



**Safety and Operations Committee**

**Board Information Item III-C**

**Wayfinding and Customer Service  
Improvement Update**

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

## Board Action/Information Summary

☐ Action ☒ Information

Document  
Number:  
205700

Resolution:  
☐ Yes ☒ No

### Presentation Name:

Customer Experience Updates

### Project Manager:

Sarah Meyer

### Project Department:

Sarah Meyer

### Purpose/Key Highlights:

To update the Board on two key improvement projects in Metro's Customer Experience Strategy: L'Enfant Plaza wayfinding pilot and digital signage and information. These projects help make Metro easier to navigate and provide more real-time information in more places for customers waiting. The projects part of this strategy aligns with our Strategic Transformation Plan goals of Service Excellence; Regional Opportunity and Partnership; and Sustainability.

### Interested Parties:

Jacobs, Entro, Order Design, HNTB, Luminator, ANC, Dell, Adobe, EY

### Background:

In September, a new customer journey map was introduced along with key initiatives supporting each step to improve Metro's customer experience and engagement. There are seven steps in this journey that we've already begun rethinking to demonstrate a stronger Metro. Two key steps are:

**Navigate.** One initiative presented was wayfinding improvements to help customers better understand and navigate Metro services and regional connections. Wayfinding is the use of signs, color, and other design elements to help customers navigate spaces. L'Enfant Plaza was chosen as a pilot location because of its complexity and customer insights showing us many customers

have trouble making navigation decisions here.

**Wait.** Modernization and expansion of Metro's digital screen network helps reduce anxiety by building confidence a train or bus is coming, in addition to sharing service disruption information. These improvements are geared toward reducing anxiety and eliminating barriers to riding our services.

### **Discussion:**

Metro has made notable progress to improve wayfinding at L'Enfant Plaza, while expanding its digital screen network and roll-out improved passenger information designs to customers. We have begun tying together brand, technology, navigation and insights to reduce fragmentation and anxiety customers feel when they are trying to "navigate" and "wait" for Metro and connecting services.

**L'Enfant Plaza Wayfinding Pilot.** Approximately 200 signs have been replaced throughout the station to help customers better navigate the complexity of the station layout and gain a better sense of place when trying to enter/exit the station; decide which platform they need; and board the correct train to their intended destination. In addition, we've introduced new design elements including better accessibility directions, cardinal travel directions, airport and regional connection indicators and common language. There is an increased number of system maps at the station, along with a new neighborhood map to provide directions to attractions, bus service and Capital Bikeshare at street level. The bulk of this design and production work was done with in-house teams to reduce the cost burden on outside, contracted support.

Customer Insights has conducted initial focus group research with 35 participants (including low-English proficiency + accessibility community members) performing two tasks - find the correct train to Navy Yard and exit to the Air & Space Museum. The results are positive: 100% of participants boarded the correct train to Navy Yard; 80% used the correct exit to the Air & Space Museum. Based on feedback from the 20% of participants who used the wrong exit, a sign change was made to better direct customers exiting the train to the correct exit.

**Digital Signage & Information.** In CY2023, approximately 240 passenger information screens were added to our network for both bus and rail customers. This includes a full build out of digital screens at Potomac Yard; new passenger information displays at all 3 transfer stations; removal of outdated phone booths replaced with digital screens at 3 rail stations; and screens at the additional entrances of 2 rail stations. Around the region, 140 screens were installed to bus stops/shelters. With new screens come new digital information designs. Many of our new rail screens have a more unified design, bringing consistency across the information Metro is displaying to customers.

### **Funding Impact:**

This presentation is informational and not a request for action or funding.

### **Previous Actions:**

These are previous enhancements Metro has made to information & technology to enhance the Customer Experience:

**September 2023:** installation of new, static signs began at L'Enfant Plaza for our Wayfinding Pilot Program; new digital screens in station mezzanine were installed at Bethesda

**November 2023:** new digital screens in station mezzanine were installed at Union Station & L'Enfant Plaza

**December 2023:** new entrance digital screen was installed at second Columbia Heights entrance; second of four entrance displays installed at Metro Center; 140 screens installed around the region for Metrobus customers

**January 2024:** 200 signs installed as part of L'Enfant Wayfinding Pilot, in addition to new neighborhood maps; customer research conducted on progress

### **Next Steps:**

#### **CY2024 Q1:**

- Expansion of wayfinding pilot elements to Gallery Place & Metro Center
- Integrated technology system pilot at L'Enfant Plaza
- 10 screens for real-time bus departure information at Minnesota Av
- New bus passenger information designs launch on digital screens

#### **CY2024 Q2:**

- Continued customer research of L'Enfant Wayfinding Pilot
- Expansion of Wayfinding Pilot to a second station, Rosslyn
- Refined Metrobus data released to screens

#### **CY2024 Q3:**

- Continued customer research of Wayfinding Pilot stations
- Broader rollout of integrated technology system; customer alerts messaging pilot

#### **CY2024 Q4:**

- 150 screens for Metrobus customers around the region
- 15 stations upgraded with new digital screen at station entrance
- Rollout of integrated technology system for passenger information

**Recommendation:**

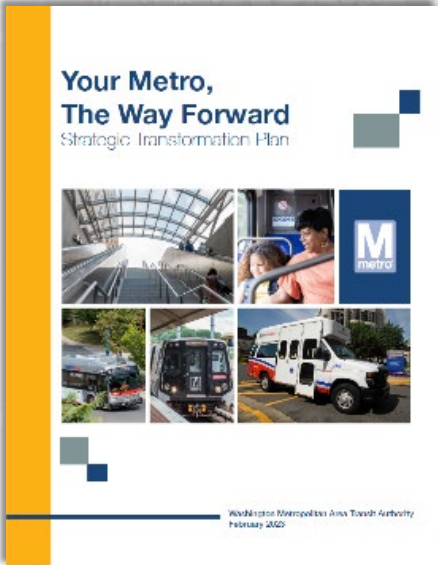
Information Only

# Customer Experience Updates

February 2024



# Strategic Transformation Plan: Guides long term strategy and day-to-day decision making of Metro over the next five + years



