



DRPT Monthly Director's Report

August 2026



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



Growing Ridership & Building Connections

- **Statewide Transit Ridership**

- May 2026 Transit Ridership was 13.6 million, a slight increase over May 2025. See slide **11** for more details

- **Virginia Breeze Ridership**

- May 2026 Virginia Breeze ridership was 5,826, an increase of 11% over May 2025. See slide **13** for more details

- **Industry Engagement**

- On July 23, Director Zimmerman spoke before Women's Transportation Seminar Hampton Roads Chapter at their scholarship fundraiser, benefiting the next generation of women pursuing careers in transportation
- On July 28, Director Zimmerman was a panelist at the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance Policymaker Breakfast, alongside Katie Choe, VRE CEO, and Walter Alcorn, Fairfax County Supervisor and WMATA Board member
- On July 28, DRPT hosted a webinar for new and returning grant recipients, ensuring grant recipients are able to effectively manage and receive DRPT funding
- On August 13, Director Zimmerman moderated a CEO roundtable at the annual Community Transportation Association of Virginia Conference and Expo, discussing transit capital and operating challenges and opportunities



Celebrating our Partners

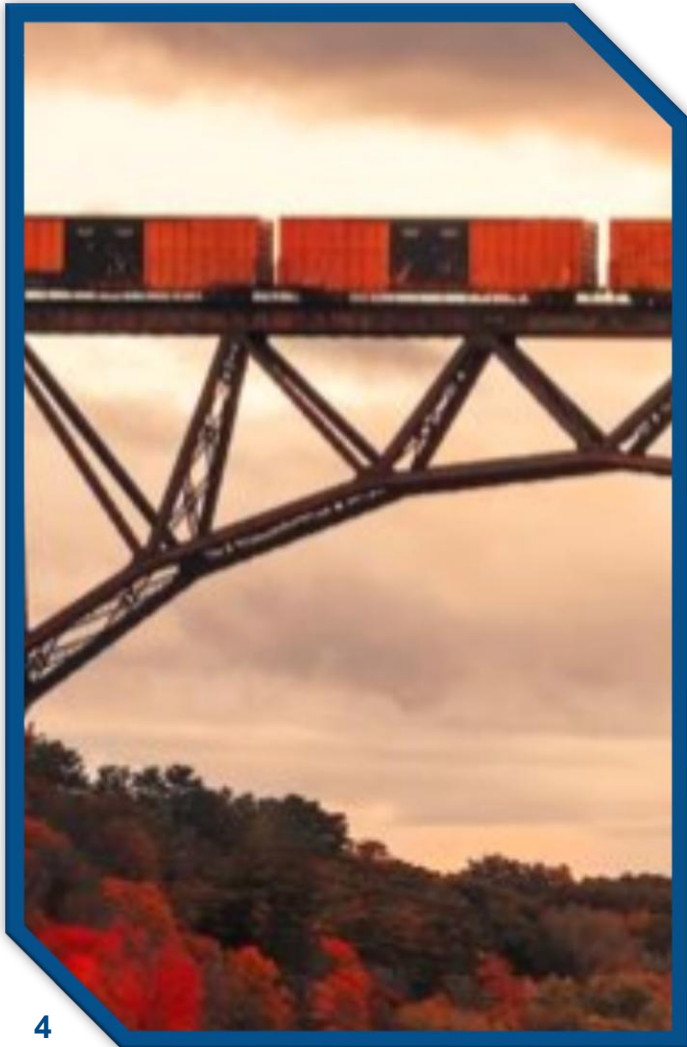
Milestones from across the Commonwealth

- **Arlington Transit- Moving Affordability Forward**
 - In July, ART became the first NOVA regional partner to accept Metro Lift on its routes, giving eligible riders 50% off fares; saving riders \$21,000 this year.
- **Northern Virginia Transportation Authority- Connecting the Community on Planning**
 - On July 23, NVTA held an open house to hear from the public regarding TransAction, Northern Virginia's long-range multimodal transportation plan
- **Central Virginia Transportation Planning Organization- Seeking Public Input**
 - The CVTPO has released a public survey seeking input regarding future transportation investments across the Lynchburg region
- **Virginia Railway Express-Launched #VREMakes Cents Campaign**
 - VRE launched its #VREMakesCents campaign, encouraging commuters and their families to ride the rail in order to cut down travel, fuel, and parking expenses



