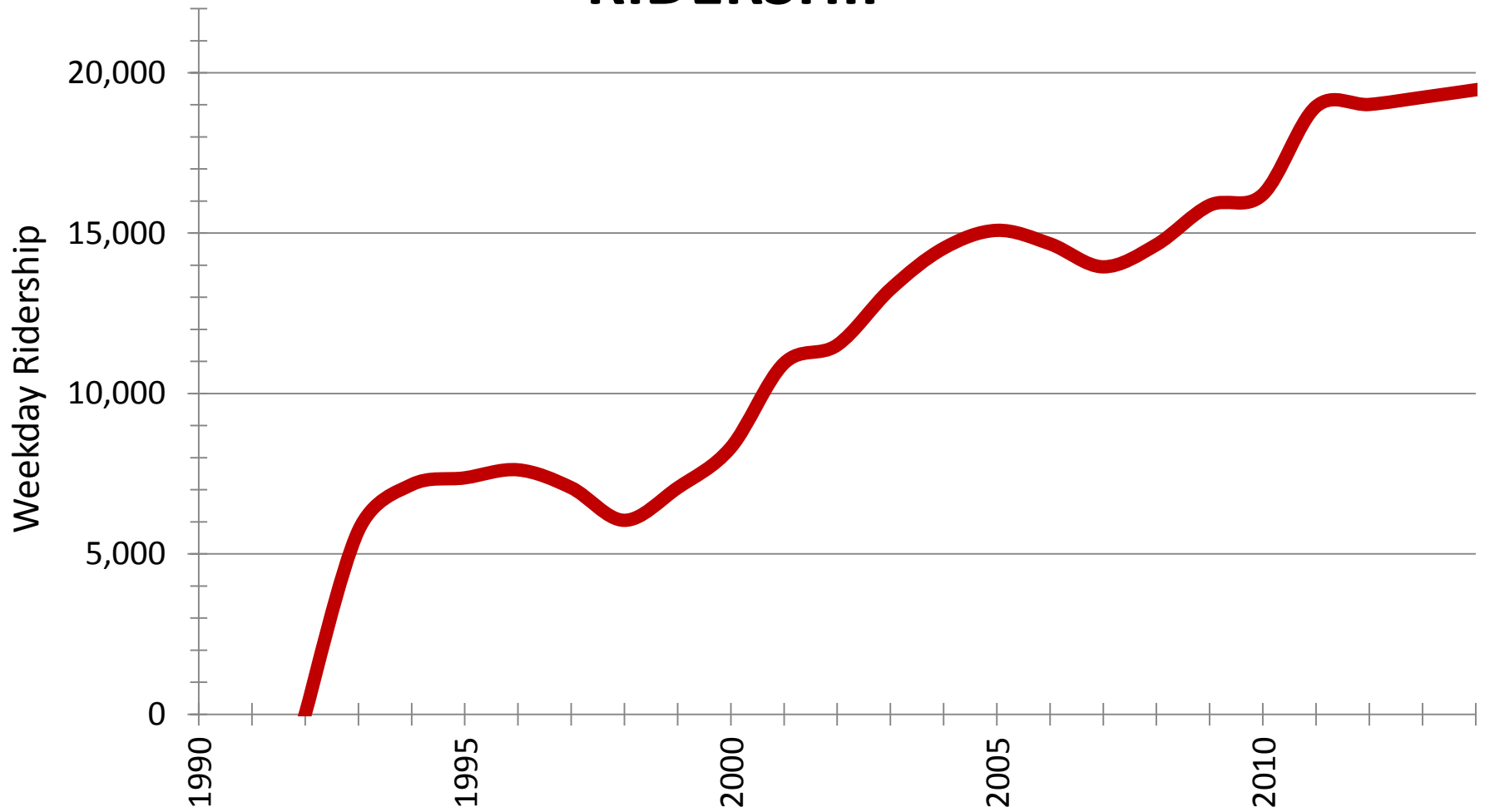
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