Guiding



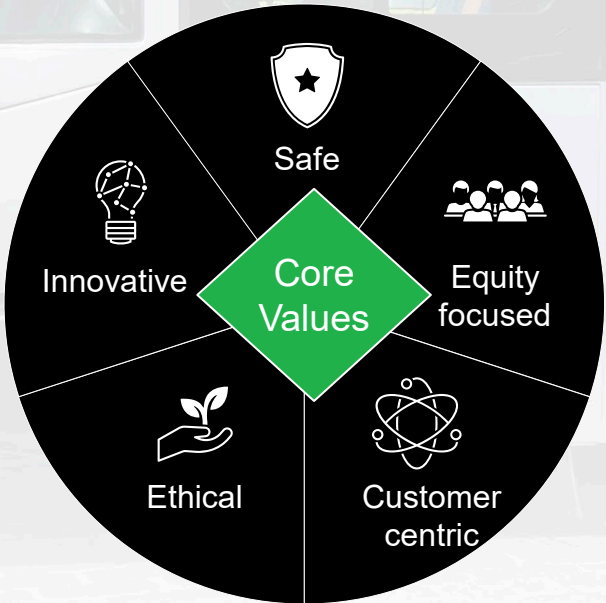
### Day-to-day decisions

- Customer interactions
- Service schedules
- Communications



### Long-term strategy

- Budget allocation
- Capital improvements
- Priority projects



## Goals — Our priorities to achieve the vision

Service Excellence

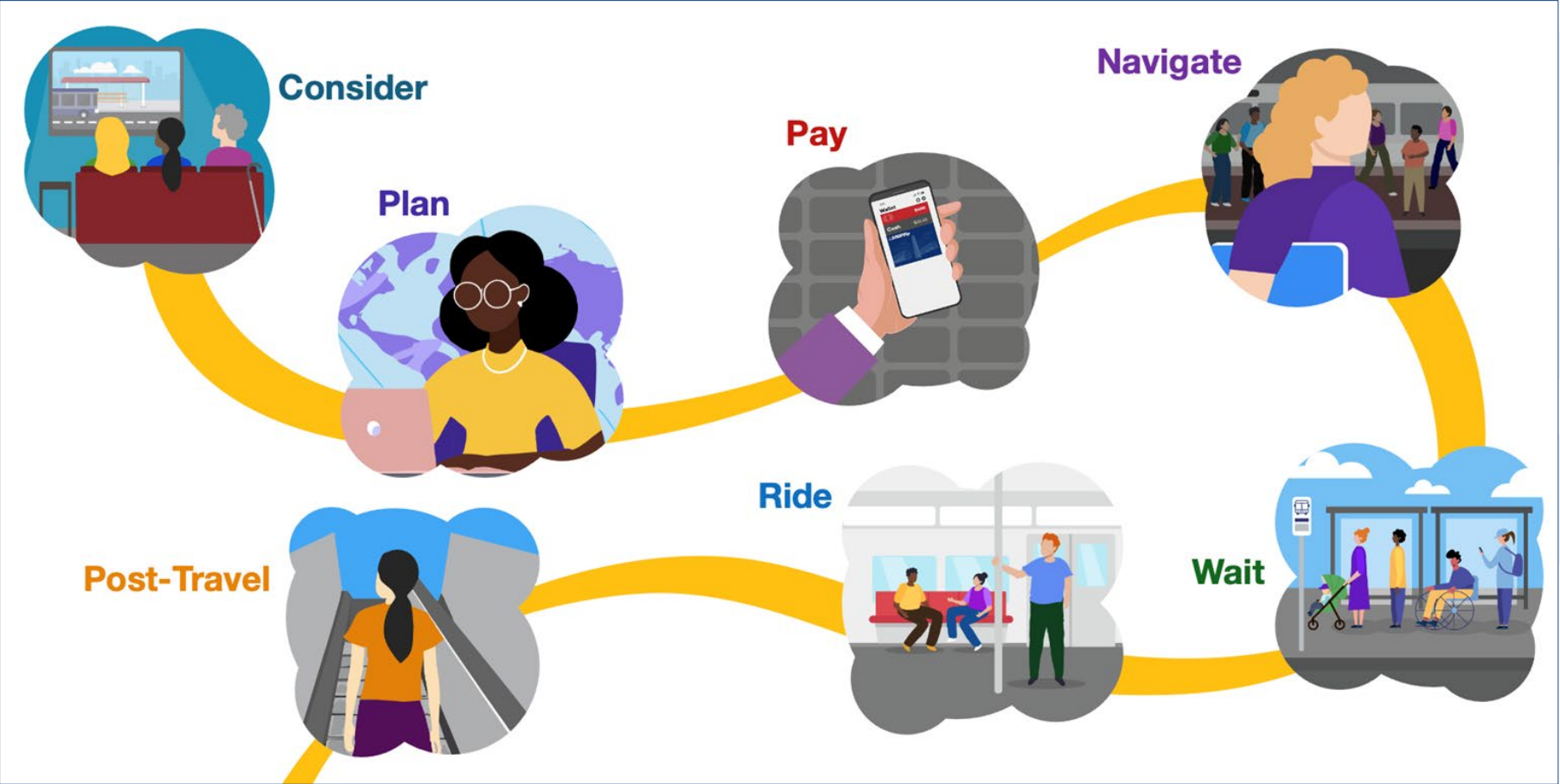
Talented Teams

Regional Opportunity and Partnership

Sustainability



# The Customer Journey





# Improving Navigation & Waiting

## Navigate:

Responding to customer-identified pain points with L'Enfant Plaza Wayfinding Pilot

