Metro: Fund It/Fix It (FIFI)

What Is It and What Is Going On?

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There's a reason you're hearing and seeing so much about Metro in the media, legislature, local governments and forums. Metro is a $40 billion asset[1] serving a population area of over 3.9 million people living in a 1,500 square-mile radius that provides 1 million trips on an average weekday.[2] Over 39 percent of rush hour riders are federal employees.[3] Follow the skyline for construction cranes and you will find that many are clustered near a Metro station. In fact, 86 percent of new office development in the pipeline in the D.C. region is within ¼ mile of a Metro station.[4] Revenue generated by Metro and VRE (Virginia Rail Express)—$600 million annually—goes directly to the State's general fund, enough to pay for higher education and state police.[5]

Metro or WMATA, and How Is It Funded?

The problem is dedicated funding for annual operating and capital projects. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA, aka, **Metro)** operates in three jurisdictions: Maryland, D.C. and Virginia. A funding formula based upon population, average weekday ridership, and the number of stations determines the proportion of costs. D.C. pays 36 percent, Maryland pays 34 percent and Virginia's jurisdictions split the remaining 30 percent. D.C. funds Metro through a mix of general funds, dedicated revenue, parking fees, and bus fares.[6] Maryland has a transportation trust fund that pools revenue from gas taxes, automobile titling, transit system fare boxes, the Port of Maryland, and airports to be used for transportation projects throughout the state.[7]

Virginia's share is broken out by locality, each receiving a bill: Alexandria 3.8 percent, Arlington 7.1 percent, City of Fairfax 0.3 percent. Fairfax County 12.2 percent, and Falls Church 0.3 percent; The State pays 6.5 percent as a match of the federal PRIIA funds (Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act).[8] Virginia's share of the costs will increase in 2020 when Phase 2 of the Silver Line opens—three of the six new stops will be in Loudoun County, which will then be responsible for their portion of the bill.

A large portion of the monies collected directly from Northern Virginia are in the form of taxes: hotel, real estate sales, gas, and some highway tolls. Some of the funds collected from vehicle registrations, general sales taxes, and gas sales across the state also go into funding Metro. Portions of the funds are administered by Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) or by (Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) or by Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VRPT).[9] *[See chart]* Each year, WMATA goes to each jurisdiction with a bill and each year the jurisdictions try to come up with the necessary funds. This doesn't allow for long-term bonding of debt and it is also makes it difficult for localities to budget their other responsibilities.

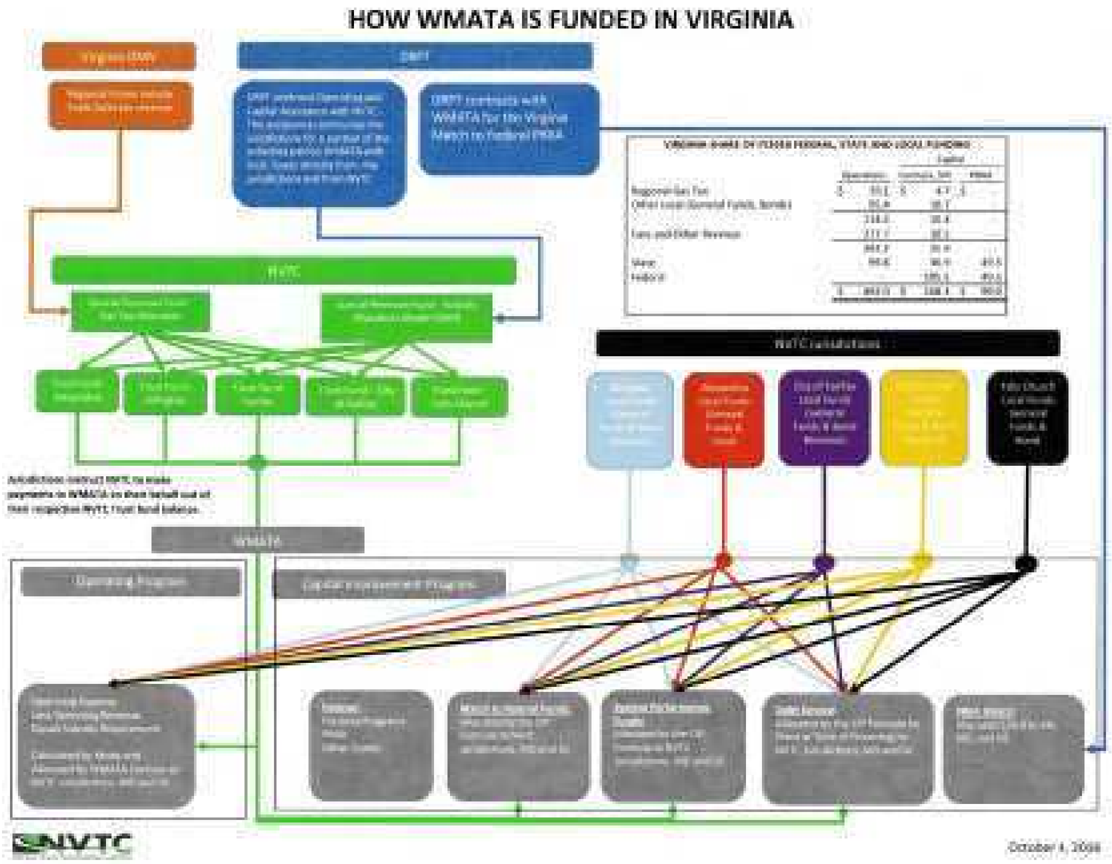
What's the Difference – Metro or WMATA?