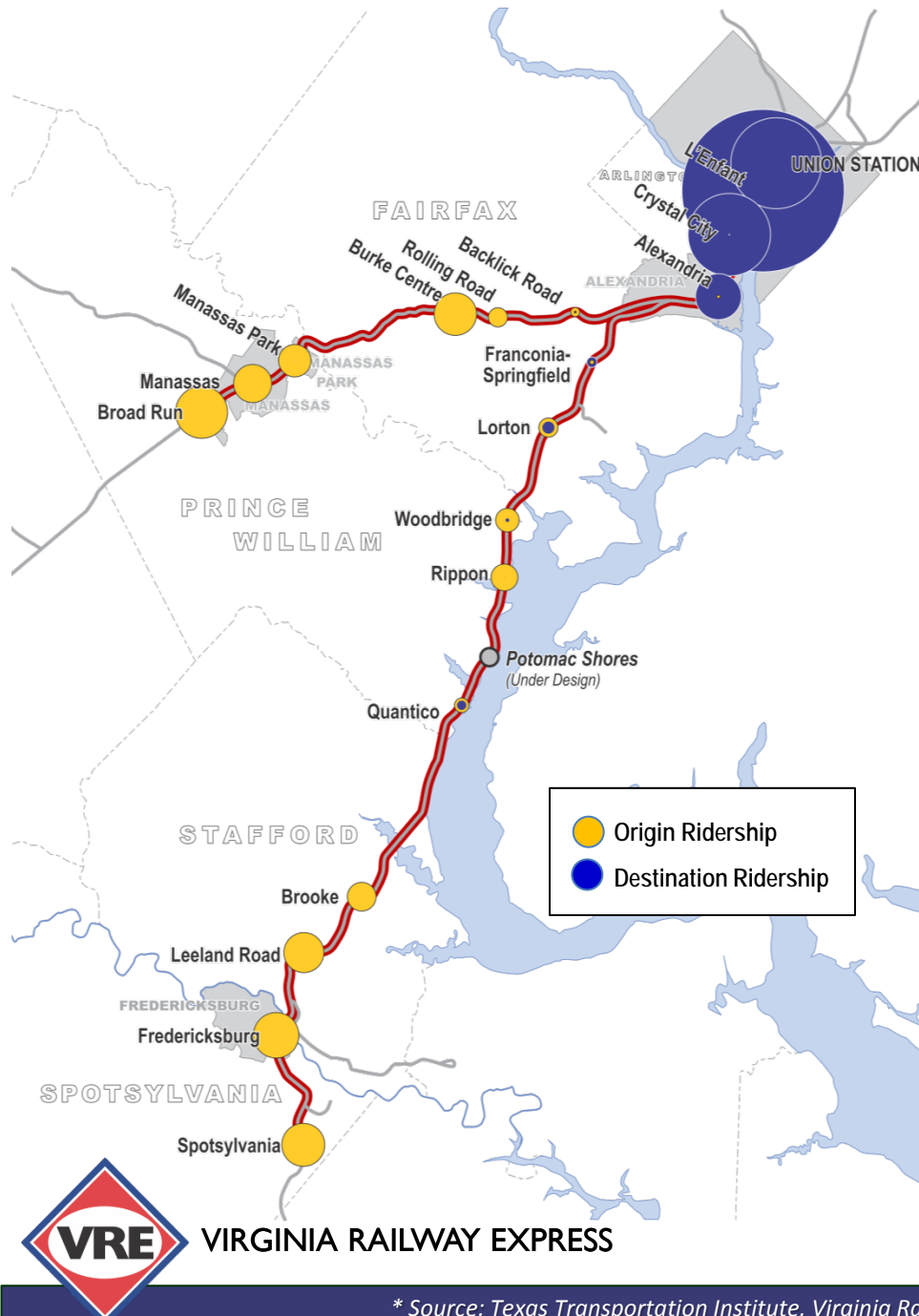
# VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS RIDERSHIP



