Director's Report

June 2025

DRPT

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



Next Stop: 2030
DRPT's Strategic Plan

Create a positive impact on the Commonwealth: Provide support and solutions to positively impact the lives of Virginians, the economy, and the environment

Foster innovative practical solutions: Challenge the status quo, creating solutions while sharing new ideas and innovative practices that contribute to better transportation outcomes

Convene with partners and stakeholders: Bring together the right people at the right time to leverage resources, address important transportation issues, and create the best solutions collaboratively

Cultivate a sustainable well-managed organization: Deliver exceptional service with an engaged workforce that effectively manages public assets and promotes transparency

Create a positive impact on the Commonwealth

Increase throughput of people and goods.

- The Virginia Breeze broke its ridership record for a single month in March 2025, providing more than 8,000 trips. That is a 25% increase over March 2024.
- All Virginia public transit (including WMATA and VRE) ridership for March 2025 was 90% of pre-pandemic levels - and increasing.
  - VRE ridership for March 2025 was 240,000, 72% higher than March 2024 and double what it was in January 2025.
  - WMATA Virginia ridership for March 2025 was 8 million, 18% higher than March 2024.
  - Virginia Agencies (excluding WMATA and VRE) ridership for March 2025 was 5 million, 15% higher than March 2024. That is 98% of March 2019 levels.

Promote factors driving economic vitality and development.

- On April 23, CSX Transportation announced its latest group of high-ranking properties to receive CSX Select Site designation. This program connects expanding companies with valuable rail-served sites. One of the 18 announced nationwide was the Dragway Site in Sandston, Virginia.
- DRPT had an unprecedented number of industry inquiries about the Rail Industrial Access (RIA) program. In the past month, four potential projects have come forward. DRPT expects that this is a result of DRPT's press releases announcing previous awards. DRPT will add a “how did you hear about this program” question to future applications to assess effectiveness of the communications tools.

Foster innovative practical solutions

Be the ‘go-to’ organization for best practices, technical assistance, and implementation of innovative transportation solutions.

- On May 14, the FTA issued its Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Low/No Emission Program and the Buses and Bus Facilities Program. In addition to providing grants for buses and bus facilities, the program also aims to expand the bus manufacturing industry, which has been heavily impacted by supply chain issues and suffers from major backlogs.

Foster a culture of innovation.

- On April 24, WMATA staff presented a proposal for World Class Transit to the WMATA Board’s Safety and Operations Committee. The proposal includes pursuing Grade of Automation Level 4 throughout the entire Metrorail system and the implementation of a Regional Bus Priority program to make transit operations more efficient and to improve the safety and resiliency of the regional transit network.

Convene with partners and stakeholders

Clarify roles and responsibilities when engaging with our partners and stakeholders.

- On May 14, DRPT joined the City of Richmond, GRTC, HR&A Advisors, and PlanRVA on the kickoff and site visit for the North/South BRT Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Corridor Project.

Engage with partners and stakeholders at the right time to maximize DRPT's influence.

- DRPT conducted a Coordinated Human Services Mobility (CHSM) Plan survey to receive feedback from our partners and the community. The CHSM plan is a federally required document to maintain compliance with FTA's 5310 program, which is aimed at providing transportation services to individuals with disabilities and seniors. DRPT's survey is intended to collect public feedback on service gaps and identify potential solutions to fill those gaps.
- On May 13, DRPT hosted a meeting of the Transit Service and Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) to review the Draft FY26 SYIP and provide updates on the MERIT Capital and Operating Assistance Program Review. DRPT plans to recommend MERIT changes to the Board by the end of the year.

Cultivate a sustainable well-managed organization

Attract, develop, and retain a diverse and engaged workforce focused on customer service.

