



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County

Program Title: Route 234 Mobility Program

Program Category: Transportation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Christopher J. Shorter

Title: County Executive

Signature:

Virginia Association of Counties 2025 Achievement Awards Submission
Prince William County
Route 234 Corridor Mobility Program

Executive Summary

Route 234 in Prince William, Virginia is the most powerful corridor in the County and vital to local, regional and state mobility, land use and economic development. It creates the only connection between Interstates 95 and 66 outside the beltway and serves four Activity Centers, George Mason University (GMU), Innovation Park research center and entertainment complex, three commuter rail stations, a regional airport, seven commuter lots with bus and ridesharing, Quantico Marine Corps Base, a 13,000 acre National Park, eight schools, and a wide variety of industrial, residential, commercial and civic land uses. These demands create extensive and wide-ranging needs.

The County began the Route 234 Mobility Program in 2018 as an alternative to the previous, narrow-scope, auto-centric improvement approach by creating a coordinated, comprehensive program using innovative design, funding, and delivery methods to bring \$400 million in multimodal solutions that support broader economic development, land-use and transportation goals and have demonstrated State, regional and local benefits.

Need and Context

Route 234, designated a Corridor of Statewide Significance by Virginia, had daily traffic volumes exceeding 50,000 vehicles in 2023 and a history of congestion and failing levels of service well-documented through decades of planning studies. The Corridor serves as a vital connection for interstate commerce, as well as State, regional and local traffic, which made addressing congestion essential to both mobility and quality of life.

The corridor provides multimodal access to the Manassas Regional Airport and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Broad Run and Manassas, and future Potomac Shores, rail stations (which have active capital and service expansion plans) and multiple commuter lots with OmniRide bus services.



Activity Centers are designated by the National Capital Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as locations targeted to accommodate 75 percent of the Washington D.C. region's substantial population and employment growth and the corridor provides access to and connectivity between multiple activity centers. This includes the Innovation Activity Center, home to Innovation Park, 1,500 acre research park for targeted industries, GMU Science and Technology campus, the largest entertainment complex in the County, and an upcoming Town Center. This center is guided by a Small Area Plan to strategically direct and support growth through high-density mixed-use development that relies heavily on a high performing transportation network.

Safety is also a key need driving the program. The Corridor experienced over 350 crashes annually prior to program implementation. Many of the accidents were concentrated near critical intersections, due to high volumes, closely spaced intersections and limited access management. This highlighted the need for targeted safety improvements to protect motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The County recognized these existing needs and, with the MPO forecasting 10 percent of the region's forecasted 1.4 million population growth by 2045 being in Prince William and large portions of the region's workforce returning on-site, the need became clear that future substantial mobility improvements were needed on Route 234.

Program Implementation

The first initiative under the Program was a Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) Intersection Alternatives Analysis, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) that brought a wide range of stakeholders together early in the process

to identify preferred alternatives at six intersections covering approximately 7 miles, that work holistically and leverage resources to maximize benefits to the corridor.

This resulted in five projects with a high benefit to cost and strong support, which the program advanced with innovative programming of funds and alternative delivery methods through a coordinated and aggressive implementation of the Program. Six years after the study, three of the five projects are complete and two are active.

Balls Ford Road Interchange (Completed 2023) – Implemented an innovative Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) using external funding and alternative Design-Build delivery method.

University Boulevard Intersection (Completed 2024) – Implemented innovative quadrant roadway intersection design and additional improvements at Innovation Park using external funding.

Brensville Road Interchange (Completed 2024) – Implemented grade separated interchange and additional improvements using external funds delivered through a Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA) Design-Build contract using surplus funds from the cost efficiencies and expanded scope based on public feedback to construct the first roadway pedestrian bridge in the County.

Sudley Manor Drive/Wellington Road Interchange (Fully Funded, Active) – Program advanced design for this intersection through a state Performance-Based Pilot study to further maximize benefits and reduce costs and secured external funding to accelerate to 2025.

Clover Hill Road Interchange (Partially Funded, Active) – Program utilized local funds to reanalyze and redesign this intersection to better serve the airport expansion project and advancing design on an innovative DDI.

Full information on these projects can be found on the PWC DOT [website](#).

With projects from the initial study underway, the Program began expanding in 2020 to include the following:

Transportation Demand Management Program (Complete) – Implemented County’s first Transportation Demand Management [website](#) and marketing program promoting carpool and transit use.

