



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, 2024 Transit Summitt, Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Date Wednesday, May 29, 2024
Place Board Room, First Floor, Government Center, 1 Harrison Street SE, Leesburg, Virginia
Length 4h 47m (video)

- Official meeting video (county, Granicus): <https://loudoun.granicus.com/player/clip/7686>
- Agenda (Granicus): https://loudoun.granicus.com/AgendaViewer.php?view_id=73&clip_id=7686

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-19. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:05:58] Well, good evening, Supervisors, good evening, staff, good evening, Loudon. I'd like to call to order the May 29, 2024 Board Supervisors Transit Summit. This room has a hearing loop. If you need hearing assistance, please switch your hearing aid to the telecall mode.

[00:06:14] If you need a headset, we have those available as well. Please see the clerk to request one. Would everyone please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance? I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:06:39] Okay, so whenever we do these summits, I always like to invite any of the advisory bodies that are groups that I think are going to be helpful. Now, truthfully, it could be a lot, and I try to get all the ones that I feel are going to be most directly impacted.

[00:07:02] Having said that, if I don't get it, everyone, people should remember, Loudon, please remember, you can email us at any time and communicate with us any other ways just so we know what you're thinking about these issues. And so I do have three of the four invited advisory bodies here with us this evening.

[00:07:21] I'm going to call your name, and when you come up, you will have three minutes to speak on behalf of your advisory body. and then we're going to do the first two items and we'll take a dinner break and do the second two items. Supervisors, as I read through this package and my staff and I sat and went through this package, it's my thought that so many of these four sections kind of build on one another, and so a motion on item one could impact something on item three.

[00:07:55] I would prefer if we hold all of our motions to the end because I just don't, I think if we, I think we will be going back and changing motions if we don't hold them to the end because our whole transit system builds on itself. And so if you don't mind, can we go through all the items, get all the answers, and then at the end, make the motions because I think that that just makes a lot more sense to do it that way.

[00:08:21] Without objection, I think that makes more sense. So the three people we have here are from the Transit Advisory Board, the Commission on Aging, the Disability Services Board. I do see Mr. DePesci in the room from the Transit Advisory Board, and it would be Mr. Fasalo and then Ms. Ingram.

[00:08:41] So the three of you in that order, if you come to the podium closest to you, first of all, thank you for coming and representing your commission, your committee, or your board. And thank you for serving, because, you know, we can never thank enough volunteers who serve on our commissions, committees, and boards.

[00:09:01] It's really, really important. So, I see Mr. DePesci in the room. Is it going to be you, sir? Could you come to the closest podium? And after you would be Mr. Fasolo and Ms. Ingram. Good evening, sir.

[00:09:19] Hi. Madam Chairman and members of the Board of Supervisors, good evening. My name is Mr. Ray Delpesh, and I'm the Chair of the County's Transit Advisory Board, or TAB, the liaison between the Board of Supervisors, county staff, and the community on issues regarding local, metro, long-haul commuter, paratransit, and other public transit services in Loudoun County.

[00:09:45] The TAB is a diverse group of parties and constituencies and substantial interests and stake in the Loudoun County transit services. My statement tonight reflects consensus views of the entire TAB membership, all of whom have received and approved the positions and recommendations set forth below.

[00:10:07] The TAB very much appreciates this opportunity to address the Board on these critical issues for loud and public transit. Effective and efficient public transportation is a public good. It enables equality, promotes accessibility, allows productivity, increases mobility, physical, personal, and career, and creates opportunity for the community.

[00:10:34] Here in Loudoun County, we are doing good in the public service and public transit arena, but we need to maintain and grow that effort. We need to find a proper balance between ideals and realities. We need to ensure that services are fit for purpose, providing a synergy of effort and optimized results.

[00:10:57] We need to find and allow the redundancies and boost individual productivity and community health, giving our residents multiple ways of getting to work, home, and care. And most of all, we need to ensure that our work looks solidly to the future, Not where we are now, but where we will be 10, 15, or 20 years from now.

[00:11:23] And that plays a proper role in the wider region. These are the issues that the TAB will address over the coming years. One, local bus service, discussion, and border coverage versus compact but

frequent service and proximity to transit services.

[00:11:44] Legacy rules show a strong pattern of growth, frequency surpassing pre-pandemic levels. Silver line connector use is increasing, but it will take two to three years for it to get fully established.

[00:12:02] The county should consider initiating expanding weekend services, especially to our local breweries and wineries and other places of interest. Route consolidation, this will require making a choice between investing into a wide coverage, regardless of ridership or investment, more where ridership is stronger, or how to balance accessibility with efficiency.

[00:12:29] Supervisors, I want to hear from my advisory board, so I'm going to let him finish his thought on this one. Mr. Dipesh, go on. Thank you. Paratransit, discussion on coverage area related to required minimum distances from fixed-route services and impact to customer when changes to local fixed-route alignment occurs.

[00:12:49] The growth in paratransit services in the Loudoun County success story, but we need to maintain and grow that success responsible and sustainable. We'll also need to keep in mind the possible consequence of local fixed-route consolidation on paratransit services.

[00:13:10] We must remember that 10% of county population can be categorized as senior citizen or disabled. Free fares discussion on issues related to eliminating fares for local fixed route and paratransit services.

[00:13:26] The tab supports this initiative. The concept is working well in Alexandria and other areas as an opportunity to increase ridership without incurring a financial penalty. It gives the riders an opportunity to experience their services and build a comfort level with transit.

[00:13:47] Fare collected recouped, a relatively small portion of the operating costs, and imminent replacement of fare boxes, card readers, and the rolling stock will cost about \$65,000 per bus.

[00:14:02] But that's something that we can confirm later. A proactive communication campaign can counter any perception of the county giving free stuff to the bus riding portion of the community. Commuter Bus. There's discussion on ridership levels, consolidating services from fewer park and ride lots, and proposed fare increases.

[00:14:26] The TAP sees the commuter bus network as a complement, not competition to Metro. Ridership has been steadily increasing. routes to Roslyn and Pentagon currently have the lowest ridership. Feedback from commuter bus riders during this last year strike action emphasized how many Loudoun County residents use it, rely on it, and choose to move, live, stay here because of it. The pressure is increasing for the federal government and other D.C. employees for employees to return to office

[00:15:01] at least three days a week. Although previously deadline for RTO, that's return to work, had been pushed back. Employees are now holding firm and insisting on presence in the office. We will need to allow additional time for the commuter bus network to adjust.

[00:15:21] Need and demand is clearly increasing as traffic congestion on Route 7, 50, and 28 is getting back to pre-pandemic levels. In addition, toll fatigue will soon set in for individual drivers as Route 1 I-66 traffic levels increases.

[00:15:43] The tab is considering many ways to better optimize resources, whether a possibility, fare increase, consolidating routes and points of origin, or using fewer parks and ride lots. In addition, the tab

is considering possible alternatives to use of buses on Fridays when ridership is done as such, as, for example, level incentives for county seniors or other community centers.

[00:16:12] The tab is dedicated to working cooperatively with other colleagues on the county staff, and we are proud to do that on our part to make transit more practical and user-friendly as many of our citizens as possible.

[00:16:29] It is in all of our interests, after all. Every passenger on a bus is one less vehicle on Route 7. Every minute not stuck in traffic is that much time Loudoun County residents to spend home and in their communities.

[00:16:44] Thank you again for the opportunity to address you. I would be pleased to answer your question as well as receive your comments and suggestions. Mr. Pesh, that was amazing. Thank you so much. And to the whole TAB board, thank you for all the work that you all have done.

[00:17:01] I don't normally do this, but this is not public speaking. You're speaking on behalf of one of our advisory boards. So do anyone, does anyone have any questions? Ms. Bricksman, we're going to be real quick with this, but Ms. Bricksman.

[00:17:17] Thank you. When you mentioned Fridays as maybe a lighter day for commuters, are you saying that because a lot of folks have consolidated their weeks to be Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday in the office, and then like Monday, Friday at home? That's what I've heard.

[00:17:34] That has been a trend. Yeah. And from our data that we've been receiving from the leadership, they have been providing that information to us, and that's how we see the trend of the ridership being low on the Fridays. So that makes me wonder, instead of consolidating routes or eliminating routes, maybe we eliminate Fridays on some routes or something like that.

[00:17:57] I hadn't even thought about that, so thank you. And that's something I take back to the board and discuss with them. Thank you. Thank you very much. I was just going to ask, thank you for that. You mentioned keeping the commuter bus and giving it time to adjust. So I know that there's a recommendation to discontinue 10 underperforming commuter bus routes.

[00:18:20] What suggestion do you have, keeping them, or what's your path forward on the commuter bus? With all due respect, I don't think I'm in a position to answer that question. Okay, okay. And I can take that back, and we can discuss it and give you a much better response.

[00:18:40] Okay, thank you. Could you just repeat, because I think you said it, and I either misunderstood you or I didn't get it. You weren't saying that you thought the metro should go out to the west for our wineries and breweries. You were saying it would have some type of transit to go out to the west to the wineries and breweries at the appropriate times, correct?

[00:19:00] That's correct. That's what I thought. All right. Thank you, sir. Thank you, ma'am. Thank you. Our next speaker would be Anthony Fasolo from the Commission on Aging.

[00:19:16] I see you, Mr. Brown, on the Commission on Aging. Hello, sir. Hello. I'm Chair, members of the board. I am Anthony Fasolo. I'm currently the chair of the Loudoun County Commission on Aging. I work very closely with the Area Agency on Aging, and most of my comments are from the Area Agency and also members of the commission.

[00:19:43] First of all, we've got to know that the adults 55 and older make up approximately 21% of our county, and there are going to be more in the future. Right now, an estimate was 91,000 individuals make up the population of the county.

[00:20:01] Area agency, we meet with them on a regular basis, and they provide a variety of services, on-demand transportation. There are varieties of medical, we already talked about Medicaid, transportation, as well as rides provided by nonprofits, Loudoun volunteer caregivers, assist older adults with some of these needs.

[00:20:26] However, a significant growth in older adult population, the vast and dispersed nature of our county, and the rising levels of social isolation and loneliness all contribute to a continued and urgent need for reliable transportation, support our senior community.

[00:20:42] Work very closely with adult protective services, for example. Approximately 20% of their cases have unmet transportation needs. Some other challenges, many adults live in rural areas.

[00:20:58] Even when they have access to service, the options are often unreliable as transportation providers are not always available to provide services. Another item is the services do not accommodate stretcher transport, causing older adults to pay out of pocket for this type of transportation.

[00:21:16] Due to increased needs, services have wait lists that are often closed. Many older adults are no longer driving but do not have a disability, so maybe not qualify for rides through these services. So there's consideration to running errands, attend medical appointments, rehab center, and nursing homes.

[00:21:36] Older adults who have specialized medical appointments outside of Loudoun County, such as NIH and Georgetown, do not have transportation to these appointments. Those needing colonoscopy or procedures for cataracts and do not have family or friends who can drive them, no transportation as medical facilities require their release to a person and not a transportation company.

[00:21:59] Affordable private transportation. This may be the only option for sudden illness, last-minute medical appointments, out-of-county appointments, or just simple trip to the grocery store. One member of the commission suggests that perhaps looking at a voucher system to offset the cost of private transportation.

[00:22:17] That was one member of the commission. Language barriers such as transportation, scheduling assistance, and those who speak another language, another problem or concern. Metro, we talked about the metro. Right now, it's kind of limited.

[00:22:33] But my own thought, if I want to get a pass to use the metro, I have to go to downtown D.C. Perhaps maybe we could have a place out here where you can buy the passes. I don't know if that's available or not. I may not. Anyway, thank you for what's been done in the past, and I hope you will look at this.

[00:22:53] I have a copy of my notes, and then if anybody has some questions, I'll be glad to answer them. or Richard Payne's here, who is my predecessor on the commission. I don't know if there's anything at this point. Hey, Mr. Fezzello, thank you so much. Let me just ask, I'm just going to ask my colleague a question who's on the Metro Board.

[00:23:10] Mr. Attorney, is it possible to get Metro passes without going to D.C.? Yeah, absolutely. I will follow up and get you information on all the many ways you can get Metro passes. We definitely don't want

you to have to go to D.C. to get a pass. Thank you. My only question is, do any of the hospitals, our hospitals, the ANOVA system or HCA system, do they have any transportation for people to come to the hospitals?

[00:23:35] Do they have, because you mentioned like the hospitals outside the area don't. Does ANOVA or HCA, do they have something for people who might be of a certain age or any different abilities? They have no pickup services either though, do they? I don't know the answer to that. I hadn't doubted about that before until you said that.

[00:23:52] But we can look and see if that exists. Okay. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it. And then our Disability Services Board member, Ms. Ingram, who is just so busy in our county. I appreciate you so much.

[00:24:09] I love our county. I do, too. Yes. Good afternoon, Madam Chair Randall, board members, staff, administration, and representatives here today. I am Evelyn Ingram, Chair of the Disability Services Advisory Board.

[00:24:25] Thank you so much for allowing me to share with you a statement from the DSB regarding paratransit services in our county. As you are aware, the DSB is dedicated to increasing awareness and promoting the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

[00:24:42] Currently in Loudoun County, there are over 30,000 residents, about 7%, who have at least one type of disability. Among them, 13,971 are between the ages of 18 and 64, while 13,236 are 65 years and older.

[00:25:07] Reliable transportation is fundamental in order for this community to improve their quality of life, have access to employment, health care, education, and social activities. The great news is that paratransit is stable and ridership is increasing because you, the board, you've listened to us and you've acted on bettering the transit system.

[00:25:36] I am here to encourage you to keep putting funding into and getting more strategic about providing the service. Many individuals in our county, such as seniors who may be recuperating from an illness or surgery, individuals with disabilities, individuals with temporary mobility limitations, count on the existing services and they can legitimately justify increasing the service in the county.

[00:26:02] Residents in our county still have concerns with limited service availability. It is challenging for residents who need the paratransit service and may need same-day transportation, especially on weekends or in the case of an emergency. Efforts should be made to increase awareness and communication, enhance our paratransit options to include same day and weekend service 24-7. We could invest in additional vehicles, hire contractors and employer partnerships with ride-sharing services like Uber. We are upgrading public transportation

[00:26:42] infrastructure to ensure accessibility in the county, but unfortunately, it is moving way too slow. No pun intended. We need expanded bus routes, more wheelchair ramps, and lifts and shelters and benches at bus stops, and improvement to signage to assist individuals with disabilities navigating our transit system, and we need it now. This may sound like a lot, but we need accessible transportation. It is crucial for promoting independence, inclusion, and equal

[00:27:17] opportunity to people with disabilities. We are Loudoun County, and our transportation system should meet the diverse needs of all of our residents, regardless of mobility limitations, physical, mental, sensory, or cognitive disabilities. Thank you for allowing me to address these challenges, because this is how Loudoun County continues to create a more inclusive place to live work and play thank you so much thank you and hold on just a sec first of all again you've been so active and i appreciate it and i i think there may be some some questions

[00:27:55] for you i i will say that i don't think it's too much to ask and i think we've been talking about this for a while and all the reasons but supervisor do you have any questions no the one question i have is this and i've talked to staff about this before for people with differing abilities one of a different ability could be, and you just mentioned it, a mental health ability. So have the young lady who's had anxiety disorder. And so for her, driving wasn't an option because she would have panic attacks while she's driving. So when you all are having this discussion about

[00:28:32] people with different abilities as it relates to transit, how do you incorporate the discussion of that different ability being one that's mental health? Well, that's a great question. Because oftentimes, you know, when you've got a physical disability, you have a, you know, cognitive disability, all of it relates, you know, ultimately to the mental ability. And, you know, we try to use the information that we receive from the community. One individual come in and talk to us about the things that they are struggling with.

[00:29:11] So that would be a question maybe similar to you putting on the summit for the DSB. We might consider doing something very similar for this community for the transit. Well, I'm going to have that discussion with staff today because I know that the answer in the past has been if a person can show they have the need.

[00:29:32] But how do you do that? And still, you know, if it's a HIPAA issue, it's a confidentiality issue, it's all kind of things. So how do you do it? And I'm not quite sure how to get at that yet, but it's something we need to figure out, actually. A lot of doctor's appointments, a lot of begging some doctors to, you know, create a document that says...

[00:29:52] A document, a bracelet, or something that says, this is something, I'm something. We've got to figure out some way to do that. As a pass, they show, something they show. Yeah, okay. All right, thank you very much. I appreciate it. Thank you so much. All right. All right. Okay, supervisors, we're going to take, like I said, we'll hold our motions to the end.

[00:30:09] We'll go on each item now, and the first item is our paratransit service. These same wonderful people will be with us all night, Mr. Gross, Ms. Hurwitz, and Mr. Brown. So for the first item, item number one, we are ready. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[00:30:26] Before I hand it over to Scott for the presentation, I just wanted to provide a general high-level overview of what the recommendation for this particular item is tonight as you heard from both well all three of the of the boards there's a need for reliability in the service delivery and what we're asking the board to consider tonight is establishing a stable baseline service area that certainly meets federal requirements and it would be the basically the service area that we have right now so that people can rely upon that when we start looking at

[00:31:01] optimization of the local routes, things change and modify. It does not move with those changes, but it stays consistent for the patrons of the service to be able to rely upon. So that's where we're

trying to pinpoint the board's attention and recommendations on. Maybe that was a spoiler for Scott's presentation, but I wanted to lay that out up front. So without any questions, I'd like to hand it over to Mr. Gross.

[00:31:29] Wonderful. Thank you, Mr. Brown. Thank you, Chair Randall and board members for having us here tonight. We really appreciate your time. We're going to start out tonight in the paratransit world, and we're going to talk about the current service area policy background.

[00:31:46] We're going to talk about paratransit ridership trends, local fixed route paratransit current areas, the policy issue that Mr. Brown just discussed, and then our recommendation moving forward, And then, per your request, we'll hold the discussion until the end of the four items.

[00:32:03] Well, not the discussion, the motion. Okay, the motions. Not the discussion, the motion. We'll do all the discussions right now. Yes, ma'am. Okay, this is essentially how we got to where we are these days. Starting in 1990, we've been operating local fixed-route service.

[00:32:20] Through 2014, it was operated by Virginia Regional Transit. And then it shifted over in 2014 to a local. There were two contracts, a commuter bus contract and a local contract that also had the paratransit, and that was by MV Transportation. That consolidated down to one contract on April 1st in 2021, and then to date, the board directive is to follow the minimum federal mandate, which is three-quarters of a mile around each of the local fixed routes.

[00:32:50] The current ridership trends we've talked about in the Finance Committee and the TLOC Committee, and I'm just going to go over them real quick. So as of 2024 in April, we were at 14,500 rides.

[00:33:07] As of the middle of May, we're at about 16.2 thousand rides. And we are projected to end up at just right at 18,000 rides for the year, which is far and away the highest ridership we've ever had, even pre-pandemic, on paratransit services.

[00:33:25] Next slide, please. This is our current footprint. The reason that this is up here is this is what the paratransit service base is based on currently. It's three-quarters of a mile around all of these routes. Next slide, please. So essentially every area covered in blue is where we serve now.

[00:33:44] That's within three-quarters of a mile around each route. And just real quickly, if routes encircle an area, we are required to cover that area as well by federal minimum mandate. Next slide, please. All right, so we covered the current policy issue, and Mr. Brown essentially hit the policy issue, and that is what's new to this county is because we started all these new routes, any low-performing routes, if we get to a point where we decide to move them or change them, discontinue them, it could cause a problem for folks already being serviced on the paratransit service in those areas.

[00:34:25] And so that's something we don't intend to, it was an unintended consequence by this, and so we have to kind of address it, and that's why we're here tonight. Next slide, please. So essentially we're going to ask the board to amend the current policy to essentially get to a point where as we move out and as the service area expands that it essentially will not contract no matter what happens on a local fixture outside so that we can make sure that all the folks that are being serviced and being provided rides now will continue to be provided rides.

[00:35:01] And that's the quickest one we're going to have tonight. That's great. Okay, Supervisor's questions. Ms. Bricksman. I'm sorry, Mr. Turner, why don't you see lights? Thank you, Madam Chair.

Explain to me three-quarters of a mile within fixed routes.

[00:35:20] Within fixed route stops, within three-quarters of a mile either side of the route, And does that mean paratransit moves them, the passengers from the paratransit route on to the intent is to transfer them on to the fixed bus route?

[00:35:38] I'm having trouble understanding the relationship between the two routes. So the mandate is that if we provide service from point A to point B, we have to pick up anywhere within three quarters of a mile of that route, the entire route. So three-quarters of a mile either side of the route line is your service area, and you then pick up and move from point A to point B, wherever that person needs to go, within that three-quarter of a mile radius or wherever they need to go?

[00:36:08] Within any three-quarter of a mile radius of any fixed route in the county. So, for example, if you've gotten on one of the aspirin routes at three-quarters of a mile and you wanted to go to a hospital in Stone Ridge, because that's within three-quarters of a mile of one of our routes, you can take paratransit from that point to that point.

[00:36:26] So basically, the three-quarters of a mile is a qualifier. Exactly. Three-quarters of a mile of a route, of a fixed route at your start of your trip, and three-quarters of a mile within either side of a route at the end of your trip, then you qualify, and they will pick you up point A to point B.

[00:36:42] You'll qualify for that trip, but you still have to be eligible for the service. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Understood, understood. Okay, thank you very much. Mr. Luterno? Can you go to the slide that has the blue service areas in it there? So I think that we should keep our existing service areas in place in anticipation of potential route changes.

[00:37:06] However, I'm wondering if we can define it differently and a little bit more broadly. If you look at this map now, there's a little area of South Riding in the southeast quadrant there that's missing. There's a little area of Leesburg at the tip that's missing.

