Customer Services, Operations, and Safety Committee

Board Information Item IV-B

June 25, 2009

NextBus

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Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

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⦿ Action ◯ Information	MEAD Number: 100395	Resolution: ◯ Yes ⦿ No

TITLE:

NextBus

PURPOSE:

To provide the Committee with an update on the status of NextBus and the rollout effective July 1, 2009.

DESCRIPTION:

Overview how NextBus works and will provide bus customers with real-time predictions when the next bus will arrive. The information will be available to Metro customers via: Website, Metro Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System and LED display signs at certain high volume bus terminals.

FUNDING IMPACT:

Metro Matters
NextBus (CE_NEXT & CE_BFAC)

	FY2005-FY10
Budget:	3,000,000
This Action:	0
Prior Actions:	2,600,000
Remaining Budget:	400,000
Remarks:	Information Only Item

RECOMMENDATION:

None

NEXTBUS

Presented to the Board of Directors:

Customer Service, Operations, and Safety Committee

June 25, 2009

NextBus Initial State

- On October 31, 2007, Metro paused the Bus Customer Information System known as Next Bus.

- The decision to pause the Next Bus program was based on Metro's internal pilot project that demonstrated low accuracy levels of the overall system and business processes.

- Metro publicly announced a commitment to fix the internal systems and processes so that NextBus service could be resumed.

NextBus Description

- NextBus is a service that provides bus customers with real-time predictions when the next bus will arrive. This information will be available to Metro customers via:
  - Website;
  - Metro Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system; and
  - 38 LED display signs at certain high volume bus terminals.

- Customers can use this tool to better time their arrivals at the bus stop.

How NextBus Works
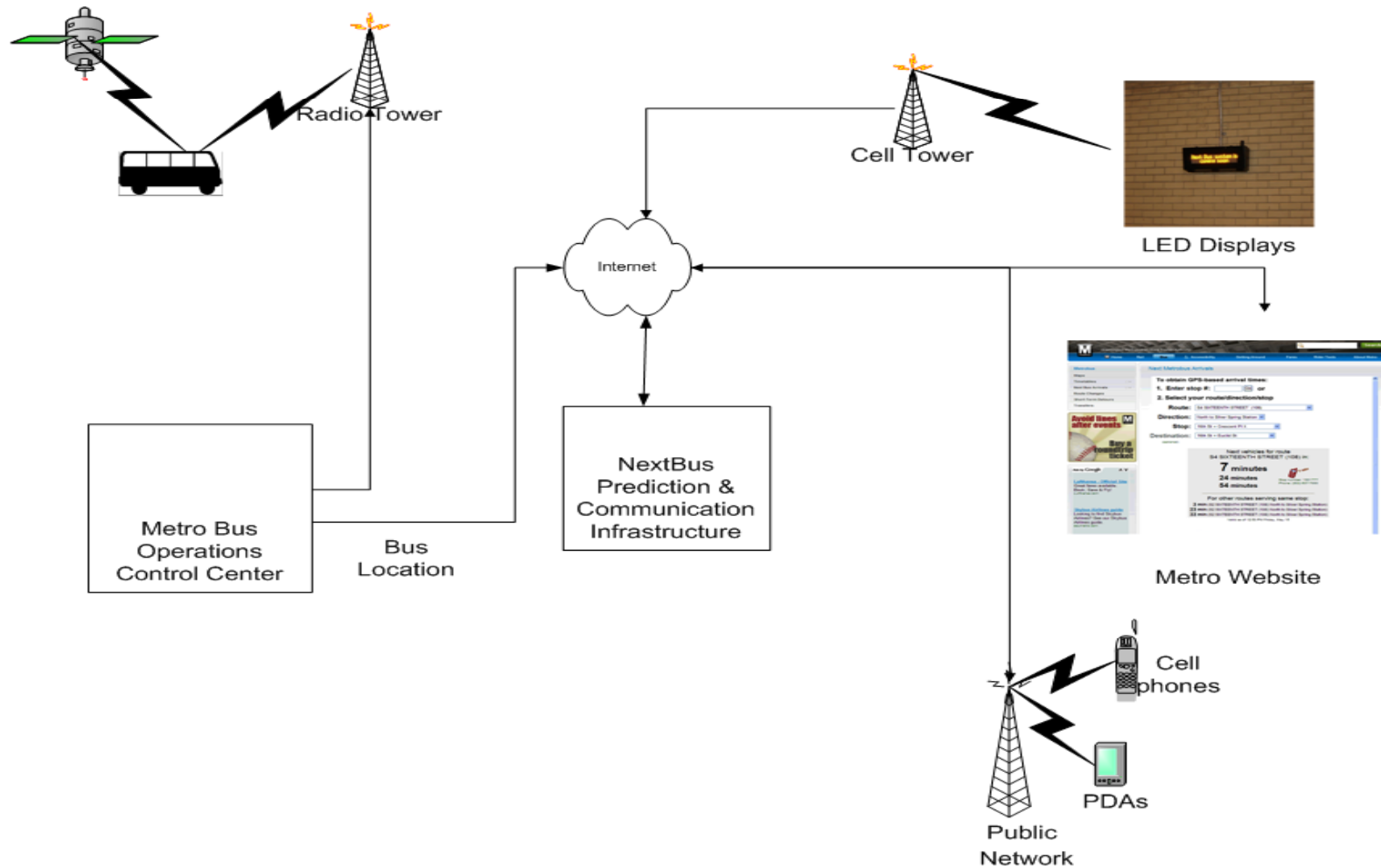
LED Signs and Speakers