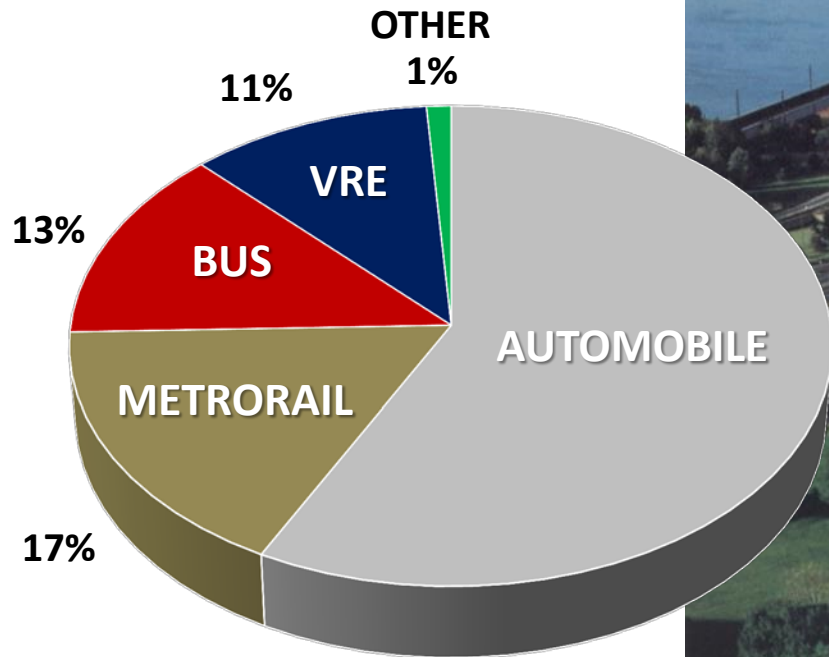
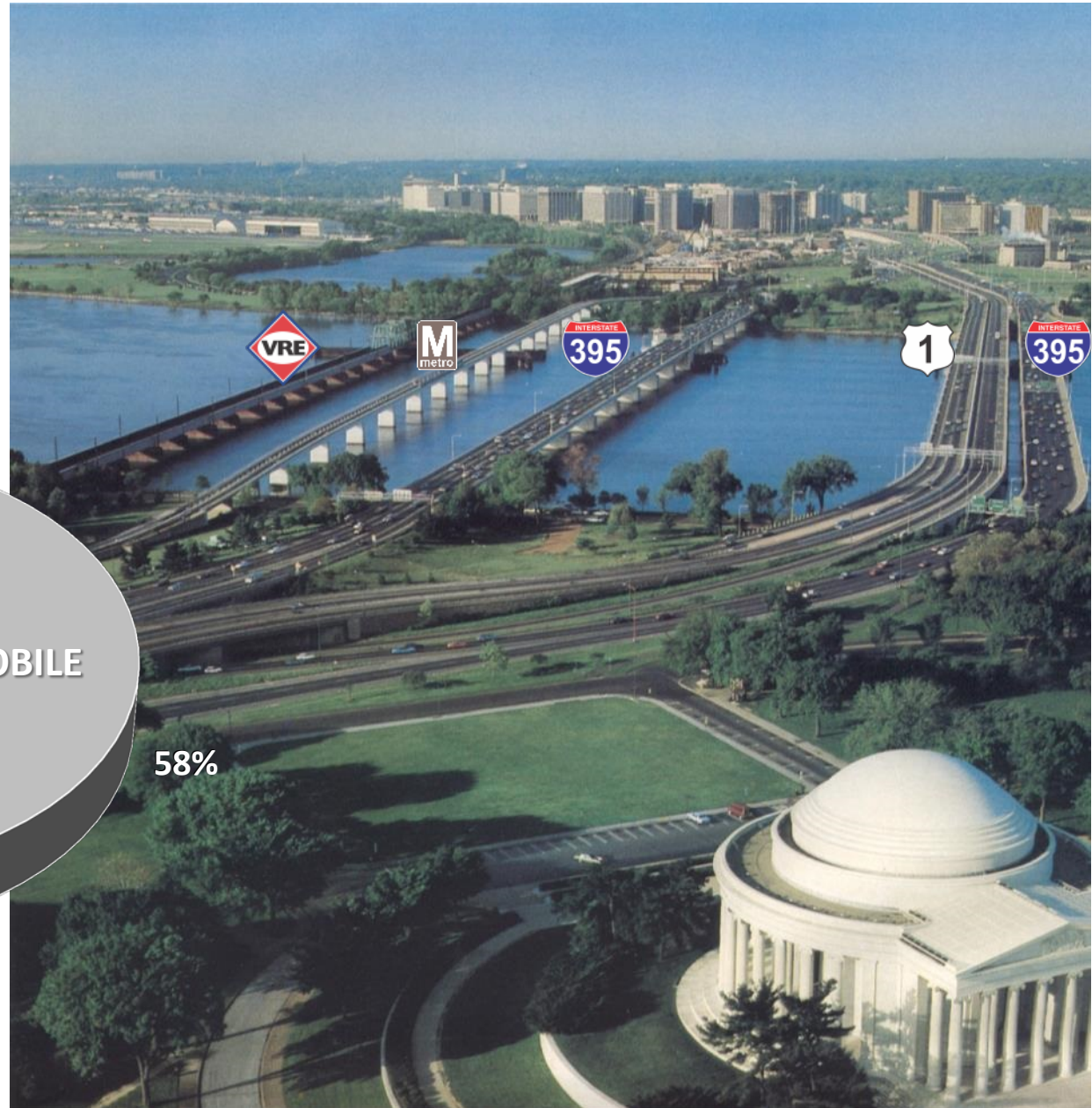
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# WHERE OUR RIDERS GO