## Wait:

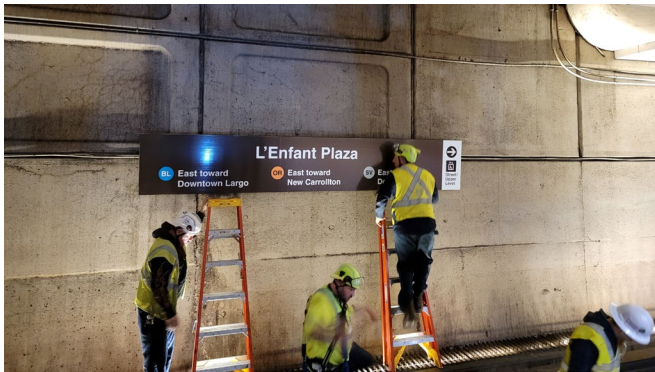
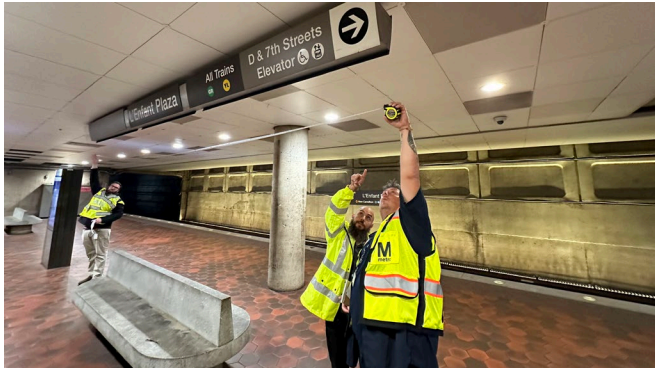
Knowing when a train or bus is coming easier with redesigned passenger information + real-time digital screens systemwide