[00:37:21] There's a little area east of Leesburg that's missing. Could we define our service area as suburban, urban, Leesburg, JLMA, town of Leesburg policy area and leave it at that? Because that would cover pretty much all of the kind of urbanized areas in the county, plus whatever also is within three-quarters of a fix, which I don't think would add much, but it would take care of some of these little gap areas.

[00:37:47] That is absolutely in the spirit of what we're asking the board to consider. We want to be able to have a base service level that the constituency can rely upon. And if that is a more equitable allocation, then that would be certainly the.

[00:38:04] Yeah, I mean, it's kind of hard for me to say somebody lives like one street over here in the same exact neighborhood. You know, we're not going to provide it for you. You know, I mean, I understand we have to have limits. but I think when we get to motions Madam Chair where I would probably go with this is to be a little bit more expansive than the existing service area for that baseline and define it maybe using our policy areas I was actually going to ask you about that because I know some of those spaces were just in your district that were not being covered Can I ask a clarification? Are we in committee whole or are we sequenced? We are not in the committee as a whole. I do have a minute left I'm happy to yield to Mr. Turner for a question

[00:38:42] if he chooses to do the chair. If I understand the concept you're saying that That structure right now complies with the federal requirement within three-quarters of a mile. You're saying add supplemental areas that may not comply with that but actually exceed that just to pick up. Just to pick up a few of these places, and you probably may, I don't know whose area that is right to the east up there, but a couple of these areas that clearly are in the same type of neighborhood but just missing because of where.

[00:39:07] I completely support that. My only question is how frequently to review do we review that. Yeah. Thank you. Mr. Crowley? Yeah, thank you, Chair Randall. So what about rural Loudoun? I know Supervisor Alterna was saying to pick up some of these areas, but do we offer on-demand paratransit in rural Loudoun County?

[00:39:28] Yes, Virginia Regional Transit operates on-demand service out there. They have six vans now, I believe, that they offer out in those areas. They operate the Route 40 between Leesburg and Purseville as well. so the rural areas are covered by them and it is on demand outside of the Route 40 and where that's important is it's not it can be it's paratransit eligible but it's not specific to paratransit anybody can ride those buses oh great okay and and do they offer weekend or no uh they do not all right thank you would you like to talk about that just a little bit because you haven't

[00:40:06] discussed that and I think that that is an important discussion to have what happens in rolled out as it pertains to paratransit? Certainly. So the on-demand service that Virginia Regional Transit operates is fully paratransit compliant.

[00:40:23] So anybody can ride that bus, and it can handle anybody. The trick is that where our complementary paratransit service, you have to specifically be eligible for it. Out in the West, you do not.

[00:40:39] and why that sounds maybe a little um vague if you're a paratransit customer and you're trying to get a ride it might be a little difficult out west because folks are getting they're booking those rides ahead of time and going to work every day and doing those kinds of things so that's really the difference between on demand on demand is open to everybody it's 24-hour reservation um and the only reason you you can't get it is if the van's actually booked. Thank you. Ms. Brooksman? Thank you, Madam Chair. Pertaining to some of the comments that we

[00:41:15] heard from our commission chairs, how are folks identified as being able to use paratransit right now? Have we considered changing it? And then also, what about the folks that fall into the gaps that they spoke of? For example, you're an elderly person, you can't drive, but you may not qualify for paratransit or you had eye surgery and you don't have a family member that can come pick you up and drop you off.

[00:41:45] Do we have accommodations for those folks? And I'm real curious about how you decide who qualifies and who doesn't. So we contract out our eligibility services to adaride.com. They do quite a bit of that service for the different agencies. There is an eligibility factor.

[00:42:03] It doesn't matter what you're disabled or what your quality is. It can be a mental issue. If your doctor basically signs a note and says, yes, they have anxiety issues and they can't ride the bus because they get panic attacks or whatever, that ADA ride would deem them eligible and they would be eligible to use our service.

[00:42:26] So that is covered in the eligibility side of things. The senior citizens are in a little different category. We don't have a senior citizen discount, per se, or that, and I don't, going back through my

eligibility criteria, I don't know that they're covered under that ADAride.com eligibility.

[00:42:49] And what I hear you saying, correct me if I'm wrong, to be ADA compliant, or that's not really the right term, but to qualify ADA qualifier, you have to have a note from your doctor, is what I hear you saying. Your doctor has to sign off on it. Yes. Your doctor has to sign off on it. Okay. All right.

[00:43:08] Thank you. And I know that you're not making those rules, but thank you. Appreciate that. Yeah, I get what you're, it's such a, it's such a strange thing to require. Like, you know, your doctor has to say you can get around safely. It just, it seems it is a added burden to an already burdened population. I don't know that I know a different answer, but it's an added burden. I mean, and depending on what the different ability is. So if somebody is in a wheelchair I don't think you need a don't know from the doctor that says that you can you qualify that just makes no sense to me at all and if some and if the if the different ability is a

[00:43:44] mental health different ability it is such an invasion of privacy that like so but at the same time we have to be able to identify who needs them or not and I don't know a different answer I just I like us to try to think of something different because it just seems not that that's not how we should we should do that I will um I was going to ask about the the the kind of gap areas because they're not just small areas some of them have fairly decent populations so I do I was going to ask about the gap areas Mr. Turner already uh uh did that and so I will whatever motion comes from that I would be um I would be happy to support it it is interesting that this is the

[00:44:24] this this ridership just keeps going up and so what it speaks to is one the need and two, I think how they're treated when they get on, and that's really important. So there will be, I think the main motion, the package, makes sense, and I think there'll be another motion when that area comes up.

[00:44:42] I do think this was the easiest one. You're right. So we're going to go to item two, which is commuter bus service. Before I do that, Mr. Hemstreet, is it logical to assume that as we have this discussion on the next three issues, The community bus service, the local fixed route, and the local fixed free fare program.

[00:45:03] It's logical to assume that this is assuming, this whole discussion and all that we do tonight is assuming that for now the bus service stays, it's not a service that we're bringing in-house. Yes. Okay.

[00:45:19] So for now, all decisions we're making is that the service is remaining what it is today. Correct. There would remain contract of services. What the board is being asked to discuss tonight and provide input upon is the specific routes and how we design those routes.

[00:45:36] And if that were to change in the future, we would have to come back and revamp a lot of things at a later date if that were to change in the future. Correct. Okay. All right. Thanks. Sounds good. Okay. Let's do commuter bus service, item number two.

[00:45:53] I'm not going to give you a preamble on this one. I think that the committees have had a lot of discussion about this and what staff is requesting is direction on how to do some cost containment by still providing these vital services to our community and the ways to do that and we have recommendations associated with consolidating routes, looking at some fair restructuring to get us closer to an optimized operational construct and the other question that we're going to be asking the board to give consideration to is the fair neutrality policy that

[00:46:32] currently expires in on June 30th which then we will not be able to achieve at that point in time and we would be in violation of the policy if it does not something does not change gotcha okay all right before we start can we be warmer i have i have made the text and it is thank you it's really cold when i saw the the the blankets come out really appreciate that thank you very much um so you don't think so you're not going to do the presentation no we are going to do okay i wasn't going to be praying

[00:47:11] preamble because that was free that was preamble to the presentation yes ma'am all right ready when you are next slide please okay this is what we're going to hit for the commuter bus services uh the the we've been asked several times by several folks including members of the board um what's our vision for commuter bus um so we'll go into our discussion on on what what based on our current ridership levels and based on our current parking levels of from a commuter bus operations standpoint what's the best path that we move forward with this service uh so regarding

[00:47:47] this we're going to touch on commuter bus revenue neutrality evaluating potential fare increases for the service, optimizing the commuter bus services, possible consolidation of park and ride lots, possible transition of the Dulles Trans Center, Transit Center out from where it is to the Ashburn Metro Rail Station, and reducing the commuter bus fleet for excess commuter buses that are currently over and above our 20% spare ratio. And then we'll end up with an update on the commuter bus feasibility study from the west, north, and south. Next slide, please.

[00:48:23] So developing a long-term vision for the commuter is complex. We were taking a look at riderships. We had the COVID to contend with, but we feel like we finally hit what I would classify as a stable zone.

[00:48:41] So we've got ridership patterns now that have been pretty stable for a year. The park and ride lots usage has been pretty stable for a year. So we'll talk about, you know, there are environmental policies and equity policies that we need to consider, land use policies, and then also the county's investment in the metro rail stations as well.

[00:49:00] Next slide, please. Currently, we are averaging 1,064 riders a day, or trips a day, so roughly 552 vehicles. Trips a day, not trips a day. Trips per day, correct.

[00:49:17] So 552 in, 552 out, right, roughly. Now, that goes from 550 to 650, Tuesday, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are higher, Fridays are lower, so that averages across the week. But there are, you know, effectively there are a core group of riders that are riding every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and it averages out a little over 550.

[00:49:40] So to put that from an environmental standpoint, taking 552 vehicles off the road, going down to downtown D.C., reduces 4,504 metric tons of carbon out of the air. It's not a small feat. So the recommendations presented are going to be to optimize operations to retain the benefits of the carbon savings and also optimize the commuter bus service.

[00:50:11] Next slide, please. So one of the first things that we have to talk about is commuter bus fare neutrality policy. Prior to FY19, or really at FY19, we were basically revenue neutral when the rail got here.

[00:50:26] Then the pandemic hit, and we fell south. We're essentially from FY19 to FY24, we basically were operating at about 45% to 48%. It was covered by grants and fares and advertising revenues.

[00:50:44] FY25 is that the adopted budget is going to be right in that same area. About 47% of the revenues are expected to be covered by fares, grants, and advertising revenue. You can see the breakdown for FY25.

[00:51:00] It's essentially about \$5.3 million, projected to be \$5.3 million. \$2.8 million of that would be covered in local tax funds. \$2.5 million would be covered in grants, fares, and advertising. And to put it in perspective, if we were to have to be, if we were required to be revenue neutral, the one-way fare would have to go from \$10 to \$23.74 in each direction.

[00:51:22] And essentially, there would be no sense in operating the service if we did that. Next slide, please. You mean those four people wouldn't want it to be operating? So in evaluating the fare increases, which we think is the correct thing to do, We went back to evaluating the fair increases from FY14 to FY19.

[00:51:45] There were three of them. So we raised up over that period of time from \$7 to \$10. You can see the percentages in there. They went 10.8% decrease in the first year, went to 3.64 the next year, dropped another half a percent or 0.05 or 0.06 of a percent.

[00:52:05] The long and short of it is that over that span of time, We averaged a 3.7% decline year over year over year by raising it a dollar each time. Next slide, please. So we then projected out and said, okay, if we take our current ridership, projected in FY 2011 to be about 211,000 riders, and at \$10, you're at 2.1 million.

[00:52:32] If we projected out to, and using that same 3.7% decrease in ridership, we would dip down to 203,000 riders. but your revenue would go up. And the same thing, the same idea for FY26 is you go up to \$12.

[00:52:51] The assumption is you drop another 3.7. So now you're at 7.4% drop between the two years and you're down to 195,000, but your revenue is up to 2.3 million. And then you can see the same for moving it to 13 and 14 if you were to drop them by a dollar each year or to raise it by a dollar each year. Next slide, please. So the next thing we did was we said, okay, let's take a look at it. What's it going to cost me if I have to drive into DC? So we took and said, okay, if you're driving from Leesburg and you took the Greenway in and you took the toll road in and you took the

[00:53:28] I-66 in, which is what our buses do, you're looking at, and with the cost of fuel, you're looking at essentially a \$24.40 one-way trip. And it can go up to \$47.40, depending on the I-66 congestion pricing that goes on. Now, obviously, you look at it and you go, okay, it's \$24.40, but there's a number of people in Loudoun County that would not take the Greenway because they're not, they live north of the Greenway or south of the Greenway. They don't have to take the Greenway, so that's going to drop \$7 off. So you're down into the \$17 range, essentially, is if you take

[00:54:05] the Greenway off and you still remain and drive in the rest of the way that way. Next slide, please. Okay, so our transit, much like our riders per revenue hour that we use on the local fixed route side of things, and on the commuter bus side of things, we measure it in trips because there's ridership per trip. Every bus makes a single trip in in the morning and a single trip out in the evening, so we're measuring it by the number of riders that are on the bus.

[00:54:36] Currently, our average for the system is 19, so roughly any route that's operating less than nine, nine and a half riders per trip is subject to elimination which is you know how we got to our ten ten buses that are those ten trips that we're recommending which is on the next slide please so the bottom of this

route you basically see there are there are ten buses or ten routes that are operating with less than nine point five two of them are a oddly enough two of them are AM routes and the other 8:00 or PM routes some of that makes sense because of a couple of them are later routes that are more catch you know catch the

[00:55:13] end of the day routes for people who have to work late, whether it's from the Pentagon or from DC. So that's why those buses are so low. Next slide, please. So another, the next point regarding consolidation is really looking at the park and ride lots. Again, you know, this conversation is really from an operational lens and what would make sense to still move 550 people the most efficient way. And consolidating from six lots to two lots is really the best way to do that.

[00:55:47] We've got ample parking in Leesburg. There's 691 spaces. There's currently a little over 1,100 spaces at the Dulles Transit Center. So we would recommend moving out of or discontinuing service to Harmony, discontinuing service to Stone Ridge, discontinuing service to Eastgate, and the Brambleton Park and Ride Lot and just moving into the Leesburg and Dulles Transit Center.

[00:56:17] Now, there are positives as far as operations is concerned. You can actually move more people with less buses. You can actually provide them more options in and out of the city in the morning and the evening because you're going to less places. Now, the negatives on that are those folks do have to drive to the lot, so you do have an environmental impact and a congestion impact there.

[00:56:39] And then, obviously, the folks that have been getting on commuter buses right next to their house are going to be inconvenienced if they have to go to the center. Um, it's kind of ironic that you're, we're going backwards here because that's how we started this service years ago, two decades ago.

[00:56:57] It started with Leesburg and the Dallas Transit Center and spread out as it grew. And now we're just essentially contracting back to where it should be from an operational standpoint or recommending that I should say. Next slide, please. So, essentially, this breaks down the park and ride lots.

[00:57:15] You can see the Stone Ridge park and ride lot. It's got 300 spaces. It's parking about 88 vehicles a day. Dallas Transit Center, you're parking at 161 or so. I know I'm not going to go through each one of them. The important one is the column on the right.

[00:57:31] There's 2,000, a little over 2,700 spaces there for the total, and there's 563 daily parkers. So we're only parking about 20% of the spaces, the open spaces that we have. Next slide, please.

[00:57:48] So this is just to show, this graph is to show geographically where those ones circled in red, Leesburg and the Dallas Transit Center are, which are the lots that we're recommending to keep. And then you've got the Harmony, Brambleton, Stone Ridge 2, and East Gate lots circled in black, which are the parking red lots we're recommending to discontinue service to.

[00:58:11] Next slide, please. So the last or one of the last consolidations we're looking at is moving from the Dulles Transit Center to the Ashburn Metro Rail Station South Garage.

[00:58:30] We do get quite a few questions from the current commuter bus riders of what happens if I have to work late or what happens if I can come home early? How do I get to my space? So this transition actually makes a lot of sense from the standpoint of it supports the Metrorail system because then if folks work late or get hung up in D.C. or at the Pentagon, they can still get back to their cars.

[00:58:54] Even in Leesburg, they can come to Ashburn, they can hop on the bus, and they can take the Route 351 back to the park and ride lot, which is where it goes. So it's got a lot of synergies to it to support

the Metrorail station. The other big thing it does is if we can get out of the lease with the MWA, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, that's another \$221,000 in savings a year.

[00:59:22] Next slide, please. So lastly, the commuter bus fleet is currently over-fleeted. We have 45 commuter coaches in the fleet now. We need 25 to operate service every single day.

[00:59:39] With a 20% spare ratio, that makes it 30. So that means 15 of those coaches are expendable. So we're just simply stating, and oh, by the way, the FTA grant that we just signed, the Federal Transit Administration grant, requires us to only have a fleet at 20% over the existing operating fleet.

[00:59:59] So at that point, this 15 extra commuter buses really should be surplus, and that's what we're recommending doing here. Next slide, please. So at this point, I'm going to hand it over to Gladys, who gives my voice a break and lets you guys hear somebody new.

[01:00:15] So Gladys, please update us on the feasibility study of commuter bus service. Okay, great. Thank you, Scott. So the goal of this feasibility study is to provide insight on the level of feasibility, demand, and strategy to operate public commuter bus service connecting workers in neighboring jurisdictions from the north, south, and west of Loudoun into Loudoun County.

[01:00:37] So we really wanted to take this opportunity to share some insightful survey results that we completed as part of this study. Next slide. So we completed an employer and employee survey. The survey period was between January 11, 2024 of this year to February 23rd.

[01:00:59] And we had 21 representatives of local businesses who completed the employer survey representing 11 different industries. And you could see what types of industries participated in that employer survey. Employers who received the employer survey also helped to distribute the employee survey to their workforce.

[01:01:23] And we had 1,033 employees participate in that survey. Employers were asked, how would you gauge employee interest in a commuter bus? Of the employers who took the survey, 74% believed their employees would be interested in the commuter bus service.

[01:01:44] So this is really insightful to show us that there is some sort of interest out there. All employers reported that at least some of their employees commuted from outside of Loudoun County, in particular from West Virginia, Prince William County, Virginia, Stafford County, Virginia, and also Frederick County, Maryland.

[01:02:08] As part of the employee survey, respondents were also invited to share their home zip code and workplace zip code.

[01:02:24] The resulting heat map, as you can see here, shows that the most optimum areas and locations for the different commuter destinations. The bulk of out-of-county trips came from areas to the northwest, such as Clark County, Virginia, Jefferson County, West Virginia, places to the north, such as Frederick County, Maryland, and southeast, as southeast like Fairfax County, Virginia.

[01:02:53] For specific employment destinations, many employees' respondents suggested commuter bus stops in downtown Leesburg, Percival, Dulles, and Ashburn Metro Rail Station.

[01:03:19] Employees also shared that the distance to a bus stop, which includes whether a commuter bus stop would be close to or near or available to them, the span of service, which looks at whether the service

would be accommodating their work schedules and the length of their trip, whether a trip would actually take too long, were the biggest detractors to using commuter bus.

[01:03:50] Partly due to the continued popularity of telework and hybrid schedules, many employees commute one to four days per week rather than the traditional five-day commute based on the employees that took our survey. This could be the reason why 75% of the respondents shared that they spend less than \$200 per month on their commute to and from work.

[01:04:14] So these are really important considerations when gauging the feasibility of a commuter bus service. And I'll pass that back to you, Scott. Thanks. Thank you. Oh, one more thing. Sorry. So.

[01:04:31] Psych. Not out of the woods yet. So the next steps, we're actually going to continue with our feasibility study, and then we expect to come back in the fall to present the full study to the board in September. Thank you.

[01:04:47] Back to you, Scott. Thank you. You're now my favorite person. Okay. So we're going to go into our staff recommendations. Essentially, we did discuss the revenue neutrality policy.

[01:05:04] Again, our recommendation, if neutrality service is required, or if that's the board's desire, then we need to have a serious conversation about eliminating the commuter bus service. So our recommendation is to suspend the commuter bus revenue neutrality policy for FY25.

[01:05:23] Our recommendation is to approve a fair increase to \$11 in FY25 and step it to \$12 in FY26. The discontinuation of the 10 underperforming commuter bus routes. Next slide, please.

[01:05:41] We recommend the transition from the Dulles Transit Center to the Ashburn Metro Rail Station. And we recommend consolidating from six parking lots to two. And then we're also recommending trying to terminate the lease at the Dulles Transit Center, working with them while to get that done.

[01:05:59] And with that, next slide, please. We are completed and are prepared to answer any questions or listen to any discussion. So we may need two rounds of questions on this section alone. So if you need a second round, bless you, if you need a second round, we can make that happen.

[01:06:20] Ms. Glass. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the presentation. One of the questions I have when you're talking about transitioning from the Dulles Transit Center to the Ashburn Metro Station for parking. At the Dulles Transit Center, did they have to pay for the parking?

[01:06:42] And if we go to the Ashburn Metro Station, will people have to pay for parking to park their cars there? Certainly. So currently at the Dulles Transit Center, there is no fee for parking there. There is a mechanism using the SmartTrip card to be able to allow them to either not pay for parking at the metro garage or there's a combination, I think you called it a transfer, so that it would net out.

[01:07:11] The question is where do you want the money to go? Do you want it to go to transit or do you want it to go to garage operations? And that would be an operational decision through the budget process that the board would act upon. Bottom line is it could be free parking for the rider.

[01:07:26] And what that does for us is right now we have an underutilized garage And it does not necessarily have to be that garage. We just chose that garage for this modeling. It could move to the other garage as things develop around that garage and it becomes more accessible.

[01:07:44] But this could be constructed to where it's free parking now. It could be free parking then. Okay. And so you're saying that let's say that we do have an explosion and people want to start riding again, that we would have the opportunity to expand if we see an increase in ridership.

[01:08:08] So is that process, would that take a long time? Because, I mean, I would hate for, you know, folks to wait a year if, you know, we see, I don't know, if the federal government says, yep, we're going back five days a week, so that increases the number of folks that need to go back into D.C.

[01:08:29] Certainly. So the ride service location can easily change by adding back into the process additional parking rights. The greatest challenge that any service has that receives FTA money is now they're capped at that 20% of overage, number of spares.