- DRPT has hired 4 summer interns:
  - Julianna Cimillo – Communications Intern – Start Date 6/2/2025
  - Addie Fuller – Administration Intern – Start Date 6/9/2025
  - Nellie Liu – Compliance Intern – Start Date 6/16/2025
  - Omar Lanneau – Engineering Intern – Start Date 6/16/2025

Enhance the customer experience through well-designed processes and systems.

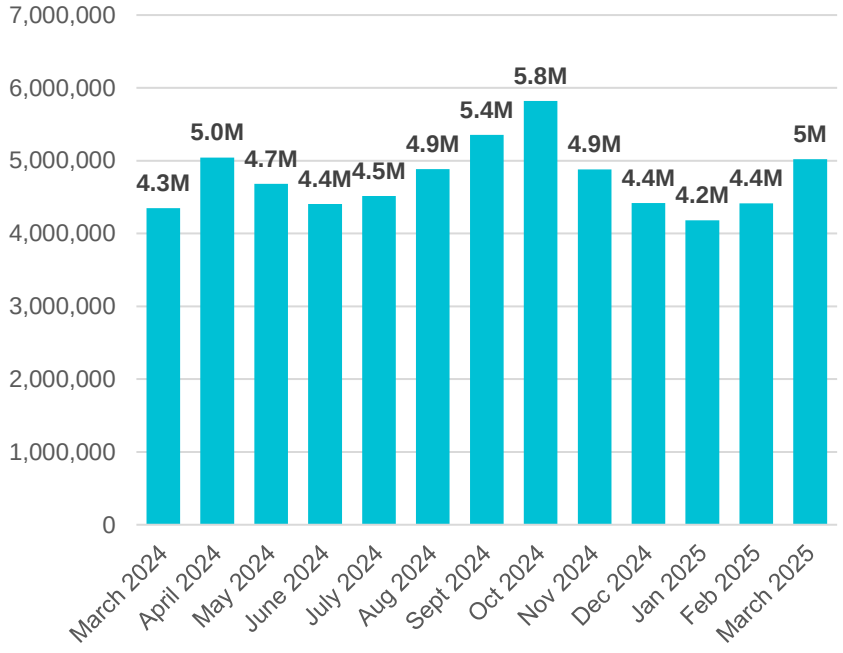
- DRPT won two awards from four nominations by the Public Relations Society of America's Richmond Chapter. The nominations were in the Blog (winner), Newsletters, Internal Communications (winner), and External Video Programs areas. Three of the four are produced entirely in-house.

Be good stewards of public resources.

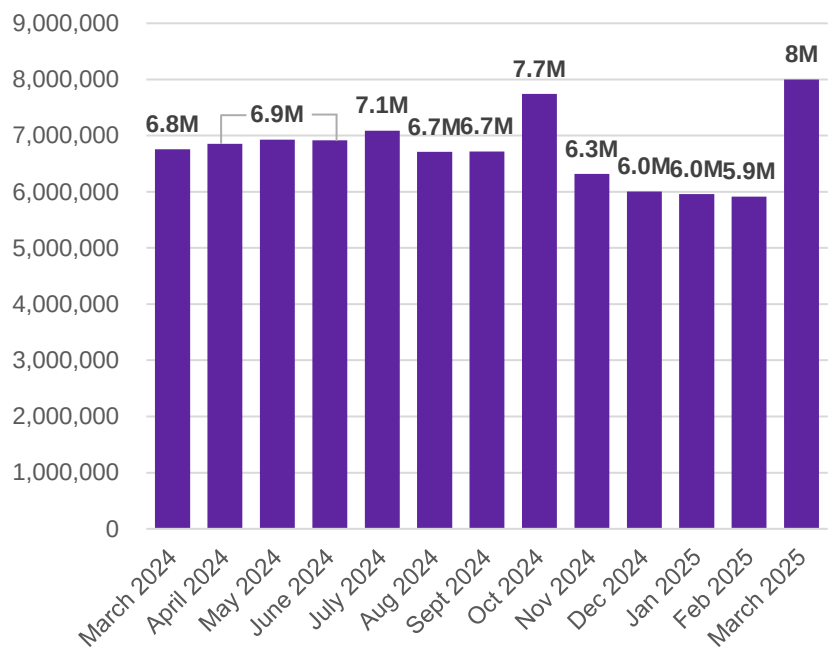
- On April 28, DRPT held a pre-proposal meeting to solicit questions and comments regarding DRPT's recent release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Virginia Breeze. The RFP is intending to solicit proposals for a turnkey operator to provide new Virginia Breeze service along the I-64 corridor from Harrisonburg to Virginia Beach.
- DRPT performed a site visit on April 28, to inspect the Buckingham Branch Railroad's (BBRR) Richmond-Alleghany Division continuous welded rail project in Rockbridge and Augusta Counties, which is a joint federal/state funded project through FRA's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program and DRPT's Rail Preservation Program.