# L'Enfant Plaza Wayfinding Pilot



# Pilot Progress



## L'Enfant Plaza Station Pilot Signage Installation

**September 2023**  
3 signs • 2% complete

**January 2024**  
200 signs • 100% complete





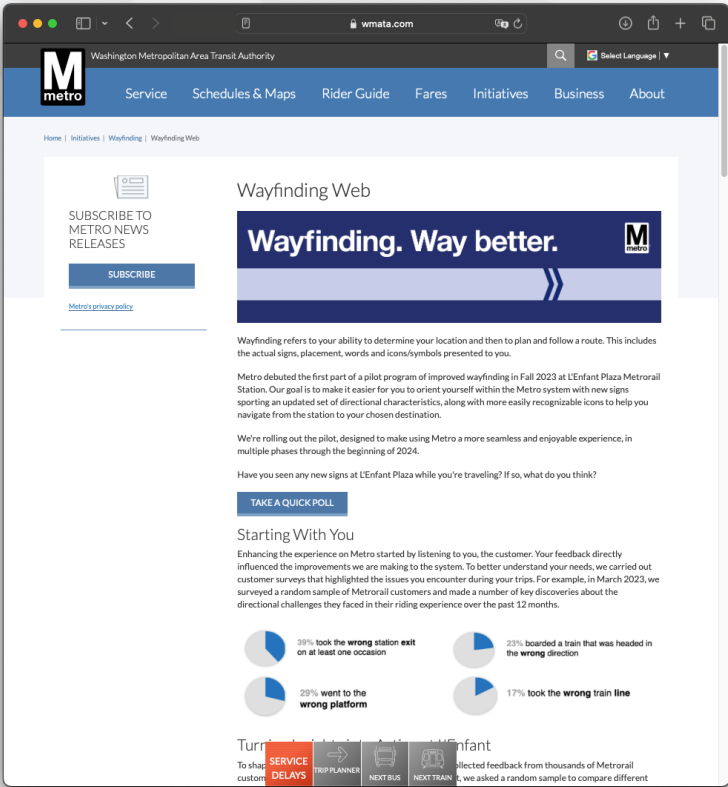
# A Customer-Centric Approach

Customer research & feedback



Design & development

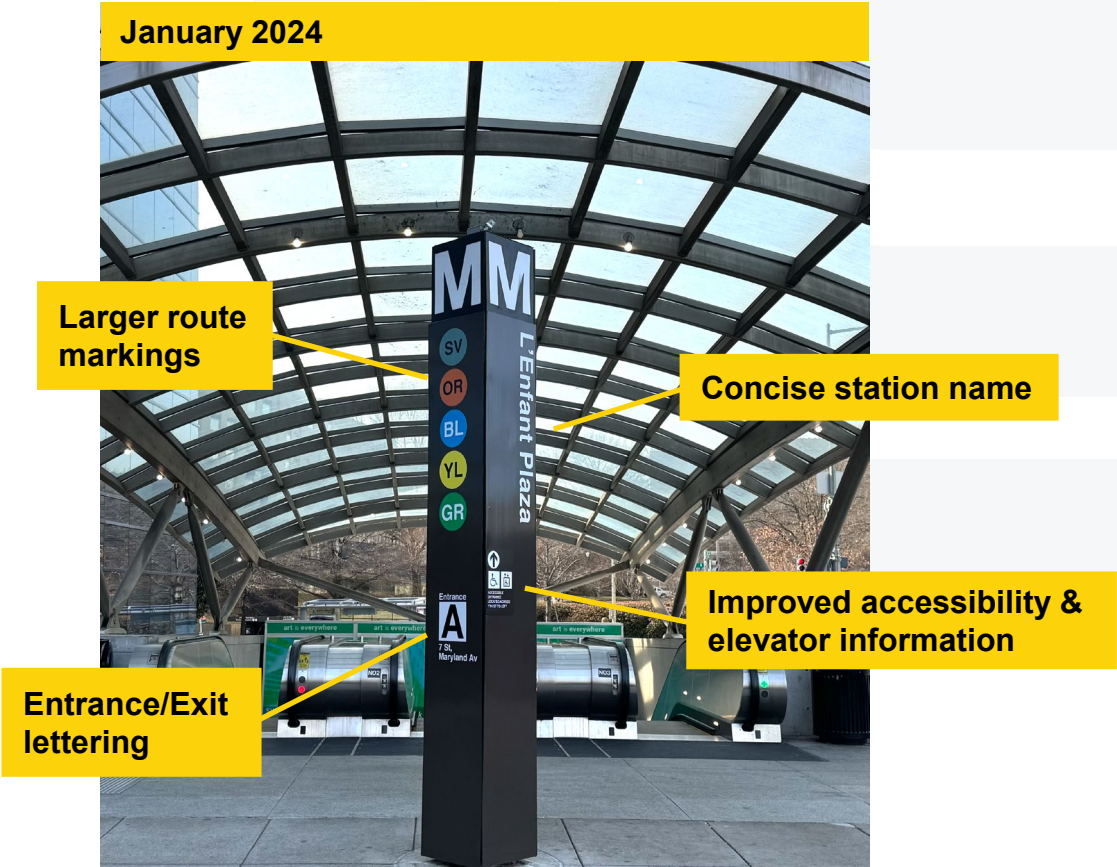
Installation & deployment



[wmata.com/wayfinding](https://wmata.com/wayfinding)



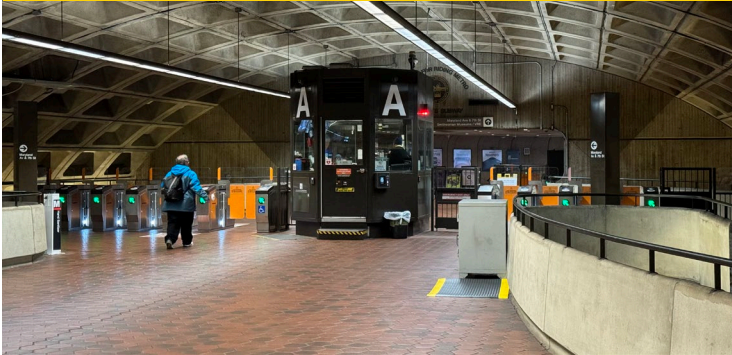
# Pilot Signage: Entrances





# Pilot Signage: Exits

January 2024, 7 St & Maryland Av Exit



January 2024, 6 St & D St Exit

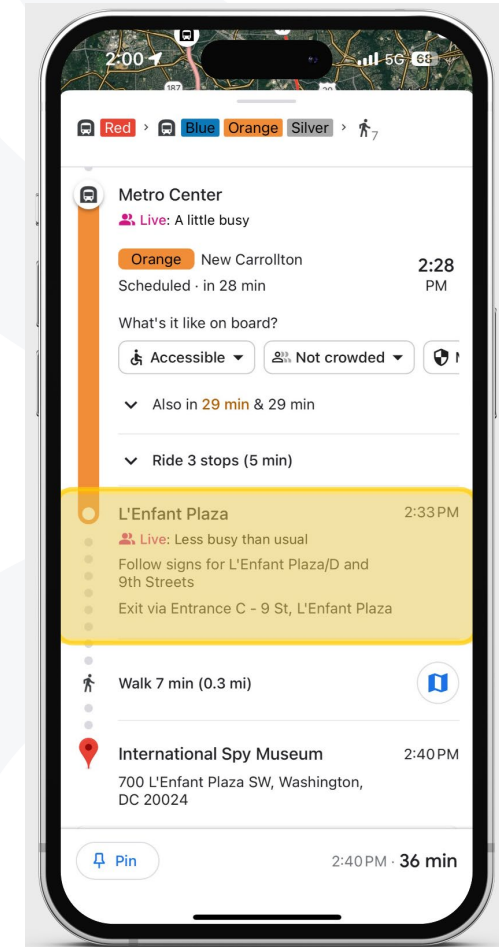
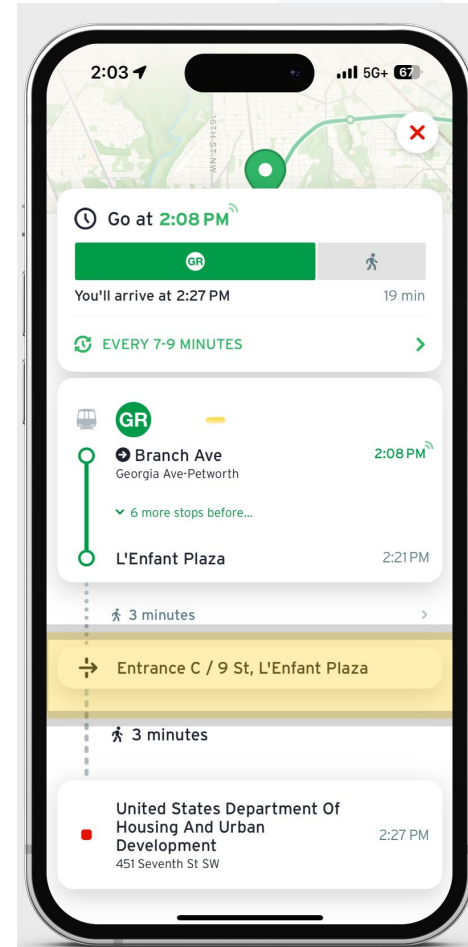


January 2024, 9 St & D St Exit



# Entrance/Exit Lettering

- L'Enfant Plaza entrance/exit also in our open transit data feed
- Popular trip planning apps like Google Maps & Transit have added lettering
- Enhancing the navigation experience even before using the Metro system