As part of the Bus Customer Information System, Metro has deployed LED Signs that provide bus arrival predictions and text messages to customers.
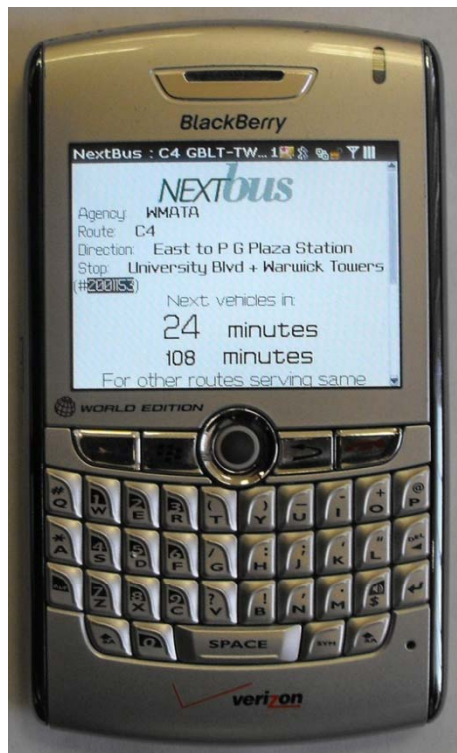

Most locations equipped with LED signs include audio speakers with integrated buttons for annunciating information to accommodate customers who are blind or have low vision.

WEB and PDA Access

A Metro website provides estimated arrival times to the public and includes companion sites to support access by web-enabled portable devices (cell phones, PDA's)

Actual arrival information is available on handheld internet devices by specifying the stop or location.

NextBus ID Sign

Every bus stop in the system will have a sign installed to communicate to our passengers their specific locations through a unique regional bus stop number.

Actions Since 2007 Pause

- Implemented a capable system for real-time managing of buses.

- Corrected route information and physically inventoried bus stops.

- Bus division infrastructure modernization substantially completed – fiber, firewalls, routers, PCs and centralized servers.

- Long-term plan developed to account for full rollout of bus support systems – fluid management, automated vehicle maintenance.

NextBus Rollout Activities

- Implementing communication plan in English and Spanish.

- User testing since May 2009 with the Rider Advisory Council (RAC) and Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).
  - Resulted in identifying anomalies in predictions

- Bus tools available for management of routes by Bus Operations Control Center (BOCC) and Divisions.

- July 1, 2009 rollout date.