Statewide Transit Ridership

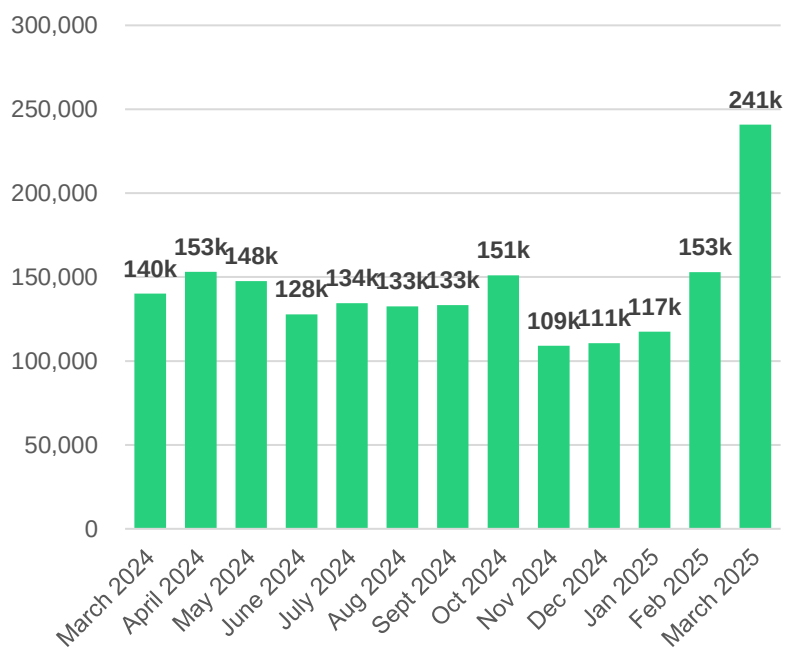
Statewide Transit Ridership – March 2024 to March 2025