# Pilot Signage: Platforms



Improved elevator & transfer information

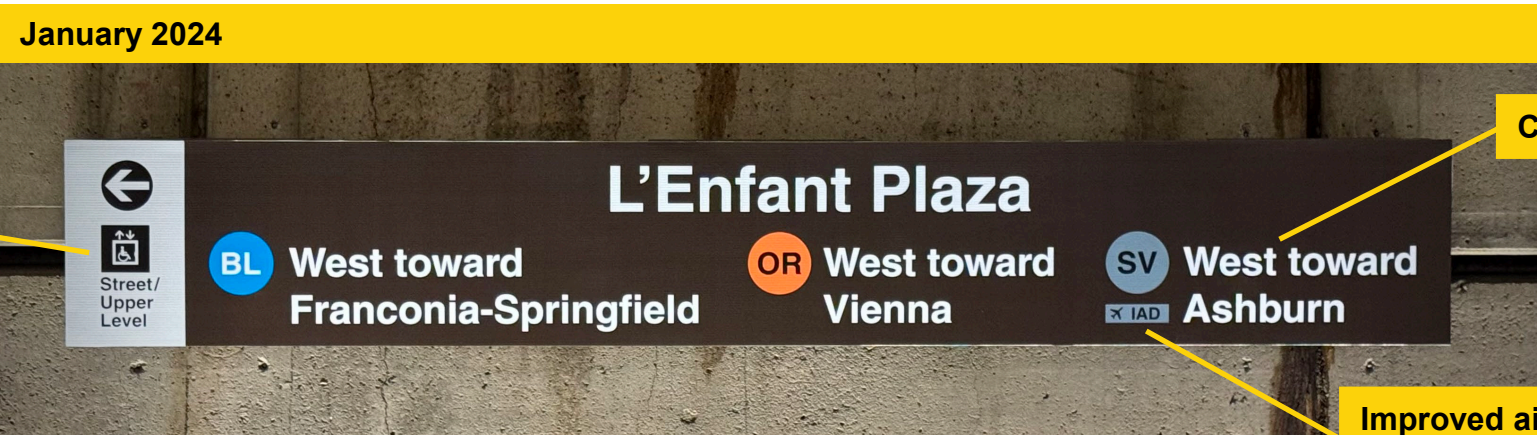
Cardinal directions

Larger & more concise route information





# Pilot Signage: Platforms



Improved elevator information

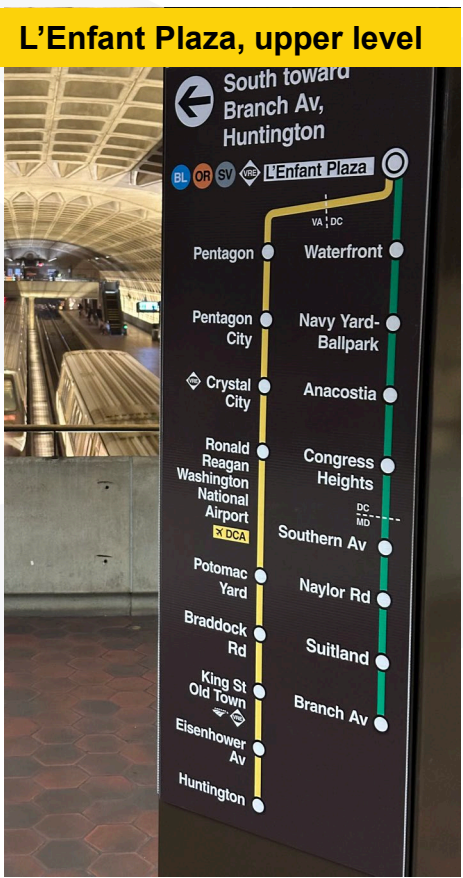
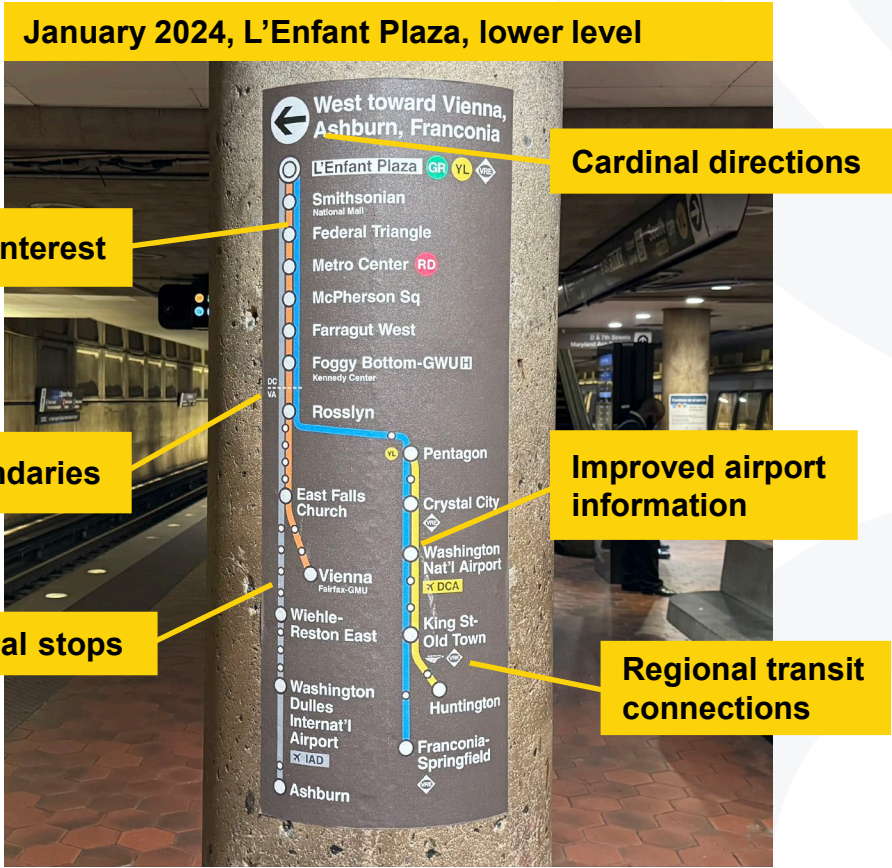
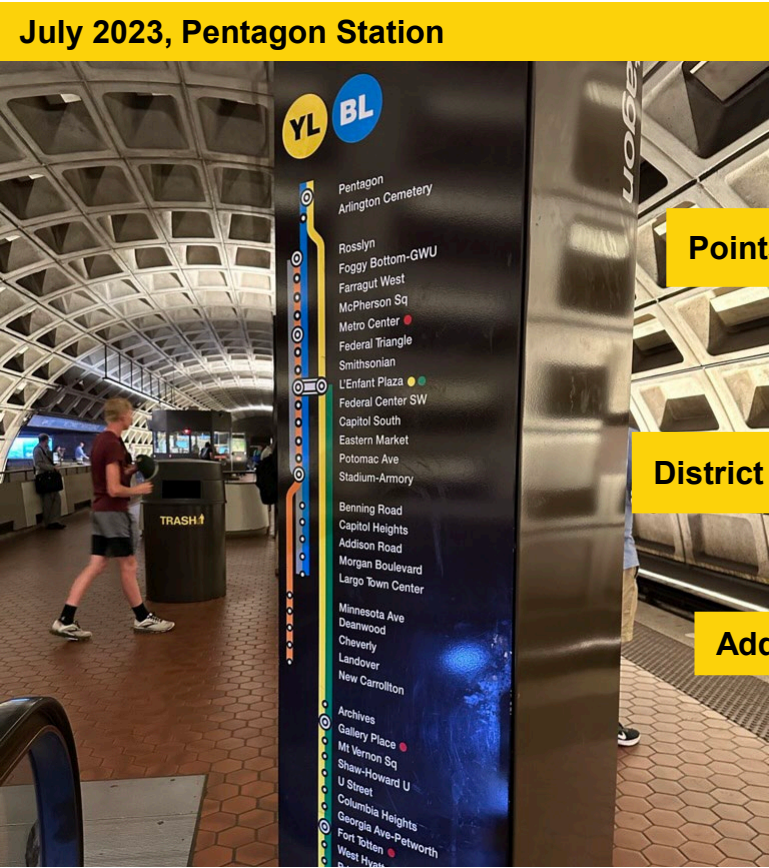
Cardinal directions