Celebrating our Partners

Milestones from across the Commonwealth



- **DASH-Service Changes Coming**
 - Alexandria's DASH will be expanding service on Line 32 & implementing its North Old Town Circulator Bus Stop rebalancing effort
- **WMATA-Breaking Ridership Records**
 - More than 866,000 people rode Metrobus or rail on July 4th weekend, with more than 120,000 trips coming after midnight
- **VRE Completes Purchase of Seminary Yard in Alexandria**
 - VRE purchased the former freight yard in Alexandria, just south of the Alexandria Amtrak station, allowing for mid-day storage of VRE trains in Virginia

Advancing Accessibility

Celebrating the 36th Anniversary of the ADA

- **DRPT + Coordinating Council On Access and Mobility Technical Assistance-Transportation Access Workshop**

- On July 29, DRPT held a workshop dedicated to developing measures of progress regarding accessibility
- Transit Agencies, private companies, planning commissions, and more came together to strategize on making transit reliable, safe, accessible, and affordable
- Director Zimmerman spoke on the importance of Paratransit and recent funding increases for accessible transit overall

- **Amtrak-Stations for All**

- On July 24, Amtrak launched a partnership with Be My Eyes, connecting blind and low-vision customers with station staff to provide real-time assistance and wayfinding support
- Amtrak has brought 163 stations up to ADA compliance, while designing plans to ensure remaining stations are brought up to code





Transit Serving Our Troops Hampton Roads Transit: Base Express

- The fare-free Base Express has exceeded its initial goal to serve 26,000 passengers since launching in December 2022
- Over 188,000 passengers have used the Base Express to navigate Naval Station Norfolk, keeping personnel, veterans, visitors, and service members connected and moving
- Base Express is funded through a TRIP grant from DRPT

Transforming Rail in Virginia

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Project Updates

- **Long Bridge Project**

- On the North Package, the contractor continues work on support-of excavation and foundation elements for the future rail bridges over Ohio Dr SW and Maine Ave SW. Traffic shifts have occurred at Maine Ave to enable continued work on the rail bridge foundations.
- On the South Package, crews are constructing the abutments for the future Potomac River rail bridge on both the Virginia and D.C. sides of the river. A detour of the Mt. Vernon Trail went into effect in mid-July that enlarges the work zone for the new rail bridge.

- **New River Valley Passenger Rail Project**

- Concrete pouring continues for the passenger platform sidewalls and base – 525 linear feet has been poured to-date, out of 960 feet total. VPRA anticipates the service extension to the New River Valley to occur in the second half of 2027.

- **Richmond Layover Facility**

- The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded a \$25M BUILD grant to VPRA to complete design and construction of the Richmond Layover Facility. The project will construct an overnight layover facility at Fulton Yard in Richmond; it will include three storage tracks and a maintenance pit for servicing trains. This grant secures full funding for this project that is needed in order to expand Amtrak rail service upon completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2 TRV Projects.

State Rail Initiatives

DRPT Rail Update

- **Rail Crossing Elimination and Relocation in Harrisonburg**

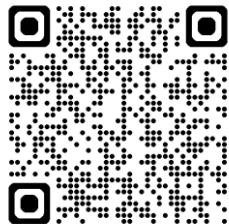
- DRPT staff will attend the 2nd Stakeholder Meeting for an FRA Rail Crossing Elimination-funded study on September 5. The City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County are conducting a feasibility study of relocating 3.1 miles of Norfolk Southern rail line to eliminate 10 highway and 9 pedestrian crossings near JMU and downtown Harrisonburg

- **FRA Hi-Rail on Buckingham Branch Railroad's Piedmont Division**

- Staff from the Federal Railroad Administration visited Buckingham Branch Railroad. Buckingham Branch is replacing rail ties with funding from an FRA CRISI grant, with matching funds provided by DRPT's Rail Preservation Fund

- **Statewide Rail Plan**

- DRPT will host a Statewide Rail Plan public meeting on September 8th
- Register Here----