Virginia Agencies



WMATA

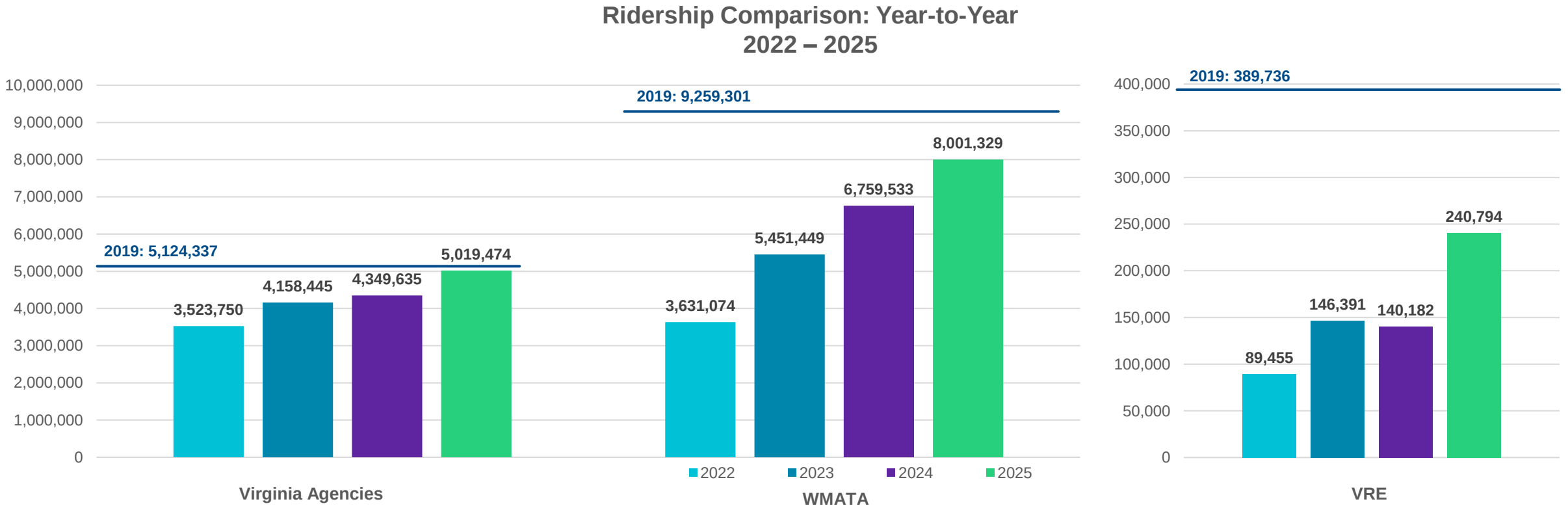


VRE

Agencies	March 2024	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sept 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	March 2025	Total*
Virginia Agencies	4,349,635	5,043,944	4,679,887	4,403,644	4,514,454	4,883,563	5,352,290	5,818,844	4,881,823	4,419,656	4,182,767	4,414,886	5,019,474	57,615,232
VRE	140,182	153,139	147,561	127,770	134,350	132,607	133,247	150,972	109,026	110,625	117,466	152,882	240,794	1,710,439
WMATA	6,759,533	6,856,539	6,930,758	6,916,793	7,089,451	6,710,201	6,717,554	7,742,372	6,320,579	6,005,122	5,957,138	5,915,679	8,001,329	81,163,515
All Agencies + VRE + WMATA	**11,249,350**	**12,053,622**	**11,758,206**	**11,448,207**	**11,738,255**	**11,726,371**	**12,203,091**	**13,712,188**	**11,311,428**	**10,535,403**	**10,257,371**	**10,483,447**	**13,261,597**	**140,489,186**

*Last 12 Months

Statewide Ridership Comparison: March Year-to-Year



Mode	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 vs 2022	2025 vs 2023	2025 vs 2024
Virginia Agencies	3,523,750	4,158,445	4,349,635	5,019,474	42%	21%	15%
VRE	89,455	146,391	140,182	240,794	169%	64%	72%
WMATA	3,631,074	5,451,449	6,759,533	8,001,329	120%	47%	18%
All Agencies + VRE + WMATA	**7,244,279**	**9,756,285**	**11,249,350**	**13,261,597**	**83%**	**36%**	**18%**

Virginia Breeze Ridership – March

In March 2025, ridership on VA Breeze routes totaled 8,049 which was:

- 281% higher than original estimates, and
- 25% higher than March 2024

For the month of March 2025, the VA Breeze contributed to a reduction of 415 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent emissions.

