There are so many reasons families love living at Potomac Shores. Our resort-style destination boasts 2,000 rolling acres. Two miles of shoreline. Ten miles of trails. Jack Nicklaus Signature golf. A private social and rec center—officially underway. A planned town center. An upcoming VRE stop. Well-appointed Tidewater homes. And a prime location only 30 miles from DC. Come feel the love and count the ways.

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Reason #11

A shoreline of river adventure.

There are so many reasons families love living at Potomac Shores. Our resort-style destination boasts 2,000 rolling acres. Two miles of shoreline. Ten miles of trails. Jack Nicklaus Signature golf. A private social and rec center—officially underway. A planned town center. An upcoming VRE stop. Well-appointed Tidewater homes. And a prime location only 30 miles from DC. Come feel the love and count the ways.
IMPROVING VRE

VRE continues to advance our system to provide safe, reliable and expanded service, and I want you to be aware of several major projects we are working on to improve your experience on VRE.

SPOTSYLVANIA STATION AND THIRD TRACK

Work continues on the Spotsylvania Station. Concrete for the platform is now in place, and construction of both the station and the parking lot is scheduled for completion soon. Additionally, we are adding a third track from Hamilton to Crossroads to serve the new station.

POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL

VRE and our host railroads are working to implement Positive Train Control (PTC), a set of highly advanced technologies designed to automatically stop a train before certain types of accidents occur. VRE anticipates installing on-board computers and radio equipment on our locomotives and cab cars by the end of the year. Other elements of the PTC system are being installed by our host railroads. Testing and certification of the PTC system will begin when these are in place. Currently, this is expected to be done in 2016. The deadline for PTC is Dec. 31, 2015. We are working with the Virginia Congressional delegation to seek an extension to this deadline. Passenger safety is our top priority and we are committed to implementing this system as soon as possible.

MIDDAY STORAGE

To create more midday storage, we are adding a storage track immediately north of the L’Enfant Station. CSX Transportation is installing the necessary changes to track, turnouts and signals, while VRE will install wayside power appliances on the storage track to permit heating and cooling of trains during layover without running the locomotive.

ALEXANDRIA PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL

A new pedestrian tunnel at Alexandria Union Station will be constructed parallel to the original tunnel built in 1906, which will be removed from service and sealed. The new tunnel will be wider and longer and will connect directly to Metro’s King Street station. The new tunnel will eliminate an at-grade crossing used by passengers between the station’s east and west platforms. The project will also widen the existing east platform, allowing VRE and Amtrak trains to use Track #1—the farthest track from the station—which is currently used almost exclusively by freight trains.

LIFECYCLE MAINTENANCE

VRE is committed to maintaining VRE locomotives and passenger cars at the highest level of reliability throughout the lifecycle of the equipment. A new building at our Crossroads Maintenance and Storage Facility will be built to specifically perform lifecycle maintenance work. The equipment in the new facility will allow us to avoid sending equipment away from VRE for heavy maintenance, thereby saving time and money.

We thank you for riding, and we thank you for your support.
VRE celebrates Independence Day with the “Firecracker Special”

This year, VRE ran our “Firecracker Special” trains on both the Fredericksburg and Manassas Lines to Washington’s Union Station for Independence Day fireworks with more than 1,700 tickets sold. Here are photos of our riders and staff celebrating the holiday!

Prince William County Fair
August 14–August 22
Prince William County Fairgrounds
10624 Dumfries Rd., Manassas, VA
Attend the largest county fair in Virginia featuring interactive agricultural exhibits, home arts and crafts demonstrations, rides, live music and more. www.pwcfair.com

2nd Annual Capital Dragon Boat Regatta
Saturday, August 29
Southwest Waterfront, Washington, DC
The Capital Dragon Boat Regatta features premier racing in multiple race distances and provides an excellent dragon boating experience. www.capitaldragonboat.com

Lake Anne Jazz & Blues Festival
Saturday, September 5, 2–8 PM
Lake Anne Plaza’s Waterfront
1609 Washington Plaza, Reston, VA
This free, family-friendly festival showcases a variety of talented local emerging artists and national jazz performers. www.lakeanneplaza.com

Labor Day Capitol Concert
Sunday, September 6, 8 PM
Gates open at 3 PM
West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol
Celebrate the beginning of the performing arts season at this free, annual Labor Day concert produced by the Kennedy Center, featuring the National Symphony Orchestra performing patriotic classics and music that highlights the American landscape. www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/event/NPLAB

The Ferris wheel and some of the concession stands at the Prince William County Fair
THE RAILROAD WASN’T BUILT IN A DAY...MORE LIKE A WEEKEND

As VRE trains cleared the mainline and our passengers arrived home, ready to settle into Father’s Day weekend, CSX crews representing the track, engineering, signals, transportation and passenger operations departments descended on the tracks between the future Spotsylvania Station and Mine Rd. in Fredericksburg.

