

Frequently Asked Questions



THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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These are the commonly asked questions about the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and the answers to those questions.

About the Authority (NVTA)

Q. *Who created the Authority and why was it created?*

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) was created by the General Assembly on July 1, 2002 to offer a common voice for Northern Virginia on transportation and other issues that confront the region.

Q. *What jurisdictions make up the Authority?*

The Authority is made up of nine jurisdictions including: the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William; as well as the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Q. *What is the difference between the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance?*

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority was created by the General Assembly in 2002 to coordinate Northern Virginia's transportation resources and has been given the authority by the General Assembly to establish taxes and fees to pay for transportation. The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance is a private organization of citizens and businesses that advocates for transportation and is completely separate from the Authority.

More About the Authority (NVTa)

Q. *Is the Authority a new organization or is it part of The Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) or The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)?*

The Authority was created as a separate entity in 2002 and is a completely separate organization from both NVRC and NVTC. However, the Authority will work closely with all regional transportation partners, jurisdictions and stakeholders to improve transportation funding in the region.

Taxes and Fees

Q. *What are the proposed taxes and fees and their approximate annual yields?*

Grantors Tax	\$.40/\$100 sales price	\$171 million
Motor Vehicle Rental Tax	2%	\$9 million
Transient Occupancy Tax	2%	\$25.3 million
Safety Inspection Fee	\$10	\$16.2 million
Initial Vehicle Registration Fee	1%	\$64.6 million
Sales Tax on Auto Repairs	5%	\$33.2 million
<u>Regional Registration Fee</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$17 million</u>
Total		\$326.3 million annually

Q. *How do the Authority representatives vote? How many votes does it take to approve the fees and projects?*

Approval of the new taxes and fees requires a two step process: **quorum** and **voting**.

Step #1— A **quorum** is required to conduct business at any Authority meeting. A quorum is established using two tests: 1) a simple majority (9) of the 16 Authority members (comprised of 9 jurisdiction representatives, 3 General Assembly representatives, 2 Gubernatorial appointees and 2 non-voting members, one from the Virginia Department of Transportation and the other from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation); and 2) a simple majority (5) of the 9 local government members of the Authority.

Step #2— For **voting**, approval of actions by the Authority requires that three tests be met: 1) 2/3 of the voting members present (i.e. 10 of 14, IF all voting members are present); AND 2) 2/3 of the local government members are present (i.e. 6 of 9 IF all jurisdictions are represented); AND

Q. *How do the Authority representatives vote? How many votes does it take to approve the fees and projects? (continued)*

3) the local government members voting in favor MUST represent 2/3 of the population of jurisdictions embraced by the Authority as of 2005. If the conditions of quorum and voting are met and the Authority adopts any of the taxes or fees, then the fees will be imposed in all nine jurisdictions, as authorized by the General Assembly in the Transportation Finance Act (HB3202) of 2007. However, the Authority can't force any specific project on a jurisdiction if that jurisdiction doesn't want that project implemented.

Q. *When were the taxes approved?*

The taxes and fees were approved following a public hearing on July 12, 2007.

Q. *When will the new taxes go into effect?*

With the exception of the Vehicle Registration Fee, Taxes and fees will be collected 60 days after they are approved by the Authority. If the taxes and fees are approved, **area residents will most likely see the new taxes take effect on or around January 1, 2008.**

Transportation Projects

Q. *Who decides what projects are started first?*

The Authority, with recommendations from the Jurisdictional and Agency Coordinating Committee (JACC), and other advisory committees. The JACC which is made up of staff and representatives from all nine Authority jurisdictions as well as regional transportation agencies, has proposed an initial project list totaling \$102 million dollars for a balance of transit, multi-modal and roadway projects. The initial project priority list will be voted on by the Authority if it votes to approve the proposed taxes and fees. After initial project list approval, then the JACC will develop a proposed standard project criteria no later than November, 2007 to help guide the Authority in the future selection of projects. This criteria will mirror the current criteria as previously approved in the adopted TransAction 2030 plan.

Q. *When will construction begin on transportation projects?*

It will be several months before the construction of projects actually begins. The Authority received recommendations from its five implementation working groups on June 6, 2007 and a public hearing is scheduled for July 12 to hear public comments on the proposed taxes and fees. If these are approved then the Authority will issue an initial bond of approximately \$102 million to fund the initial project list. Following the legal process, some projects could start moving forward in Spring, 2008.

Q. *How can I learn more about the Authority and decisions regarding transportation funding?*

Please visit the Authority web site at: www.TheNoVaAuthority.org or e-mail the Authority at: TheAuthority@TheNoVaAuthority.org.