Valley Flyer:

- Ridership – 41% higher than March 2024
- Farebox Rev. – 46% higher than March 2024

Piedmont Express:

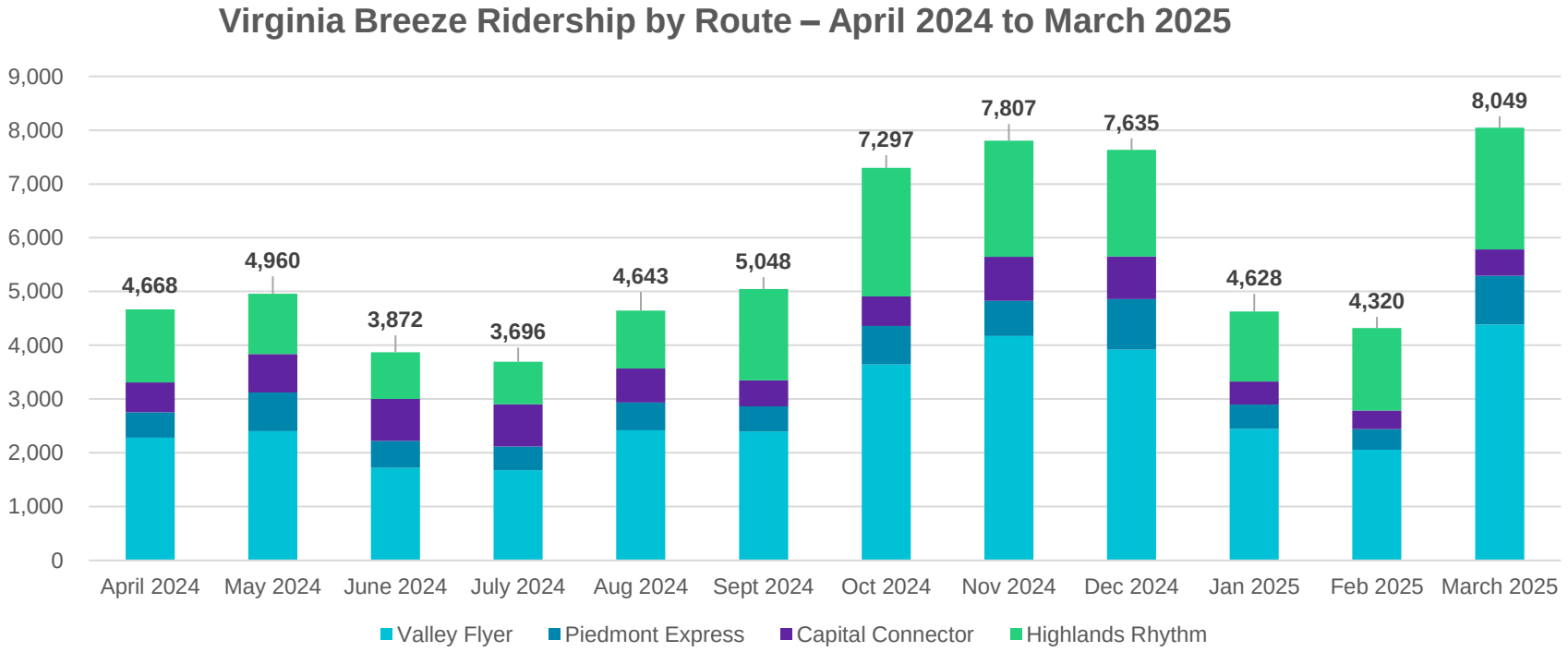
- Ridership – 26% higher than March 2024
- Farebox Rev. – 25% higher than March 2024

Capital Connector:

- Ridership – 33% lower than March 2024
- Farebox Rev. – 29% lower than March 2024

Highlands Rhythm:

- Ridership – 21% higher than March 2024
- Farebox Rev – 20% higher than March 2024