- L'Enfant busiest station
  - Primary destination
  - Nearby offices
  - Metro connections
- Crystal City, Union Station & Alexandria
  - Next three busiest destinations
- Busiest origin stations are at the end of lines
  - Big park-ride lots
    - Most VRE passengers have a car available\*



# Peak Hour Trips from Virginia to DC across the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridges (6:30 to 7:30 AM)



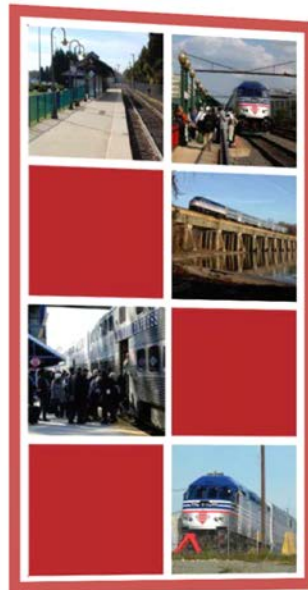
**21,934 TOTAL TRIPS**



**VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS**

# SYSTEM PLAN 2040

- Adopted by VRE Operations Board in January 2014
- Outlined phased approach to capacity and service improvements
- Adapts VRE to meet the challenges of a changing, growing service area
  - Bidirectional, more frequent peak service
  - More midday and evening service
  - Double ridership by 2040



VRE System Plan  
Summary

January 2014



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# REGIONAL RAIL vs. COMMUTER RAIL



- Service concept based on *Réseau Express Régional (RER)* in Paris
  - Metro-type service standards in a railroad operating environment
    - Bidirectional, all day service
    - Less frequent but longer journeys than by Metro
  - Five Parisian commuter railroad lines converted to regional rail since 1977



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# REGIONAL RAIL vs. COMMUTER RAIL



- A shift in VRE service to:
  - More frequent, bidirectional train service
  - Reverse-peak train service
    - Connecting DC, Arlington and Alexandria residents with jobs in Northern Virginia
  - Midday and evening train service
- North American examples
  - MARC (DC – Penn Line only)
  - SEPTA (Philadelphia)
  - MTA & NJ Transit (New York City)
  - MBTA (Boston)
  - GO Transit (Toronto)
  - Caltrain (San Francisco)



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# REGIONAL COLLABORATION

## WMATA Metrorail

*Expands the reach of VRE rail  
Used by 17% of VRE riders*

## Amtrak Virginia Trains

*Step-Up fares available  
Faster ride option for longer trips*

## MTA/MARC Train Service

*Fare Integration  
Exploring Opportunities for  
Through Running*

*Infrastructure improvements  
needed for further growth*



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# SYSTEM PLAN 2040 SERVICE ASSUMPTIONS

