



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **PRTC awarded \$3.6 million for new buses**

The Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) is pleased to announce that it has been selected by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to receive a \$3.6 million grant to purchase six new OmniRide commuter buses.

The grant award will enable PRTC to replace six older OmniRide commuter buses that have exceeded their useful life. OmniRide currently has a fleet of 125 commuter buses, nearly all of which are in active service on weekdays to help those in the Prince William region reach popular destinations in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Receiving grant funding to replace commuter buses “is especially important as Virginia is facing an upcoming reduction in transit dollars which will impact the Commonwealth’s ability to provide matching state funds for projects such as this one,” according to an endorsement letter sent to the FTA from Jennifer Mitchell, Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

“While PRTC does an excellent job of maintaining its rolling stock, DRPT understands that replacing vehicles while they are still in good condition is critical to maintaining a competitive edge,” Mitchell’s letter stated.

The new Motor Coach Industries (MCI) buses will be 45-foot vehicles that seat 57 passengers. The buses should be delivered and placed into service in late 2019. At that time, six of OmniRide’s 2003 model MCI buses will be taken out of service; some will be sold via auction and others will be placed into the contingency fleet, to be used in emergency situations.

“Having adequate funding to replace older buses will enable our riders to have a safe and more enjoyable commute, and that’s vital to our mission of improving overall mobility in the greater Prince William area,” said PRTC Executive Director Bob Schneider.

PRTC is one of three area public transit agencies to receive funding through the FTA’s competitive grant program, according to DRPT. Other area recipients are the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA), which will receive \$3.6 million to replace bus shelters, and Blacksburg Transit, which will receive \$1.4 million to add two articulated buses to its fleet.

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“The Commonwealth is encouraged by its participation in this competitive federal grant program as three of our transit operators have been awarded funds. These grants will allow the town of Blacksburg to accommodate its growing ridership and allow for PRTC to improve the state of good repair of its fleet. In addition, new bus shelters will positively add to the WMATA customer experience,” Mitchell said.

The FTA selected a total of 139 projects in 52 states and territories to receive approximately \$264 million in funding through its Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program. The grant program’s goal is to improve the safety and reliability of bus systems and enhance mobility for transit riders throughout the country. The Bus and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Program makes federal resources available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low- or no-emission vehicles or facilities.

“FTA is proud to help bring new and rehabilitated buses, facilities, and equipment to communities across the country,” said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams. “This marks a step forward in improving mobility for the millions of Americans who travel by bus to work, school, healthcare, and other services.”

### **About PRTC**

The Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), operating as OmniRide, provides commuter and local bus services as well as ridesharing services in Prince William County, the City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park. It also co-sponsors the Virginia Railway Express in partnership with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.