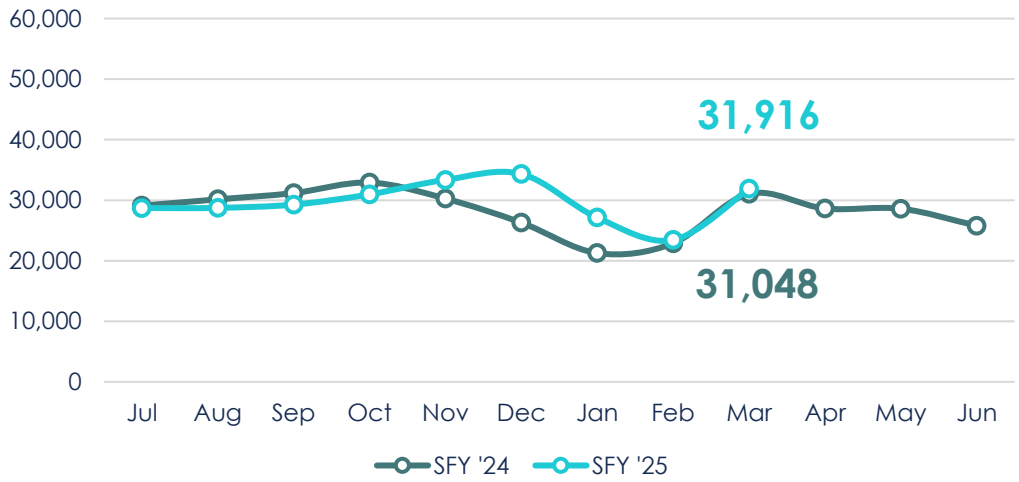
Route	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sept 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	March 2025	Total
Valley Flyer	2,281	2,404	1,722	1,676	2,421	2,399	3,645	4,171	3,920	2,448	2,057	4,385	33,529
Piedmont Express	476	719	500	440	518	467	717	656	940	448	384	908	7,173
Capital Connector	551	714	781	789	631	483	545	816	790	432	345	490	7,367
Highlands Rhythm	1,360	1,123	869	791	1,073	1,699	2,390	2,164	1,985	1,300	1,534	2,266	18,554
All Routes	**4,668**	**4,960**	**3,872**	**3,696**	**4,643**	**5,048**	**7,297**	**7,807**	**7,635**	**4,628**	**4,320**	**8,049**	**66,623**

Virginia-Supported Amtrak Monthly Ridership by Route SFY '25 vs. SFY '24

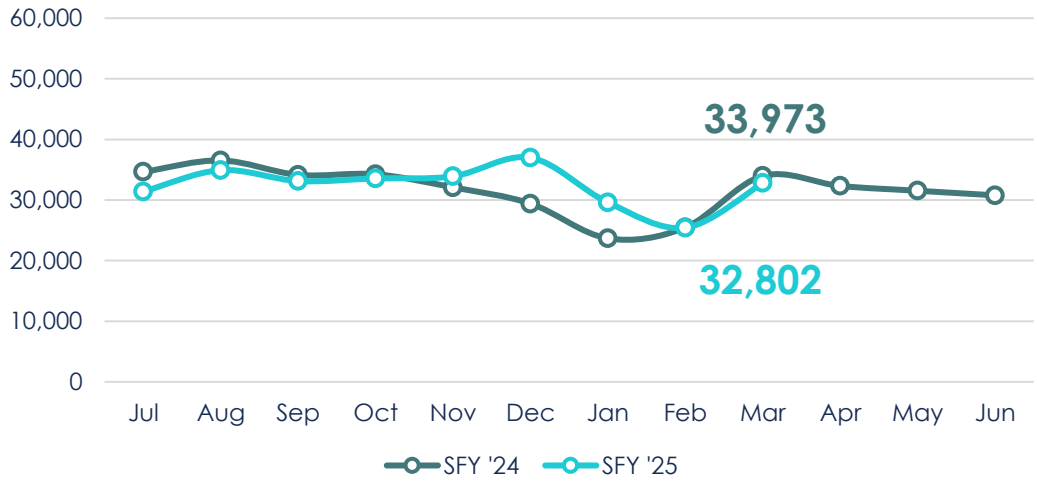
Friday – Sunday remain the most popular travel days.

Eight train cancellations due to infrastructure improvements at DC.

