



October 2023

Welcome to the new Metro Express newsletter!

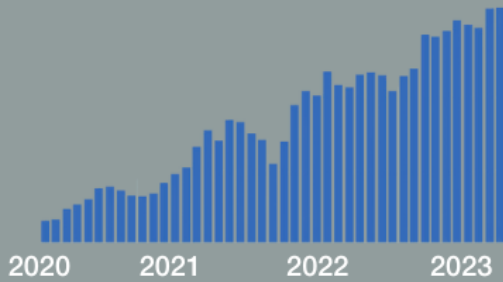
Welcome to the first Metro Express newsletter, an inside look at what's going on at Metro! This semi-regular newsletter is full of information for customers, a look behind-the-scenes, fun facts, historical tidbits, and more.

This issue, we're looking at:

- Our new pilot to make navigating and wayfinding L'Enfant Plaza easier
- The reduction of crime in the system
- New electric buses
- An in-depth look at our upgraded faregates
- Our new command and communications center
- A look at our increasing ridership this fall

Metro on the move in 2023!

Bus and rail ridership recovering



October sees highest
ridership since 2020

Frequent service



Trains every 3 mins
where lines overlap,
5-10 mins elsewhere

Quality of life improvements on bus



Introduced nighttime
“courtesy stops”
in between bus stops

Enforcement increasing



Police patrols up 240%
this year, citations up 274%

We're testing out new signs at L'Enfant Plaza



An example of a new sign Metro is testing at L'Enfant Plaza. It includes new exit names, more destinations and cardinal directions.

It's happened to us all -- we get on the wrong platform or take the wrong exit. Four in ten riders say they've taken a wrong exit in the past year and three in ten say they've gone to the wrong platform.

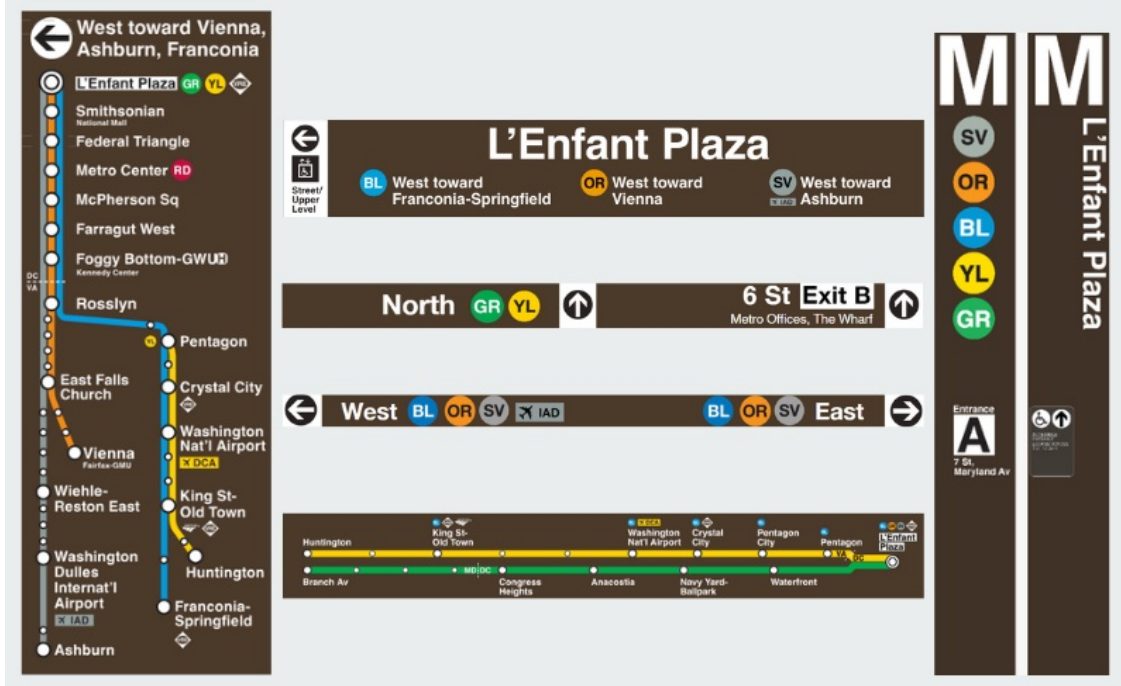
We get it! The system can be confusing for tourists figuring out a brand new transit system for the first time and some stations are even tough to navigate for locals.