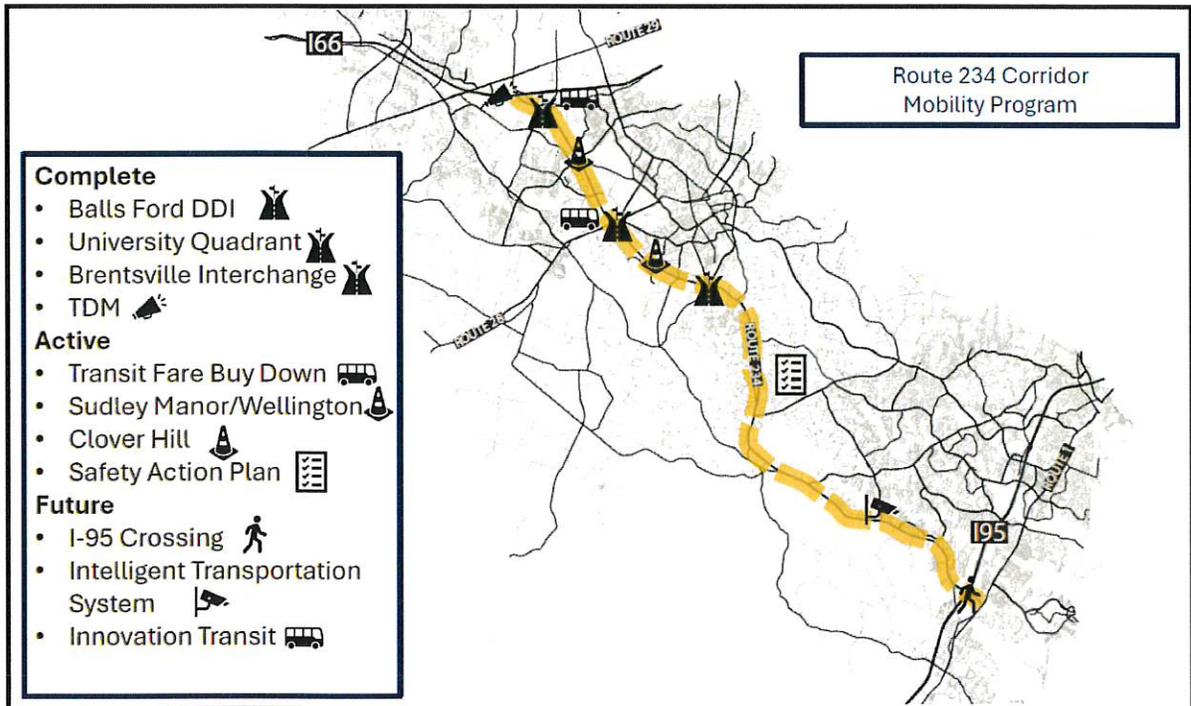
Transit Fare Buy Down Program (Fully Funded, Active)- Implemented program to reduce fares by 50% on OmniRide routes in the corridor.

Safety Action Plan (Complete)- Developed a [SS4A](#) safety plan that identified safety projects for corridor.

Route 234 Pedestrian Facility over I-95 (Fully Funded, Future)- Secured [external funding](#) to construct a sidewalk on Route 234 crossing Interstate 95.

Route 234 Operational Improvements (Fully Funded, Future) – Secured [external funding](#) to implement Intelligent Transportation System improvements along the corridor.

Innovation Park Transit (Partial Funding, Future) – Conducted planning study and developed microtransit service plan for Innovation Park.



Cost and Funding

Direct costs of the Program activities total \$390,120,100 and are 98 percent supported by external funds secured through competitive grant processes, leveraging just \$7.7 million in local funds.

Program Activity	Cost	Funding Source
234-Balls Ford Road Interchange	\$115,000,000	I-66 Outside the Beltway Concessionaire Funds
234-University Boulevard	\$29,700,000	NVTA (\$24.2M) Local (\$5.5M)
234-Brentsville	\$55,000,000	NVTA (\$54.9M) Proffers (\$68K)
234-Sudley Manor	\$115,000,000	NVTA
234-Clover Hill	\$50,000,000	Local (\$2M) \$48M unfunded
TDM	\$200,000	NVTC
Transit Fare Buy Down	\$1,650,000	NVTC

Safety Action Plan	\$1,012,000	Federal (\$992K) Local (\$200K)
Route 234 I-95 Crossing	\$12,000,000	NVTA
Route 234 Operational Improvements	\$10,000,000	NVTA
Innovation Park Transit	\$558,100	TPB (\$60K) \$498.1K unfunded

Staff work on the Program’s capital projects are cost-recovered and included in the project totals above. Two staff are responsible for the Program’s grant applications, funding agreements and programming. The Program’s planning tasks are supported by multiple staff but could be replicated with one dedicated Principal Planner position.

Principal Planner (2)	\$200,000
Grants and Research Analyst	\$83,500
Annual Costs	\$283,500

**Please note, this does not include employee benefit expenses to the County.*

The total cost for the Program implementation and six years (2018-2024) administration is \$391,821,100. The cost to the County has been \$9,401,000.

Results and Impact

The return on investment is substantial and provided multimodality, land use and economic development benefits that serve as pillars for growth and quality of life.

