



West Virginia Infrastructure Hub

Connecting the Mountain State with the IIJA, IRA and CHIPS

West Virginia Win: \$4.57 million awarded for the Potomac Highlands Hydrogen Fuel Initiative

The West Virginia Division of Public Transit, in partnership with the Potomac Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), was recently awarded \$4.57 million through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program. The funding will be used as a catalyst for the Potomac Highlands Hydrogen Fuel Initiative, planning for an eight-acre solar-powered, hydrogen fuel production center to be built in Grant County, WV.



PVTA BUS

“The project will be the basis for laying the groundwork for rural public transit systems across the nation.”

**DOUG PIXLER
GENERAL MANAGER OF PVTA**

Once planning and NEPA are complete, the project will be constructed in two phases: Phase I will include the construction of a photovoltaic array to provide the electricity for an electrolysis hydrogen production plant; and Phase II will include the development of facilities that will support the compression and storage of hydrogen on site and

its delivery to onsite stations for hydrogen fuel cell powered transit vehicles.

Through its research to identify sustainable and cleaner fuels, PVTA first explored electric vehicle options but came to the conclusion that this technology performs less well than hydrogen fuel vehicles in mountainous terrain and colder winter climates where PVTA provides service. With these limitations in mind, PVTA has chosen hydrogen fuel as the best clean energy source for the future sustainability of their fleet. The Hydrogen Fuel Plant will allow PVTA to transition their fleet from a carbon-based

system to a clean hydrogen fuel. In the future, PVTA hopes to also extend the hub to local government vehicles and use it as a source of revenue for the Authority.

Doug Pixler, General Manager of PVTA, hinted at the shifting energy preferences, saying, “The availability of new, green energy technologies is driving unprecedented change in the transportation system.” He continued and excitedly noted that “The project will be the basis for laying the groundwork for rural public transit systems across the nation.”



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This is a significant win for the State. The project affords West Virginia the opportunity to be on the front lines of researching and developing hydrogen fuels. In addition to all of the environmental benefits, this project provides the State with economic competitiveness and opportunity as well. The Hydrogen Production Plant is predicted to create high-quality paying jobs, and PVTA has already planned to collaborate with the local community college to provide training in the new technology's manufacture and use.

Bill Robinson, Executive Director of the West Virginia Division of Public Transit, highlighted West Virginia's legacy as a critical energy developer, saying, "The WVDOT Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities - Public Transit has determined that hydrogen as a fuel and the related technology is the way forward as a clean successor to petroleum powered vehicles.

WVDOT Secretary Wriston and Multimodal Commissioner Butler have provided valuable assistance to this effort, and we all agree that this project is part of an opportunity for West Virginia to continue its heritage as an energy pioneer and producer that leads the nation in new energy directions."

This win illustrates that West Virginia is resilient, adaptable, and the power of state and local partnerships to deliver opportunity.



SITE OF FUTURE PVTA HYDROGEN FUEL PLANT



FUTURE HYDROGEN PRODUCTION PLANT SITE VISIT WITH AECOM, PVTA, AND WVDOH