Their mission was to cut in the new station track with the mainline. This involved moving the existing tracks, installing new track, reconfiguring the signal system, and testing the new track and signal configuration—all while coordinating with a constant flow of important freight traffic needing to move through the work area.

Work this extensive would typically result in lengthy delays for VRE trains for an undetermined amount of time. However for this project, CSX employees dug in for the entire weekend, called in a flotilla of equipment and contractor support and worked in shifts around the clock to ensure that the work was completed before VRE service began for the Monday morning commute. And most importantly, they performed their work safely.

Our thanks go out to our dedicated partners at CSX for their commitment to provide safe, secure and reliable VRE service.

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Located in the heart of Historic Olde Town Manassas, just off Church St./Rt. 28, D.R. Horton presents, Prescott Court. This private enclave of just 33 Townhomes is located within close proximity to the VRE Station, Fine Cuisine, Historical Attractions and Cultural Events. Prescott Court features 3 Level, 3 Bedrooms with 2.5 Baths to 3.5 Baths, 1&2-Car Garages, Rec. Room, Gourmet Kitchens and more. Live, Work, and Play at Prescott Court!

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CKBaity@drrhorton.com | 8879 Cherry Street, Manassas, VA 20110
www.drrhorton.com/va | Hours: Sunday, 12-6pm, Monday, 1-6pm, Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm

Prices, included features, availability and delivery dates are subject to change without notice or obligation. Photos are representational only. Square footages and measurements are approximate. Furnishings not included. See sales associate for gourmet kitchen details. © D.R. Horton 2014 MHBR#535. Expires: 8/31/15.
2015 WORLD POLICE & FIRE GAMES

The 2015 World Police & Fire Games (WPFG) brought spirit and energy to Fairfax County and our region this summer that will fondly linger in the minds of our community for years to come.

Our local heroes represented their departments and families with honor, sportsmanship and valor. Notable medal results include gold for the Fairfax County Police Hockey team in the Men’s Novice Division (B Bracket) and gold for the Maryland Law team in the Men’s Novice Division (A Bracket) Hockey competition. Congratulations to all of our Washington Metropolitan local heroes and departments for participating in the Games.

Over the course of ten days there was never a dull moment, with several touching marriage proposals, nail biting down-to-the-finish-line competitions, personal records set and a dramatic drum performance at the Opening Ceremonies.

As a 2015 WPFG sponsor, Keolis sent employees Gregg Baxter, Richard Black and Gerald Smith—along with VRE team members including conductors Nate Foose, Kendall Harris and Christine Hughes—to support the activities of the games. Supporting public safety officials doesn’t end because the Games are over, so please join Keolis and VRE by always being a proud supporter of heroes everywhere.

VRE exercises option with Keolis

VRE has exercised an option to extend its contract with Keolis, allowing them to continue operating VRE trains for an additional five years.

The contract, which also includes providing maintenance for the trains, is valued at up to $21 million for the first year. Keolis has operated VRE trains since 2010, during which time customer service scores have risen sharply and on-time performance has shown continuous improvement. Under the terms of the contract, Keolis will be eligible for an additional extension of up to five years in 2020.

“Keolis assumed operations of the VRE five years ago with a strong focus on safety, operational excellence and providing an outstanding passenger experience, and they have more than delivered,” said VRE Chief Executive Officer Doug Allen. “Passengers often tell us how pleased they are with our service and that is due in large part to the work of the Keolis team.”

“Our commitment to the VRE was to provide passengers with an outstanding service and we are pleased that the board recognized our achievements by extending our contract,” said Gregg Baxter, President of Keolis Rail Services America. “Our strong relationship with the VRE was an important factor, and we look forward to being part of the ongoing success of the service as the VRE system continues to grow in the coming years.”
At VRE we take safety and security very seriously. From the parking lots and the garages to the platform and trains, you can stay safe by practicing these simple safety tips:

1. When boarding a VRE rail car, please familiarize yourself with the safety information and emergency procedures displayed on board.
2. Observe your surroundings and report suspicious activity.
3. Do not walk on train tracks or on ballast.
4. Never leave children unattended, and always hold your child’s hand when boarding or exiting a train.
5. At the station, stay behind the yellow bumpy tiles on the edge of the platforms.
6. In parking lots, watch for cars cutting across lanes and speeding through aisles. Take it slow and always use your turn signal.
7. Never leave valuables in plain view in your car—lock them in your trunk instead.
8. Have your keys out before you reach your car.
9. Keep your cell phone batteries charged, and consider having a portable quick reserve charger on hand.
10. Add an “In Case of Emergency” (ICE) contact as a cell phone contact.