Improved airport information



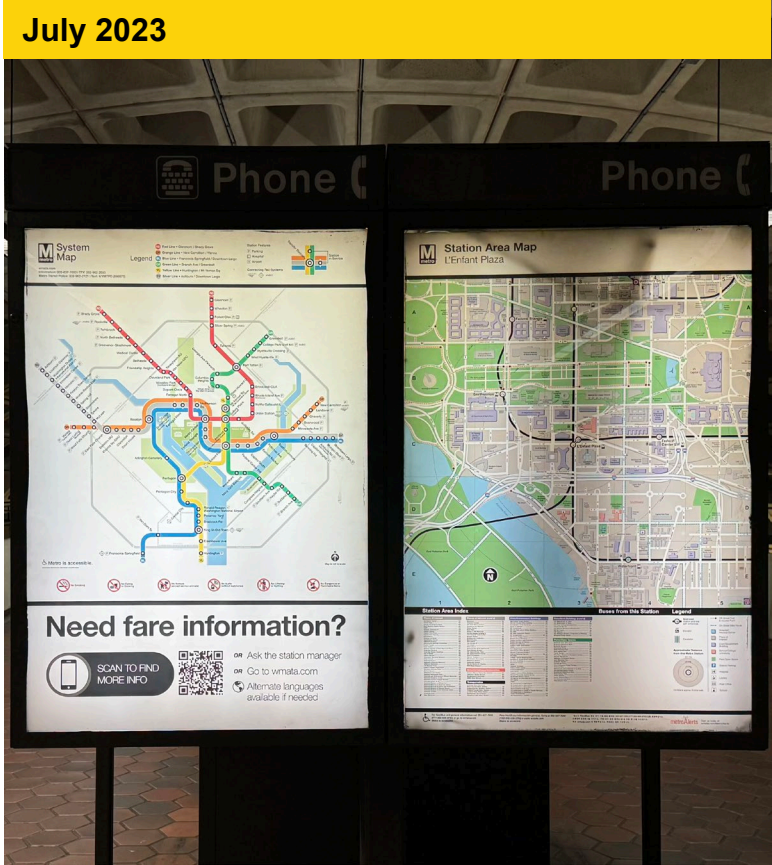


# Pilot Signage: Platforms





# Pilot Signage: Maps



**New *Neighborhood Connections* Map**

**Exit guide**

**Multimodal connections: Bus, Commuter Rail, Capital Bikeshare**



# Customers Have Noticed

“The new signs in L'Enfant Plaza are wonderful! I am slightly colorblind and have less than 20/20 vision, and the new signs are so much easier to read! Thank you!”

Exit letters are  
**AMAZING!!!**

“Love the new signs. So much easier to read from a distance.”

“I love the signs that include which direction the train is going (north/south/east/west)...I've been riding Metro for years and I still struggle to remember which direction I need to go.”

“I love the focus on implanting destinations to the exits and line directions. Including information like “National Airport” or “National Mall” into the wayfinding makes things easier for a resident like me, so I can't imagine how much a difference it makes for tourists.”

“Big fan of the improvements at L'enfant, please introduce similar improvements across the city.”

“The new digital train arrival [signs] have enough room to spell out the full stations but still have the abbreviations such as NewCrln.”