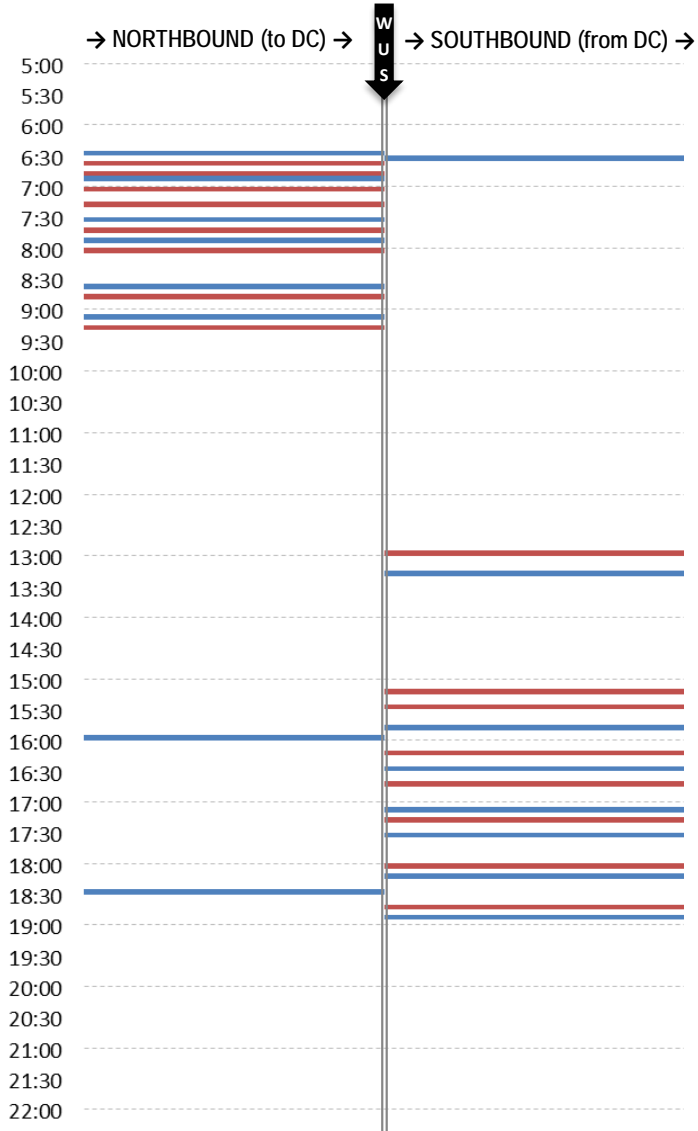
	Today (& Natural Growth)	Current Contract Limits	System Plan 2040
Peak Service	25-30 minutes	20 minutes	15 minutes
Reverse Peak	1 am/2 pm (MSS)	None	30 minutes
Off-Peak (Base)	1 MSS/1 FBG	1 MSS/1 FBG	60 minutes
Number of trains	34 train trips*	38 train trips	92 train trips
Midday Storage	12 trainsets*	19 trainsets	11 trainsets