[01:08:48] So you would put those spares into play to address that surge, but then you would have to purchase additional buses. We are obligated now through the FTA to bring our spare fleet into compliance right now so those 15 have to be dealt with in some form or fashion either put into service through some other mechanism or surplus so it's no longer in our reserve or spare fleet. One more question in 10 seconds you were talking about that we um the buses that we have now how old are they and do we need to have new buses? No the the coaches are no there's a 12

[01:09:28] year 500,000 mile limit on all on all of the heavy transit buses the majority of the transit buses even the 15 that we're recommending um there's one 2013 bus left and there are six or eight 2017 buses left and then there are 2018 two 2018s i think that makes up the roughly in that area makes up the 15 that have to go so they're not they're not old thank you mr sanes thank you madam chair and thank you for the presentation so you made a few recommendations one of them was to

[01:10:07] possibly eliminate um your underperforming routes would that cause us to have to lay off any any staff with the the cutting of routes so the the objective of this proposal certainly is is designed to uh retain the the current employed services um there's a number of ways to do that um when you consolidate routes as as scott mentioned you can actually increase the service out of those areas when you consolidate them into two locations.

[01:10:42] And, you know, there is a demand right now nationally for CDL drivers. So the contractor is currently scrambling for drivers as it stands. So we do not envision that being a notable problem with that. And in the future, depending on what we do with local fixed route, there may be additional opportunities for drivers in that area as well.

[01:11:04] So currently some of our drivers who are on this route, they could, you're saying, Possibly stay on this route, but for different routes and or could they switch over to do the local routes? Certainly. We know the decision of how to optimize has not been made as to exactly what that would look like.

[01:11:20] But when you optimize a local fixed route, for example, to increase headways. So right now we're say we're operating at a 40 minute headway when a bus arrives. If you wanted to make that down to 20, that's a function of putting more buses on the route. And so you're increased buses, increased drivers. So there there's that opportunity.

[01:11:36] It's really important to also note that that is up to the contractor, how they manage that. We tell them, here's the service we need, and they support that mission. But with the CDL driver demand out there, we don't envision that being an impact.

[01:11:53] Obviously, well, speaking for myself, I would not want to see anybody be laid off if we were to make that switch. And hopefully they could either stay on long haul or switch over, depending on what we decide and the frequency of the routes. And then the other question is, you mentioned moving folks from the Dulles Transit Center lot to the Ashburn Metro lot.

[01:12:16] So why not Loudon Gateway? Because there's a Loudon Gateway closer to the Dulles Transit Center? It is closer. Essentially, all of our current, the majority of our current bus service goes to the Ashburn Metro Rail Station, including the Leesburg buses.

[01:12:34] So if by using the Asperin Metro Rail Station, we just feel like it gives anybody coming back into the county more opportunities to use that. We can certainly use the Loudoun Gateway. Quite frankly, I will be transparent.

[01:12:50] And that is, you know, there's nothing in that lot right now. And my concern was if somebody goes in there and parks, maybe they're going to be reluctant to park in there because they're the only ones using that parking lot. Sorry, there's nobody using it for which one? So just to qualify that, it is a low-usage lot, and there's not a lot of infrastructure around that area yet, so there's not a lot of activity.

[01:13:14] Oh, loud gateway. Yes, sir. But we do have 24-7 presence in those lots for safety and security purposes. So the biggest point that Scott was making is our current structure for local fixed route drives out of the Ashburn area, so it does make it more convenient for people to get to other areas of the county should they need to.

[01:13:33] But that can be mitigated by just adding routes between the two stations. That's an in-the-weeds decision. We are recommending the Ashburn solely for current operational structure, but it could easily go to the other garage.

[01:13:51] Thank you. Mr. Letourneau. So starting with the garage issue, I think one of the concerns I have is having two class of garage users, one that has to pay and one that doesn't. So when we get into the rail riders, this, I understand, is a complicated discussion because of certain agreements that we have in a private garage that we have with some obligations.

[01:14:13] But I would really like to try to work that out before we transition to using a metro garage for this purpose because I do think it's going to create some real bad feelings for the metro riders who have to pay and are wondering for use of the exact same garage why they're paying five bucks.

[01:14:33] And if they take the bus, they won't. And, in fact, would actually incentivize people to take the bus, even though the bus is more expensive. But it kind of would net out a little better for them, which is, I don't think, really what we want for those riders who are using Metro. So I have some real concerns about that one.

[01:14:50] I also have some concerns with sort of, I think we, I think that the commuter bus system needs a diet. I think it needs SlimFast. I think this is like a crash diet. So getting rid of both of the southern loud, and you probably knew, Scott, I was going to say this, but getting rid of both of the park and ride lots south of Route 50 to me is pretty extreme.

[01:15:13] You know, there's 80 vehicles a day parking at Stone Ridge. There's close to 50 at Eastgate. So that's 130 vehicles. And we did the math. It's a 27-minute drive to the Ashburn South metro station. So those people aren't going to do that, you know, and then we've lost them.

[01:15:29] So I could understand maybe consolidating into one location south of 50 between Eastgate and Stone Ridge because Eastgate isn't getting great utilization. And certainly Brambleton's only at 18 a day, is relatively close to Stone Ridge.

[01:15:45] So I think you could potentially consolidate those three into one, but getting rid of them completely to me is not something I think I'm willing to do at this point. It's just a little too extreme for me. I do support the route structure changes, though.

[01:16:00] I mean, we have a significant number of routes that are getting almost no ridership. And these are really big buses. We shouldn't have these buses leaving with, you know, five or ten people on them. You know, that's not something we should have. So I think we can consolidate routes, make sure that there's still some level of service, you know, without completely eliminating service to a particular area or location.

[01:16:22] The last question is on the surplus buses. So it doesn't sound like the timing of the feasibility study, how quickly do we have to do this to comply with FTA? Because I was thinking, you know, if there is interest and the feasibility shows there is some feasibility, and that was my BMI to begin with, going west or north or whatever, could we utilize some of those buses for that purpose instead of surplusing them?

[01:16:49] So I apologize. I should have stated that in the item that it's pending the result of that study and whether or not we would need that. So that's my fault. Sorry about that. So we could, I'm out of time, but we could potentially read. And I would just clarify that the motion that's before the board does have that caveat in there.

[01:17:08] That we'd be pending that. Mr. Turner. Thank you, Madam Chair. On the two charts, the elasticity charts on fare changes in ridership, am I reading these correctly that the fare ridership in 2019 was 947,193 And five years later, in 2024, it's 211,111, an 80% decrease in five years?

[01:17:35] Yes. Have we correlated that to the opening of the Metro? Metro ridership is down as well. We believe that this is, the majority of that is based off of teleworking. Post-COVID teleworking. Post-COVID teleworking.

[01:17:50] Very interesting. Do we have a sense, Madam Chair, can I ask Supervisor to turn on a question? Yes, you can. Do we have any plans at all for an express train from Ashburn into the city? No, it is not technically feasible. Because it's a single track.

[01:18:05] Because we have two. It's always going to be slowed by the local. Yeah, we have done some analysis, and I think we made it public at one point, of trying to space trains in a certain way to gain time if they skip stations. The most you can gain out of that is a couple minutes. And so the board's feeling at the time was that it would cause so much confusion about which train you're getting on that it wouldn't.

[01:18:25] Okay, thank you. Boardman and the Metro Board. So the big drop-off we're attributing to teleworking, I kind of got to agree with you guys. If that's that profound a change in the market, then we don't, I think, need this service anymore.

[01:18:42] I mean, I don't know how else to say it. That's pretty harsh, but that seems to me, if it's not correlated to Metro and it's correlated to teleworking, that ain't going to go away anytime soon, I don't think. Any comments? Any thoughts on that? It corroborates your recommendation that we ought to get rid of the commuter service.

[01:19:00] That's a huge drop-off, a million. That's an 80% drop-off in five years because of teleworking. If that's not diminishing demand that says the market's gone, I don't know what is. So our recommendation is to downsize it and strategically apply it.

[01:19:17] And take a loss. And continue to subsidize it, yes, sir, by the nature of the users and the value to those users. But that is a request that we relieve the service from its revenue neutrality policy and minimize the investment that the county puts into it through some of these cost-saving measures, such as reducing lots, consolidating routes, and then increasing fares.

[01:19:50] One more question real quick. Has anybody timed how long it takes to use the commuter bus into a fixed point in the downtown area and the metro to the same rough equivalent point? My son is now a bartender at Old Ebbets Grill. This has become very personal for me.

[01:20:09] So if you're going straight from the rail station in, that's one measurement, right? if you're going from for example if i'm using the stone ridge lot going in you're saving to connect to the rail and then drive in is you're adding a minimum of 20 minutes each direction on the rail versus a direct commuter bus and if that answers your question uh sort of but we'll come back we'll come back you can come back if you want to we'll have a second thank you mr crony yeah thank you chair randall and thank you for the presentation so i agree with supervisor letourneau that in

[01:20:47] Southern Loudon to get rid of both the Stone Ridge and the East Gate Park and Ride. I think that's not a great idea because it is such a long commute to get to the Ashburn Garage and the other location that you're thinking about, Leesburg. It's a long commute. I don't think people will do it. So I'd like to keep one of those two. The Brambleton Park and Ride lot, Is that just for the commuter bus, or do we offer the Silver Line transit service as well?

[01:21:19] Commuter bus only. Only. Okay. So I heard from the HOA that that is not being utilized at all, that they would like to close that one, because I don't think many people are using it. But to what Supervisor Turner said is that I think there are really a core group of people who ride this commuter bus, so I would hate to get rid of it.

[01:21:42] i think um you know it does get cars off the road it does help the environment um any chance we could do an express bus would that help do you think any modifying how the bus some of the stops we're we're getting into the weeds yeah um well they are but but i'm wondering just to get more ridership i don't know it's already straight down into dc so i'm not sure it can get any more express than it is outside of going to a specific location that we know where there's a group of people are, but outside of that, no.

[01:22:17] Okay. Okay. One question is, can we use the surplus buses to establish a route to Maryland on that Route 15 corridor? So that is actually why we're recommending that the surplus decision be stayed until the results of the feasibility study have come back and the board takes action on that.

[01:22:40] Because if the board chooses to create an inbound commuter service, then those buses would be the likely resource to apply to that. And that would change how many buses we would need to surplus.

[01:22:56] So that, as Gladys mentioned, I believe, what did you say, December? In the fall. Yeah, in the fall. We should have that information. We know that legally we're bound to reduce our fleet by the FTA, but we do have time to look at that feasibility study, make a determination there, and then apply any resources that we may have.

[01:23:17] I was just thinking it would help traffic on Route 15 north in particular. In Western Loudoun, so we're going to basically the idea is to close the one at Harmony, right? That's the only park and ride that we have in Western Loudoun? Okay. That's correct. All right, so people are going to have to drive to Leesburg to take the commuter bus.

[01:23:36] It's essentially about the same mileage from Harmony to Leesburg as it is from Stone Ridge to Ashburn South. Yeah, that's my concern, right, discouraging some of our riders. Okay, thank you. Ms. Brooksman?

[01:23:53] Thank you. I'm definitely going to need more than one round of questions. I guess you can see right there that when you increase the price, you reduce the ridership. So I'm not inclined to have us increase the price at all, honestly.

[01:24:13] I mean, that's one way that you know that you're going to reduce ridership. We know we reduced it by 10%, going from \$7 to \$8. So we're going to lose more if we go to \$11 and then \$12. I think the Transit Advisory Board was saying that they would rather not see routes eliminated.

[01:24:34] I can understand maybe some of those at the back end that have very low ridership. Could we lower, how many electric buses do we have? Could we lower costs by using electric buses? And then also NVTC is working on a project to have area jurisdictions combine efforts to have charging stations like down in D.C.?

[01:24:58] Would that help us at all, and are we involved in that? So right now we have two electric buses that have been on order for over a year, and two years. Okay, okay. Over a year still qualifies. Okay, okay.

[01:25:14] So, and I would be very careful about using BEB's electric buses as a cost-saving measure because everybody that is using them are finding it not to be a cost-saving measure at all. It is an environmental offset effort.

[01:25:31] So it's not, if our, the balance is for us, operational and service and optimizing the cost balance. Okay, okay. What is the bottom line of, if we did all the recommendations that staff is recommending, what's the bottom line savings?

[01:25:48] Depending on, if you go to \$11 next year, essentially we will be in the, still funding roughly 38% of the funds. What's that number, dollars?

[01:26:05] I don't have a calculator. 38% of 5.2 million. I don't, does anybody, you don't want to use it on your phone? You don't want me to do anything. 38% of 5.2 million. Yeah, which is what's estimated. Not even 2.5 million then. Maybe 1.8 million.

[01:26:21] And if we kept it at \$10, okay, we have a \$6.9 billion budget. I do not mind subsidizing commuter buses and not raising the price. This is, okay, so I don't know if I'm going to, I don't know if I will support that.

[01:26:37] We listed a bunch of environmental, well, actually, let me stick with the commuter, the federal government stuff first. I also think maybe we should, my staff just said it's 1.97 million. We should probably wait a little bit to see what the federal government's going to do on their in-office policy.

[01:26:59] But have we, oh, I'm out of time, Madam Chair. Can you just go out there? We'll come back to you. All right. Can everybody please move to the item, not the presentation, but move to the actual item?

Mm-hmm. Okay. Move to page 13 of the item. On page 13 of the item, figure 13, what would keep you from using the commuter bus?

[01:27:19] Only 9% of the people say what keeps them from using the commuter bus is cost. 39% say public transportation is not available near me. 41% says it doesn't accommodate their work hours. And 42% says unsure how to use public transportation.

[01:27:38] So cost doesn't seem to be the issue we're talking about right now. Everyone moved from there to page 12. Go to the bottom of page 12. If you currently drive yourself to work, would you consider using public transportation? 54% say yes. 54% of people who are driving said they wouldn't use public transportation.

[01:27:56] And again, so it's not the cost issue. Everybody move themselves to page 10, please. on page 10 how would you gauge employee interest in commuter bus service 42 percent say very interested and 32 percent say somewhat interested if i continue the same analogy that mr leterna started which was the diet analogy it doesn't feel like we should put ourselves on a smaller diet or lesser diet sometimes if you diet too much you start you stop losing weight it sounds like we could we should think about how we should be eating differently not whether we should be

[01:28:28] eaten at all. And so I'm not sure the, I don't know, the numbers that you gave us doesn't line up with take, take those community birth services away. The numbers that you gave us say, do just the opposite. So I'm a little, little confused by all the, and like all the stats and the numbers that I'm reading. And then, but if you just look at, if you just look at the, the decrease in ridership, would you say it makes perfect sense? Perfect sense, because that's a huge drop-off.

[01:29:02] But if you look at all the other reasons that you've given us in the item, not in the presentation, it makes no sense at all. In fact, it contradicts what you're saying. Help me understand what I'm So I want to make sure that we're not confusing the commuter bus feasibility employer outreach questions with the actual commuter bus service into D.C. Those are two different categories. So So the data that comes from the employers in Loudoun County for employees coming in from the southwest and north is what the majority of those, I believe, I don't have the line in front of me.

[01:29:41] Is that true for page 13? That's the employer. Yes. So all of that is related to the commuter bus feasibility study. It does provide some insight as to possibilities later, which we won't know until the actual study is completed.

[01:30:02] But if we take away the services to the extent that you're saying, I don't see how that would help, to be honest, when I look at these numbers as we start talking about this in the future.

[01:30:20] So if I may, Madam Chair. We're going to do a second round, by the way. No, not you. We're going to do a second round. You can keep talking. You can keep going, sir.

[01:30:37] Sorry about that. So I think it's really important to frame what staff is recommending. And we are in no form or fashion recommending the elimination of the service. We are, however, recommending the elimination of the service if the board requires revenue neutrality because we do not believe we can get there and deliver a service under revenue neutrality.

[01:31:01] So that is the only reference that we make to the elimination of the service. We are recommending reducing the lowest performing routes, the 10 lowest performing routes, that on average

they have less than nine people on a 54-passenger bus.

[01:31:20] And so we're looking at reducing those and still maintaining the robust majority of the other routes. That's from an operational standpoint, which could reduce up to a million dollars in savings to the contributions that the county provides to the service.

[01:31:39] Okay. All right. We're going to try a second. Thank you. We're going to try a second round, and I will go first to Mr. Turner. So I'm fascinated with the feasibility study because that tells me there's a pretty high interest.

[01:31:55] I have a thought in my mind of how they're going to move around once they get here, because it's not like downtown D.C., it's Loudoun County. So you end up in Leesburg and you work in South Riding, that ain't so great. But we can solve that problem later.

[01:32:12] But to what extent do you think if the feasibility study says that extra ridership into Loudoun County would then potentially spike long-haul commuter services into the city at all?

[01:32:29] Or do you think most of the interest is to stop here as the terminus? I think the answer is pretty obvious. Yeah, that was the goal, to bring folks from neighboring jurisdictions into Loudoun. A lot of folks would most likely who needed to go further south can find their way to get there by either getting to the metro rail station to travel further south if needed or mark train.

[01:32:56] But really the goal is to get them into Loudoun. Okay, so, I mean, I could easily see a scenario where we could have a revenue neutrality system coming into Loudoun County pretty effectively with these kinds of numbers, saying, yeah, I'm really interested in that.

[01:33:14] I wouldn't be surprised if we could hit some revenue neutrality coming into Loudoun County, which leads me to the next question. If we were eliminated the long-haul service completely, what's the difference in time in a long-haul commuter bus and metro to get downtown from, say, the Ashburn metro station?

[01:33:32] So the general rule that Mr. Gross provided is it's at least a 20-minute savings in time. On the commuter bus. On the commuter bus, a minimum. And I think that's a very conservative number. I think it frequently is more savings in time.

[01:33:50] The risk that we have from a community perspective is the elimination of that dumps the vast majority of those users back onto the street using their own vehicles. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. And so we're very sensitive to the environmental goals and energy strategy that the board has adopted and not proposing something that is going to reverse some of our efforts that the board has made.

[01:34:15] So that is why that is not a recommendation of staff because of the consequences associated with that. Okay, in line with Supervisor Brisman's questions, what if we say revenue, easing the revenue drain, the subsidy amount is not the objective.

[01:34:30] The objective is to dramatically increase ridership to get cars off the road, and we took a bigger hit. We basically subsidized ridership to a much greater extent than we're doing right now. It seems to me that curve is pretty elastic, and if you got really lowered rates, you could really bump ridership even in the face of the telemarketing world.

[01:34:53] Thoughts? And I would say that is a board policy decision as to, from a fiscal policy, as to how you want to make those investments into the community. So, Scott, go ahead. Yeah, I'm just having this

thought since you said that. We could actually possibly go after a trip grant money, transit rider incentive program, and possibly, you know, that would have to be in FY26 because 25 has passed.

[01:35:22] But we can certainly look at that for the commuter bus side and see if we can't offset, you know, have that offset ridership. That way the county doesn't lose any revenue and we can see if that would generate exactly what you're stating to you. Thank you.

[01:35:40] Mr. Letourneau. Okay. First of all, to pick up kind of what the discussion Chair Randall was having on the survey results, the way that I was looking at this and the way these two things kind of play with each other, which is the dramatic loss in ridership and all that, And then this was that it's not so much that we should stop offering service, it's that we should change the service we're offering.

[01:36:00] Because what we're doing now doesn't make sense. We're offering a service that people aren't using. But what this is telling us is we could potentially reallocate buses to other places. And I was thinking exactly of Route 15, like Supervisor DeCrooney brought up, and potentially hit some of these congestion areas that we have in the western part of the county from people getting into Loudon, Route 9, 287, 15, all this that we hear so much about with transit.

[01:36:28] And the issue, as Supervisor Turner would say, is are enough of them going to the same place? I was thinking enough of them are probably going to either a county facility or a school facility, at least, because I know we have a lot of employees that, you know, where maybe that could work.

[01:36:43] So I think that's where we should focus on, you know, in terms of this. In terms of the fair discussion, I think it's difficult because, again, we've invested so much money in Metro Rail, and Metro Rail is so much more expansive in terms of what it can offer because you can get anywhere from, you know, early morning.

[01:37:00] So, you know, this service was always intended to be a premium service, an express service, you know, that you're paying for an extra level of, you know, of directness that you're not getting with some of these other things.

[01:37:15] So I personally wouldn't really want to look at making this super, we have to get rid of the neutrality policy. I mean, that isn't going to make any sense at this point. Obviously, we're not going to charge \$23. I'm okay with a reasonable fare increase because everything else is going up.

[01:37:31] When's the last time we raised fares on this? 2019. Okay, so it's been five years at which inflation has been 20, 30% in that period of time. We haven't raised it. And I don't, you know, the data is showing that even on this survey, that cost isn't necessarily the driver.

[01:37:48] Do you really draw 100% of that elasticity to fares? Weren't there also things like color commuting happening in the federal workforce already, even before COVID, that could be driving down some of those numbers? But I don't think it's fair to draw a complete one-to-one on the fares.

[01:38:05] So that was a look back? Yeah, I know. But even during that previous period, telecommuting wasn't new at COVID for the federal government. They started doing that. And around the time we started seeing ridership drops here, it became much more widespread across agencies. Metro was seeing the same thing.

[01:38:21] Metro didn't raise fares, and yet we saw significant decreases in our ridership during that same exact period. In fact, more so than what we're seeing here. So my only point to my colleagues is I wouldn't

draw a complete elasticity on that revenue model and say because we raised fares a dollar, that's why we saw a complete drop.

[01:38:37] It could be some of it. So if we did that again, I'm not so sure this is changing because I think we have a pretty stable group. And don't forget, federal employees get benefits for this where they're getting their trips subsidized. Wrap that up, Mr. Lieutenant. Thank you. Mr. Sainz.

[01:38:56] Thank you. So let's shift gears here for a second. We never really haven't talked about it too much, but what do we need to do differently or enhance our marketing to try to get more folks who might be aware or might not be aware to trying our services that we have to offer?