Office of Customer Research, December 2023



# Pilot Results By Customer Segment

Focus group participants unfamiliar with L'Enfant Plaza were given two specific tasks:

- *Board a train to Navy Yard-Ballpark*
- *Take the exit nearest to Air & Space Museum*

## English-Proficient Non-ADA Group

**30** participants  
**100%** boarded correct train  
**77%** found correct exit

## Uses Wheelchair or Has Low Vision & Prefers Riding Elevators

**7** participants  
**100%** boarded correct train  
**86%** found correct exit

## LEP Spanish Only

**13** participants  
**92%** boarded correct train  
**46%** found correct exit

*How do we improve?*



Office of Customer Research, January 2024

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

# Pilot Results

## Improvements based on customer inputs

- Finding the correct exit posed challenges to segments
- Updated signage based on customer feedback today



September 2023



February 2024



**Added attraction information  
facing exiting customers**



# Digital Signage & Information

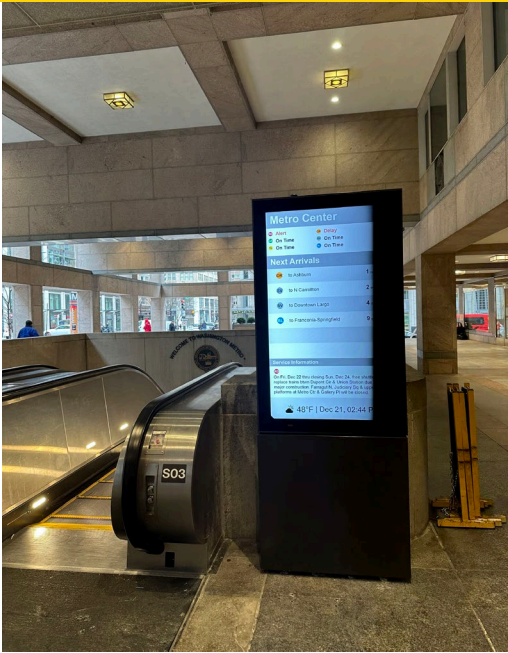


# More Screens, More Places

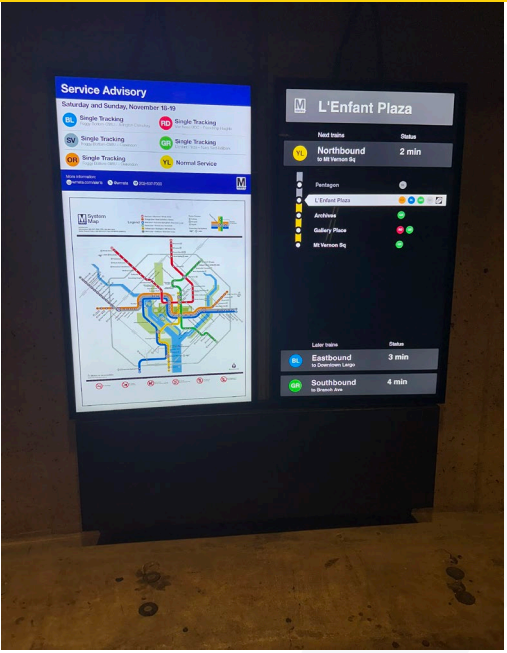
**240** new screens installed in 2023; **40%** of Metrorail stations now with real-time screens



