

ITEM 10 – INFORMATION
July 15, 2026

2025 State of Public Transportation Report

Background: The committee will be briefed on the 2025 annual State of Public Transportation report. The purpose of this report is to provide a concise overview of the state of regional public transportation in the National Capital Region.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: Pierre Gaunaud, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Review of 2025 State of Public Transportation Report
DATE: July 9, 2026

This memorandum reviews the scope, purpose, format, and contents of the 2025 TPB State of Public Transportation (SOPT) report. It also notes the new categories of data added to the report and expected changes to come in future editions. The 2025 SOPT is slated for publication in July 2026.

BACKGROUND

TPB first published the annual SOPT report for calendar year 2017 and has released eight editions ever since. The report is designed to be a snapshot of the activities, assets, and general information related to public transportation agencies operating in and based out of the National Capital Region during a calendar year. Its purpose is to serve as a reference of regional transit data for member jurisdictional staff to use in their planning work, as well as a means of incorporating public transportation interests in the metropolitan planning process. The SOPT also helps promote many of TPB's goals and the local actions furthering them through its representation of public transportation activities and agencies' accomplishments and challenges. These include maintaining efficient transportation system operations and affordable and convenient mobility operations, promoting environmental protection, and fostering livable and prosperous communities.

METHODOLOGY

The SOPT uses transit ridership and financial data published by the National Transit Database (NTD) to inform its related agency, mode, and network total calculations and analysis. NTD data is usually published every October for the previous fiscal year; therefore, there is a time lag between the NTD-based data and all other quantitative data in the report, which is gathered directly from the member agencies, such as fleet assets, route and stop/station totals, and more. That means that for the 2025 SOPT, fiscal year 2024 data is featured from the NTD. Distinctions are made throughout the report between fiscal and calendar year data for reader clarity. Qualitative data is sourced from multiple sources, including annual questionnaires sent by TPB staff to local transit and transportation staff, agency budget and other reports, presentations made to the TPB's Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee (RPTS), open-source research, data collected for DMVMoves, and more.

REPORT STRUCTURE

There are six chapters or parts to the SOPT. Part One is a summary of regional-level data representative of the National Capital Region's transit network. It typically aggregates individual agencies' data and includes insights based on emerging patterns or noteworthy influencing factors. Part Two consists of two-page agency spreads for each transit agency operated by a TPB member. These agency profiles highlight calendar year activities, give an overview about each agency's

operations, presents basic statistics related to its service offerings, and shows performance metrics and system characteristics using the most recently available NTD data. Part Three provides details and updates on other public transit services, such as those of peers and partners from neighboring regions or services that have yet to begin operation such as the Purple Line. Part Four covers activities and updates related to other regional agencies within the National Capital Region involved in public transportation. Part Five is where greater detail is available about agencies' major projects, service updates, and planning activities since the profiles in Part Two typically only have short descriptions of select activities. Part Six features information about the public transportation-related work done by TPB and its staff during the relevant calendar year.

CHANGES TO THE 2025 SOPT AND FUTURE EDITIONS

The agency profiles in Part Two of the SOPT have typically included only three operational characteristics for each agency: operating expenses, fare revenue, and total annual ridership. From these data points, different metrics can be calculated reflecting on the agency's performance. As of January 2026, only three bus agencies continue to collect fares for local service (Fairfax Connector, Arlington Transit, and Metrobus), causing fare revenue to be a less useful regional data point. Therefore, as of the 2025 SOPT, it will no longer be featured in the agency profiles. However, operational performance has received more attention from TPB members, as noted throughout DMVMoves-related meetings and discussion, as well as from the federal government which is proposing increased performance reporting.

Beginning with the 2025 SOPT, new system characteristics and performance metrics will be included for each agency in their respective profiles. The tables featuring this data will be accompanied by text boxes offering context to the quantitative information to assist readers with understanding the background for or impacts of certain trendlines and patterns. The new data points that will be included in the Part Two agency profiles are: total vehicle revenue miles (VRM), total vehicle revenue hours (VRH), total passenger miles travelled (PMT), passengers per VRM, passengers per VRH, and operating expenses per VRH. All of that data would be presented on an annual basis using the most recently available fiscal year data on the NTD. In the future, this data may be sourced directly from member agencies to help make the report and its quantitative analysis more timely.

The DMVMoves Service Guidelines and Performance Metrics Working Group has been meeting for over a year and a half to develop a set of regional service guidelines for local bus service and performance metrics that could be applied to all agencies' operations to more easily understand how each is performing and make regional network observations. As of July 2026, many of the metrics that the working group has developed consensus around are already included in the SOPT beginning with the 2025 edition. Others will be incorporated onward starting with the 2026 edition as they are finalized by the group and adopted regionally. The SOPT will then serve an additional purpose as a reporting medium for annual transit performance per the recommendations in the DMVMoves plan and January 2026 TPB resolution R9-2026. The 2025 SOPT is slated for publication in July 2026.