Ongoing Transit Studies

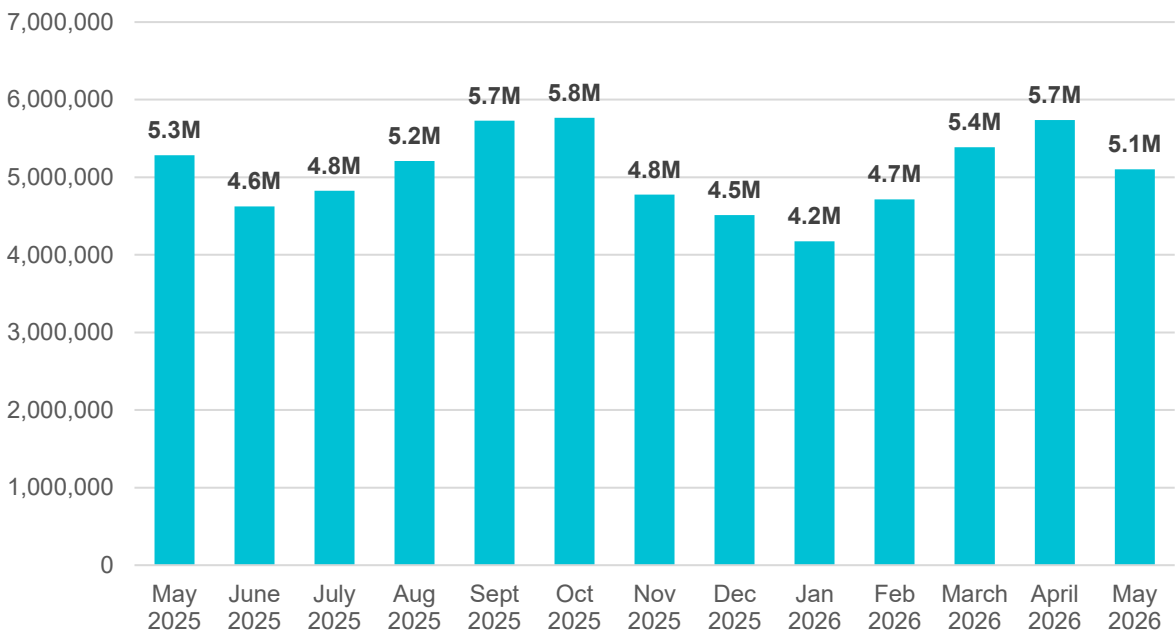
Monthly Study Update

- **Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study**
 - DRPT has kicked off the study with data gathering; DRPT has begun public engagement with stakeholders and partners
- **Equivalent Compensation Labor Study**
 - The work group met on July 27 and August 24, and data requests have been sent out
- **HJ28 Hampton Roads Transit Regional Needs Study**
 - DRPT anticipates that the joint subcommittee will meet for the first time in September
- **Northern Virginia Bus Transit Consolidation Study**
 - DRPT staff and consultants are engaging with the individual transit agencies included in the scope of the study
- **Virginia Breeze Study**
 - DRPT staff has kicked off work, beginning with a review of the Virginia Breeze's financials