[01:39:17] We've actually enhanced our marketing quite a bit, and as part of it will actually come to fruition in the next item that we're going to cover. Commuter bus is in that marketing, but we have actually put a pretty decent program together, and we're actually seeing a spike in ridership on the local fixture outside and the paratransit side because of it, we believe.

[01:39:42] So we don't have anything specific for commuter bus, but it's included in all of our overall marketing that we've got. And if I could add one more challenge with that is, you know, we made a significant investment in the rail, And we have actively marketed the rail.

[01:40:01] And the dance between that is, are you now providing competing? We want this to be a complimentary service, not a competing service. So we have to be very careful about how we market the premium service and with a potential expense against the rail investment.

[01:40:18] So we're just, even though we might cover it in the next item, but give me some appetizers. What are we doing? You said we've done a lot of updates in our marketing. What are we doing? You are correct. We are going to touch upon that on the next item, but we've done a lot of marketing and social media like Facebook and Instagram to promote a lot of our local routes.

[01:40:45] Online banner ads and websites. There's also some radio ads and Spotify and Pandora. Digital out of home board ads found in malls and gasoline stations and electric vehicle charging stations many of you have probably seen it mobile ad scrolls prints on different loud and times mural el tiempo for example all made possible by a grant that we had but a lot of that marketing was concentrated on our local route system and there hasn't been an effort for the commuter bus so just to put that so even though yeah i understand the point that was just

[01:41:22] made a second ago that we don't want to have them compete against each other but at the same time hey, if we're offering a service, we still need to advertise it as well or else we're going to see some of the results we're getting when we're saying we're having a bus that can seat, what, almost 30 or 40, how many, 55 people, and we're sending buses down to the city with 9 or 10 people.

[01:41:44] That's, you know, so at some point we need to do some advertising of the service as well, again, because you don't know, like the old saying, you don't get it, you don't get it, right, from that tagline from that certain paper. But, yeah, all right, thank you.

[01:42:04] I must not get it because I didn't get it. I suppose that you, oh, that's right, okay. Ms. Brooksman. Okay, so I think that maybe the two, the survey results and the long-haul conversation maybe should have been separated a little bit.

[01:42:27] But I'll just say I support inbound concepts, and then we can look at it when the survey results come. back. Um, I'm going to drop the federal, uh, conversation for a second. I, I, I wanted to know, um, well, first of all, on page 13 of the presentation, there's four blue peas up in the Sterling Algonquian area. Are you saying those are not commuter bus? None of those are commuter bus. So anyone up in that area has, we'll have to drive all the way down to Dulles transit center

[01:43:03] to get a commuter bus they do now they they do yes ma'am are you sure they do or they or they take a connector they've actually it's always been that way it's they've we've never had a the closest commuter bus we had to algonkian was christian fellowship church at one point on leon county parkway we don't have any commuter bus stops north of route 7 no okay that doesn't make sense to me at all. So that, I think that's bothersome. I don't know how that was decided. I don't know if there were surveys or some kind of data that showed you that all those people that

[01:43:42] lived Lansdowne and Algonquian and all there, none of them would take a, even in Sterling, that none of them would take a commuter bus. So that's confusing to me. I also, I don't support closing those other park and ride lots necessarily because partly I agree with what Supervisor Letourneau said, but partly you can't, to me, you can't claim the environmental benefits of taking cars off the road if you're making those cars drive to the Dallas Transit Center, which could

[01:44:17] take them a half hour in traffic. Same with Harmony. Like if you could tell me the people from harmony could get the leesburg in five or ten minutes then you know let's close harmony but to me we're we're just erasing what we have claimed to be the environmental benefits of the long-haul riders so if you're making them drive i mean have we done that analysis at all because we anyway go ahead what's going to be the additional carbon footprint of making them drive farther right so uh vice chair brishman that's a very good point um we calculated that there's a nine mile run

[01:44:57] and that was indicated in our cons side of that of that chart that there is a loss in that uh there's still a net gain overall because they're getting in a a uh a commuter bus eventually and and heading down so and i will i will say that that um the consolidation i keep running out of Sorry, I ran out of time again.

[01:45:17] Sorry, go ahead. Finish, please. The consolidation of the park and rides is a proposal from an operational efficiency standpoint. We present that to the board for your consideration. There are certainly scenarios that we have run that kept Stone Ridge and Harmony in play.

[01:45:38] And there were savings, but not nearly as significant. And it was running routes out of Dulles Transit Center, Stone Ridge, Leesburg, and Harmony to provide a more spread out opportunity for those.

[01:45:55] So that is, we can look at those scenarios. We are looking for board direction on how you would like us to proceed to try to optimize those operational gains and reduce costs. There used to be a commuter bus service in the Telos parking lot right across the street from Lansdowne.

[01:46:14] So what is the, because it's in here somewhere, but I don't remember what it, because I read it. What is the average income of people who are riding the commuter buses versus when we get later on, get to the fixed route buses? Over \$150,000.

[01:46:31] \$150,000, that's what I thought. We've had discussions a lot about who we subsidize and when we subsidize and that type of thing. I would be way less willing to subsidize computer bus riders. I mean, I think fair neutrality is probably out the window, but I believe that some combination of decreasing the services and increasing the fair is what we're looking at.

[01:46:59] We still won't get to fair neutrality, but a total subsidizing kind of for this population is also something that I wouldn't feel real comfortable doing. I mean, we can go back to have a whole lot of other discussions about subsidizing people if that's the amount of money that we're talking about for these riders.

[01:47:21] You know, whenever we have discussions, the numbers matter a lot, but I also try to factor in human behavior. For me, a human being, if I get in my car and I have to drive 29 minutes to get to a parking lot, I'm going to drive to work.

[01:47:40] I'm going to drive to work. My car is warmed up, my radio station is where I want to be, I'm going to try to work. Even if I'm sitting in traffic maybe 20 minutes longer, I'm just not going to get out of my car after 20 minutes to get on transit.

[01:47:57] So I do, I mean, I take Mr. Letourneau's point, not just that, you know, closing down two in one area, But I just don't think most people are going to ride 20 or 30 minutes and then get out of their car and then get on something to ride another however long that they are paying a significant amount of money to do.

[01:48:19] Human nature, human behavior just doesn't work like that. You give me five minutes in my car, maybe 10, I'll get out of my car. But 30 minutes, I'm not getting out of my car. So I think that your logic is solid, but it doesn't factor in just flat-out human behavior.

[01:48:40] And so I think that we have to look at what some of these options are. I believe that it's somewhere between where we are now, and we have to shut some things down, raising fares and not shutting stations down so many stations that we're leaving people in the car.

[01:48:59] We think people are in the car for 20 minutes already. Or 30 minutes already. That's just too long. So when we get, I think these are going to be a lot of different, when we get to these motions, they're going to be hard, and they're going to be a lot of different motions to make. I do appreciate where you're trying to go, though, and your rationale.

[01:49:16] I do appreciate that. Supervisors, that was all we have for item two. Item three, item two and item four really do have a lot of discussions together. we're actually in the next three let's take a break and come back and do three and four

[01:49:36] and then motions motions okay all right thank you let's take a break okay we are back we're

[02:18:55] going to go to item three which is a local fixed route transit service not not too heavy a lift at all no problem so now that we've gotten through the easy stuff exactly yeah this is this is fairly complex and I will be very upfront that this is an area where I think the greatest opportunity for investment to achieve a more robust service for our transit-dependent community as well as optimizing it to be a more effective and reliable service so I will turn it over to mr. Scott

[02:19:32] 41 slides guys yes ma'am next slide please all right so we're gonna we're gonna hit all of these topics essentially running through this item we're gonna do introduction in the background we're gonna do the existing local routes we're gonna talk about route optimization essentially it's a study that we've got going on we're gonna talk about our key performance indicators. We're going to talk about our marketing, which is finally underway and has been doing a fantastic job. We're going to be talking about our core transit users,

[02:20:09] equity in transit and access to transit, an introduction or maybe not an introduction for everybody to microtransit. And then we're going to talk about our strategies moving forward, whether a covered strategy versus a focused strategy versus actually a hybrid strategy.

[02:20:26] And then we're going to, out of those, we've got seven operational objectives that we essentially define. And then we'll have a discussion around, or we won't have a discussion around that at the end. Next slide, please. So, you know what, in the expedience of moving forward, since we already had this slide, we're going to skip to the next one.

[02:20:47] All right, so, again, a reminder, our two-digit local routes, those are our legacy routes that have been in operation since the 1990s. Our three-digit Silver Line routes are our new routes, the 21 routes that essentially connect up.

[02:21:02] Some of those are modified pre-Metrorail stations routes, and other ones are new. They're all effectively new because they now go through neighborhoods and then connect up with parking ride lots and then hit to the Metrorail station. Next slide, please.

[02:21:19] So this is just a familiar slide. This is our existing local route network as it sits today. Next slide, please. All right. So one of the things we looked at when we started noticing Silver Line metro rail stations or the metro rail routes were still were struggling in the first year is we said, OK, is there anything we can do within our budget, within time to make these better?

[02:21:46] So we hired a company, a consultant company, to come in and do an optimization study. We're about three quarters of the way through that study. And essentially, they're looking at all of the routes. They're trying to see if we can help travel times, if there's anything, places that we can change, make it more reliable, make it more productive.

[02:22:06] Next slide, please. All right, so the route optimization studies and goals. Essentially, all route optimizations start with good planning as well as defined goals for the service. We've run into some obstacles along the way.

[02:22:23] The Silver Line changed the landscape in Loudoun, obviously, and then we had COVID. we had to deal with talking about changing folks not just their ridership habits but actually you know when they actually ride not if they actually ride next slide please all right so the factors supporting the need for the study were we obviously had a ridership decline since the pandemic we had we just talked touched on that change in the commuting patterns and the silver line stations opened they do have low ridership on those routes we did expect that to a point it takes a while to build ridership. It takes a while to build routes. It takes a while for folks to get used to those

[02:23:03] routes, hence the industry best practice of leaving a route in play for two years before you really start making any adjustments to it. Next slide, please. So this slide is really just kind of a, you know, I call it my pretty slide. I was going to say, it's a nice slide.

[02:23:22] Ernie's laughing at you, though, which he is. He's laughing at you. Oh, he always does. We keep each other amused. So we talk about access to community destinations. You know, really, this is obviously easy. This is, you know, how can we get from point A to point B?

[02:23:39] How can we get the folks to where they need to go to, whether it's job opportunities, medical facilities, education centers, senior centers, grocery stores, et cetera. We also talk about improving

sustainability and stewardship. That's really providing environmentally friendly transportation, right?

[02:23:58] capable of decreasing the carbon in the air and keeping our communities a little healthier. Transportation equity is big for us, is making sure that everybody who needs access to the bus can get access to the bus. That's huge for us. And making it affordable for, especially for our economically disadvantaged folks that need help riding the bus as far as that's concerned.

[02:24:24] And then lastly, we have an excellence in safety. We want everybody to feel good riding the bus. We want them to feel safe, not just from a security standpoint, but we also want them to feel safe. You know, COVID has still played with a lot of people, and whether they want to get on buses or get in tight spaces with germs and that.

[02:24:42] So we want to make sure that everybody understands the buses are very clean and ready to go. Next slide, please. So the optimization recommendation focuses were exactly what we have on the screen, a more frequent service, better coverage. improve system efficiencies and resources where we can if we need to reallocate them and do it all in a cost neutral state so in other words make any changes but within the fy25 adopted budget next slide please so i think i'm going to take this one since i can't read it and you can't read

[02:25:18] it um i will start and just kind of give this a quick overview the the top corner up there is a comprehensive operations analysis. It's a COA. Essentially, that's what you have to do when you're really analyzing a system, right? You're going to start right there with all the data, with all the analytics, with all the on-time performance, and you're going to analyze it. And then you're going to identify your existing conditions after that. And essentially, you're going to work your way around. It's important to understand that this route optimization study is really to see what

[02:25:54] we can do kind of as a band-aid right now of how we can kind of adjust our systems as best we can within our budget knowing that what's really needed is a as a you know a good hard look at the service itself it really hasn't changed in two decades so we really need to get to a place in the future where we're looking at you know making better routes less long you know shorter routes shorter headways that kind of thing next slide please all right we're going to start with our key performance indicators uh we've talked about this already boardings per revenue hour boardings per revenue mile net cost per boarding and there's also a fourth one on there that's

[02:26:33] important to us and that's on time performance um the boardings per revenue hour is important because we're going to talk about that a little bit later in our recommendations essentially our current our current uh kpi is any route that has fewer than half the boardings and the average boardings per revenue hour as the system as a whole is a candidate for adjustment or elimination.

[02:26:57] So if the entire system is averaging six riders per revenue hour, then the way that this is written, if you had three riders per revenue hour or less, we would look at that for an adjustment or elimination. Our on-time performance, just so you know, our key performance indicator for that is 85%.

[02:27:17] We want to be 85% on-time at our bus stops. Next slide, please. So I'm going to whip through these slides real quickly since we did talk about these at the TLOC and the Finance Committee. These are riders per revenue hour for the legacy routes.

[02:27:35] You can see how high they are. They range from 3.9 up to 8 and change. The Route 80, Route 82, and the Route 70 are our highest averages. Those are our two sterling routes in Route 70, obviously our

spine route. Next slide, please.

[02:27:53] So the aggregate, if you're looking, if you compare all of the local fixed routes together from the legacy side, you're averaging in the mid-sixes on riders per revenue hour, which is pretty good. Next slide, please. Now, shifting gears to the silver line routes, the new silver line routes, you can see that we're averaging from 0.8 riders per revenue hour up to four.

[02:28:16] Now, I have to caveat this slide in a couple of ways. Number one is the silver line routes run a lot, They have longer days than the local legacy routes do. They run later in the evening to try to stay, you know, to give folks a ride home from the Silver Line.

[02:28:33] If they're there, they're actually running until 11 o'clock at night. We only have a handful of routes. I think it's two routes that actually run until 8, I'm sorry, 10 o'clock at night on the legacy side. So that's part of the reason that waters this number down a little bit. Next slide, please.

[02:28:50] So the aggregate riders for Silver Line is in the mid ones, right? between one and two it's not where we want it to be obviously we want it to be up we would like as a minimum to be at three but we're again our reminder we're only a year into this so we're essentially just hit the year mark on may 1 and our recommendation is to not touch these things for a full two years next slide please so the aggregate riders for the entire system is in the

[02:29:26] mid threes. You're going to see later on when we talk about key performance indicators that one of the reasons we're going to want to change to that very first key performance indicator is we don't think having a KPI in the mid ones, which is if we look at this and we say, all right, the system as a whole is, let's just say it's 3.1. That means if any routes doing at least 1.6, then we would look at it. Well, 1.6 is way low. We really shouldn't be that low in operating transit there are things that we can change and we'll discuss those in a few more slides next slide please all right this is our on-time performance

[02:30:06] indicator so I'm gonna do a little bit of a call out here you can see in October we were at seventy four point three percent one of the challenges when you're putting new routes together is getting the timetables correct and the reason for that is it's impossible to time and have school buses in front of and all the other traffic indicators that are out there so we started out at seventy four point three percent I'm gonna give the gentleman running the controls of the computer over here mr. Steve Pero a little credit he instituted some changes in January to the timetables and you can see they went

[02:30:44] from seventy nine point six to eighty four point four up to eighty seven point two so they they've been much more reliable since then and so those changes has worked really, really well. Next slide, please. So this is essentially, I touched on this slide a little bit, and that is that any route that has less than 1.6 boardings per revenue hour subject to adjustment or elimination or discontinuation, at this standpoint, half the routes or 15 of the routes of the silver line would be required to be changed or adjusted. Again, this is why you have a two-year waiting period to allow those routes to build and get a little maturity to them.

[02:31:25] The other things that happens here is, you know, if you start serving these folks, and even if you're only doing 1.6 riders per revenue hour, you're still serving folks that need those buses. So if you actually remove those buses, now you're having an equitable impact on those folks, no matter how few they are.

[02:31:44] So we have to take that into consideration. And then we touched on the paratransit service area issues if we would actually change routes in the item number one. So this is just a touch back on that subject again. Next slide, please.

[02:32:01] And I'm going to shift and allow Gladys to give us an idea on the transit marketing. And I'm going to steal a little bit of a thunder. We left you guys some swag up in there so that you could kind of see what's going on and how we're advertising this.

[02:32:17] And so take it away, Gladys. Great. Thanks, Scott. So I'm happy to hear that many of you received the swag, so that's great. So we actually started a transit marketing awareness campaign March of this year, and it's called Be Bus Savvy.

[02:32:34] It was actually made possible with a grant with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation called the Commuter Assistance Program Grant. And this has allowed us to have marketing on various platforms such as social media, Facebook and Instagram, radio ads on Spotify and Pandora, digital out-of-home advertisements and prints such as HOA Newsletters, Loud and Now, Loud and Times Mirror, and El Tiempo.

[02:33:03] And as you can see there, those are a couple of samples of the different ads that are out there. We've had some really good performance in terms of what we're seeing with a lot of our Facebook and Instagram ads.

[02:33:24] And there's been a lot of performance in terms of positive performance with a lot of males seem to be looking at our ads between the age range of 25 to 64. A lot of our Google online ads are also performing well, best between the ages of 18 to 34 of all different genders.

[02:33:43] We're also reaching a variety of communities throughout Loudoun County with our transit marketing campaign. So what we're seeing also is some positive growth in current ridership.

[02:34:02] There's been a 0.25 increase in riders per revenue hour, as you can see with the uptick of the trend line there in red, which translates to an additional 23,499 additional riders per year.

[02:34:18] So some contributors to that ridership growth, we think, is due to a lot of the transit marketing effort that we've had in place and a lot of the improvements that we've had with on-time performance recently, which is great.

[02:34:36] Now I'd like to touch on some of the several recent efforts to get public input regarding Loudoun County Transit. So in September 2022, Loudoun County actually conducted an onboard rider survey to update its Title VI program for 2023 to 2026.

[02:34:56] In October 2022, we actually launched a virtual survey to gather input on transit strengths, opportunities, and priorities to inform the transit strategic and commuter assistance strategic plans.

[02:35:12] In September 2023, we had in-person surveys of bus riders on local routes aimed to gather information on local bus service needs from underserved, economically disadvantaged, and limited English community members.

[02:35:30] And lastly, the most recent effort was in September 11th through October 2nd, 2023, where we conducted targeted outreach to human service providers in the county to gather information regarding the knowledge of the county's transit system, as well as their knowledge of their clients' experience with local transit.

[02:35:52] So some common themes that we are seeing across all of those outreach efforts was to expand local bus service to include early morning nights and weekends to better align with existing metro rail service schedules.

[02:36:08] And also, some folks also wanted to see more enhanced communication of transportation resources to improve customer awareness and increase confidence in using our transit services. So during our October 2022 virtual survey, we wanted to share a couple of survey results with you all.

[02:36:33] The first survey result to the left shows that respondents value transportation options that are fast, convenient, and direct, even over factors such as safety and reliability, which is really interesting.

[02:36:48] And then the survey question to the right shows that respondents had a general preference for more frequent service in a smaller service area compared to less frequent service in a wider service area.

[02:37:05] So this is really relevant to a lot of the information that we were speaking to earlier regarding service optimization. We also wanted to touch on who our core transit users are, and a couple of slides will actually, we're going to share some of the onboard results for demographic variables, such as including income and vehicle ownership, which is going to give us some insight on who those core transit users are, right?

[02:37:37] So what we're seeing is that people with incomes under \$50,000 tend to use local bus service, but not commuter bus or metro connection service as much. As mentioned earlier, or touched on, commuter bus service is most commonly used by people with incomes over \$150,000.

[02:37:58] Vehicle availability, we found, also strongly correlates to service type use. So many of those local bus users reported having no vehicle access, little to no vehicle access, and that really supports how many of our local bus users are what we call transit-dependent people.

[02:38:23] And most commuter bus users have access to one or more vehicles. And with that, I'll turn it over to you, Scott. Thank you, Gladys. Now we're going to discuss equity in transit.

[02:38:41] Essentially, the board has several documents that actually address this, which is really helpful. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan, they're listed up here. These are not all of them, but these are the ones that really had information that really tied back to transit.

[02:38:57] The 2019 Countywide Transportation Plan, Article 7 of the Zoning Ordinance, the board's equity resolution, the Human Services Strategic Plan, and the Transit Strategic Plan, just to name a few. they address equity and accessibility some indirectly affected by trend or affect transit other ones are directly affect transit and essentially our view from a staff perspective is to take the board's policies in these and say where there is there's accessibility is needed it's our job to get accessibility to

[02:39:33] those places next slide please so the transit equity challenges we've kind of talked about this off and on throughout the different, whether it was paratransit or even commuter bus and now in the local, and that is anytime you have a lengthy wait time, you've got a limited access to essential destinations, that becomes an equity problem. If we continue operating underperforming routes and tie up resources in that manner that could be used in other areas, that becomes an equity issue as well. There are alternatives when we have places like

[02:40:07] that where we can start to work in microtransit which is essentially an on-demand transit or other mobility solutions i don't want to lock us into any one of these because uh that the transit flexibility

options are really expanding every year so we want to make sure that we're not locking ourselves in any one but microtransit in particular right now is you know a strong alternative that we're going to look into for any place where we have an underperforming route when the time comes to have to make a change to that route.

[02:40:40] Next slide, please. Essentially, this access to transit in Loudoun County, we actually lifted this right off of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission website. Essentially, it says that 282,000 people in Loudoun County out of 421 do not have access to transit.