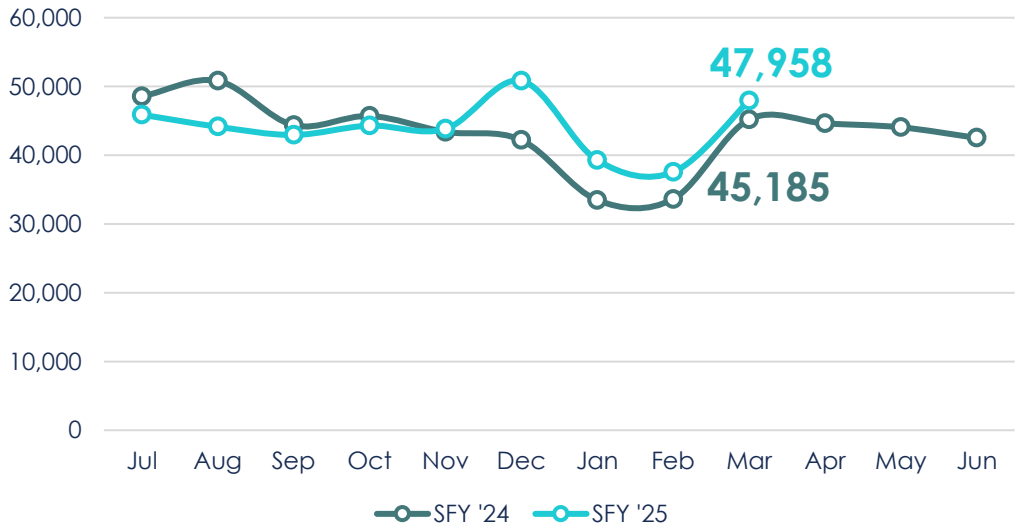
Route 46: Roanoke (+2.8%)



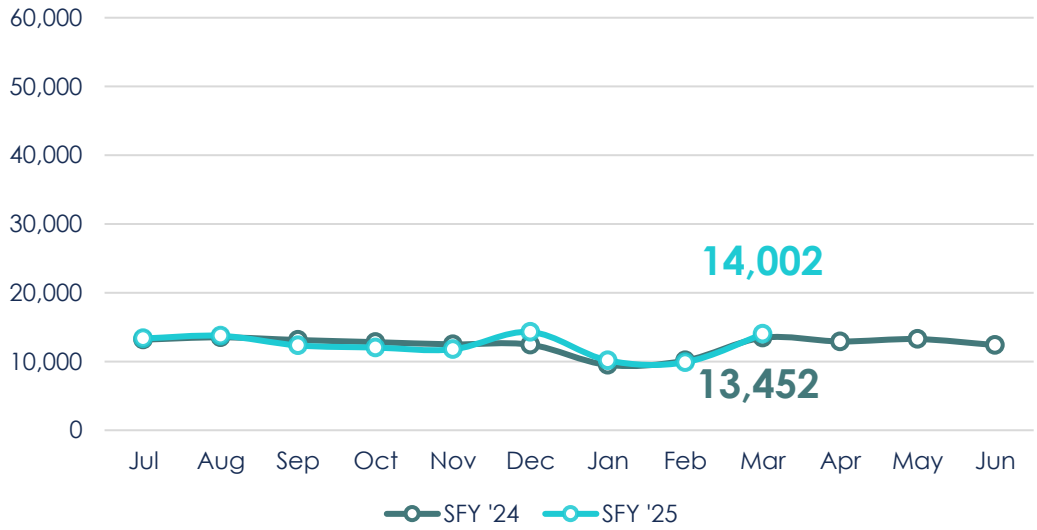
Route 47: Newport News (-3.4%)



Route 50: Norfolk (+6.1%)



Route 51: Richmond (+4.1%)



VPRA

Virginia & Comparable State-Supported Service Ridership

Normalized: Monthly Ridership ÷ Daily Trains