The Washington Metropolitan area Transit Authority (WMATA) was created by an interstate compact in 1967 to plan, develop, build, finance, and operate a balanced transportation system in the national capital area. WMATA is commonly known as Metro throughout the region, most is in Fairfax County. People in the county think of it as the rail transit (Metrorail). However, WMATA also covers Metrobus and Metroaccess (which provides paratransit services to those unable to use rail or bus transit).

Not Just a NOVA Problem

Northern Virginia is not the only part of the state dealing with transportation funding issues. Existing transit bonds are expiring, resulting in a looming transportation-funding cliff. In 2016 the Virginia General Assembly established the Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board (RAB for short) under the DRPT [HB1359].[10] The Board was made up of members from Virginia Transit Association (VTA), Community Transportation Association of Virginia (CTAV), Virginia Municipal League (VML), Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) and DRPT. The Board was tasked with studying the impact of losing funding, identifying potential sources of new or additional funding and to prioritizing capital transit projects in terms of congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, environmental quality, and land use.[11] The RAB reports:

> An evaluation of the Commonwealth's documented funding needs and projected revenues has conservatively identified an average revenue gap



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of $130 million annually over the next ten years, representing a drop of over 40 percent from existing funding levels. In 2020, the estimated gap will be $35 million, and it will grow to an estimated gap of $178 million by 2027. This reduction in State funding, along with increasing uncertainty in Federal funding, will result in an increased burden on local governments to either fill the gap or implement significant reductions in, or elimination of, transit services in communities, large and small, around the Commonwealth. The projected impact of the loss in State transit capital funding to Virginia's economy includes the estimated loss of 1,000 jobs and $200 million in economic activity annually. It is critical that solutions are identified and implemented to close this gap. It is important to recognize that the majority (approximately 80 percent) of transit capital funds are currently dedicated to replacement of existing assets in order to maintain them in a state of good repair. The needs assessment outlined in this report represents a snapshot of program needs as understood in 2016. The transit capital environment is constantly changing as asset conditions are assessed and documented by transit providers statewide in response to recently imposed federal requirements. One notable example is the recent capital plan update from the WMATA which reflects an increase of $1.1 billion in capital funding needs over the next five years. This information was released after this study's analysis was conducted and reflects an increase in the overall statewide funding gap that will need to be addressed through further analysis.[12]

The key recommendations of the RAB were: [13]

- The Commonwealth needs a steady and reliable stream of dedicated revenues for its transit capital program to meet state-of-good-repair needs and support much needed transit expansion to keep up with population growth.
- The Commonwealth should consider a funding approach that utilizes a combination of revenue sources to spread the impact or a single statewide source that is predictable and sustainable.
- Revenue sources that ramp up gradually to address future gaps and needs.
- A combination of statewide and regional sources,

with the majority of support coming from statewide sources.

- An approach for regional funds directed to prioritized needs within that region.
- A floor on regional gas taxes.
- Excess Priority Transportation Fund revenues (after debt service) dedicated to transit capital as this source becomes available.