[02:41:04] I was a little shocked by that number, but then when I started looking into the data, A lot of that has to do with the fact that we don't operate on weekends, so therefore that data is a little bit skewed, and the fact that those folks don't have. So it's accurate, but if we added service on the weekends, it would fix a lot of that problem.

[02:41:24] Next slide, please. Okay, microtransit. So we've been looking into microtransit, and we're looking to do a study moving on, but we'll talk about that here in another slide or two. Microtransit is essentially like on-demand.

[02:41:40] The big difference is in on-demand, you have to book it 24 hours in advance, and it typically goes from your curb to curb, from your house to your destination. Microtransit, for the most part, operates within a zone that you define. It's in real time.

[02:41:56] It's similar to Uber, but it doesn't go from curb to curb. It goes from bus stop to bus stop generally. And then what ends up happening is you can define the zones. And what's intriguing to us about this is that if we've got a couple of areas that don't have or have underperforming local fixed routes, this is a viable opportunity where we can take, let's just say we have four buses running two local fixed routes in an area.

[02:42:22] We could switch those out to on-demand vehicles, still provide access to all those areas and provide it in a timely manner and without having to make reservations or anything. The way the microtransit works, it's on an app and you just, you know, you tell it you're at your stop.

[02:42:41] It signals the driver. The driver comes and picks you up. And as the driver is driving you to your next bus stop, if another bus stop comes in, it's on his way or whatever, it dynamically reroutes him to that bus stop and picks him up. So it's a very interesting dynamic and an interesting thing for us to review.

[02:43:01] Next slide, please. This is just a quick example that we pulled up in Green Bay Metro. Really, the big reason for this slide is the zones. You can see identified the greens, the blues, the purples. Those are all different microtransit zones.

[02:43:17] Microtransit is very flexible. We can define what those zones are. We can define if buses go between zones or stay within zones. It's a great solution that can be used really anywhere in the county from the rural areas, maybe even in those slightly denser areas.

[02:43:37] Next slide, please. Oh, and actually before I go back one, sorry about that. It is important to note that the vehicles that are used in microtransit very often are shared with paratransit fleet. So if you've got a heavy paratransit day, a lot of times you can shift some of those vehicles that are in that fleet over and supplement your paratransit service.

[02:43:58] Next slide, please. All right, this is where we get into our strategies. When we sat down and started looking at everything, we said, okay, given the board's policies and transit strategic plan and all the other documents that are out there, do we want a coverage strategy, which essentially talks about covering the widest area possible?

[02:44:24] Do we want a focus strategy, which concentrates resources on higher demand areas? Or do we want a hybrid strategy that essentially takes something in between where you're going to add more resources to your higher usage areas and maybe figure out ways like Microtransit to cover your lower usage areas?

[02:44:41] Next slide, please. So the coverage strategy, these are pretty obvious, where you start to get where your advantages and your disadvantages are. Coverage strategy, the advantages are obviously accessibility. You know, you're going to cover a lot more areas and wider areas.

[02:44:58] The disadvantages are the same, right? It's you're going to have longer wait times, you're going to have, you're going to spread your resources thinner, and it's going to be more costly to operate because you're going to be operating buses on longer routes for longer periods of times with less people on them. Next slide, please.

[02:45:15] So the focus service strategy is essentially, I don't want to say the opposite of the coverage strategy, but you're really looking at where your higher performing routes are and you're saying we're going to put service in these areas. So one of the things that we've, from a strategy standpoint, we've looked at and we've realized our legacy routes really need looked at and adjustments.

[02:45:37] We've got high ridership on those routes, and a lot of those routes are 45-minute headways, meaning you're waiting 45 minutes between buses. And, you know, those of all the places, those who are economically disadvantaged folks, you know, they're riding those buses, and we should really have those headways at 20 minutes.

[02:45:55] So that's a priority for us, and that's what a focus strategy would do. And so the key, next slide, please, is really how do you do both? How do you focus in those areas that you can focus in where you have higher ridership, yet not lose accessibility in areas where still people need rides?

[02:46:17] And that's really where the hybrid service strategy comes in. It's essentially it takes the best of both worlds. You mix in a network of microtransit buses in your rural areas where the ridership is lower or on lower performing routes. It doesn't necessarily have to be in a rural area.

[02:46:34] It could just be in an area where it's, you know, folks have got cars and they're not going to use it. But there's still some lower income areas there, right, economically disadvantaged income areas there that need help. So that's where the hybrid strategy comes in. Next slide, please.

[02:46:52] Essentially, we take all of these factors in when we start to look at these, public input, population density, ridership demand, budget constraints, service allocation policy, meaning the coverages that we were just talking about, and in urban form and land use.

[02:47:08] We take all of those in as we're making our decisions and moving forward. Next slide, please. All right. I got through that quicker than I thought. You're welcome. So, staff recommendations and the operational objectives are listed on the screen right now.

[02:47:27] Operational objective A is, we talked about this, we're going to, in FY25, do a study of on-demand microtransit in one or several service areas. The reality for that study is because microtransit can be done in so many ways, we really want somebody that's versed in it to come in and let's just discuss what's the best way to do this, how to set this up, how to move it forward.

[02:47:52] Based on the outcome of that study, we plan to come back to the board in the FY26 budget to procure vehicles for the microtransit fleet. CNG obviously would be our vehicle choice to operate in those areas.

[02:48:09] And then we would also come back to the, you know, seek permission to apply for a grant for capital funding for those buses as well. Operational objective number two is to allow, we talked about this earlier, is to allow two full years for new local routes to become established.

[02:48:27] Our operational objective C, our third one, is establish a performance criterion, new and existing local fixed routes of a minimum of three riders per revenue hour. This is what I touched on earlier, where right now it would be at 1.6 riders per revenue hour, and as a transit professional, I just can't look in the eyes and say that's a good performance indicator to utilize.

[02:48:50] And three is, since the system is at a little over three, that's a good place to start. Next slide, please. Now we can get into our four equity objectives. So objective A, ensure accessibility within a quarter mile of all affordable dwelling units, senior living facilities, senior centers, economically disadvantaged housing, recreation community centers, and employment hubs.

[02:49:13] It's important to note that when we're making these recommendations, these are not recommendations that we're asking you to solve in FY26. These would go into our transit strategic plan over a series of years and come back what we would do in FY26, what we would propose to do in FY27, and then in FY28, so that it's more spread out, and we would start to prioritize each of these objectives.

[02:49:41] Equity objective B is the local fixed routes, and we just touched on this, getting our legacy routes to a 20 to 30-minute headway and off of a 45 to 60-minute headway in those areas. Objective C, enhance or redesign the local fixed routes to facilitate direct access from residential zones to employment hubs across the county.

[02:50:00] Again, this is directed at our legacy local routes. They've been long and meandering for a number of years, and that whole system needs a facelift to look at and see where can we get folks from Sterling. Do they need to get to Ashburn, the employment hubs in Ashburn quicker so that we are not sending them down the Route 70 and having them connect up?

[02:50:22] So that's going to be vitally important to look and see what we can do to our routes to make them get folks to where they want to go, where they need to go. And lastly, our equity objective D is to enhance the local fixed route service on Saturdays and Sundays and mirror those operations on Sundays.

[02:50:39] I can't tell you how important it is to have operations on Saturdays and Sundays that helps boost your weekday ridership. It allows folks to rely on the bus seven days a week. And a lot of these folks that are operating and riding our buses need that service seven days a week.

[02:51:00] so right now all of our economically disadvantaged folks that are riding the bus Monday through Friday can't ride our bus on Cyberman Sunday so it's imperative that we get that up and running and with that next slide please so obviously our staff recommendation is to ask the board to endorse the

hybrid strategy for the delivery of the transit services and endorse all seven operational inequity objectives. And with that, we are, next slide, open for questions.

[02:51:35] Wonderful. Before we do questions, I do want to do something real quick. I have a new staff person named Jason Minovar. Jason is a self-described transit nerd and has come, wave your hand. He was so excited to hear that Matt Letourneau worked on our floor. He actually said and I quote you know him unquote because Matt's on the metro board and I was just like oh my god I'm like I do and I can introduce you to him because I had that kind of swag

[02:52:13] I can introduce you to Matt Letourneau on the metro board so Jason is having our first meeting is with us for our first meeting and it's the uh transit meeting and and and So he's here for our first meeting, the first time in the boardroom doing a meeting with us, and it's a transit meeting, and welcome to the boardroom, you're doing a great job, and by the way, meet Mr. Letourneau, so there you go.

[02:52:43] all right questions please Mr. Sains well thank you thank you again for the presentation you mentioned the micro transit so and I know Scott over the the years we discussed how we can get more into the interior say in Sterling Park and then some of the neighborhoods where the streets a little bit more narrow and congested and that's causing a problem for our buses because they're running more on the main route say Sterling Boulevard Holly you know church, et cetera. So would micro possibly be one of those options to kind of get in the more interior? Absolutely. We believe it would be a possibility for areas like Sterling. All right,

[02:53:21] well, I'll just throw it out there now. We'll be very interested to do a pilot program if we were to, with your staff and my colleagues are willing to move forward. So throw that out there. Thank you. Ms. Tacroni. Thank you, Chair Randall. So I'm really intrigued about the microtransit as well especially for rural loud in um you know where it's not as populated and i'm sure they don't get the bus service especially on weekends and um in the evenings uh do you know what like

[02:53:57] how many micro transit buses are you thinking of purchasing for fy26 do you know do you have any idea that would have to come out of the study honestly that's why we want to do a study to see how to set that up to kind of really get a better handle on what we would need and how many square miles we could utilize a single bus on that kind of thing. Okay but it would be for the FY26 budget you're thinking as far as the pilot? The plan would be to come back to the board. It would not happen in FY26 I can tell you that right now likely and here's why we would have to do the study in 25 and

[02:54:34] even if we knock it out in a couple months or six or eight or ten months then then we'd have to come to the board then we'd have to order the buses the buses depending on how long they take could take eight ten months to get here so that's the timeline we're looking at okay thank you yeah I'm really excited about it and then what operations do you foresee for local fixed route transit service on Saturdays and Sundays so we would we would we would have to look at that from a revenue neutrality standpoint meaning that a budget neutrality standpoint is

[02:55:09] what I should say, right, is we would look at that and say, okay, what are we running on Saturday now? What aren't we running that we run Monday through Friday? So that's going to be one set of numbers. And then how to mirror that on Sunday, that'll be a whole new set of numbers. So we would have to come back with that as probably, I guess, a resource request moving into one of the budget years coming up. And because we're in the middle of the optimization study now, it is our hope that we can we can integrate that into the study and be able to have some sense of what that ask would

[02:55:45] look like for fiscal year 26 if we're able to to get that integrated in in time to do that because our goal would be able to to let the board know at the at the fiscal year 26 budget deliberations what that increased service could look like if we're able to get that completed in time okay Great. All right. Thank you, Mr. Letourneau. Thank you. So I've said some of this before, but this this isn't field of dreams. I have come to realize if you build it, they won't necessarily come. And I am of the opinion that at least to some extent on our on our newer fixed route

[02:56:24] service, I understand you want to go to the full two years and we can do that, but they're probably not going to come at the volume that would justify the expense. So I am really excited about the metro transit discussion. So just to kind of talk it through a little bit more, I think what we're talking about is potentially a fleet of vehicles that can be adapted depending on what the service needs actually are at the time. One question is they don't necessarily have to be buses, right?

[02:56:51] They could be vans. That's correct. Which are less expensive, easier to procure. We all know metro itself, others having trouble getting buses, especially electric buses, almost impossible, but potentially some options with vans.

[02:57:06] So if we kind of endorse the hybrid model, I think what we're saying, and correct me if I'm not getting it right, is we have a core of probably more transit-dependent folks that we need to serve with more frequent service than we are. And I think geographically speaking, that's probably the Route 7 corridor, you know, roughly between Leesburg and Sterling, not exclusively, but roughly there.

[02:57:30] And then the rest of the county, potentially, we could serve with a different model. Do you think it's possible to actually just reallocate resources and be able to cover some of that with microtransit? Or are we looking at something that's going to cost a lot more money?

[02:57:47] We don't know yet. Yeah, I was going to say, we don't know yet. My gut, as a transit professional and operating pretty good with numbers, is it would be both. Depends on how much we want to do. Exactly. Yeah, Sterling doesn't have to get all the pilots, by the way, just to be clear.

[02:58:07] It gets a lot of pilot programs. But, you know, in this other part of the county, I was a big advocate for these routes, you know, but I do feel like they're not performing, and it's not just that they're not performing because the core ridership need isn't there. Like, people aren't trying to get to metro stations and use numbers, and if they are, they're just going to drive there, you know, which is primarily what we're serving.

[02:58:27] So if there's a different way to serve some of those people, I really think that it's smart for us to look at it. And it's not about providing less service. It's providing smarter and better service, potentially with something close to the same kind of cost envelope that would get us there. Because we're running so many empty buses.

[02:58:45] And, I mean, it pains me. I see them go down Tall Cedars and Gump Springs all the time, and there's never anybody on those things. And I'm just thinking to myself, God, if we could be putting these resources into something that would work better, we would be benefiting a lot of people and giving them, I think, a better experience in addition to, you know, potentially being better value. Ernie, did you want to say that? So I would just like to thank you, Supervisor Turner, for saying that publicly because this transit professional keeps telling me to wait two years. I think there is an opportunity, and I don't want to be overly

[02:59:21] ambitious or establish unrealistic expectations, but I think there are opportunities where we see specifically targeted areas on those Silver Line routes where you have 0.8 riders per hour and they are coming from an area that we know that they are transit dependent that we can start looking at opportunities to sub to to replace the the service streamline that that route and start adding in those things to your point buying a van is is a is a much less expensive proposition than buying a \$750,000 bus so there may be those opportunities to look at that in in

[03:00:01] advance I caveat that with I don't want to set unrealistic expectations but I am very very interested in this and will fully support the active and tenacious pursuit of it I want to caveat that I want to caveat that with that's a given I really want to caveat that with the discussion or they the reality of it is is we need to get up to speed on microtransit, right?

[03:00:36] So that's going to take a little bit of time. We don't have it allocated in our FY25 budget. That's a totally separate discussion. By the time we get, in my mind, by the time that we get actually up to speed on that and be able to get the buses ordered and get them here, we're going to be into year two anyway.

[03:00:54] Right now, we're a year away from that happening. So even if we start right now, logically, we're going to be at the end of the two-year stint. So it's going to kind of address yours and Mr. Brown's concern. Mr. Turner.

[03:01:12] Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to try and get this straight because I'm trying to wrap my head around this. How many seats are on a fixed-route transit bus in Loudoun County, General? They range from 16 to 40. So we've got a bus with 16 to 40, and the objective we're trying to achieve is three riders per revenue hour.

[03:01:34] Minimum. I cannot imagine a business model where the opening discussion of investing in that business model is a 16 to 40 percent capacity, and we're shooting for three persons per revenue hour. It just screams of this system is not working.

[03:01:53] I know the microtransit option is exciting, but that's really you're defining a function with microtransit. It's sort of fixed-route transit on demand. So it's not just the size that we're dropping down the size to vans, but it's also you go to the bus stop, you schedule the pickup at a certain time at that bus stop, and it takes you to another bus stop.

[03:02:16] So it's a totally different function of the transit, which I think is a viable function, and I'm excited about that. But I'm wondering, why in the world are we running buses, 40-passenger buses, with three passengers per revenue hour? That just boggles my mind.

[03:02:33] Two years or not. Sorry. If I may, Supervisor Turner, I think you're experiencing the similar frustrations that we have in this, and this is why we're asking to start ratcheting that up.

[03:02:48] Now, you're not going to be able to go to an average of 1.6 to 7 to 12 in a year. But we believe that if we intentionally invest in a hybrid strategy, embrace the operational inequity objectives that we've set forth, that we can start moving towards those higher volume course routes that are still achieving the service needs of those transit-dependent entities in the community through alternative means such as on-demand or microtransit or flexed ride.

[03:03:21] They are coming out with better and better technologies to augment that. But we move to those high-volume service delivery routes that are more focused. And you do, in fact, get increased riderships,

and your ridership per hour will increase over time.

[03:03:37] So agree at 100%. Three riders per hour per revenue hour is low. We cannot compare ourselves to D.C. We just do not have the demographics nor the infrastructure grid to accommodate that. But this is absolutely the step that we need to start taking to get to a place where we have an optimized service that really provides for the community.

[03:03:58] And please don't misunderstand. I'm not criticizing the team at all. Not at all. I know it's a real challenge, and I'm happy to take whatever recommendations you have because I trust you guys. I just didn't realize that we were underutilizing that resource to the extent that we are. Well, I do have to add this qualification for you, though.

[03:04:18] Transit systems are not light switches. It takes a while to build them up, and it takes a while to go, and so we have to be patient with them. Now, having said that, I think what we've outlined in this item with microtransit and heading in different directions is a way to make it more affordable, get the buses where they need to be, where the higher ridership is.

[03:04:40] So we're in agreement with you there, but we're also trying to build a transit system for three years from now, not right now. And that's the challenge in our seat, is trying to, where's the patience level of what we can operate now to get to that point.

[03:04:57] I would close on my end with the legacy local fixed routes have been around for two decades. That's why they're operating at eight riders per revenue hour, because people know they're there. They trust them to be there, and they ride them every day. Thank you. Ms. Brookman.

[03:05:16] Oh, Ms. Glassman, sorry. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for the presentation. So I guess I have a disconnect because when you were showing one of the graphs and you showed the commuter routes and then you showed the local routes and it had shown that most of the folks that use the local buses do not have access to a car.

[03:05:45] So are these folks that have been using the original routes that you've been talking about? And so are we talking about because of the expansion of our bus system that certain areas aren't using it?

[03:06:07] I think I'm a little confused there. I would say that on the legacy local routes, the original routes, right, they've been operated for a number of years, and it is a transit-dependent population that operates on those.

[03:06:26] The Silver Line routes are really going through, you know, different areas in the higher income levels, honestly, and they have options. And so it's a matter of a culture change, too, to get everybody to realize that riding a bus is okay and that I can take a bus to the grocery store or whatever to have to eat and come back home again.

[03:06:53] So I think that's really the difference, if that answers your question. I think so. Also, when you were talking about the objectives, I'm looking at, I think it was number four, equity, objective A.

[03:07:10] and you were talking about ensure accessibility within a quarter mile of all affordable dwelling units, senior living facilities, senior centers, recreation and community centers. I didn't see libraries, so would you include, would that be part of recreation and community centers when I think of libraries?

[03:07:33] Yes, I should have put in more at the end of that sentence because I would have filled up the whole slide, But yes, ma'am, libraries would definitely be included in that. Okay, thank you. Ms.

Brooksmen. Thank you. Is staff recommending eliminating any of the fixed routes right now?

[03:07:51] No. Okay. I had a little bit of an issue with what I perceived with the PKIs in that I don't know that we can justifiably compare routes that run every 30 minutes with routes that run every 60 minutes.

[03:08:07] For example, Route 70, I think, runs only every 60 minutes, and it might have a much much higher ridership and rate better on the PKI if it was every 20 or 30 minute type of route, if that makes sense. So I want us to make sure, I'd like to see us increase frequency on routes before we consider eliminating routes, if that makes sense. The vans, I hope when we do the pilot in algonquian district i hope they can be electric i hope they can be electric um and then

[03:08:46] uh also i'd like to see that because it looks like the marketing is working really well so i really would like to see the marketing have some time to work before we consider eliminating routes like i'd like us to measure them again at some point against our pkis and after we perhaps increased frequency to make sure that we're not eliminating a route that could potentially be a three per ridership hour or four or five or six per ridership hour if that makes sense. The other thing I was thinking about and well I'll back up for a second with the

[03:09:22] microtransit I support the microtransit but I'm thinking once we get some patterns in microtransit that might dictate routes for us. If we consistently have people just doing microtransit from, you know, Northern Virginia Community College to Leesburg and back, to me, the interpretation would be, let's put a permanent fast route to Leesburg and Northern Virginia Community College without all this, you know, Route 70 stops, all these different places. And I've actually tried to ride from my house to here one time, and it would take me well over 90 minutes. And that's assuming I drive my car to the Northern Virginia Community College bus stop, and I get on the right

[03:10:02] side of the street, which leads me to another point. I hope that, um, part of this analysis and evaluation leads to some improvement of the signage because I, like I have an MBA and I still can't figure out sometimes what, and some of the signage signs don't even have the route numbers on it. Um, and then lastly, the, the app is pretty good. Um, but if you go to our website, the county website, you, and you try to look at a route, it shows you a PDF. So I'm wondering if one of the recommendations out of this could be, I'm hoping could be that we have a website on loudon.gov

[03:10:38] that shows an interactive map, but also is mobile friendly. Or maybe we skip the maps all together, the routes all together being a PDF, and we just say, go to the app, go to the app, go to the app, because that was a little confusing too. And now I'm out of time, but thank you.

[03:10:56] Okay, so if I am reading this right, and if I'm not, I'm sure you'll tell me, not in the presentation, but on the document, on the actual item, if we go to page 14, figure 13, does that figure say that the majority, by a very large amount, of people who are riding transit buses do not have a car?

[03:11:28] No, no, no, not in the presentation, in the item. Yes. Okay, that's actually what that says. Again, these graphs and charts are not matching what's actually happening. It's really confusing.

[03:11:44] If that many people don't have, so really, if they didn't have these buses, they'd have nowhere to get around. That's correct, right? All right, so they are using buses. I have two questions.

[03:12:01] One, with the micro buses, are we saying that those buses would be used maybe for people like the rural policy area and are people who might be of a, would that be income dependent? Would the micro

buses be income dependent at all?

[03:12:17] It really, the goal of the microtransit would be to serve areas that have low performing fixed routes now, still provide accessibility for those folks that need it.