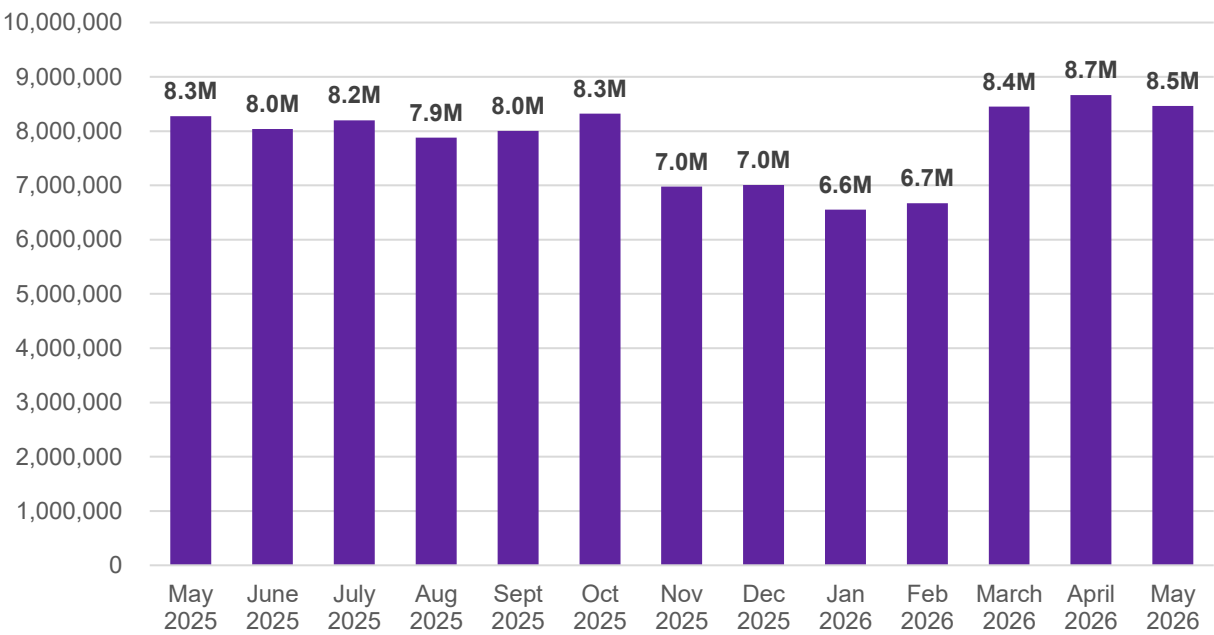
Performance Measures

Statewide Transit Ridership

Statewide Transit Ridership – May 2025 to May 2026



Virginia Agencies (incl. VRE)

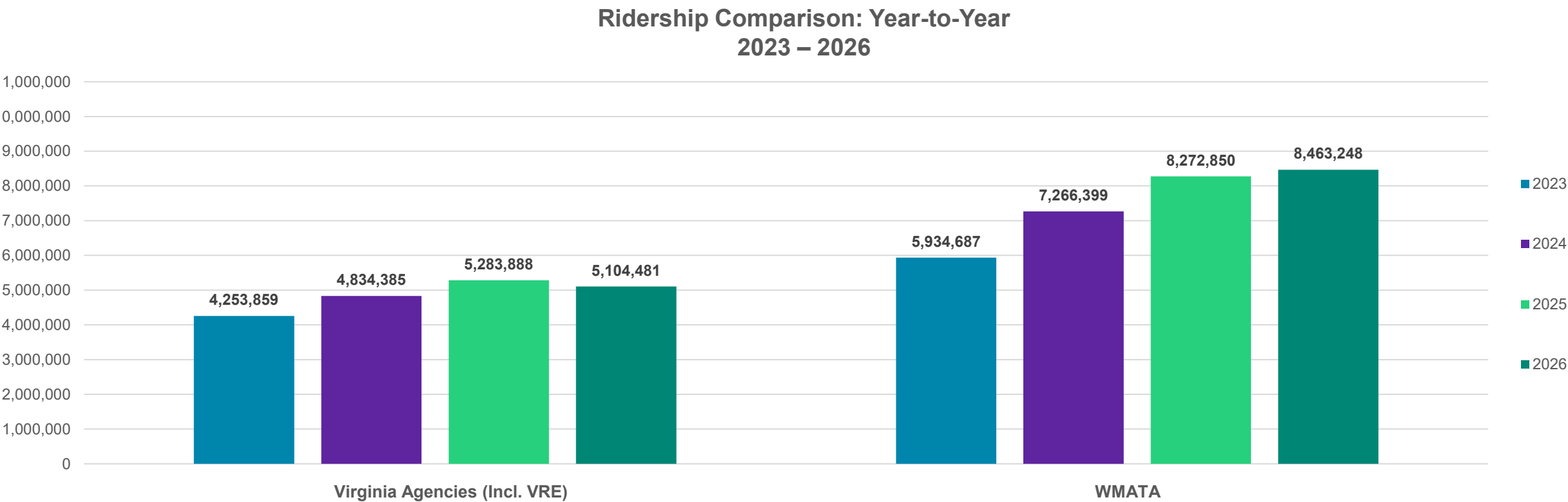


WMATA

Agencies	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	Aug 2025	Sept 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	Total*
Virginia Agencies	5,283,888	4,624,290	4,826,487	5,208,249	5,729,123	5,765,456	4,774,932	4,513,370	4,175,539	4,715,787	5,387,585	5,739,226	5,104,481	60,564,525
WMATA	8,272,850	8,038,628	8,197,440	7,877,904	8,005,759	8,320,907	6,977,427	7,005,271	6,551,481	6,668,660	8,449,361	8,661,623	8,463,248	93,217,709
Total	13,556,738	12,662,918	13,023,927	13,086,153	13,734,882	14,086,363	11,752,359	11,518,641	10,727,020	11,384,447	13,836,946	14,400,849	13,567,729	153,782,234