James R. Dyke, Jr, appointee to the WMATA board by former Governor McDonnell, illustrated the importance of a healthy transportation infrastructure to Virginia's economic and global competitiveness:

> Virginia's economic and global competitiveness depend upon having a world-class transportation infrastructure in place. Improving mobility and connectivity throughout the Commonwealth, whether that be at the Port of Virginia, Dulles Airport, or Metro, greatly impacts Virginia's economy and should be prioritized to ensure the Commonwealth continues to position itself for success in an increasingly competitive global economy.[14]

In addition to the funding issues addressed in the RAB report, then-Governor McAuliffe had commissioned former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood to evaluate Metro reforms. LaHood's report released in December 2017 found:[15]

1. WMATA General Manager Paul Wiedefeld, who was hired late 2015, is performing well.

2. WMATA Board structure is too large, too fractious, too parochial.

3. WMATA costs are comparable and wages are in-line with the region's cost of living.

4. Ridership has fallen—more than the nationwide decline—resulting in loss of revenue (a large source of funding).

5. WMATA offers (20 percent) more service per rider than other large transit agencies (more trains, longer hours, new lines).

6. WMATA funds are inadequate for maintaining an aging system (tracks and cars with lifespans of 30 years)..

LaHood recommended that:

1. WMATA install a temporary, five-person reform board.

2. Service be offered that matches demand—especially for bus service.

3. Costs be managed and productivity increased in the next labor contract—larger worker contributions to the pension fund, and cap or prohibit overtime earnings applied to retirement pay. (Union employees have been working without a contract since June 2016.)[16]

4. Repairs to aging infrastructure should be increased. Capital improvements have lagged for years and budgeted revenues were not spent.

5. Dedicated funding is necessary so it must be sufficient and must arrive soon. He recommended the $500 million the general manager said was necessary.

6. There be dedicated capital funding at the Federal level. Because nearly 40 percent of rush hour commuters are Federal employees, the federal government has a "special responsibility" to help WMATA succeed. The federal government needs to create a successor to PRIIA and make it legally dedicated so that it is bondable.

How Did We Get Here?

To understand how WMATA ended up with such a complicated funding formula, why it scrambles for funding each budget year, and how it fell into disrepair and became unsafe, it's necessary to look at its history. An excellent resource is *The Great Society Subway* by Zachary Schrag.[17] Schrag details how Metro evolved and how competing agencies, ideologies, and realities caused a mountain of delays and cost increases. The first 81-page Compact (February 1964) was replaced within a year (February 1965)—and the original did not address funding because it was too tricky trying to get consensus on the other "details." It was another year before the Compact passed in Virginia (June 1966) and then Congress (October 1966).[18] In October 1971 the Compact was amended when WMATA assumed control of several bus systems—becoming the third largest bus system in the U.S. and blowing up its cost estimates. Bus ridership figured heavily as feeding into rail ridership and there was no choice but to assume bus service.[19]

Every delay in construction led to cost overruns. In fact, Metro broke ground in December 1969[20] and was out of funds by August 1971.[21] Reasons for delays included: competing agencies, getting final approval of the system's design, redefining location of tracks and stations, implementing additional studies, modifying construction to a variety of soil types (sand to rock), discovering hidden utilities and abandoned structures, retrofitting and redesigning to incorporate accessibility for wheelchair users, competing with well-funded highway and automobile interests, negotiating labor strikes, and enduring the obstruction of powerful Congressmen.[22]

In February 1969, WMATA released a revised *Adopted Regional Rapid Rail Transit Plan and Program* known as the 'bronze book' which provided an official statement of what Metro was supposed to accomplish, from creating jobs and real-estate value to enriching the region's social and cultural life. The estimated cost of the system: $2.4926 billion including $535.4 million for inflation. By end of 1970, the estimate was at $2.9802 billion. At the end of 1976, it was $5.0178 billion plus $378.1 million for contingencies. By the end of 1978, the estimate was $6.8 billion. The total cost by time the 103-mile system was completed in January 2001 was around $10 billion. There were many reasons for the rising costs: the first estimate was not very realistic (it used the most optimistic forecasts); construction was more difficult than anticipated; the system built was not the system planned; inflation, and delay. When inflation is high, investors demand higher interest rates. Bonds couldn't be sold—which led to a Congressional bail-out in June 1972.[23]