[03:12:33] And the answer would be no. The strategy of microtransit is to not be income dependent. One way or the other. Not at all. It's an extension of the existing transit system, unlike paratransit. So that doesn't mean we have to apply it that way. But to Scott's point, it is designed to provide a cost effective extension into an area that has very low ridership.

[03:12:56] But say, for example, you have a community of 500 dwelling units and 40 of them were proffered as ADUs. So you have a small subset of that community that is transit dependent that may not generate enough to have a full route stop there.

[03:13:16] All right. You just answered my next question. Then why wouldn't we just put more routes or more stops there was my question. So you actually just answered my next question, my second question. You know, I'm just baffled why people are not using the transit.

[03:13:37] I mean, I tend to think scaling it back is not the answer. But all the, I mean, Mr. Turner's right. If you look at buses that are going out, you know, empty with seven people on it, it doesn't make any sense to keep doing it.

[03:13:54] I just, yeah, really, I just don't, I do not understand the hesitancy to use the transit. i just don't get it and i i would say well that can't that's not the only reasons i mean if i can't get around slow or not i'm gonna get on the bus that can't be because i'm gonna take another do it do another round of two minutes if that's the reason it's slow we can fix that but we've done different things and people still like getting on we we've made this soup 10 different ways people still like getting on yes mr zanes uh yes we've made some nips and tucks we'll do

[03:14:30] another round of two minutes if you want but overall it's still slow like I remember this was a few years back I had one of my staff members take the bus from Sterling to Leesburg and they had to transfer twice just to get down Route 7 to Leesburg here from Sterling transferred twice and it took almost two hours to get here that's so yeah it's slow and you know also let's be honest unfortunately I hate to say this there are some people put a stigma on riding public transportation, unfortunately.

[03:15:05] So I think we need to do a better job of eliminating that stigma. And so hopefully with our marketing, be bus savvy or be commuter savvy, let's go loud and we can do this. I think we need to keep making these nips and tucks and updates and keep adding things for residents to pick and choose.

[03:15:26] Okay, well, I don't like the local where I'm staying on the corner, but maybe, yeah, let me try this microtransit where it's more of a on-demand similar to a uber lyft type of type of program maybe though people might feel a little bit more comfortable with being a little bit more on-demand a little bit more private and again kind of move away from some of the unfortunately the stigmas out there so most people you know I'm willing to take a shot and roll the dice and see what we can do to improve the services that we have because we know we have folks residents that need to have these services and want to see them so I think whatever we can do to make it

[03:16:02] robust, adds more options. Let's do it. Mr. Latour. I was going to say, maybe to response to the chair, I think what this has kind of shown us is the transit dependent riders we have do use the system. It's

everybody else that doesn't. And in our county, we're blessed to be a relatively affluent county. And that does not mean everybody is able to do it. But as a percentage of our population in some of these areas that we're running routes, it's just not very big that's transit dependent and it's just not enough to i think to justify continually throwing bus after

[03:16:38] bus at it because and that's where the transit you know the the on-demand model could really work because you could still serve those people who need it without wasting a lot of miles on a lot of gas and a lot of tires or a lot of whatever to do it so i think i i agree with the hybrid strategy here um i think we may i would request madam chair that maybe we have some some check-ins with the finance committee or TLUC or both on the progress we're making with the both the sort of route optimization discussion and the study that we're going to do on on demand I think this

[03:17:18] is the topic that I I don't really want to kind of just I'm not saying a will for staff I know staff's going to work on it but yeah I think the board should stay connected with it with some some regularity so we can kind of maybe just plan on having some check-ins with sort of what the progress is, I assume we're going to have to procure a consultant and who knows where that level will be and whether there needs to be board approval on it or something like that.

[03:17:42] But just requesting kind of going forward that we do that. Yeah. Thank you. Mr. Sainz, did you want to ask something really desperately? You've got 19 seconds. Also, I was going to mention, Ms. Brickman might bring this up through the chairman.

[03:18:00] We've talked about this bus shelters. That's another issue. We don't have a lot of bus shelters. That's when people don't want to stand out in the rain or the hot weather and not in dignity waiting for a bus. Thank you. Ms. Bricksman. Thank you. Yeah, that was going to be one of my comments.

[03:18:17] And, you know, no shade. I mean, I know we've been working on it, but it's slow and it's inconvenient. And I don't, I mean, the white buses are beautiful. I don't know why there would be a stigma. I mean, I think that our system is clean and, you know, on time and those sorts of things.

[03:18:34] It's just not on, it's not, doesn't have a high enough frequency. And, you know, the, the affluency might be part of it. And one of my thoughts is a selling point might be what impact we can have on the environment if we have more people taking transit.

[03:18:55] I think that even the most affluent people and, and everybody actually at this point is concerned about the environment. So maybe we could use that as a selling point besides when we get the convenience factor up, we get the frequency factor up, we get more people that know about it through the marketing.

[03:19:15] But also one thing that I think would make it very attractive would be that you're really helping the environment. And I know for me personally, I would love to have a rapid bus that goes from where I am to Leesburg. And I'm sure there's some people that kind of make a trip every day, you know, up and down, I don't know, 28 or something like that that they do in their cars that once we've, I think what we haven't quite figured out or put our finger on is what are the actual routes that the majority of people need.

[03:19:45] And I know we've made every effort to do surveys and things like that. But what I'm excited about is if we do the microtransit, that will show us exactly. We'll have red lines, you know, probably half a dozen red lines in the county where we know we need a point A to point B route, and we just put it in.

[03:20:03] So also, I agree with the bus shelters, and I'm going to have a little emotion later about how we might accelerate the bus shelters. because nobody wants to stand on grass with just a stick and then wait an hour for a bus. Thank you. So much of this, I think, is just the culture of the area.

[03:20:21] I know I keep saying this, but I'm from Denver, Colorado, where it is cold, and people stand outside with no bus shelters all the time. And you get in the bus, and you see sixth graders on the bus, and you see businessmen in suits on the bus. So if fluency or not, it just doesn't matter.

[03:20:37] I think that this area is just not an area that, I think it's just not the norm here for whatever reason it's just not and I guess you know it's hard to change 200 years or however many years of behavior because you know other places have people who are affluent and not other places have great bus shelters that are heated or none and and people get on or they don't and I you know I think you all have tried and we have tried all types of different things but to some degree it's just the culture I'm almost well I I won't say this because, never mind, the media will pick that up.

[03:21:13] But it is the culture. I don't quite, though, the reason I'm asking about whether the microtransit is income dependent is this. If, and I think Mr. Turner is right, if people who depend on buses because of their income,

[03:21:37] If the microtransit is not going to cost, if it's going to cost more, then are we going to take buses out of those areas, put microtransit option in those areas, but now it costs more than the transit buses cost right now?

[03:21:55] Because if so, we've just made it hard for them. Also, for our fixed route buses, is it possible to do a fixed route commuter bus? So 7 to 7, 7 and 7, just goes down 7. I mean, it's not, it doesn't take two hours to get there.

[03:22:12] It takes two stops and it gets down 7 to Leesburg. Two hours from Leesburg to Sterling or vice versa should never happen. Should never happen. So is it possible to do a fixed route commuter bus that has three stops and otherwise is moving down? So the most you might take, the most you should take, unless it's just a traffic issue that day, would be maybe 45 minutes to get down.

[03:22:34] So is that our fixed-route commuter buses, we used to, in Colorado, they call them express buses. They're fixed-route buses, but they make much fewer stops. Is that a possibility? Because, you know, I'm just trying to kind of throw things out here to see would might work.

[03:22:52] Yeah, I would say we're getting into the weeds of route-making in this conversation. Yes, but we're the transit summit, so that's what we do. We're trying to keep it at a higher level, but yes, we definitely think that looking at all of the routes would flesh out exactly what you're saying, right?

[03:23:12] So if we can get surveys directly on the buses and go into more of a route revamp, because one of the things that's missing just to pull into the data world is Route 70 does meander in.

[03:23:29] It was never intended to be a point A to point B bus. It's getting people on and off and on and off and on and off all the way up and down the road, and that's what it's designed to do. So it may be that the express bus, and we've actually had this conversation internally before, could get there.

[03:23:44] But, yes, it's an option that we need to look at for the planning purposes. Madam Chair, I would just also add to that, these operational inequity objectives are really designed to get to those issues so that

the staff is free to go down those roads with the board, have established some parameters, and that they can work with our optimization consultant to get to those issues.

[03:24:14] Because before it was almost the conversation between the board and staff was, let's put a route here. Let's put a route here. And that's not efficiency. Efficiency is data-driven, using a set of clear objectives that, you know, this is what we want to accomplish through our transit system, and then maximizing that to achieve all those goals.

[03:24:37] It doesn't mean it's cheaper, but if you're talking about ensuring that you have access within a quarter mile of all affordable dwelling units and the other factors that came in there, that's an objective that we've established, that we're not going to be able to cut those things out.

[03:24:52] How you do it, I think whether it's microtransit, on-demand services, or a route, a formal bus route, I think that the optimization strategies create that solution for you and you get there. Can you answer my first question? Is that possible? about the the express route no no my first question was if we have the micro transit are we going to take away the fixed route as well because wouldn't that just increase the cost of people who are transit dependent so so the the pair train so there's a there's a cost for paratransit and there's a there's a cost for our fixed route which is a dollar a ride right now the next item

[03:25:31] which is a proposal for the board's consideration which is free fare for both paratransit and local fixed route. The expectation is that microtransit would be at that same cost factor of zero. I do not believe that there would be, we'd have to do the study, but my understanding of it, it would not be more costly for microtransit or on-demand services than it would be the fixed route service. Okay, all right, okay, all right. Did I get close enough?

[03:25:57] You got close enough to get us to the next item. Yes, ma'am. So let's kind of go on to the next item item number four everyone and then after that we will go to all the different types of motions that are on this um on this dais all right um we are on the last item and just reminded we still have um motions to make so we'll try to get through this now the the finance committee has seen this item on several occasions um i don't believe we submitted this to tuck i do not recall

[03:26:35] but this conversation is about the proposal and staff's recommendation to consider free fare for local fixed route and paratransit. I'm going to try not to steal your thunder, Gladys, so I'm going to stop there and turn it over to Gladys for the presentation.

[03:26:52] Okay, great. Thanks, Ernie. So as Ernie had shared, this really evolved from a 2021 initiative, BMI, by Chair Brissman to provide fare-free transit for service for students, And the project faced numerical logistical challenges, so that prompted the exploration of a system-wide fare-free option instead.

[03:27:13] So we did have our consultants take a closer look at what fare-free would look like for us. So this presentation is going to touch on the study approach. We're going to summarize the recent experiences of U.S. transit providers that have adopted fare-free models.

[03:27:29] We're also going to discuss the rationales and benefits of fare-free transit. We're going to touch on the outline requirements for implementation, potential fiscal impacts, and provide staff recommendations for transitioning to a fare-free system.

[03:27:46] Next slide. So just wanted to touch on the study approach. We examine national experiences with fare-free transit, looking at various transit agencies that have implemented this approach and the lessons they have learned.

[03:28:02] The report actually delves more into the advantages and disadvantages of a fare-free transit, exploring the rationales used to justify this approach. I do want to share that there were scenarios tested using current fare information from Loudoun County to analyze the potential numerical impact of adopting a fare-free model.

[03:28:24] Additionally, the project team applied what we call the Simpson Curtain Rule, which is really a rule of thumb elasticity, which suggests that completely eliminating fares could potentially lead to a 33% increase in ridership, highlighting a potential benefit of the fare-free approach.

[03:28:47] I'd also like to just touch on some of the common reasons why transit agencies have opted for fare-free service. One area was for operational performance and service efficiency.

[03:29:08] By removing things like fare boxes, this helps speed up possible boarding, improving on-time performance, right? And eliminating the whole fare processing issues that could occur. There's also the reduction of eliminating administrative costs, and we'll touch on that a little bit more in some subsequent slides later.

[03:29:29] And then there's also the equity and economic opportunity. So the thought is, with fare-free transit, this could potentially promote social equity and economic benefits by allowing individuals to spend more locally on goods and services that they would save from paying fares.

[03:29:49] And lastly, would be the benefit of promoting a culture of transit. A common theme that we've seen and rationale from transit providers is targeting specific groups like students, for example, for fare-free programs to encourage a culture of transit use among younger generations.

[03:30:13] I'd also like to touch on some of those national case studies from transit providers around the nation who opted for fare free and have seen some promising results starting with Kansas City they actually launched a zero fare transit plan becoming the first major region to transition to fare free transit so their primary goal is really to increase transit ridership and a lot of their initial findings when they launched it was quite promising so in May of 2020

[03:30:48] about a year after they launched it, ridership was at 58% of their 2019 levels, which actually recovered to 80% by October of that same year. Another case study that we looked at was in Missoula, Montana. In 2015, they partnered with the city of Missoula and local businesses to make 13 of their routes fare-free. This really actually started as a three-year demonstration,

[03:31:25] but then the program was later made a permanent program followed by their voter approval. The Mountain Lion actually saw a 70% increase of ridership from 2015 to 2018, with 48% of surveyed users reporting more frequent use since the fare-free program began. So really great, great gains there. Now, I know that a lot of you have seen this. Would you like me to just skip ahead to the next latest and greatest slide or should I continue? I think you should continue

[03:32:00] actually. Sorry, guys. Okay. So for the next... I think people saw it and not everyone has seen it actually. Absolutely. Yeah. The next case study that we looked at was Olympia, Washington. They started a fair free program in 2020 with a rationale to reduce agency costs.

[03:32:18] one of the challenges they were facing is that they were actually having aging fare vending equipment. So they had a really difficult time replacing that equipment. So they really reevaluated a lot of the pros and cons of their fare program and decided to pursue the fare-free initiative. So they started the program in 2020, which was actually funded by local sales tax initiatives. And extra sales tax was later introduced to offset the lost revenues after a month of going fare free their ridership actually increased by 20 percent

[03:32:53] compared to a previous year totaling approximately 60 000 additional i'm going to stop you to say i was wrong i wanted it but everybody else look at me like i'm crazy okay so you can jump ahead great so i'm just going to skip straight to the observations so in every observed case what we've seeing is a significant rise in ridership, administrative cost reductions with some other things that we've observed. And yeah, those are some of the main things. Next slide. Something new

[03:33:28] that we looked at to get a better understanding of who else could benefit from fare-free transit was what we call ALICE. And I'd like to just say thank you to Car Rush, our chief equity officer, who provided us with this resource to help us get additional insight for who could benefit.

[03:33:50] So United for Alice is an initiative by the United Way that focuses on the financial struggles of households that are asset-limited income-constrained employed. So those households are actually known as Alice households. They earn above the federal poverty level but still do not earn enough to afford basic necessities such as housing, child care, food, transportation, and health care. So Loudoun County has households who are Alice who could potentially benefit from

[03:34:23] fare-free transit. So the next couple slides are going to show you the percentage of workers not making enough for a survival budget. And I would like to note that this shows a percentage of full-time workers earn enough to support the household survival budget for one adult and one school-aged child. And the maps that you're going to see do not correspond with Loudoun County election districts. So for this first slide, the orange area actually shows parts of Sterling,

[03:35:00] Algonquian, Ashburn, and Broad Run. And the data shows that 49% are Alice, are considered Alice. The orange area here shows that parts of Leesburg, Dulles, Ashburn, Broad Run, and Sterling have 29% who are considered Alice.

[03:35:25] And lastly, the orange area here, showing parts of Central, Southern, and Western Loudoun County, shows that 33% are considered Alice. It's the way you keep saying it.

[03:35:41] It's making everybody up here go, mm, mm, mm, mm. You're like, are considered Alice. So in this slide, I'm just going to touch on some of the key advantages of fare-free. I've touched on the equity advantages, right?

[03:35:59] So promoting greater participation in the local economy for money that's not spent on fares. We also have a lot of those environmental benefits, potentially having more folks getting out of their cars, getting into transit, using that more, and all of the environmental benefits associated with that.

[03:36:16] And lastly, the reduction of administrative costs, which are great. So implementation of a fare-free approach, we wanted to highlight some of the key actions which would be needed for Loudoun County. One of it was the purchase and installation of automatic passenger counters for 14 buses that do not currently have this technology.

[03:36:41] We also have to complete a fare-free equity analysis, which is required for all fare changes to evaluate the effects of fare changes. And lastly, I'm not going to touch on them all, but we want to go back out to the community and share this information with them. So these are just some key actions that we would have to put in place, which we had some discussions internally, which seemed very doable for a recommendation to start fare-free on January 1st, 2025.

[03:37:09] So I'd like to touch on some of the impacts of fare-free, the elimination of estimated fare revenues of approximately \$162,000. That's based on a January 1st, 2025 start.

[03:37:25] The local match funds included in the electronic fare box replacement capital project budget may be reduced by \$388,491. So here we are with our staff recommendations.

[03:37:47] We recommend that the board approve the transition of local fixed route and paratransit service to be fare-free beginning on January 1st, 2025. We also recommend periodic evaluations of the fare-free service, which includes assessments of ridership changes, receiving feedback from the community, et cetera.

[03:38:09] And with that, we'd be happy to take any questions that you may have. Thank you. Okay, wonderful. Questions for this section? Mr. Sainz? Thank you. Thank you for the presentation being here and helping us with this.

[03:38:27] All right. So if we were to go fare free, help me explain or can you please explain how we would collect data on ridership, assuming people wouldn't swipe to get on the bus anymore. So how would we track activities and or say if you want to send out surveys to riders and how would we go about doing all that?

[03:38:53] I'll touch on the the part about just the um we had mentioned earlier how we do onboard surveys and just surveys in general of folks on the local transit routes now right a lot of the outreach and engagement that we've done recently so that would also just continue um for that effort just to let you know and then Scott was going to touch on some other right before we go to Scott but that's more of like a point in time yes but say if we were you know because I'm assuming with you know collecting people getting the smart trip cards are giving some data information so we have that information so we could easily send out emails and you know rapidly instead of like a point in time where

[03:39:32] You're having a survey or sit on the bus and you know ask questions so how would we do that if we are not collecting any data if you're not buying the smart trip cards and swiping that's where the automated passenger counters come in they actually give us geographic information of who's getting on and getting off the bus at different bus stops.

[03:39:52] So we actually have that data on all but 14 buses now on the local fixture outside. That's why if we go fare-free, it does eliminate that electronic fare collection data collection piece that we've got. So we've got to get those 14 buses with automated passenger counters installed on them to do exactly that.

[03:40:10] Okay, and then still within time, so all your examples, do we know how they're collecting data? Are they still having people swipe, or are they using the technology that you're talking about, or are they doing something else, or do you have any of that information? I do not, but we can certainly find that information out for you.

[03:40:32] Yeah, I think that would be very helpful. Okay. All right, thank you. Mr. Croney? Thank you, Chair Randall. So I support the fare-free recommendation. I like that we can go up to 33%, potentially increase in ridership.

[03:40:51] And I also saw that bus fares typically represent between 10% to 20% of total system revenues, so it's small, the bus fare revenue. And it looks like we would save money by not putting in the electronic fare box replacement.

[03:41:10] I saw we'd save \$1.127 million. Is that true? So I think the savings there, and I don't, tell me which page, I'm surprised it was a crony that you're actually referring to.

[03:41:25] I just saw it in the item. I didn't look at the... So those numbers net out, page 9 you said? Yeah. Okay. And Scott, you may do better to answer that question because the...

[03:41:41] While he's looking for that, I can tell you, I think the 1.127 is the difference in state operating funds that would actually be needed. That's the difference in those numbers. The net difference to the county is \$790-ish thousand dollars if we put them on all the buses and it drops down and there's a savings of \$388,000 if you're only putting them on the commuter buses and not the local picture.

[03:42:11] Okay, so you only need them on the commuter, not on the, if we do fare free. Correct. Okay, that's good. I mean, I support that. and can could we get the could we do it in July or is that too too because i saw that you were thinking about July 1st versus um January the big concern there is exactly what supervisor sayings brought up we'd have 14 buses that do not have apcs on them um and and we are waiting from a for a quote back from our vendor to find out exactly how long it would take to get them

[03:42:47] purchased and installed and we're at the end of fiscal year 24 so there's the setting up the po and that kind of thing for 25, that takes a little bit of time. So that's what our concern is, is being able to do that. Could we do it? Yes. Would it be, we would lose access to some data for a period of time if we did that.

[03:43:10] In addition to that, Supervisor Croney, I want to reference back to Gladys' slide on key actions. We want to make sure that if the board directs us to do this, that it's planned properly and that we have the analysis done for the Title VI analysis as well as the proper communication plan rolled out.

[03:43:31] And my fear is if we attempt to try to do it July 1, we won't do some missteps that may actually create more negative impacts than positives. So this gives us the appropriate planning period to ensure that it's rolled out properly if the board wants to move in that direction. Okay, thank you.

[03:43:47] Thank you. Mr. Turner. Well, I've expressed some of these things in the Finance Committee before, but I do have some concerns with the approach. The macro concern is the level of hypocrisy that, quite frankly, I think exists in all the jurisdictions in this region about their own transit versus the region's transit system, which is Metro.

[03:44:05] We just raised fares by 13%, bus and rail. It's now \$2.75, \$3 for a lot of bus rides. Some of the rail rides go up to \$6.80. And no one blinked an eye at that because no one wants to pay Metro a higher subsidy because they know it's hundreds of millions of dollars to buy that down.

[03:44:26] But yet, at an individual basis, the jurisdictions, including now ours, are considering zeroing out our fare revenue, and our fares are a dollar, a flat dollar. So if we really want to get at what's more impactful, it's not eliminating the dollar fare.