That's why we're trying out new signage to make getting around easier.

Last month, Metro launched a pilot of new wayfinding signs in L'Enfant Plaza beginning with overhead signs on the lower Blue/Orange/Silver level.

Some of the biggest changes you'll notice are new exit descriptions. Currently, exits are denoted by cross streets, like 7th and D Streets, or major locations, like L'Enfant Plaza or Arena. At the L'Enfant Plaza pilot we're taking a page out of Hong Kong subway's playbook and adding a letter designation to exits. "Exit A" and similar will make it easier to know where to enter and exit. Metro will work with navigation apps to integrate these exit names into those apps' directions so you can get in and out at the most convenient locations.

We're adding more destination names as well: "Exit A | 7 St, Maryland Av | Air and Space Museum, VRE Trains."



Cardinal directions will be added to some signs, telling new riders that you can catch Blue line trains West toward Franconia-Springfield or Silver Line trains West toward Ashburn. See some examples above.

More digital screens are on the way across the system that will have the Metro map, and other helpful service information.

Outside, the station pylons will lose the rail line color stripe at the top. Customers told us they didn't realize it meant what train lines are at the station. Instead, it will be replaced with circles that show the rail lines.

As part of this effort, we're also trying to streamline and reduce the types of signs we have across the system. Right now, we have nearly 200 sizes and templates, but we're trying to narrow it down to a more manageable nine or so templates.

You can see some of the new signs on the lower level of L'Enfant Plaza now. All 140 signs will be upgraded in the station by this winter.

If customers respond well to the changes, the new signage conventions would be implemented across the rail system.

Weigh in on wayfinding

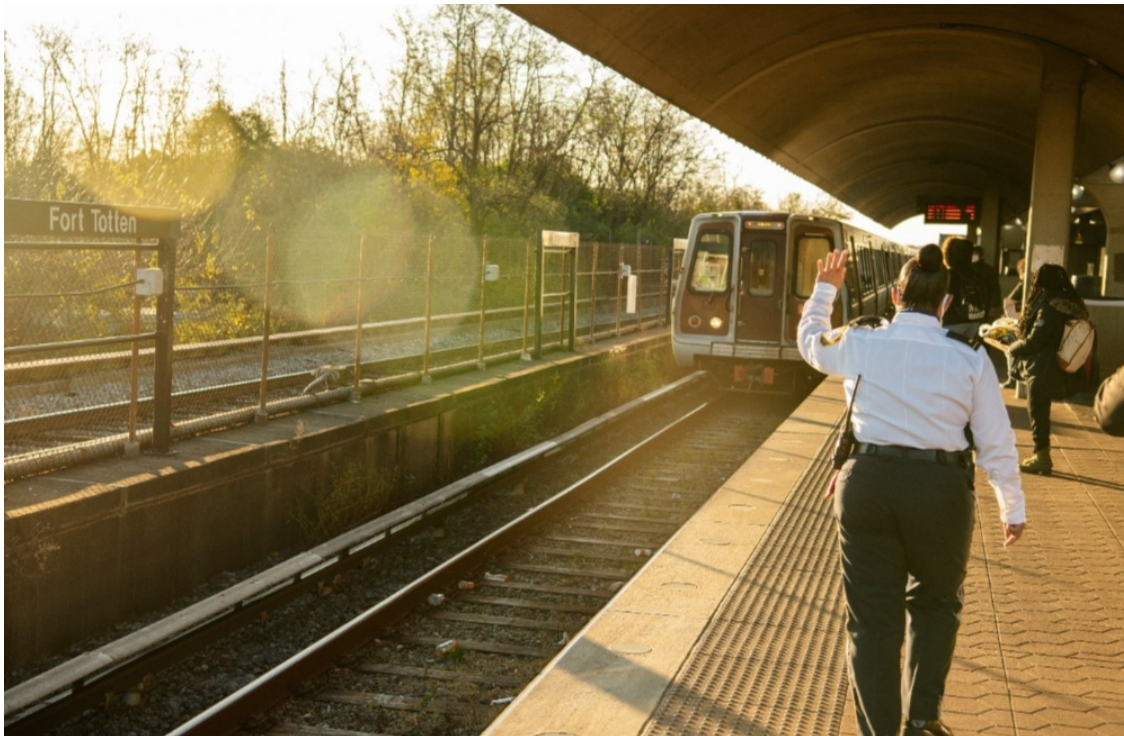


A Recent Ridership High

The buzz is real!