If there was never enough money and plenty of resistance, how did Metro get built in the first place? Two passages from Schrag's book sum this up:

> July 1973 Washington Post editorial: " 'Metro ought to realize that the object of good public transportation is to provide frequent, reliable service at rates that will encourage bus ridership everywhere. That is not a money-making mission, but an effort to move people where they want to go; to cut down on air pollution, gasoline usage and traffic congestion.' That same logic would demand low fares on rail."[24]
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> "[By] 1979 it was clear that Congress and the region were committed to Metro, for richer or poorer, revenues would never cover its operating costs, much less its construction cost, elected officials from the region and the nation decided that it was still a fine investment. Some of the same factors that made the system so expensive also made it too popular to kill."[25]

Because Metro's annual operating and capital project costs were never fully funded, it was easier to keep putting off maintenance until there was a crisis—a passenger died in a smoke-filled tunnel at L'Enfant Plaza in January 2015.[26] (In June 2009, nine passengers died when two red-line trains collided near Takoma Park.)[27] Maintenance could no longer be delayed. The National Transportation Safety Board stepped in[28] and funds were withheld until Metro could prove that it had addressed safety concerns.[29] Ten months after the last fatality, WMATA announced it was hiring Paul Wiedefeld as general manager on Nov. 5, 2015.[30]

Trying to Fix the Problem

Since then, there have been a number of changes made to try to make Metro safe, reliable and financially sound.[31] Metro was shut down in March 2016 so that maintenance issues could be assessed. From June 2016-June 2017, SafeTrack, meant to address the most critical repairs, condensed three years' worth of work to the span of one year.[32] More maintenance is needed since the system and railcars have exceeded their intended thirty-year lifespans. Issues like water-proofing problematic sections of tunnel are being addressed.[33] Metro promoted a program called Back2Good[34] designed to show riders that the system is more reliable. The oldest and most unreliable railcars have now been retired; the new 7000 series cars can be linked into 8-car trains to maximize the number of customers transported and they have exceeded expectations for reliability.[35]

In an effort to bring costs under control, jobs have been eliminated[36], fares raised,[37] some rail and bus service eliminated, and hours of operation cut.[38] In November 2017, for a second year in a row, WMATA presented its financial reports on time and they received clean audits. Red signal overruns and personal safety for workers were improved. Trains were running 90 percent on time, offloads were down 50 percent, and 99 percent of the capital budget request was served (rather than 16-17 percent). The proposed FY 2019 budget caps annual subsidy increases for capital spending at 3 percent and operating expenses to less than 1 percent to help localities better forecast their own budgets.[39]

In January 2018 Metro introduced its "Rush-Hour Promise" to lure back riders and to retain those who might leave after a bad experience. The program automatically refunds fares of rail riders who use SmartTrip cards to pay for trips during rush hour and whose travel is delayed more than 15 minutes. Bus riders must go online to apply for refunds; since they do not "tap out" when exiting a bus, there is no way to track the length of time they travel.[40]

The League Connection

The League of Women Voters has continually played an active role in the development and promotion of Metro as evidenced by the dates of its Transportation and Land Use positions that go back to 1962.[41,42] Representatives of local

Leagues in the D.C. region had been meeting informally on regional issues since 1958. In 1962, with the Metro system coming to the area, the meetings became more regular, often including a representative of the national League (LWVUS). The meetings culminated in an "Agreement of Cooperation" in 1963 formalizing the group as an Inter League Organization (ILO). It was incorporated as the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA) in 1972.[43]

In November 1962 Darwin Stolzenbach, head of the NCTA—which would later be rolled into WMATA), released the first regional transit plan, known as the "November report."[44] Three months later the aforementioned League of Women Voters of the Washington Metropolitan Area, consisting of seven independent local Leagues, (now known as LWVNCA) sponsored a workshop entitled "Wheels, Rails and People"; the Metropolitan Washington Transportation Problem."[45] The workshop featured Mr. Stolzenbach, and panelists included Anne Wilkins, Fairfax County Mason District Supervisor and Vice-Chair of Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). In early 1965 the League laid out its position on Metro in the "Washington Metro-League Guide for Unit Presentation."[46]

LWVNCA has emphasized that Metro is integral to the region and has continued to monitor the Metro system and updated positions accordingly.[47, 48, 49] The following excerpts from LWVNCA positions on transportation. (dates indicate when language was first adopted and subsequently amended).