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Can one of the nation’s newest, fastest-moving industries help to solve one of transportation’s oldest problems? At the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), we think the answer is yes. That is why we are proud that Google has agreed to partner with us to make rail crossings safer for drivers and their passengers.

Google has agreed to integrate FRA’s geographic information system data, which pinpoints the location of the nation’s approximately 250,000 public and private railroad crossings, into its mapping services. Adding railroad crossing data to smartphone mapping applications just makes sense—it means supplying drivers and passengers with additional cues that they are approaching a crossing. For drivers and passengers who are driving an unfamiliar route, traveling at night, or who lose situational awareness at any given moment, receiving an additional alert about an upcoming crossing could save lives.

We know that more and more drivers today use map applications on smartphones to guide them to their destinations. While mobile device maps and applications are trusted sources for directions and guidance, many of them do not notify drivers when they are approaching a rail crossing, or do not identify the rail crossing at all. When drivers are alerted or reminded that there is a rail crossing ahead, they may be more likely to remain alert, use greater caution, and obey the signal crossings.

From the very beginning of his tenure, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has pushed all of us to do more to integrate technology to raise the bar on safety across all modes of transportation. This partnership, which will allow us to do just that, is an important development. Secretary Foxx and I are incredibly grateful that Google has quickly agreed to work with us, and we are hopeful that other tech companies that develop map applications will join us too.

Last year, approximately 270 people died in highway-rail collisions that were largely preventable. This is the first time this decade in which that number has actually increased from the previous year. We can—and should—do everything possible to end vehicular-train incidents at rail crossings. With Google’s and other tech companies’ help, I’m confident that we can achieve this goal even faster.

Not long after I arrived at FRA, I promised a fresh look at how to prevent grade crossing accidents. The key so far has been in our partnerships—with local police, to increase enforcement actions; with Operation Lifesaver, to help educate people about the risks; and now, with Google, to help with driver awareness through smarter engineering.

At FRA, we’ll continue to build more of these dynamic partnerships—because we must do everything we can to reduce grade crossing accidents that far too often have tragic consequences.
SPOTLIGHT ON KEOLIS

MEET MIKE COVEL

Mike Covel is no stranger to the railroad. After working in the industry for more than 30 years, he believes that “Keolis and VRE are without a doubt, the best two companies that I have ever worked for in my career. The bond that the VRE and Keolis have created over the past five years has been a really great experience to watch.”

Mike began his career in Hornell, NY at Alstom (formerly Morrison-Knudsen) overseeing the manufacturing of rail cars for more than 20 years. With a significant amount of experience under his belt, he sought a better career and moved south to serve as a facility manager for VRE.

Although his initial job at VRE was temporary, Mike took such a strong liking to the work culture and team there that he soon accepted a full-time position. Mike has now been working at the VRE for more than five years, where a typical day for him consists of overseeing both the Crossroads and Broad Run maintenance facilities. He is responsible for managing the facility technicians at each of the VRE sites as well as conducting outreach to outside contractors. In order to meet and exceed his goals as a facility manager, Mike consistently ensures that all of the equipment is in pristine condition, and that any needed repair does not affect the mechanics of working trains.

“One of the most rewarding parts of my job is getting very little complaints as far as equipment being broken or the facilities not being clean,” said Mike.

“Keolis and VRE are without a doubt, the best two companies that I have ever worked for in my career. The bond that the VRE and Keolis have created over the past five years has been a really great experience to watch.”

In his free time, Mike loves to spend time with his wife, Sarah, and his four-year-old son, Brody. He also enjoys taking out his Harley Davidson and hitting the golf course.

Keolis is VRE’s contractor that maintains and operates VRE trains.

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Service Alert
In observance of Labor Day, VRE will not operate regularly scheduled service on Monday, September 7th. Normal service will resume Tuesday, September 8th.

COURTESY REMINDERS

WHEN RIDING ON THE VRE we ask that you make every effort to be courteous to your fellow passengers. Below are a two courtesy reminders:

- When using your cellphone, please make sure you keep phone conversations as brief and quiet as possible.
- Give people with disabilities, the elderly or women who are pregnant first access to elevators.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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BE ON THE SAFE SIDE

1. HOLD THE HANDRAILS
2. WEAR SENSIBLE SHOES
3. WATCH YOUR STEP
4. DON'T RUSH GETTING ON AND OFF THE TRAIN

VRE.ORG/SAFETY