*Last 12 Months

Statewide Ridership Comparison: May Year-to-Year



Mode	2023	2024	2025	2026	2026 vs 2023	2026 vs 2024	2026 vs 2025
Virginia Agencies	4,253,859	4,834,385	5,283,888	5,104,481	20%	6%	-3%
WMATA	5,934,687	7,266,399	8,272,850	8,463,248	43%	16%	2%
Total	10,188,546	12,100,784	13,556,738	13,567,729	33%	12%	0%

Virginia Breeze Ridership – May

In May 2026, ridership on VA Breeze routes totaled 5,826 which was:

- 134% higher than original estimates, and
- 11% higher than May 2025

In May 2026, the VA Breeze contributed to a reduction of 221 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions.

Valley Flyer:

- Ridership – 10% higher than May 2025
- Farebox Rev. – 5% higher than May 2025

Piedmont Express:

- Ridership – 6% higher than May 2025
- Farebox Rev. – 2% higher than May 2025

Capital Connector:

- Ridership – 33% higher than May 2025
- Farebox Rev. – 37% higher than May 2025

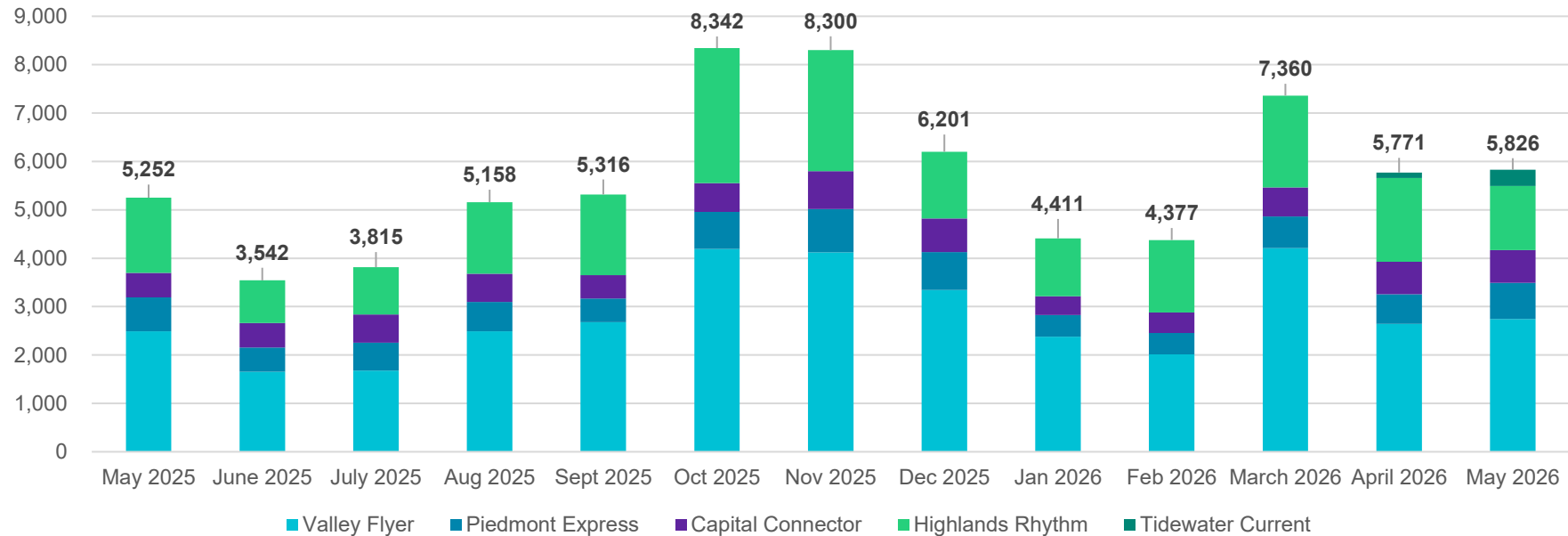
Highlands Rhythm:

- Ridership – 15% lower than May 2025
- Farebox Rev – 16% lower than May 2025

Tidewater Current:

- Ridership – N/A
- Farebox Rev – N/A

Virginia Breeze Ridership by Route – May 2025 to May 2026



Route	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	Aug 2025	Sept 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	Total*
Valley Flyer	2,489	1,655	1,675	2,493	2,676	4,189	4,124	3,344	2,377	2,012	4,211	2,645	2,746	34,147
Piedmont Express	702	499	577	606	490	767	895	781	451	440	650	609	744	7,509
Capital Connector	508	504	585	581	484	598	778	694	389	424	602	670	676	6,985
Highlands Rhythm	1,553	884	978	1,478	1,666	2,788	2,503	1,382	1,194	1,501	1,897	1,734	1,325	19,330
Tidewater Current	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	113	335	448
All Routes	5,252	3,542	3,815	5,158	5,316	8,342	8,300	6,201	4,411	4,377	7,360	5,771	5,826	68,419

*Last 12 Months

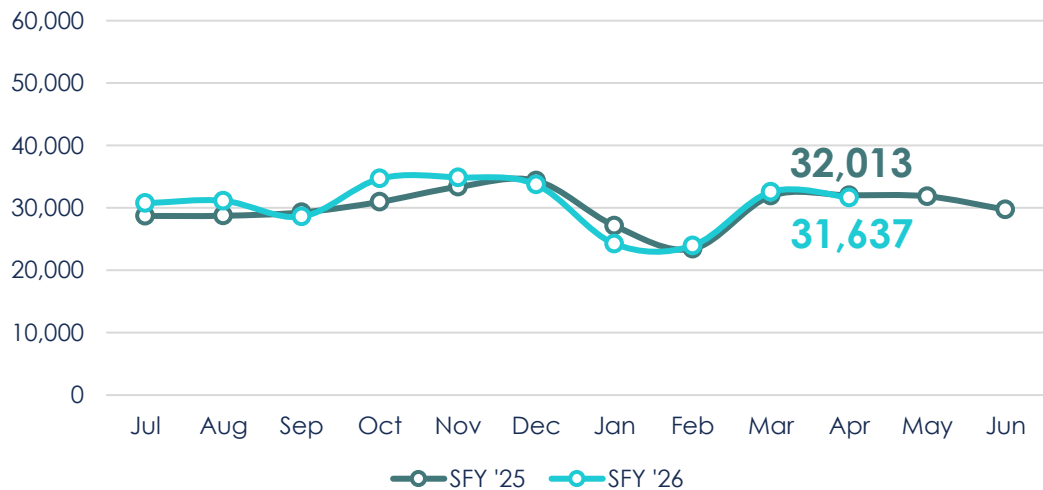
Virginia-Supported Monthly Amtrak Ridership SFY '26 vs. SFY '25

Newport News route recorded highest monthly ridership.

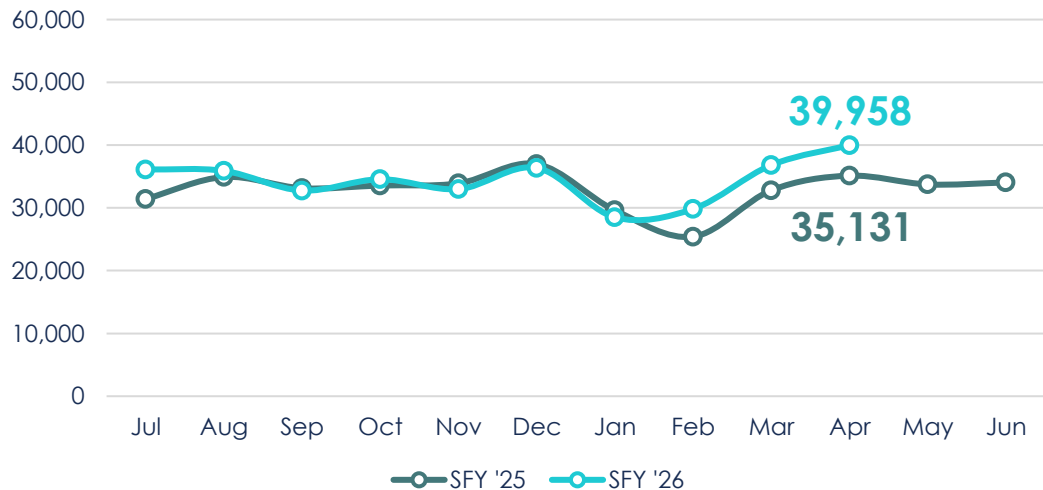
Express buses chart displays both Hampton Roads and Richmond area ridership.