1. In support of the concept that there be some form of public transportation available for all, we [LWVNCA] endorse public policy in services and planning that:
   a. supports a coordinated public transportation system which includes bus and rapid rail transit (1964, 70, 83, 89),
   b. promotes and improves the present and proposed public transportation systems to encourage the use of mass transit (1963, 70, 89).
   . . .
4. We support financial measures that include: . . .
   d. the use of a dedicated tax to help fund public transportation. The objective of such a tax should be to spread the costs of mass transit among the total population and to encourage the use of mass transit instead of the automobile. A sales tax which excludes such necessities as food and medicines would be the best means of financing mass transportation in the metropolitan area. The most important criteria to be used in evaluating particular taxes dedicated to transportation should be revenue potential, timeliness, and reliability (1980).

In early 2017, representatives from LWVNCA member Leagues worked to learn about and draw attention to Metro problems. The timing enabled the LWVFA to monitor and encourage efforts in the 2017 Virginia General Assembly session that resulted in enactment of HB2136 [50] that set up safety oversight in the Metro Safety Commission.[51, 52] While appointments have been made in all three jurisdictions (VA[53], MD[54] and D.C.[55]), a chairman has not been selected and the federal money has not been released.[56]

In the summer of 2017, LWVNCA partnered with 22 other nonprofit organizations to form the Fund It-Fix It (FIFI) Coalition. LWVNCA and the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG) co-sponsored a Metro Forum in October 2017 to kick-off an education and advocacy campaign about the current situation and to teach and encourage citizen participation in the solution. Presentations and materials from the forum can be found on the LWVNCA website, "Metro Fund It-Fix It page" at http://www.lwvnca.org/MetroFund-It-Fix-It.html.

Currently there are several bills addressing funding for Metro. At the time of this writing (early February 2018), the Virginia General Assembly is considering SB856[57]/HB1319[58] as a vehicle to provide a dedicated funding source for Virginia's share of Metro costs. These bills include a variety of provisions, including changes to some of the funding allocations set out in HB2313[59] passed in 2013 and establish a gas floor that was not set in the 2013 bill. These bills also provide for a match to proposed federal grants. The Governor's budget request also included Metro funding measures, which are in the budget bill, HB30[60]/SB30[61], in the 2018 Session. These bills are a promising start but there is no guarantee they will actually become law. Since nearly all Northern Virginia legislators support current funding proposals, enactment will require support from other areas of Virginia. Because of the fluid nature of the Metro funding legislation during the General Assembly session, Fairfax County and other Northern Virginia jurisdictions are working within a coalition and set of principles as they evaluate and propose funding measures.

In addition, two federal funding bills have been filed in Congress; the one proposed by Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10th) seeks a smaller WMATA board and labor concessions[62] while the bill filed by Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11th) seeks safety oversight.[63] Two bills[64, 65] were proposed in the Maryland legislature and the one with broad support will be debated the second week in February. Also in the second week of February, the D.C. Council will take steps to propose its own source of funding, likely a sales tax. All of the proposed state/D.C.[66, 67] legislation hinges on the other jurisdictions providing similar amounts of funding and depend upon some federal grants.[68]

The funding situation in Virginia could well remain in flux until the end of the General Assembly (GA) session which is scheduled to adjourn *sine die* on March 10. The Maryland legislature will not adjourn until a month later. Members and the public are encouraged to "keep tuned" to: local media; sources such as those included on the accompanying list of resources; local government budget presentations (see Appendix, page EF-8); and to attend or listen in on the Friday afternoon (during the GA session) briefings of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Legislative Committee: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/legislative-committee.

But Why Metro? Why the League?

Newer members more familiar with the LWVFA's Voter Service activities and programs about election laws, redistricting, schools, gun safety, etc., might be unfamiliar with its history of interest, involvement, and support positions in the areas of land use, environment, transportation, and government finance. Its early and continuing support for Metro has been based on its interests in Metro's economic benefit, planning for density around Metro stations, providing disincentives for single-rider automobile commuting, and environmental protection – among many others. The LWVFA is not a single-issue organization, and we hope that more members will get on board in helping our current efforts to keep Metro on track.