Oct. 23-27 was our best ridership week since 2020! Each day on average, we had 812,000 trips on our buses and trains.

Crime going down as more security patrols system



More Metro Transit Police Department officers, hired private security officers, and local police partners from across the region are patrolling buses, trains, and stations.

Surveys tell us that safety is a top concern for our customers and employees, so earlier this year we began adding more security to stations, trains and buses.

We partnered with local police departments across the region to patrol 15 stations in their jurisdictions and hired private security to fill in the gaps. Hired security wearing blue shirts at stations.

Arrests and citations have more than doubled since last year thanks to increased patrols. The number of serious crimes per million passenger trips went down 20% from February to June.

Metro's crime-fighting philosophy boils down to cops, cameras, and compassion:

- We hired more security around the clock
- Added more and better cameras in stations to help catch crimes
- Rolled out body-worn cameras for MTPD officers
- Hired five new mental health crisis intervention specialists that have already interacted with 1,000 people in need.
- Supplied officers with Narcan to treat overdose cases

As always, you can reach MTPD dispatch by texting 696-873 or by calling 202-962-2121. Add these numbers to your phone for quick access. We've also put stickers with this information on our many of our trains and buses.

New electric buses on the way



Metro's new 60-foot electric bus from New Flyer was recently on display at Metro's headquarters.

Metro is preparing to launch two new 60-foot electric buses, a first for the agency. The new buses are more environmentally friendly, quieter, and have more customer amenities like USB charging ports and larger information screens.

We're testing a dozen new electric buses in the coming months. The buses will be put through real-world operating conditions to help inform Metro's future zero-emission bus purchases and infrastructure needs.

Bus operators and mechanics are being trained on the new type of vehicle, including everything from maintenance of battery systems to the new features like upgraded fareboxes, cameras, and information screens.

We also recently won a \$104 million federal grant to pay for 100 new electric buses and convert our Cinder Bed Road garage in Lorton, Virginia to an electric charging facility. Metro aims to have a completely zero-emissions fleet by 2042.

New Integrated Command and Communications Center opens In Virginia, centralizing key areas



The Rail Operations Control Center board at the MICC shows trains on a live map.

A giant room with big screens on three walls is Metro's new nerve center, known as the Metro Integrated Command and Communications Center (MICC).

The state of the art facility opened at the Metro Building at Eisenhower Avenue in Alexandria earlier this month.

It houses rail and bus operations, power systems on rail, Metro Transit Police communications, customer communications, video monitoring, escalator and elevator monitoring, and maintenance operations.

Instead of managing service from separate control centers, the MICC brings all these departments into the same room for the first time, creating a more streamlined and unified effort to get customers timely and relevant information as soon as possible.

Fare evasion down 70% with faregate modifications



New faregates at Fort Totten feature higher saloon-style swing doors that are much harder to jump over than the lower paddle versions that have long been in Metro's stations.

New faregates are now installed at ten stations and already proving effective in reducing fare evasion by about 70-90%. The faregates have been retrofitted at:

- Congress Heights
- Mt Vernon Square
- Wheaton
- Addison Road
- Bethesda
- Court House
- Federal Center SW
- Vienna
- Pentagon City
- Fort Totten

We've made several tweaks to the faregate design during the pilot phase including raising the height to almost five feet, raising fencing nearby, and making the gate motors stronger so people can't push their way through easily.

These changes are important because Metro relies on fares and government subsidies to run the system. Fare evasion is often mentioned as a top customer concern, according to our surveys.

While it will be impossible to eliminate all fare evasion, the new faregates are going a long way to address the problem.

We also want to help those who can't afford fares. Earlier this year, we launched Metro Lift, a half-off fare discount program for low-income customers who have SNAP benefits. [Enrollment is open now.](#)

Next, upgraded faregates will go in at Capitol South, Union Station, Metro Center, L'Enfant Plaza, and Gallery Place.



The Night Owls Are Flocking

Tons of folks are hopping on for a night out! Our top 5 busiest stations at night? Gallery Place, Navy Yard, Metro Center, Foggy Bottom, and Dupont Circle. Metro takes you out on the town.

Did you enjoy our first newsletter? Let us what else you want to see! Email metronews@wmata.com

Yes

No



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
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Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority | 300 7th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024

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