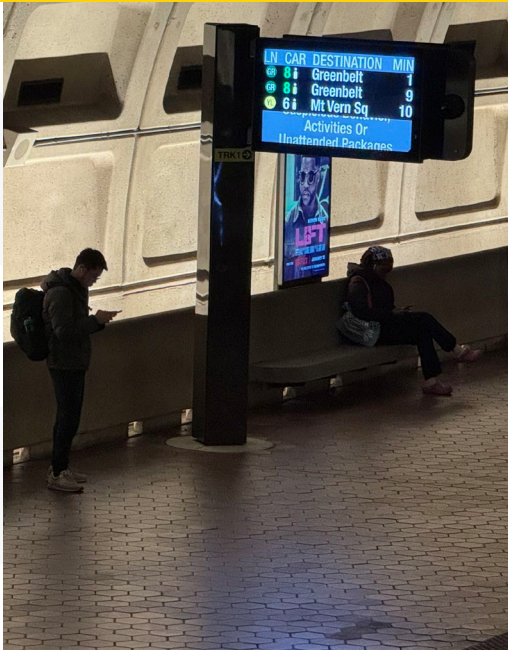
**140** new bus stop screens



**4** entrance screens  
installed at **2** stations



**12** new mezzanine screens  
at **3** stations



**42** new screens at  
**L'Enfant Plaza, Metro Center & Gallery Place**





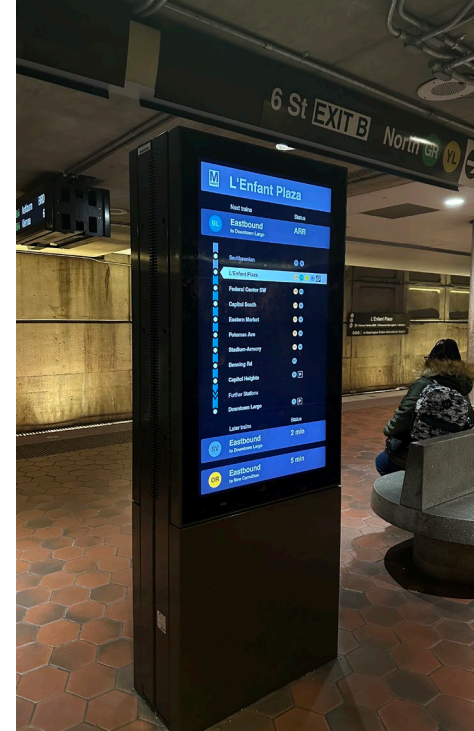
# New Passenger Info Designs

Improving Next Train Predictions, reducing DLY

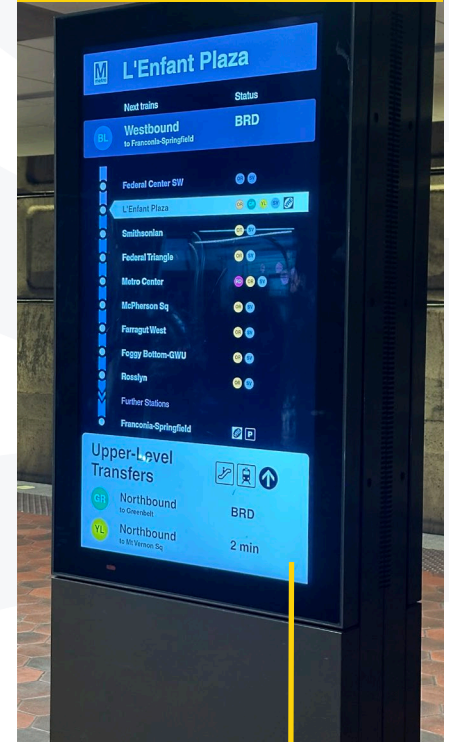


- Reducing “DLY” by updating delay threshold from 2 minutes to 5 minutes
- Dynamically match trains running to schedule; improves likelihood of showing a destination and arrival prediction
- More updates coming throughout 2024

Real-Time Station Ahead



Upper-Level Transfers



For customers exiting trains at the platform on the lower-level



## L'Enfant Plaza

Next trains

Status

BL

**Westbound**  
to Franconia-Springfield

**BRD**

Federal Center SW



L'Enfant Plaza



Smithsonian



Federal Triangle



Metro Center



McPherson Sq



Farragut West



Foggy Bottom-GWU



Rosslyn



Further Stations

Franconia-Springfield



### Upper-Level Transfers



YL

**Northbound**  
to Mt Vernon Sq

**BRD**

GR

**Northbound**  
to Greenbelt

**2 min**

I

**Largo**



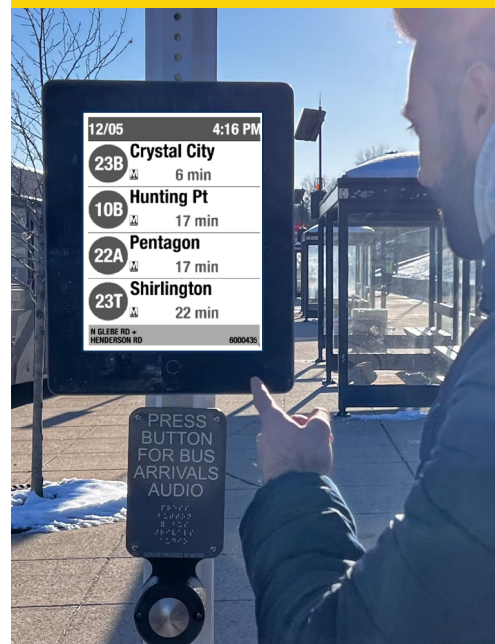
# Better Bus Information

Bring better bus information to Minnesota Av:

- Installing **10 new real-time screens** in bus bays
- Launching new bus stop information design
- Better bus departure information in-station to improve rail-to-bus connections

New **MetroPulse** for all Metrobus for real-time information on mobile

ePaper Signs at bus stops

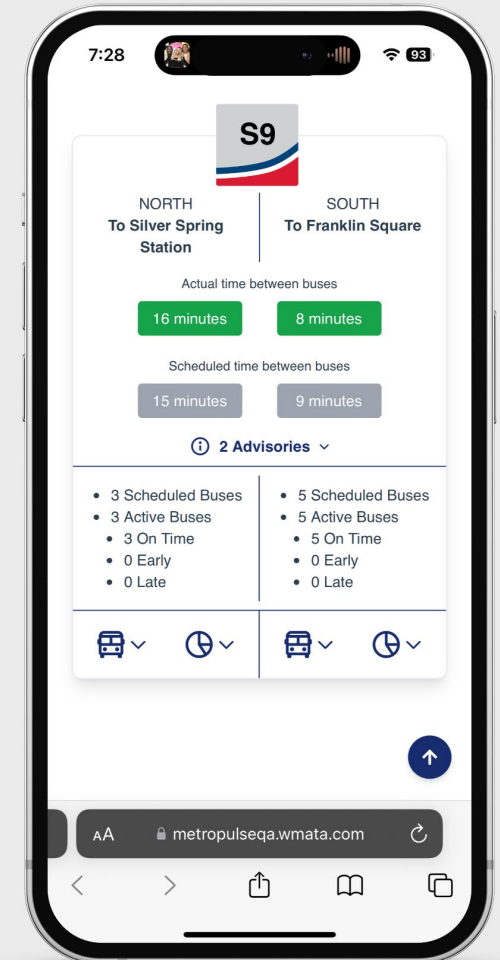


New bus departure design

| Line                    | Status  |
|-------------------------|---------|
| <b>Minnesota Av</b>     | 9:26 am |
| M U5 Marshall Heights   | 5 min   |
| M U6 Lincoln Heights    | 8 min   |
| M V4 Navy Yard-Ballpark | 19 min  |
| M X2 McPherson Sq       | 23 min  |
| M U4 River Terrace      | 27 min  |
| M U7 Deanwood           | 29 min  |
| M V7 Congress Heights   | 29 min  |
| M V8 Benning Heights    | 30 min  |
| M X9 Gallery Place      | 32 min  |
| M X9 Capitol Heights    | 34 min  |

**More real-time bus info at Minnesota Av**

Metrobus Metropulse web app



# Next Steps



# What's Next

## Q1 2024

- **Wayfinding Pilot expands.** New Exit signage installations at Metro Center & Gallery Place-Chinatown
- Integrated technology system pilot at L'Enfant Plaza

## Q2 2024

- Expanding Wayfinding Pilot to Rosslyn Station
- More wayfinding enhancements: entrance pathway lettering in-station & in-app/open data; new maps to test

## Q3 2024

- **Wayfinding Pilot concludes.** Findings incorporated into WMATA Signage Guidelines
- New on-board Metrobus screens & data revisions for consistency

## Q4 2024

- Broader integrated technology system rollout for customers; new alerts messaging system pilot
- Beta customer app debut



# Questions & Answers