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APPENDIX: BUDGETING FOR METRO – THEN AND NOW

Acting on one of the principles of the League of Women Voters that calls for adequate financing of government, the LWVFA has a long history of review and comment on the Fairfax budget, especially as it impacts its support positions. Since we are approaching our local "budget season," it seems fitting that some budgetary information be provided with regard to the Metro system.

In June 1977, the LWVFA issued a study covering various aspects of transportation in Fairfax, addressing roads, traffic, and buses as well as Metrorail and its financing. While the study reinforced the League's support of disincentives to automobile use, advocacy of planned higher densities, especially along rail and bus lines and at planned employment centers, it also included information about financing the newly-opened Metrorail system which, at that time, operated for 5.7 miles in central DC. Much of the following information is taken from that paper. *(For LWV history buffs, this was the time that LWVFA members addressed the issue of whether the end of the Metrorail line being constructed along I-66 should end at Vienna or make a turn to Tysons.)* Some aspects of Metrorail funding are the same now as in 1977, especially its complexity, which doesn't allow for simple budget pie charts of where resources come from and where they go. The numbers are, of course, quite different.

THEN: In 1968, Metro estimated that the system would be completed in seven years at a cost of nearly $2.5 billion. Of this amount, the Federal government was to pay $1.147 billion, the local jurisdictions $.555 billion, and Metro bonds, $.764 billion (originally planned to be repaid from fare box revenues). Nine years later, the estimated cost had more than doubled to $5.025 billion. The original federal government share was being drawn from interstate highway funds; it was clear that additional sources of income were needed. Local governments were being asked to come up with a plan for both the higher capital cost and operating costs; and a study was underway to determine if heavy rail was the best alternative for the planned but not yet constructed parts of the

Adopted Regional System (ARS). Notably, operating subsidies were neither budgeted nor fully envisioned.

According to the LWVFA study, the Fairfax County budget included the following amounts for Metrorail (*in dollars)*:

	FY 1977	FY 1978
Metrorail Capital		
Bond proceeds	$ 4,927,809	$ 1,511,670
State of Virginia	5,341,191	96,330
Subtotal	10,269,000	1,608,000
Metrorail Operations*	145,000	2,556,000
Debt Service	-	382,790
Total	$10,414,000	$ 4,546,790

*The large increase in FY 1978 is due to the fact that most of the start-up costs were capitalized or considered as the costs of building the system in 1977.

NOW: While the current funding needs of Metrorail have been addressed above, some budget figures deserve repeating to show the contrast with earlier years—after 40 years of "wear and tear," underfunding, and a rail system that is scheduled to add the final miles of its currently planned 129 miles and 6 of its planned 97 stations in 2020.

METRO Operating Budget

The proposed Metro budget for FY 2019 submitted to the public for its comment includes the following budgeted amounts for Metrorail operations in FY 2018 (*dollars in thousands*):

Operating Revenues	
Passenger total	$ 542,800
Parking	42,164
Advertising	7,920
All other	29,239
Total:	$ 622,123

Operating Expenses	
Personnel	$ 741,941
Services	105,345
All other	136,161
Total:	$ 983,447

Subsidy Required ***$ 361,324***

METRO Capital Budget

The FY 2018 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) shown in that iscal year's Metro budget plan totaled $1,250.0 million, which included some $225 million for bus, paratransit and agency-wide investments for FY 2018 (*dollars in millions)*:

Expenses		Funding	
Railcar Investments	$ 523.0	Federal Formula & Other Grants	$ 311.9
Rail System Investments	117.0	Federal Dedicated Funds (PRIIA)	148.5
Track & Structures Rehabilitation	113.0	State & Local Funds	374.4
Stations & Passenger Facilities	207.0	All Other	415.2
Business Support	65.0	Total	$ 1,250.0
Other investments	225.0		
Total	$ 1,250.0		

