



## Virginians for Better Transportation (VBT) Transit Fact Sheet

Quality public transportation benefits all Virginians by reducing traffic congestion and increasing mobility. It connects people with jobs, medical facilities, retail establishments, educational institutions, and recreational and tourist sites. Public transportation provides independence for a growing elderly and disabled population, greatly improving their quality of life.

### CURRENTLY

- Every year more Virginians are choosing to take transit. Ridership grew 19 percent from 2003 to 2007 and by 6 percent during the past year despite declining fuel prices.
- Ridership will reach 200 million passenger trips in FY 2009. If growth continues at the same rate, Virginia transit could triple and reach 600 million in ridership by 2035.
- Virginia faces a current transit capital backlog of \$241 million and over the next 10 years it will grow to \$2.08 billion at a time when an increase in service is crucial to meet the growth in rider demand.

### WHY CONTINUED FUNDING IS URGENTLY NEEDED

- Public transportation provides an affordable, and for many, a necessary alternative to driving. Households that use transit save \$9,530 annually, freeing funds for housing, retail purchases and education.
- Every \$20 million in transit investments yields \$62 million in business sales; every \$1 billion in transit investments supports and creates 30,000 jobs (2/3 are "Green Jobs").
- Every bus full of passengers removes 40 cars from traffic; every full railcar removes 120 cars. Without Metro, 26 *new* freeway lanes would be required to carry peak hour traffic. In Hampton Roads, if every commuter would carpool or take the bus to work just *once* every two weeks, peak hour congestion problems would disappear.
- Without public transportation, congestion costs in the U.S. would have reached an additional \$13.7 billion. Past investments in transit have reduced annual congestion costs in the D.C. area by over half a billion dollars, \$18.6 million in the Hampton Roads area and \$8.6 million in Richmond.
- One person using transit rather than driving saves 200 gallons of gas per year (US Total = 4.2 billion gallons per year), reducing U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

This November, Virginia will elect a new Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and all 100 members of the House of Delegates. It is critical that we reach out to these candidates, media representatives and other members of the public to let them know that it's time for a long-term, dedicated, multi-modal, statewide transportation funding solution.