



August 2011

OmniNews

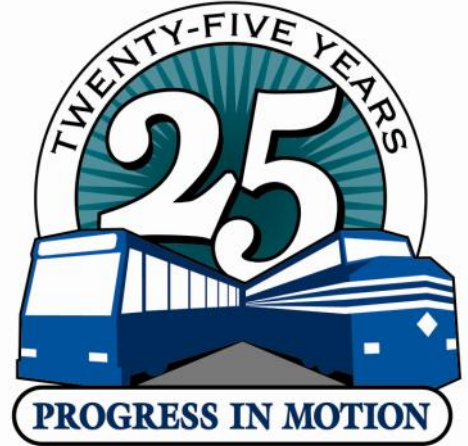
PRTC Plans 25th Anniversary Events

PRTC will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of its founding this fall with activities that will show appreciation for passengers, staff and the public officials who have played a vital role in our success through the years.

Plans for the passengers and general public include contests and give-aways incorporating PRTC's website and Facebook page. So if you haven't already "liked" us on Facebook, now would be a good time to do so!

Passengers should watch this fall for posters on the buses, newspaper ads, notices on PRTC's website and Rider Express messages for details about the public portion of the anniversary celebration.

This fall, PRTC also will host a dinner to acknowledge the public officials and other stakeholders who



have provided their support and encouragement through the years. During this invitation-only event, PRTC plans to reveal a new video highlighting the important role of public transportation in our community.

Finally, a separate event will be held to thank the dedicated staffs of PRTC and First Transit. ■

New Trips Relieve Some Overcrowding

Ten new OmniRide trips are being added in August to help relieve some of the chronic overcrowding on OmniRide buses.

Because the new service is limited to what can be done with the resources at hand, it is expected to alleviate some, but not all, overcrowding. New trips are being added based on where the most severe and persistent overcrowding

is present.

New trips added as of Aug. 8 are:

- Dale City—Navy Yard - one AM trip starting at PRTC
- Dale City—Pentagon - one AM trip starting at PRTC
- Montclair - one AM trip starting at the Dale City Commuter Lot
- Montclair - three PM trips

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Tysons Ridership Growing Steadily

OmniRide’s Tysons Express buses set a ridership record in June by carrying 3,421 passengers for the month, or an average of 156 passengers daily.

Despite the growing popularity of the Tysons service, there’s still room for growth! Passengers can relax or work during their commute on buses that feature free Wi-Fi.

Tysons Express buses serve two local stops on weekday mornings at the Woodbridge VRE Commuter Lot and the I-95/Route 123 Commuter Lot before traveling express to Tysons Corner. Once in Tysons, commuters have their choice of 16 bus stops including one near the West Park Transit Center where they can transfer for free to a Loudoun County Transit shuttle bus serving Eastern Tysons. PRTC offers four trips to Tysons in the mornings and five return trips in the afternoons/evenings.

Tysons Express ridership has been growing since the spring. In fact, an average daily ridership record was set in April, then surpassed in May, and eclipsed once again in June.

The Tysons Express services offered by PRTC and Loudoun County are entirely funded by Virginia Megaprojects, a partnership of VDOT and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. Megaprojects is funding the services to encourage commuters to consider alternative means of travel during construction of the I-95 HOT lanes and Dulles Metrorail. ■

New Trips Help Overcrowded Buses

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In addition, these new trips are planned:

- Manassas - one AM trip starting on Aug. 22;
- Dale City—Washington - three AM trips starting on Aug. 29.

Despite standing-room conditions on some trips—particularly during rush hours—PRTC has been unable to add service recently because all available buses were deployed during the afternoon rush hours. However PRTC took delivery in June of four new federally-funded buses that were intended to replace four retirement-age buses.

Rather than auctioning off the older buses as previously planned, PRTC will retain three of these buses in the active fleet to permit supplemental service in the afternoons. The fourth bus will be used to accelerate an ongoing mid-life OmniRide bus overhaul campaign, so that three buses can be overhauled at a time instead of just two.

Another recent obstacle to supplementing the level of service has been funding. This problem has eased somewhat because of three things:

- Scheduling efficiencies that PRTC’s Planning and Operations Department developed during the Spring Service Change that freed up some budgeted service hours;
- The use of higher-than-budgeted passenger fare revenues to self-finance some additional hours; and
- The use of some budgeted “contingency hours” that are part of each year’s budget for schedule adjustments that are periodically necessary to accommodate longer running times.