Fairfax County FY 2018 Budget for Transportation

In contrast to the usual focus of the LWVFA and other citizen groups that review the County's budget, the focus for transportation is not on the general fund, which covers transportation administration funds and transfers, but on the capital project and special revenue funds, especially fund 30000, Metro Operations and Construction. It is this fund that provides the County's subsidy payments to Metro, which is the focus of the current funding problem and proposals to resolve it that are discussed in this paper. Following is a short version of that fund statement (plus the amount for bonds that WMATA sold on behalf of the County) for the current fiscal year that was provided by Fairfax County Department of Transportation staff (*dollars in millions)*:

FY 2018 Revised Budget Plan		Sources of Funding to Pay Metro	
Operating Subsidy	$135.3	State Aid	$118.0
Capital Subsidy	117.9	General Fund	13.6
Transfer Out	2.8	Gas Tax	16.3
		G.O. Bonds (local)	30.0
		WMATA Bonds	78.0
Grand Total =	$ 256.0	Grand Total =	$256.0

Note: The table includes: amounts for Metrobus and Paratransit as well as rail.

Note that the construction and other costs for Phases I and II of the Silver Line, as well as **many** other County transportation-related projects and costs are not included; they are addressed in other parts of the budget not strictly related to the subject of this paper. However, because of the current interest in the Silver Line, or Rail to Dulles (now Ashburn?) project, readers might want to know that the total construction cost was estimated (in 2017) to be $5.9 billion, with $2.9 billion already spent on Phase I. The total project costs were and are being shared by the Federal government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, and Dulles Toll Road revenues. The Fairfax portion is being covered, at least in part, by supplemental taxes on commercial and industrial properties in the transportation improvement districts established for each phase. County budget documents continue to be a good source for persons wishing to learn more about this and other transportation improvements, projects, programs, and funding—now online at: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/budget-finance.

Fairfax City 2018 Budget for Metro

According to the WMATA budget for 2018, the Fairfax City share of Metro costs is $2.2 million, which the online City's budget materials notes is handled through its share of Northern Virginia Transportation Commission funds.

Discussion Questions

Note: Questions are grouped by overall category, so they can be answered in a group, if so desired, rather than by individual question.

1. Were you surprised to learn of the LWV's involvement in transportation issues for so many years?

2. Funding:
Were you surprised to learn that the funding problem is one associated with operating and current capital costs and not related to the building of new tracks/stations for Silver (or any) line?

What do you think of the current funding formula for Metro? How would you change it, if at all?

Do you think it is **fair** that Northern Virginia jurisdictions pay most of Virginia's portion of funding **for Metro**?

Should the state of Virginia pay a larger share? Should the federal government pay a larger share?

What is meant by "dedicated funding," and why is it important?

Should Metro be self-sustaining? Compare with airports? Roads? Amtrak? Uber? How *could* it be self-sustaining? Would you support higher fares?

3. Current State of Metro:
Do you ride Metro? Or feeder or any buses? Why or Why not?

Do you think Metro is safe to ride?

Do you think Metro has improved? If so, how? If not, what else should be done?

4. Reform: *Skip some or all of this section if you do not have enough information to answer.*
Do you have any suggestions for reforming WMATA?

What about the composition and size of the WMATA Board? Too large? Should elected officials serve on the Board? Should Labor have representation on the Board?

Should individual jurisdictions have a veto on the Board?

General

5. Please share any opinions that you may have regarding Metro's effect on development in NOVA.

6. What else do you want to know? Would you be willing to work on future/periodic updates on this issue or observe at meetings of bodies such as NVTC, WMATA, COG, etc.?

LWVUS on Money in Politics

Why it matters

Reducing the influence of big money in our politics makes our elections fairer. Voters have the right to know who is raising money for which political candidates, how much money they are raising and how that money is being spent. Our elections should be free from corruption and undue influence and should work so that everyday Americans can run for office, even if they aren't well connected to wealthy special interests.

What we're doing

We fight to reform money in politics in Congress, with state legislatures, with the executive branch and, where appropriate, the courts. We are deeply committed to reforming our nation's campaign finance system to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, and enable candidates to compete more equitably in public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.

Our Most Recent LWVFA Donors and Supporters

The LWVFA Board wishes to thank the following individuals for their generous support, including those still responding to our #Giving Tuesday Fundraiser.

Erica Hedrick
Bette Hostrup
Sidney Johnson
Raleigh Romine
Vivian Watts

Your support is appreciated and needed to carry out the work of the League. Thank You!