[03:44:43] It's looking at the fares that are \$3, \$4, \$6, \$6.80 as a max fare on our rail system. So I just think we got to get some consistency as a region on how we're handling this. And we don't have it. And so I'm not ready to jump into this.

[03:44:59] I'm also not ready to do it now because we just talked about not really knowing what our system is and where it's going. So the on-demand model is a different financial model. We don't know what it would cost or how it would operate, but let's find that stuff out.

[03:45:15] So I think from my perspective, the good thing is we have some ready-made solutions in place, which is the Metro Lift Program, which is a program that's already been established in which anyone who qualifies gets a 50% discount using data that's already collected and existed by this county and every other county.

[03:45:36] And then Metro also does the senior fair and the student fair. And I think in those cases, we could just go to zero. But I would prefer to do that and provide the discounts in this interim period rather than going to a complete fair free. Because number one, I think a lot of those examples, the problem is like, what's the baseline?

[03:45:56] You know, some of those places were charging more than a dollar. So when you go from one to \$3 to free versus \$1 to free, and there's, you know, they picked a bunch of college towns. I already kind of picked apart that study in finance committee one time. I'm not going to do it again. But they weren't very great comparisons for who we are and what our county is and what the barriers are for people to use Metro.

[03:46:18] So I'm not going to support a motion to do this tonight. I would prefer to stick with the programs that are in place for reduced income to figure out what our system is and then to really use the DMV moves process to have some jurisdictional discussion about how we want to handle transit fares as a region so that there isn't completely opposite things happening for systems that we all belong to and pay into.

[03:46:47] It doesn't make sense to me. So I should, before I go on, I should say that the new DMV Moves Program has four people that have been asked to sit on that subcommittee from Virginia, and I am one of the four.

[03:47:07] And I feel like doing this almost works in direct opposition of the DMV Moves Program. So I may have to abstain on some of these votes just because I don't know that you can do both together. So I'll give that some thought as I'm sitting up here.

[03:47:27] Ms. Frixman? Thank you, Madam Chair. So I am fully supportive, and if you could have seen, like, when we were describing the genesis of this program, if you could see the notes that I wrote in Granicus about, like, how was this so difficult to just get students to be able to ride our transit for free and build a culture of, you know, from the younger students up to build a culture of using transit.

[03:47:56] But in the end, which is often what happens here, I think that we have a much better solution. And I really appreciate staff for digging into this and doing the research and making the recommendations. I am very supportive of it.

[03:48:12] And I'm looking forward to hopefully announcing it and putting it into place. I think we're thinking about January 25, which I'm fine with. My one question was with the ALICE data, which is

fascinating, and we mentioned it with the commuter buses that there may be grants that we could apply for, which, yes, please do that.

[03:48:36] Do we think that maybe there would be some grants that we could apply for in this area, especially as we've identified, you know, certain sections of the county? And I don't know if the federal government recognizes Alice or if, you know, people who allocate grants recognize Alice, but I know that we also have census tracts that are identified as, you know, low-income census tracts in our county.

[03:49:03] So I'm just wondering if we might want to look into that as a way to maybe make up some of the cost. I will share that if we were to seek odd grant funding to help with this effort, I kind of see this as another data source in our toolkit to help us make the case for if it's fare free or other sort of transit asks that we may have.

[03:49:26] Yeah, yeah. And to Supervisor Letourneau's point, listen, I think that, yes, we're in a quagmire with Metro, but I don't think that should stop jurisdictions from being progressive and trying to create a culture of, you know, environmentally friendly culture, a culture where we're getting cars off the road, where we're encouraging transit.

[03:49:51] and I think that the conversation around metros is so much bigger that I just don't even know that we should take that into consideration and you know it's a federal level thing to me and a state level thing in many ways I know that we pay into it but I don't think I don't think that's an apples to apples comparison and if we are following the trend of other northern Virginia jurisdictions that are eliminating these sorts of fees then we are amongst friends for for lack of a better phrase So thank you very much, Steph, for all the presentations tonight.

[03:50:21] Really appreciate it. Do we know what other jurisdictions have done? They've been beyond just – I know two of our jurisdictions started off doing them just for school kids to fare free, not for everyone. Is that still true, or is it everyone now?

[03:50:40] That's how DASH started, and they went fare free. For everyone. But they started off with students. How many? Fairfax? Fairfax is fair free. Fairfax still has their school program. It's just for school. Okay, thank you. Did you see him making it?

[03:50:55] Did you see him? So I'm, and I think, fair of fact, I think we should do it for our young kids, for our kids for different reasons. I don't, first of all, I'm going to respectfully disagree with my colleague from the Algonquian District.

[03:51:14] We are, we pay in the metro. It's not just, it's definitely not just the state and federal thing. I don't know how the state and federal should be paying more into it. That is absolutely true, and I have been saying that, I think, first and loudly for, I don't know, nine years.

[03:51:32] But that doesn't mean that a discussion around a bus system in all of northern Virginia to be one system in all northern Virginia also doesn't make sense. So you can travel from Loudon to Fairfax and transfer and go to Arlington on the same system.

[03:51:52] Wouldn't that be amazing? And so I think that's also a discussion we will have. And so it's hard to do this kind of piecemeal thing if everyone's doing it different already. I do think because I am on this subcommittee, as much as I, well, first of all, for me, I would vote to have Fairfree for our paratransit and for our students.

[03:52:18] I don't know that I would go fare-free for everyone, even for the—I think there's some value in doing that and paying a fare, so I wouldn't do that for everyone. But I think that my role in what we're doing in Metro would be in great and direct contradiction to what we're doing here.

[03:52:40] And so for that reason, I don't feel the need to recuse myself, but I do feel the need to stand on the vote for now, on this vote for now. It doesn't mean I don't support the fair-free efforts, but it does mean that I can't sit on both committees and do opposite things.

[03:52:59] So I'll recuse myself for this vote. So, okay. Supervisors, we're going to go back to having seen everything and knowing how everything is kind of working together and in conjunction, which was important to do, we're going to go back now and make motions.

[03:53:20] I'm going to make the motion on the transit, I'm sorry, on the paratransit, and if Mr. Letourneau has a friendly alternative to that, we will do that at this time, and then we'll go and listen to all other motions that are being made.

[03:53:38] I move the Board of Supervisors amend the paratransit service policy to define the existing paratransit services area as the reference point for all future service provisions and continue adhering to the federal minimum requirement of three-fourths mile from a newly established local fixed route outside of the current paratransit service area.

[03:53:56] Motion is made. And second, I think we've talked about this already. Thank you for doing this. My only question, and I started this discussion in 2018, is to make sure, and I think this is a discussion we can have right now or maybe do a friendly on this.

[03:54:14] We've talked about making sure that there are curb cuts on all the bus stops. We talked about shelters. We talked about all that in the discussion with paratransit. It was put in the CIP in 2018, I think.

[03:54:32] Where are we at on that discussion? Because it seems like that should be coming up right now, and that is all to be of assistance with some of our citizens who have differing abilities. What that CIP said and this issue go together, and I started that in 2018.

[03:54:54] So where are we at with that? So we met with DTCL, who's the purveyor of that project, yesterday on that question. I sent out the graphic for that as of 521 where they stood on that project. They have completed, I think, 51 of those cuts right now and are well on their way with land acquisition for a very large number.

[03:55:18] I couldn't pull it up real quickly, but they're making great strides on the ADA stop improvements project. Is this a funding issue, or as I said, they're moving as fast as they can no matter what's going on issues.

[03:55:34] So even if we move funding up or around and back, it wouldn't change how fast they're moving. So ultimately, I would defer for DTCL to answer that question. They are the subject matter experts when it comes to managing that project. So really, I don't know what their capacity is on their planning and design side, but we will get that answer for you.

[03:55:54] Okay, I might come back, and I would appreciate if no motions are made on that because I started this neat thing. I may come back later and make some other motions on that section right now. But in the meantime, I will go with Mr. Letourneau for a friendly amendment. Yeah, I'm going to make a friendly amendment, which is in the motion, after it says to define the existing paratransit area as the

reference point for all future provisions, to say define the existing paratransit service area, as well as the suburban, urban, Leesburg, JLMA, and Town of Leesburg policy areas,

[03:56:31] and then continue as the reference point for all future service provisions. That would be the front lane. It would be fine. Okay. May I speak on the motion? Yes, please. Okay. So obviously what we're doing there is trying to take care of some of those gap areas. I did just want to make a point on the curb cut issue and the bus stop issue, which is, I think as we look at the roots as a whole, we should look at where these stops are, because I just ran across a situation where we're trying to put in a curb cut and a cement block for

[03:57:04] a bus stop. And guess what? There's no sidewalks on either side of that bus stop. So, I mean, it's great that we can do that, but there's no sidewalks there. So it's not going to do a lot of good um and we do have some situations like i personally know of some in the routes that run in my area where it's just it's not a very good location particularly if somebody has has you know a disability so i think rather than just kind of blindly be putting concrete boxes on and things like that we may need to take a little bit more holistic viewpoint in terms of how we're planning

[03:57:44] the bus stops and where they are and making sure that they actually do connect to something that's accessible because just doing it in a vacuum and improving a bus stop itself is not necessarily going to make that bus stop accessible it's going to spend a bunch of money on something and then honestly it actually could be worse because we're making it sort of permanent like that's where it is from that point forward and now we haven't so we should instead just move the stop and then be somewhere that's more accessible so let's I don't know if there's a way to do that as part of the local fixed you know analysis that we're doing in the hybrid model but sort of throwing into the mix, you know, stop accessibility seems like it would make more sense to me rather

[03:58:23] than just sort of, you know, I mean, obviously, some of these stops are no brainers, we need to improve them. But I think there can be a level of staff analysis that will that will find that there are some that it probably doesn't make sense. Does that make sense? What I just said to you guys? It does, sir. And I believe what I hear you saying is, is as we move forward with this ADA stop improvement program, we make sure that there's connectivity to it so that the improvement X makes sense. And where it does not have the improvements, we should be evaluating if that's the right location for that stop and potentially relocate it to an area that is accessible. Yeah. And as we're doing route planning, we should look at that. I mean,

[03:59:02] because again, like we're talking about making significant changes to this. So to our route network, you don't want to end up with stops that aren't going to make sense for where the future is going to lie and i think there's enough low-hanging fruit where we can stay busy getting them done for a while but on the areas that are less dense and the roots aren't performing as well we know there could be changes we maybe prioritize those less because we may change how we're surveying and also have different stop locations you know i hate for us to put in all this stuff and then all of a sudden we're moving away anyway you know what i mean yeah so i i do want to clarify the ada

[03:59:35] transition plan does include sidewalk connectivity in it. So there's three projects going on. That one does include exactly what you've stated. So it builds the bus stop out. And if there's a curb cut and sidewalk needed, it's part of that plan for the ADA transition plan. There are 175 bus stops going in in line

with the new Silver Line routes that aren't, that are just going in like that that's a different project so i just want to make sure we were clear on what we were talking

[04:00:08] about that's the one i was talking about thank you mr brooksmen thank you madam chair um is there a difference between the bus shelter cip project and the ada compliance project are those two different projects okay so what i'm talking about are the bus shelter the cip bus shelter projects CIP project. If that's different than the ADA project, I'm not, I wasn't really looking at the

[04:00:41] ADA if that's a different project, but I would assume because in the bus shelter chart that you sent us today, it says that there are 83, well, there's, first of all, there's 339 we're looking at there's 83 that are design ongoing i have to imagine i know it's a dtci project so i apologize for maybe getting over what what your expertise might be but i have to imagine if they're in design phase we're not going to build a shelter that people can't walk to that is the ada bus

[04:01:20] stop implementation improvement project that i sent you oh so this is different than the cip project this is that is the cip project for the ada bus stop improvement project it's is it different than what is called you actually have three projects okay you're not going to find the ada bus stop improvement project in the 2026 2025 cip volume 2 because it has already been fully funded in previous um so you have to go back to 2000 oh so 18 or 19 or 20 and you'll see it in there okay so so my motion tonight was not about that my motion tonight is about the bus shelter

[04:01:57] program that is on page 10-158 of volume two of the budget it's it's not related at all to the program that you started and is already fully funded volume two of the but of our budget yeah it's right here it's a totally different program so um we can talk about whether i can make the motion tonight let's make the motion at the end of all the other motions okay i'll make the motion later so anyway i'm supportive of this motion we got a little bit off track but i'm supportive of this motion absolutely i'm glad we're looking at the gaps that that supervisor letourneau because

[04:02:32] i'm sure there's others in other area of the county and i'll stop talking now um i want to say one more time what the question i asked mr hemp street earlier in the meeting is these decisions we're making right now are decisions for now and there there there might be could be very likely will be discussions about in-house services and so i know that it was said that these decisions should last three years so hopefully we're making good decisions that will last three years whether or not these services are moved in-house or not they will last three years

[04:03:07] i also want to say mr gross you have been talking about services for this different population for a long time and you came to me i don't know some years ago with these discussions about how some of our transit is not getting to the people who have different abilities for a lot of different reasons and not everyone's talking about that and i remember i discussed it from the days and you came to me you had you have been thinking about it for a long time before i ever said anything

[04:03:41] about it i appreciate that very much i appreciate that we're thinking about um how everyone can be can take part in the good story that is allowed and how making accessibility available for people with different abilities is just the right thing to do. And you said that. You and I have been talking about this for a long time. So I want to just put that on the table and say thank you for that. All right. Supervisors, I made the motion. Supervisor Leterno second the motion. All in favor say aye. Any opposed? That motion

[04:04:17] will pass 60702 with Mr. Kirshner and Ms. Umstead being up today. And by the way, I did hear from Mr. Kirshner. He had some things to do with his children tonight, thus he could not be here. I have not heard a word from Ms. Umstead as to why she's not here. She was here in the building earlier today. I haven't heard from her or her staff just so I don't know. I don't know. So we're going to we're going to go to item two now, which this the commuter bus service, and I'm going to go to, let's start with the base motions in the package, everyone, and then if somebody wants to do something after the base motion, we can do

[04:04:55] that as well, okay? Change it, fix it, take it out, whatever. I move the Board of Supervisors suspend the commuter bus revenue neutrality policy. I further move the Board of Supervisors approve the discontinuation of 10 underperforming commuter buses. Well, I'm going to make the motion um i'll make the motion but then i'm not going to vote for the motion um okay because yeah there's a bunch of different things on here and i and with and this one i'm

[04:05:34] not going to see how about does anyone else want to make this motion let's just try that okay i'm gonna make the first one okay the board of school brothers i'll do i'll do that for the the revenue bus neutrality policy. Second. Okay. That motion has been made in second. Let's just start on that one, on the revenue bus neutrality policy.

[04:05:53] I think we've got enough discussion on this during the item. I have nothing else to say on that one. Anybody else? All right. All the people who say aye. Aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass 702. For the second motion, does anyone want to take a stab at that? You want to make that motion, Mr. Sainz? Okay, Mr. Sainz.

[04:06:11] I move that the board's supervisors suspend the oh no wait a minute i move that the board of supervisors discontinue uh discontinuation of 10 underperforming commuter bus routes as soon as practical in the fiscal year 2025 budget cycle he just you just made the first sentence of the motion second uh okay discussion on that motion yeah no um yeah like discussed before if we're sending a bus that's concede was

[04:06:48] Was it 55 folks and rarely having four or five six nine ten people on it? I think that's that's not not performing. Well, we can we can find other other routes as what was suggested by Mr. Coney and Mr. Letourneau and maybe use look at some alternative routes 15 and other areas or Reroute this these underperforming routes to other areas So I think it's worth a stab and taking a look at so support it

[04:07:19] Okay. You want to have discussion on this motion? Okay, just to make sure I'm what we're saying on this part of this motion Because the T look chair may make other motions one make other motions for as we go along For this part of this motion. We're saying we're going to discontinue 10 underperforming routes, but did you but is this part of this motion?

[04:07:49] Identifying those 10 they are identified as the 10 lowest performing right okay, so the 10. We're talking about so we're not talking Okay, that's fine. All right. Yeah. Anybody else you want to have a closing? All people say aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass 702 we'll let mr. Sains one going to go on with this motion these motions or with anyone else I can make another one if you want Okay All right, I'll do the next one which is I moved that we increase the one-way commuter bus fare to \$11 in FY25, rising to \$12 in FY26.

[04:08:27] Second. Okay, so we haven't raised this since 2019. This is a premium service. We've raised metro fares in this time period. Tolls have gone way, way up, and we already have suspended the revenue neutrality policy to the point where now it would be \$23.

[04:08:50] So we're giving a pretty heavy level of subsidy here, even with these increases. I wouldn't propose endless increases, but this maps out, I think, a reasonable two-year plan and, you know, well-eliminating revenue neutrality.

[04:09:07] So as you saw, the income figures for the average rider here is quite high. So I think this makes sense. Mr. Saints? I like to make a friendly and see where it goes. so let's do 11 and 25 and let's keep it at 11 and 26 the motion is to do \$11 and 25 and \$12 and 26 I'm suggesting our friend making friendly to do 11 and 25 and keep it at 11 and 26 I want to I don't know what I don't know what the or the motion is going to do, but as a second, I won't accept that.

[04:09:45] Make your life easy. Did I help you out just then? I would just say I associate myself with Mr. Letourneau's comments on this. I think the people who ride this bus, no matter what these numbers are saying, the people who ride this bus have said to me over and over again they want the commuter buses.

[04:10:08] They have stopped me and said it. The income is high. It is a premier bus service. We haven't raised the rate in a long time. You know, people are not taking the bus every day anymore. That's the other thing. People are taking it two times a week or three times a week.

[04:10:24] Some of these riders have the fare covered by their employer or part of the fare covered by their employer. You know, I think if you want to take this premium bus service, then okay. So I'm going to leave it there.

[04:10:40] All right. You want to close? All people can say aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass 6-1-2 with Ms. Brickspin voting against the motion. All right, next part of the motion.

[04:11:01] Anyone want to make that motion? The relocation of community bus steps from Dallas Townsend to the Aspen Metro Garage. I'm not going to make it.

[04:11:18] I'm sure I'll make the motion. I bet you will. I move that the Board of Supervisors approve the relocation of the community bus services from the Dulles Transit Center to the Ashburn South Metro Rail Garage. I think that's it. Motion made by

[04:11:49] second to the Cronies. Discussion on the motion. Ms. Bless. No discussion, Madam Chair. No discussion? I think we discussed or not. All right. Ms. DeCrony, discussion? You second or nothing?

[04:12:08] I don't think we should be paying rent to EMWA for the Dulles Transit Center. So I would prefer it going in the Ashburn South Metro Rail Garage. Okay. Mr. Letourneau? So I think, and if this motion doesn't pass, I may even make an alternative motion.

[04:12:25] We need to dive into the issue of parking at the metro stations. This is an issue well beyond this because we have underutilized garages. We have an agreement with a private contractor who is losing a lot of money on that garage because the demand isn't there.

[04:12:43] And now what we're doing, I think, is going to complicate that by putting in presumably free parking into a Metro garage and having two different types of users using the same garage. You're going to have the bus users using the garage for free. You're going to have the Metro rider having to pay \$5.

[04:13:02] And the easy answer may be don't charge the Metro Rider \$5, which I'm fine with, except not that simple, Mr. Rogers is nodding, because of the agreements that we have both with WMATA and EMWA and the other jurisdictions and the federal government and so on and so forth.

[04:13:20] So I am not ready to do this yet. It could be that this is where we go. But just to ask the question, there's no stat to Mr. Brown and Mr. Gross. There's no immediate need to get out of the Dulles Transit Center until 2027 when the lease expires.

[04:13:36] Right. That is that is correct. And you don't even know for sure if M was going to let us out of that lease because we signed a lease with them. That is correct. Any early release would have to be negotiated. OK, so I'm happy to come back and revisit this item, but I would prefer to just keep things as they are at this moment and try to advance the discussion on the larger parking question that we're having.

[04:13:55] And I will say for Metro, parking at suburban stations has come up as a issue repeatedly, and it's one that we're sort of handcuffed to deal with because Fairfax and Loudon have private arrangements on their garages. And so I would like to just wrap this into that discussion and then have a broader discussion if that's possible.

[04:14:15] Can I make a suggestion that might, I don't know that, that people, not everyone on this day is at this moment, has the history of the garages that some of us have. Mr. Letourner and I, and Mr. Sains, may have more information on this than Ms. Bricksman, Ms. Glass, Mr. Turner, and definitely Mr. Crony.

[04:14:42] And so, Mr. LaTona may have just been speaking Greek to people to some degree because they may have no idea what he's talking about at all. So, Ms. Glass and Mr. Cronius, to make a motion, second the motion, could I, if I make a motion to table this, this motion right now, until you all both get a briefing about the garage situation and the things that were discussed and the deals that were made and then if you want to bring this motion back and still make the motion, that's fine

[04:15:21] but I don't think, it's almost like not fair to you two right now because I know that you may not know what Mrs. Eternell is talking about because it took me a long time to get to I wasn't here when that was done it took me a long time to do it and I think you guys are almost working with not enough information to know what he just said.

[04:15:43] So I'm going to make a motion to table this until such time as any supervisors that want a staff briefing receive that staff briefing and at that time, after that, if you want to bring it back, you can. So I'm going to make a motion to table.

[04:15:59] Is there a second on a motion to table? Second on a motion to table. Motions to table do not have discussions. I apologize, but all in favor of tabling this motion until that time, please say aye. Any opposed? No. Okay. Well, that motion to table will pass with Mr. Turner saying no and Mr. Kirsten instead of being off the desk.

[04:16:21] Madam Chair, could I ask a clarifying point, question? We're not in a motion right now. We are not in a motion right now. Well, all right. Never mind. I'll ask staff later. Yeah, because we're not in a motion anymore. Okay.