The multimodal focus of the program and use of innovative designs have improved mobility and safety for all. Elimination of two traffic signals, grade separation of roadways and additional enhancements are improving traffic flow and providing travel time savings for residents, particularly commuters traveling during peak periods. New sidewalks and trails are creating

pedestrian-bicycle connectivity, encouraging healthier transportation options and enhancing the non-motorized network. Transit ridership has increased on services promoted through the Program's TDM initiative; particularly on OmniRide's western commuter bus routes also supported by the Transit Fare Buy Down Program. Proven crash modification factors are improving safety at high-volume intersections by eliminating conflicting movements as demonstrated by Crash analysis data. New or enhanced sidewalks, trails, crosswalks, ADA ramps and grade separated crossings are improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

These mobility improvements are facilitating and accelerating land use and economic development plans and creating an environment for them to thrive. The Program began implementation at the western end of the corridor near Innovation Park and data from the County Economic Development Department shows tremendous investment in this area since 2018 with \$7.6 million invested creating 1319 new jobs and retaining 871 existing jobs. The mobility improvements in the area were also key to the approval and implementation of the 132-acre Innovation Town Center, a land use development with nearly 3,000 homes and over 2 million square feet of office and retail that is a cornerstone of the County's Small Area Plan.

There are 15 active land use applications on the Corridor filed in the last three years that are rezoning over 220 acres of land to higher-density, mixed-use development, demonstrating the role of transportation in supporting growth and creating more opportunities to live, work and play along the Corridor and in the County. I-95 and I-66 are economic lifelines for the County, state and nation. The Program's role in improving access to, from and between the interstates directly supports economic development.

The use of innovative designs, procurement and delivery methods resulted in significant time and cost savings for the County, with the Balls Ford Road Interchange alone completed 206 days ahead of schedule and \$28 million under the initial allocated budget. Effective use of resources has enhanced project scopes, maximized investment impacts and enabled sustainable growth.

Innovation

The Program is award-worthy for its use of innovation in all aspects of multimodal project delivery to successfully navigate the complexities of the corridor to plan and coordinate nearly \$400 million in activities along the corridor, with over \$200 million implemented within the first six years to improve mobility, safety, connectivity, economic development and quality of life.

The Program utilizes innovative planning studies and proactive coordination with state and federal agencies, the public, property owners and other stakeholders to ensure that projects are viable, receive timely support and are not impacted by changes in external policies, plans and projects. This planning and coordination were critical to the Balls Ford, University and Brentsville improvements all being completed within 18-months of each other to accelerate benefits and reduce “construction fatigue” on the corridor from a phased approach, while maintaining traffic operations at acceptable levels along the seven-mile segment between projects during construction, and meeting all environmental approvals on a roadway that requires NEPA documents for projects on the corridor regardless of federal funding.

The Program also strategically pursued and programmed funding to keep these projects moving in alignment by securing grant funding and programming funds to align fiscal year budgets

with project schedules, close funding gaps, or expand scopes to better meet the needs of the community. By strategically applying to funding sources based on alignment between project and program criteria, the Program leveraged limited staff and local resources to secure external funding for 98 percent of the \$342 million budgeted to the Program to date.

Last, but certainly not least, capital projects in the Program used innovative intersection designs and alternative procurement and delivery methods such as Design-Build to realize better transportation solutions faster and more cost-effectively.

Conclusion

The Route 234 Mobility Program in Prince William County is transforming a vital transportation corridor into a multimodal, future-ready network. As the only direct link between Interstates 95 and 66 outside the Capital Beltway, Route 234 is essential for mobility, economic growth, and quality of life. Since 2018, the Program has shifted from outdated, car-centric planning to focus on multimodal access, innovative design, strategic funding, and efficient project delivery. Key projects—including the Diverging Diamond Interchange at Balls Ford Road, the University Boulevard quadrant intersection, and the Brentsville Road grade-separated interchange—enhance traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and connectivity. With over \$390 million in direct costs, 98% of funding secured through competitive grants, and strategic planning enabling \$200 million in improvements within six years, the Program exemplifies efficient infrastructure development. Multimodal upgrades—such as removing traffic signals, adding grade separations, sidewalks, trails, and ADA ramps—are improving safety, reducing delays, and encouraging non-motorized transportation.

These enhancements have spurred \$7.6 million in economic activity, created over 1,300 jobs, and set the stage for the 132-acre Innovation Town Center, featuring nearly 3,000 homes and 2 million square feet of commercial space. The Program is also accelerating land-use changes, with 15 rezoning applications filed in the past three years to support higher-density, mixed-use development, reinforcing transportation's role in attracting investment and compact growth. Excelling in project coordination and environmental stewardship, the Program engages agencies, stakeholders, and the public to navigate NEPA processes, maintain traffic flow, and minimize disruptions. This approach enabled three major capital projects to be completed within 18 months. By aligning funding with grant timelines and budgets, it has maximized resources, ensuring sustainable, adaptable development.

The Route 234 Mobility Program is a model of innovation, leadership, and strategic investment, driving multimodal transportation planning, economic growth, and sustainable infrastructure.