Express bus ridership breakout on Slide 11.

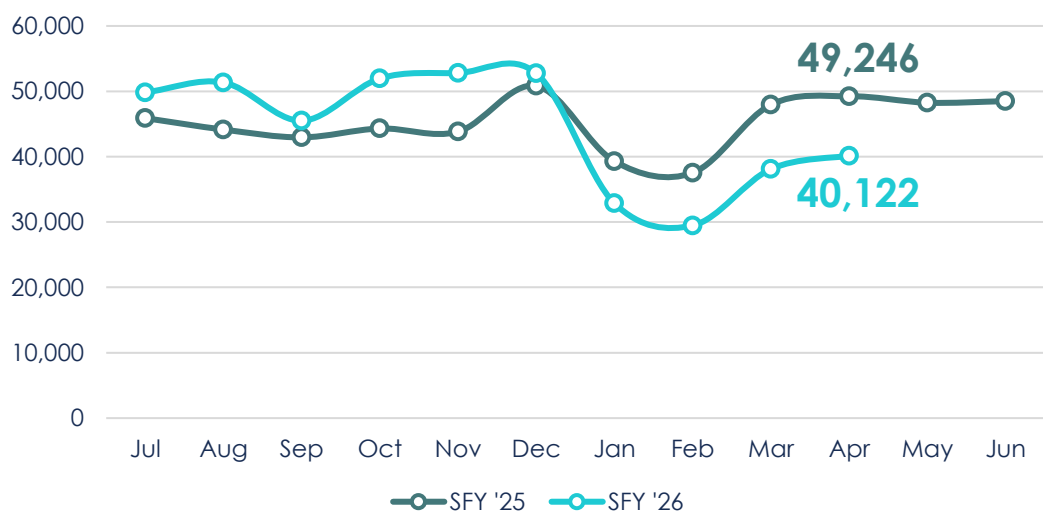
Route 46: Roanoke (-1.2%)



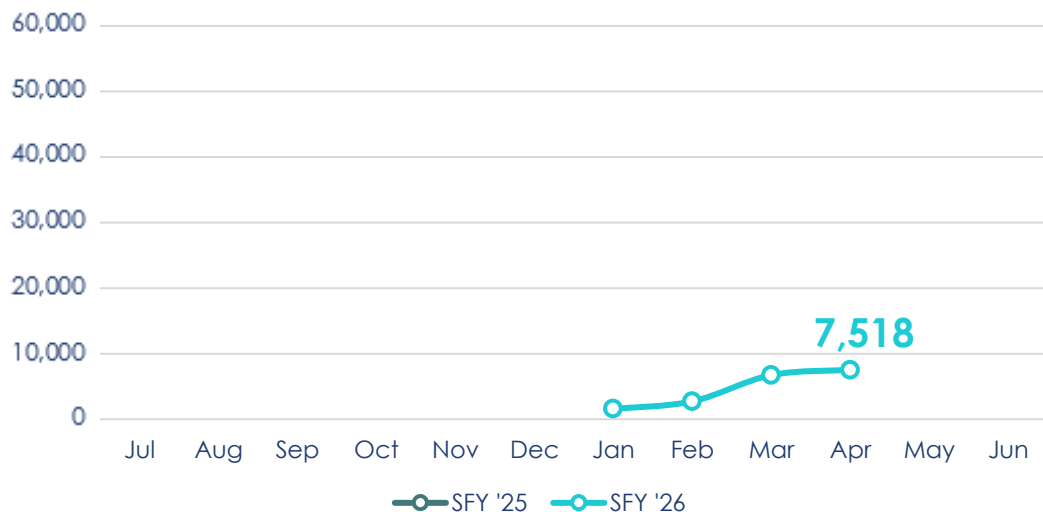
Route 47: Newport News (+13.7%)



Route 50: Norfolk (-18.5%)



D.C. Express Buses



Virginia & Comparable State-Supported Amtrak Service Ridership

Normalized: Monthly Ridership ÷ Daily Trains