[04:16:38] um 15 buses we like to make a motion on 15 buses it's mr eternal okay how about i try to wrap these next two together because i think there's some consensus okay maybe i'm wrong but um which is

that that we surplus 15 commuter buses pending the outcome of any direction on commuter bus feasibility study and we transition computer commuter bus operations no and we cease operations at the Brambleton commuter bus lot.

[04:17:14] I like it. You like that? Yeah, second. Okay, I'm going to give it to Mr. Crony because it's her area. Okay, the surplus is something we're required to do, but the motion has it in there that we're going to wait and see about the feasibility study, and my hope is that we can use some of these buses to go other places and other directions and increase transit.

[04:17:36] And then on the commuter bus parking lots, I think the one piece of consensus there was up here was that the Bramilton lot should close. I guess I could add Eastgate in there as well. I don't know.

[04:17:52] Is this our only bite at this? No, sir. Actually, I think that the approach where I think you're going is more of an incrementalist approach to see close one, see what that looks like, maybe bring it back. Yeah, I'd be open to the discussion, but I think Mr. Kirscher's not here, and I had a conversation with Supervisor Crony, and she's concerned about shutting down Harmony at this juncture, and then we got the south issue so I'll leave it at that for now and then we can perhaps continue to ship at this a little bit okay what does mr kirsten not being not here to do well he represents

[04:18:29] percival so if we're going to shut down the commuter bus lot there yeah and also it's the only one in west it's the only commuter or the only parking right i just you know think sometimes We should make decisions all the time. People are not in this. I'm just saying. All right.

[04:18:46] Same thing. Okay. Well, none of them are saying the point as we do. All right. So Mr. Letourne will make the motion. Mr. Crony second the motion. All the people say aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass 702.

[04:19:02] All right. I think that was all the motions out of two. Now we're going to go. These are going quickly, Scott. Look at us. Look at us. Okay. Because Scott was like, I can't believe I'm done the motions yet. Mr. Turner, as T-Luck Chair, would you like to make the motions?

[04:19:24] And they are on page 24 of the item. That's the motion in the item. I move that the Board of Supervisors endorse a hybrid strategy for the delivery of transit services in Loudoun County and endorse the seven operational inequity objectives presented in the May 29, 2024 Board of Supervisors Transit Summit item.

[04:19:50] Motion was made in second, but I think that's for you, Mr. Sainz, correct? Mr. Sainz, all right. Discussion on that motion. Good job. Good analysis. I really like the strategy, and press on. All right. Anybody else? Yes.

[04:20:06] You good? Yes. Okay, press on. All in people who say aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass, 702. And then Mr. Turner, ST Lecturer, would you like to go to this one, too?

[04:20:24] although i think there may be some more discussions with this one this motion starts on page it's on page 10. i move the board of supervisors direct staff to transition the local fixed route and paratransit services to fare free beginning on january 1st uh 2025. second discussion on the motion very briefly this was presented in tluck i thought it was a slam dunk 10 minutes into the discussion i still think it's a slam dunk i take super supervisor luterne's point that we ought to fit into a larger regional strategy, I would be dead by the time we came up with a coherent, larger regional strategy.

[04:21:01] And so I'm going to move that we pass this motion tonight. Thank you. Wow. Wowee. He's so unclear. We never know what Mr. Turner's thinking.

[04:21:18] We have to just guess at it all the time. All right, anybody else? Ms. Materno. I think I have greater faith in supervisor turner's life expectancy um simply because if we don't i hope so mike i hope so i hope you're going to be around and i'll call you and say see i was right yeah i was right and you're still alive anyway um well the reason i say that is because if we don't solve it as a region pretty darn soon we're not going to have a metro system so there's every incentive in the world

[04:21:56] yeah, we just did a Band-Aid, but we're two, three years out from a major fiscal crisis, and we have established several working groups, one of which is through the General Assembly, one of which the chair has referenced with DMV moves, that are specifically going to be looking at this issue. And one of the objectives is consistency in how the region as a whole is handling transit, including fare. So I do think these topics are literally up for discussion right now yes one of our neighbors has gone fare free the the largest one has not I would point out because I think they're waiting for this kind of to play out a little bit as well

[04:22:31] so I get kind of the numbers here they're low numbers it's not going to cost us a ton of money but we do have some other alternatives in place where we could provide assistance to low-income residents and to seniors and to and to students and give them a discount and not not go completely fare free so that's just kind of where I am I also think there's just sometimes some benefit to having some small token to help operate the system and everybody has a little bit of skin in the game but be that as it may I'm probably in the minority but that's where I'm at. Okay Mr. Saints. Thank you Madam Chair I'm going to support the motion and to Mr.

[04:23:09] Letourneau's point I think once the move DMV or whatever body gets together and comes up with the strategy we can obviously see, if we like it, we can pivot and ride on those coattails. But I think this is the right decision at this time.

[04:23:24] So I'll support the motion. Ms. Brooksman. Thank you, Madam Chair. Listen, I'm less concerned about some of the things that Supervisor Letourneau was saying. And I think it's because my original goal was to make sure that students of Loudoun County could ride local fixed bus routes for free.

[04:23:47] So let it be known, as of January 1st, 2025, despite LCPS's best efforts, we will have free fares for everybody, not just students. So it's benefiting everybody that wants to ride the bus, just like curb cuts benefit not just people in wheelchairs.

[04:24:07] They benefit kids on tricycles, and they benefit parents with strollers. So, this effort, while it took a lot longer than I wanted it to, I'm really excited that we are finally moving forward with fare-free for everybody, including students of Loudoun County.

[04:24:26] Thank you. Okay. And, of course, I'm going to abstain on the motion for reasons I've already given. Madam Chair, I meant to do a friendly. You did a whole big speech and then said, thank you. So, now you want to go back and do a friendly.

[04:24:42] Well, I can do a friendly with one of my motions rather than do a friendly. No, no, do it now. Do it now. Well, but we have to ask the maker of the motion. Yes, I will. Thank you for letting me do this. I wanted to add that we direct staff to include in the FY2026 proposed budget a resource request that eliminates fares on the senior bus service provided by Parks, Recreation, and Community Services.

[04:25:09] Madam Chair, can I ask staff? I'm sorry, I wasn't listening. Can you say it again, please? Sure. It would be adding to direct staff to include in the FY2026 proposed budget a resource request that eliminates fares on the senior bus service provided by Parks, Recreation, and Community Services.

[04:25:29] If it's too complicated, I can just do a separate motion later. It's not complicated. I just don't know why it belongs here. Because we're doing free fares. This is the free fares. I know it's not the same. I'll do it separately. Never mind. Okay, do it separately. Okay, all right. Would you like a closing?

[04:25:45] Please. All kidding aside, I completely take Supervisor Laterno's point, but I remember when we had the discussions on NVTC, which I was on for four years after COVID, and I said, why are we charging fares on transit? We want to get people out of cars. We want to get them on Metro.

[04:26:01] Why are we doing this? It's chump change compared to the overall cost of the system. We ought to do away with fixed route transit fares. I felt that for years now. I still feel it. I personally believe regional discussions after the whole furball that we go through for years is going to end up exactly with free fares for fixed route transit.

[04:26:19] That's why the individual jurisdictions are going on their own to that because I think it's a natural evolution of the system. If the goal is to get people on Metro, let's make it as easy as possible and as cheap as possible for them to get there. So I think this is an evolution that's just waiting to happen, and I'm happy to do it.

[04:26:35] Thank you. Okay. Mr. Turner, make the motion. Ms. Brickson, second the motion. All of the people, please say aye. Aye. Opposed? I will abstain. That motion will pass 5-1-1-2 with Chair Randall abstaining, Vice President Letourneau voting against the motions, Vice President Kirshner, and I'm being off the dais.

[04:26:55] Those are all the packet motions. I do believe there are other motions on the dais, and I do believe they are both for Ms. Bricksman or do we have others? I think we have three others, one for Ms. Glass and two for Ms. Bricksman.

[04:27:12] I will go to Ms. Glass first before I go to the vice chair. Ms. Klass. Thank you, Madam Chair. My motion is I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to develop a proposed cost estimate for trash recycling containers to be installed at county bus stops along with the cost estimate and program for having a vendor pick up that trash and recycling and present this proposal to the Finance, Government Operations, and Economic Development Committee as part of the fiscal year 2026 budget process.

[04:27:47] Motion is made and seconded by Supervisor Brooksmen. Discussion on the motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. So currently we have a mixture of county bus stops that some provide trash and recycling bins for users of the system, and it's been inconsistent.

[04:28:12] So I've had constituents to contact me and say that there are riders that are leaving trash because there's no place to put it at the bus stops. And then, of course, that trash blows away, you know, when it's a windy or rainy day.

[04:28:28] So if we are encouraging and facilitating bus trips, we also need to be providing trash containers for our riders to use. This is asking staff to come back with cost proposals for a funding decision later, but this is a step toward keeping our communities clean from trash okay so anybody so i'll

support the motion because it's a study i don't know and then i'll see what the study says that's what that's what i'll do because you know if they have shelters but i don't i don't know yet i'll come

[04:29:05] back and see what the study says not so much for the cost but i haven't heard that trash on our bus stops at our bus stops is a problem i don't know i haven't heard that um if that's true just come tell me and let me know, but it's a study right now and I'm happy to support the study. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:29:25] Anybody? Yeah, sorry. All right. I did look. All in favor say aye. Opposed? Okay, so that motion will pass with Mr. Letourneau voting against the motion and the other two people not being here still.

[04:29:45] Ms. Glass, I mean Ms. Bricksman. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to include in the FY 2026 proposed budget a resource request that eliminates fares on the senior bus service provided by Parks, Recreation, and Community Services. Motion made and seconded by Supervisor Tacroni. Discussion on the motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. So as we were discussing free fares, thanks to my legislative aid and being at the Senior Center a couple times between this, you know, when this was being discussed on the board,

[04:30:18] We realized that it would be really inconsistent to continue charging our seniors a dollar to ride the bus while we were going free for the rest of the county. So the reason that this is framed the way it is as a resource request is because when we discussed it between Ernie and Steve Torpy and myself, we realized that it was kind of a staffing issue.

[04:30:43] It's not a lot of money. It comes this year to about \$26,000 that we're going to lose in revenue. It's not a lot, but Mr. Torby preferred that we do it in the 26 budget cycle so that he can basically manage his staff and manage the process a little bit easier.

[04:31:00] So I was happy to just send it to the budget discussion. Thank you. Thank you. I really had a lot of questions here. I don't think PRCS is here. How much do we actually charge right now? nobody knows i can answer that no no no this is the problem with this motion like it it has nothing to do with this discussion and so the right staff aren't even here for it dollar so you're asking what prcs charges yeah senior trips it is one dollar per trip each way okay and that's just to

[04:31:36] is anybody who uses it so it is it is uh for senior citizens that are part of the uh senior center there's a fee it's not included in their membership it is not and it's uh it's actually it's a it's a door-to-door service was slightly different than our fair our service but uh confirming with with steve as we were going through this it's one dollar per trip each way okay and the we only collect 26 000 that is when he ran uh when he received that information from his team it was 26 500 that has been received in this in the in the year that he pulled those

[04:32:16] numbers. Which was last year, I guess. Yes, sir. Probably. Okay. I mean, it probably makes sense to do it. I'm just, I'm a little uncomfortable. And this was his request that if it was, if it is done, that he pushed through the 26 budget process. Why isn't he here then? Well. Nothing against him.

[04:32:36] I'm just saying like, if we're going to talk PRCS bus service, I would have expected to have a discussion with PRCS. I don't think that's crazy. Okay. So it goes. I'm supporting it. Mr. Torpy is everywhere all the time so did he know you were going to make this motion tonight?

[04:32:57] Yeah, I said that in my opening Well, he said he asked you to he was fine with you doing it, I don't know if he knew you were going to do it, but okay I'm happy to support this motion Sure, want to

close it? Sure, yeah, thank you Madam Chair, yeah, just to clarify I think that, and I don't want to put words in Mr. Brown's mouth, but he was trying to avoid having other staff have to come to this meeting.

[04:33:21] And we had discussions between Mr. Brown and Mr. Torpy in my office. It's \$26,000 for 2023 is what it costs. And if we don't want to do it in the end, if we want to keep charging our seniors a dollar each way while everyone else gets to ride free in the county, we can decide not to fund this in the budget discussion.

[04:33:44] So we do have another opportunity to line item this out of our budget if we want to save the \$26,000. Thank you. I think we have to go heavy-handed on this girl. It's going to pass. Come down. She wins. Golly.

[04:34:04] Only when she works in her favor. All in favor, please say thank you. Any opposed? Look at that. No, you're not.

[04:34:20] No, you're, okay, and because of that, Ms. Letourne abstained, and we have two people still not here. Okay, Ms. Bricksman has another motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. It's only 10.30. I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to evaluate the possibility of accelerating the Bus Shelter Program CIP project and provide a recommendation for the funding necessary to accelerate the project as part of the FY 2024 fund balance discussion.

[04:34:52] Thank you. Motion made in second by Supervisor Brooksmen. Discussion on that motion. Okay, so as I was thinking about the Transit Summit and the things that we need to do to encourage folks to use transit, one of the things that I've been most frustrated with in the county is the way that our bus stops are designed or not designed and you know for example I was actually talking to supervisor Sains on the phone a couple weeks ago driving over to the W&OD trail

[04:35:25] past Walmart and I saw people standing on a hill next to a stick someone had tipped over a shopping cart to sit on and there were like half a dozen people waiting for the bus and so I see that often in the county in my district i see people standing by a stick when it might be raining or bloody hot or or so anyway i know that we have a great plan going right now with doing 20 shelters a year i know that we're working on it but i'm just curious if we put you know it's about a 12 million dollar project right now with land acquisition and design and then and then

[04:36:03] construction we do have 181 million in fund balance that we will be looking to allocate by the end of the year. I'm thinking maybe some of it, you know, some of the \$12 million could be funded early. Perhaps we could accelerate this project a little bit so it gets done before 2030.

[04:36:22] And so that's the idea. It's not a set amount now because in speaking with Mr. Brown, this is a DTCI department project, and I wanted them to be able to weigh in on even the feasibility of being able to accelerate the project depending on the resources that they have and so this that's why the motion reads the way it is without a specific number for the fund balance discussion but um i look forward to to hopefully accelerating the program thank you okay mr mr turner thank you madam chair um i'm happy to support the motion but since this is the last time i get to talk i

[04:36:58] did i don't know if everybody heard me before but i've discovered this is not breath freshener It is hand sanitizer. Just wanted to warn everybody here at the end of the evening. He's the second person who's had this discussion on this day is tonight.

[04:37:17] We have lots of sanitized breath on this day is tonight. Just going to say. So maybe the message is, although it does say be bus savvy, folks. So maybe. But he's not me, of course.

[04:37:34] He's not the only one. mr crony um yeah thank you chair randall so i'm happy to support it but i i am a little confused about you know what the ada bus stop improvements are versus the bus shelter program versus the bus stop installation for new routes so um it would it would be good to understand maybe from dtci what all these things are and then where the 20 i guess 60 bus shelters are going because it looks like it's 20 a year um so i don't know some clarification would be helpful um julie um

[04:38:13] or supervisor brisbane are you going to send it to the finance committee or am i allowed to answer no she's not the one that's not the motion what would you like to yes would you like to ask um no it was going to be sent to the fund balance discussion but we could send it to the finance committee if you that one will so the manager yes mr hamstring so the process for a fund balance we'll go through finance oh goes through that first okay wonderful thank you for the clarification well yeah i'm done thank you well the thing is though what i'm trying to get clarity on so now i'm confused on each of these programs right um because i was bringing up something earlier but

[04:38:51] we have the ada program this this is not the program that i was talking about either right that's the bus installation program so mr robson so there are three programs so there is the ada program for existing bus stops that primarily deals with the access and the platform, right?

[04:39:14] So we got these bus stops that are out in the middle of, they just exist in grass. And so the ADA program provides the ADA access to those areas and then provides the platform. Separate from that, there's a shelter program where we're installing shelters for as many of the bus stops as we can and then the third which is a retrofit and then there's a program for future bus stops where we're ensuring that the shelter is installed okay so we'll take a look at

[04:39:51] it i this came up to me today so i did not have a chance to go and verify anything i would not surprise us so i just want to caution the board that it's likely not a funding issue yeah i think that's right i think it's a bandwidth issue but we'll go ahead and verify okay i mean the other thing is similar to what i said earlier if we're gonna reimagine the whole system then i don't know if it makes sense to be again retrofitting bus stops or planning future stops if we're like going to an on-demand model in some place or whatever i mean we may want those but may not be in the same

[04:40:26] places so this seems like a bad time to be doing some of this i think some of the ada stuff is different because it's just a necessity but so i don't know i guess i'll support it for now but I'm not likely to I don't know we got to have more conversation it sounds like Mr. Sainz thank you Madam Chair I'll be supporting the motion and you know I think there's some bus stops that are high traffic volume areas that are probably not going to be moved so again we can flush that out because I think the example that Mr. Brisbane gave was you know on Atlantic Boulevard in my district where right in front of the Walmart the Sam's Club and across the street from that you have the Raising

[04:41:01] Canes the Best Buy there's a stop on each side of the street that is a high volume traffic area with the people there all the time rain sleet or snow standing out there without any type of cover whatsoever and yes they'll bring the carts tip them over sit or what if they do all types of things so if we can review and somehow accelerate getting some bus stops up and at least in our most high traffic volume areas where we know we're most likely not going to change the stops then I think that's that's something

we're all doing so I'm supportive of it and I just like this point out at 10:44 p.m. I've been here since what six

[04:41:37] o'clock. We have had a great discussion and presentation and information download on transit here in Loudoun County. So good job to everybody. We were talking at 1045 about transit, which is great. And we all are some political and political walks. Let's just say that. Right. So I don't I don't disagree with this.

[04:42:06] I have a hard time doing these things when the staff that is actually running that program is not here. And unlike, so did you speak with DTCI about this? Because like Parks and Rec, you talked to Mr. Torpy, he told you to come to support the motion.

[04:42:23] Have you had this discussion with them? I didn't have a chance to talk to DTCI, but Ernie and I spoke, and I believe Mr. Brown spoke with DTCI. Did you speak to Mr. Brown? Did you speak to DTCI? I did not speak with them directly.

[04:42:40] I believe that was briefed with them as the motion, proposed motion, was being vetted. I don't know what you just said to me. What? When the motion comes in. If I may assist Mr. Brown.

[04:42:56] Thank you, sir. Did anyone speak to DTCI? So the motion, well, I didn't see the motion until almost 4.30 or 5 p.m. So I did review the motion. My understanding in going through the staff review with the motion is my office did speak with DTCI, and they assisted with the drafting of the motion.

[04:43:21] My perspective on the motion is taking direction from the board is for me to go evaluate this with the requisite departments, which would include DTCI in this situation, PRCS in the previous situation. In both cases, we are coming back to the board with additional information and funding analysis for your consideration.

[04:43:43] That sounds good. Because, I mean, only because, you know, what Mr. Sains just said makes sense. But I don't know if the stop he's talking about right now is already something that's already been, one of the stops that's already been slated to get a shelter tomorrow, right?

[04:44:00] I don't know how that looks. So as long as the staff is going to come back to us and go evaluate it and come back to us and nothing more is being done, that is fine. Accelerating it, I'm not sure I'll support that.

[04:44:16] We'll see when it comes. Again, I like having information before I can make these decisions, and this motion is to really get information. So I'm supportive of getting more information. Would you like a closing? Yes, Madam Chair, thank you. And thank you, colleagues, for supporting, those who are supporting.

[04:44:32] appreciate it um again that this was designed so that we could have you know an evaluation maybe some suggestions from staff as to how we could use fund balance to accelerate this project and it could be any number of ways maybe we hire more construction contractors or we can you know hire a consultant for design which we've done on a couple of other of our projects to accelerate them we did it with the data center mapping project we did it with um the freedom trail or something like that, that Supervisor Sains had sent a fund balance, I believe.

[04:45:09] So anyway, the idea is just to get some suggestions from staff as to how we could accelerate this. This is really important to make sure that we encourage riding transit and multimodal forms of

transportation in the county. Thank you. Point of clarification, is the motion to get ideas of how we can or if we should?

[04:45:28] How we can. Can we read the motion one more time? Yeah, hang on a second. Because that wouldn't be a motion that I actually support. Well, actually, the motion is for staff to look at the possibility that we can use fund balance to accelerate the project. So if they're looking at possible ways to use fund balance to accelerate the project, they could potentially, yes, I think we are telling them, they can correct, Mr. Hemstreet can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think what we're asking staff to do is look at possibilities, which means ideas, as to ways that we could use the money to accelerate the project.

[04:46:03] in your time, if they came back and said, if Steph came back and said, we don't think we should, we don't think we can, we're really close already, would you be okay with that too? I have to be. Okay. Okay. I can't force them to build things faster. I just want to make sure that we don't, because, again, in your time, that we're giving staff the freedom to come back and say to us what the facts are and not kind of trying to push them in one direction to say. No, of course, that's why it says the possibility of accelerating the project.

[04:46:34] And so, you know, and that's why there's not a certain, you know, my initial motion was \$12 million, because that's the entire project, but then we backed it up and said, well, staff might say we only need \$4 million to accelerate. So don't attach an amount until we know some information.

[04:46:51] Exactly. Yeah. Thank you. I like that. I like that. All right. All right. All in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? That motion will pass unanimously with 702.

[04:47:07] Thank you all. Thank you, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gross. We really appreciate it. Thank you. You did a great job tonight. I know this is actually hard, and we have fun, but we ask tough questions. So thank you very much. We appreciate you. All right. We are adjourned.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com