Collectively, these hours can be used to fund new trips without additional monies from Prince William County, which is the sole local government sponsor of PRTC’s commuter bus services.

New trips are listed in PRTC’s online schedules, but will not appear in printed schedules until the fall. ■

Commuter Lot Webpage Gets Update

The Commuter Lots page on PRTC's website has some great new features that new and occasional commuters will find very helpful.

The page now features a Google Maps-based image that allows the user to see a map view or satellite view of the lot along with the address and general information about where the lot is located.

Best of all, the Commuter Lots page now includes the number of total parking spaces at each lot along with a guideline for the approximate time that the lots fills up.


Do slug lines operate from the lot? If so, you can now click a link to Slug-Lines.com, the authoritative Northern Virginia slugging website.

You'll also know immediately if the lot has bicycle accommodations so you can ride your bike to catch the bus.

For each lot, there is a listing of which PRTC bus routes serve that location along with a direct link to the timetables for those routes.

Check out the updated page!

- Visit PRTCtransit.org
- Click on the Commuter Bus tab at the top of the page
- Click on the Commuter Lots tab.

Now, just select the commuter lot you're interested in. It's that simple! 

Outstanding Operators



First Transit, the contract provider for PRTC's bus services, chooses one outstanding operator each month for special recognition. If you have a compliment about your operator, please let us know.

Mohammed Shafiq — January and April 2011

Mr. Shafiq is such an outstanding operator that he was named Operator of the Month twice this year. Originally from Afghanistan, he has worked for First Transit for more than 22 years and has been part of the PRTC team for nearly 2 years. He strives to give passengers safe, reliable and quality service so they want to continue riding with PRTC. He currently operates two Lake Ridge OmniRide trips in the mornings and a Tysons Express trip in the afternoons. In his spare time, he enjoys camping and soccer.



Robert Ware — February 2011

A PRTC operator for nearly 2 years, Mr. Ware said that the thing he enjoys most about his job is the people he sees every day. The Alexandria resident currently operates a Lake Ridge OmniRide trip in the mornings and two Dale City OmniRide trip in the afternoons. Mr. Ware has five sons enjoys sports, particularly basketball, football, jogging, cycling, boxing and wrestling.




Majdi Mehyar — March 2011

Mr. Majdi recently celebrated his 5th anniversary of working at PRTC. A native of Jordan, he has lived in the area for 20 years and now calls Gainesville home. Mr. Mehyar currently operates trips on the Montclair OmniRide and Prince William Metro Direct routes in the mornings and a Lake Ridge OmniRide trip in the afternoons. Before joining First Transit, he worked as a chief cook for two decades. He enjoys playing soccer and swimming.



Patrice Brown — May 2011

Traveling throughout Manassas and interacting with passengers are the things that Ms. Brown most enjoys about being part of the First Transit - PRTC team. Originally from Washington, D.C., she has lived in Prince William County for the past 12 years and has worked at PRTC for 8 years. She currently operates Manassas OmniLink trips in the afternoons/evenings. When not at work, Ms. Brown enjoys reading, music, puzzles, quilting and scrapbooking. 





Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission

PRTC
14700 Potomac Mills Road
Woodbridge, VA 22192
Phone: 703-730-6664
Fax: 703-583-1377
Website: www.PRTCtransit.org

**Serving Prince William County,
Manassas and Manassas Park**

I Want to Know...

I'm familiar with OmniRide and OmniLink, but what is OmniMatch? — S.T. of Manassas

OmniMatch is a free, personalized ridematching service for carpoolers and vanpoolers.

OmniMatch links commuters who have similar work hours, origination and destination points. We partner with Commuter Connections, which has an extensive regional database of those interested in ridesharing, in order to provide you with the most potential matches.

We can obtain all the data nec-

essary to create your ridesharing matchlist in just one brief phone call to PRTC's Customer Service Office at 703-730-6664 or by completing our online Match Request form at PRTCtransit.org. From the homepage, just click the OmniMatch tab and the Match Request Form tab.

Carpools generally carry three people and operate on a share-the-ride, share-the-cost basis with members taking turns driving. Vanpools, which carry up to 15 people, are more formal operations with a primary and back-up driver.

There are OmniMatch carpools and vanpools originating from the Prince William and Manassas areas with destinations throughout Northern Virginia, the District and Maryland.

As an added incentive, PRTC provides funding for VanStart and VanSave programs which provide financial assistance to vanpools. Further information and eligibility requirements are available at PRTCtransit.org by clicking on the OmniMatch tab and the Commuter Programs tab.