\* - will change to 32 train trips/13 trainsets when L'Enfant storage opens

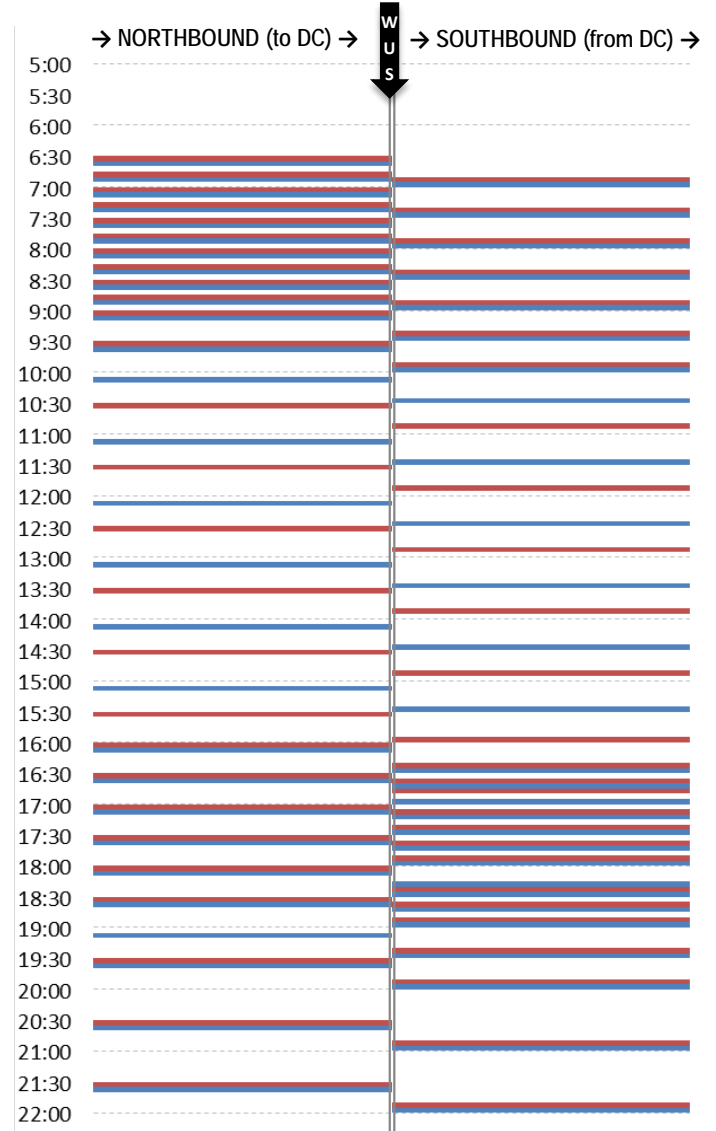


# SYSTEM PLAN 2040 SERVICE ASSUMPTIONS

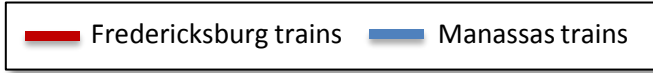
**Present  
Schedule**



**System  
Plan 2040  
Schedule**



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# VRE SYSTEM PLAN 2040

*Provide capacity improvements for ridership growth*

## PHASE 1: *Run Longer Trains*

- More railcars
- More station parking
- More train storage tracks
- Second & longer platforms

## PHASE 2 & 3: *Run More Trains*

- Earn additional slots through capacity improvements
  - Additional CSXT tracks
  - Long Bridge (core) Expansion
  - More parking, railcars, yards

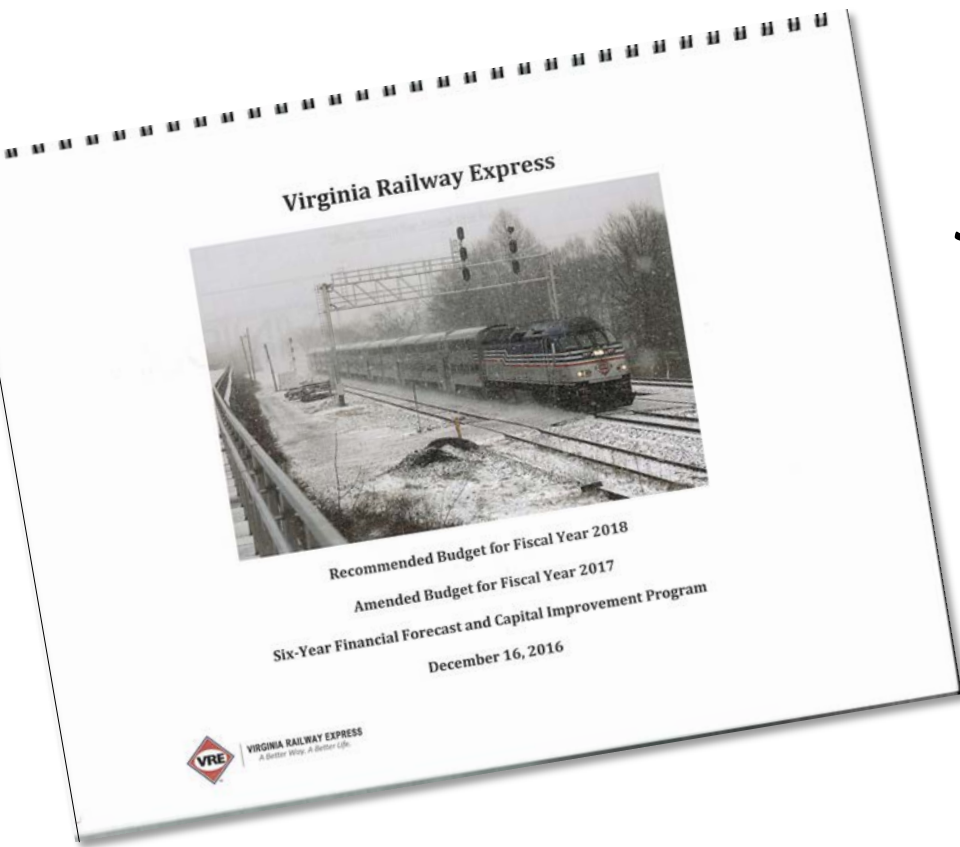


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# VRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## *Six-Year Roadmap for Investment (FY2018- FY2023)*

- Asset Management/SOGR  
*8 projects – \$73 million*
- Passenger Stations  
*19 projects – \$317 million*
- Station Parking  
*5 projects – \$108 million*
- Track & Signal Infrastructure  
*2 projects – \$28 million*
- Maintenance/Storage Facilities  
*7 projects – \$194 million*
- Other Projects  
*2 projects – \$1.1 billion*
  - Long Bridge & GHX projects



Available On-Line at:

<http://www.vre.org/about/board/board-agenda-minutes/2016/December/fy-2018-budget-full-document-final-web-published-version-updated-pdf/>



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# HOW WE ARE FUNDED

VRE is a *grant funded* agency

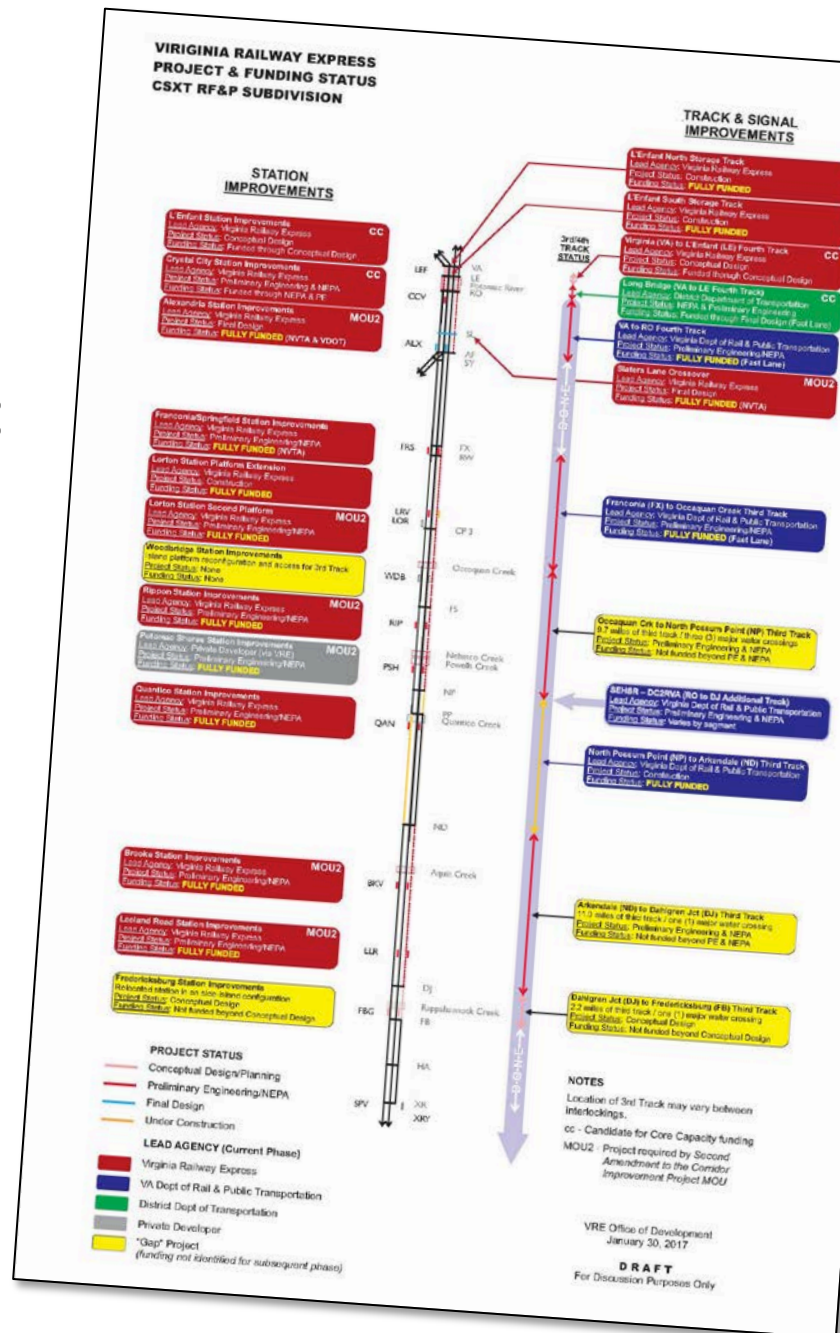
- VRE projects are funded in whole or in part from:
  - Federal sources
    - Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
    - Federal Highway Administration (FHwA)
  - State sources
    - VA Dept of Rail & Public Transportation
    - Virginia Department of Transportation
  - Regional sources
    - Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
    - Jurisdictional contributions/match



# HOW WE WORK

VRE works through *strategic partnerships*

- A “VRE” project could be led by:
  - Virginia Railway Express
  - Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation
  - DC Department of Transportation
  - Any host railroad
  - A jurisdiction or private developer
  - Any combination of the above

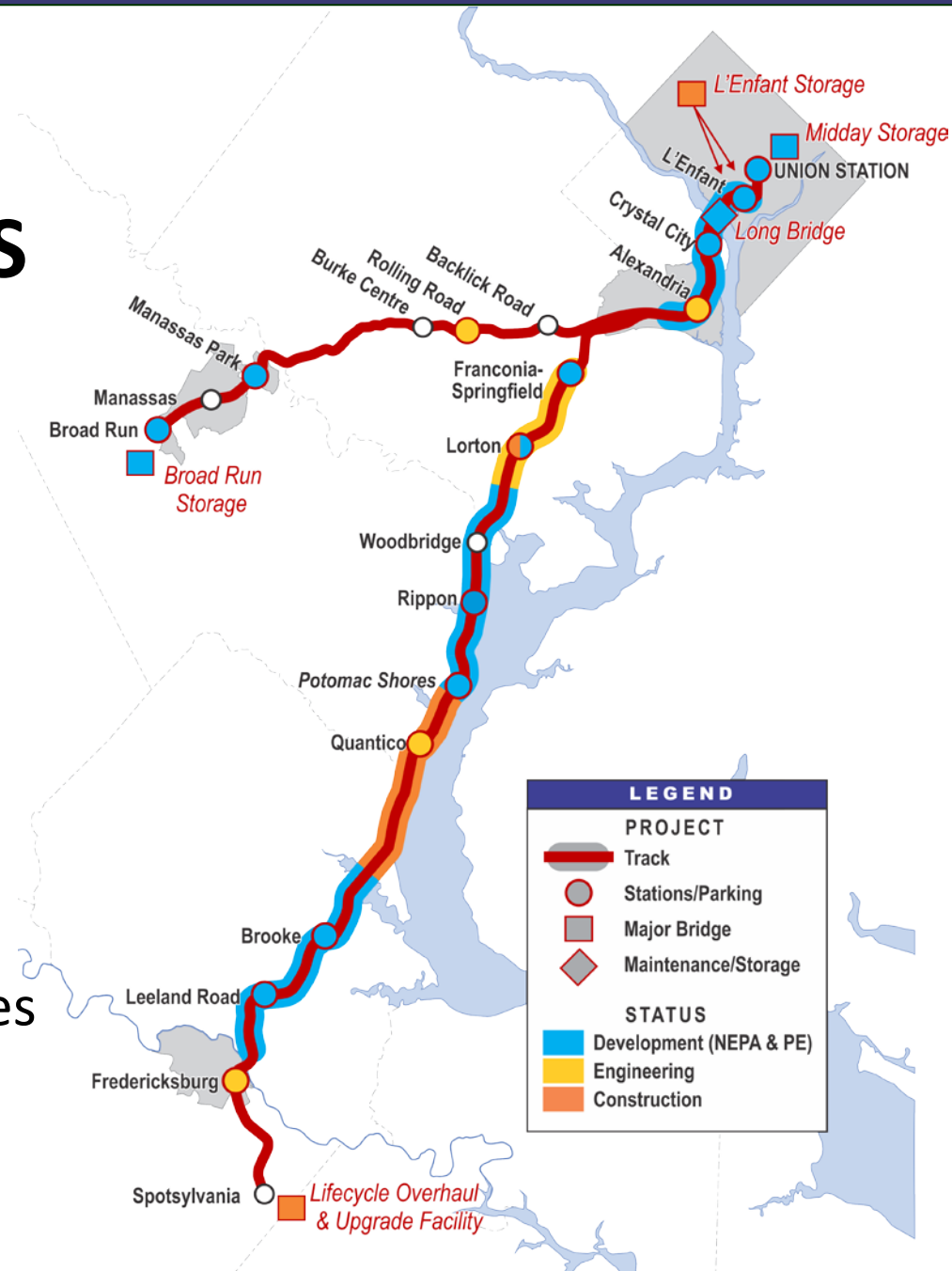


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# ACTIVE PROJECTS

- Stations & Parking
  - 11 projects in NEPA/PE*
  - 4 projects in Engineering*
  - 1 project in Construction*
  
- Additional (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>) Tracks
  - 26 miles in NEPA/PE*
  - 9 miles in Engineering*
  - 9 miles in Construction*
  
- Maintenance/Storage Facilities
  - 2 projects in NEPA/PE*
  - 3 projects in Construction*



# VRE & TPB

- TPB advocacy and support for VRE projects is vital
- Priority VRE projects of regional significance
  - Regional rail service  
*Off-peak/reverse-peak*
  - Long Bridge Corridor  
*“The Eight-Mile Bridge”*
  - Dedicated funding for capital & operating costs
- We look forward to 25 years of continued collaboration



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