

Better Bus Updates

Rider's Advisory Council

October 4, 2023



For Community Connections Committee Use Only



Meeting Objectives

Better Bus Network Redesign

- Project timeline and status
- Phase 2 engagement results

Modernizing the Bus Experience

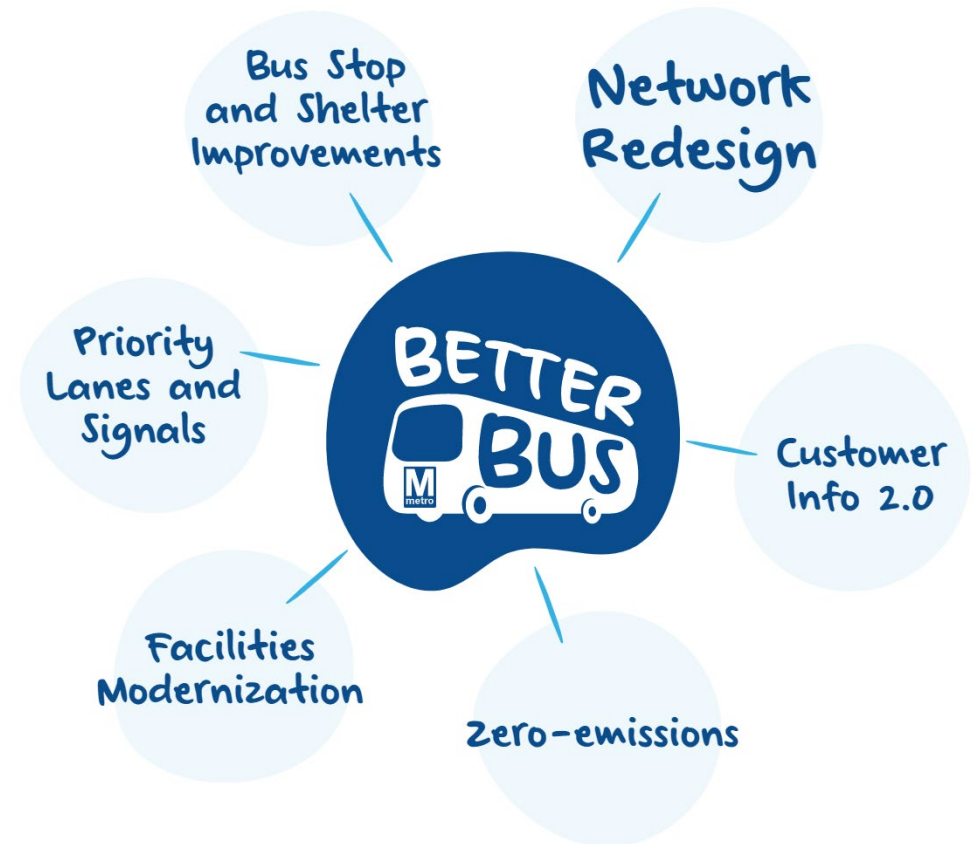
- Bus stop amenities
- Improving connections
- Metrobus route renaming



Better Bus Network Redesign

What is the Better Bus Network Redesign?

- The Network Redesign is a project to rethink, redesign, and revitalize bus service
- Part of the Better Bus Initiative – which includes many ongoing and future efforts to improve bus service



Why Redesign the Bus Network?



To better connect people to where they need to go



To promote equity, inclusiveness, and access to opportunity



To keep up with our evolving region and the people that live here



To create an easy-to-use network, no matter where you are



Project Timeline and Status

Better Bus Network Redesign Roadmap



Where We Are

Project Status

- Received 8,000+ route specific comments – Incorporating into Revised Visionary Network and Draft Year One Network
- Developing recommendations for new route naming system

Shared in Spring 2023



Anticipated Sharing in Winter 2024

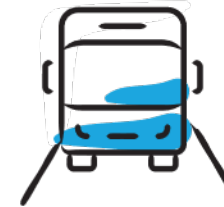


What is a Year One Network?

Transformative bus service that

- Is **equitable**,
- Provides a base network that can be **built upon in the future**,
- Reallocates resources to best meet **goals for bus service**, and
- Can be delivered with **resources available today**

Metro and partners resources include



The Year One Network is the **first step** to implement the Visionary Network

A blue dashed arrow pointing upwards and to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

Phase 2 Engagement Results

A blue dashed arrow pointing downwards and to the left, located in the top right corner of the slide.

Phase 2 By The Numbers

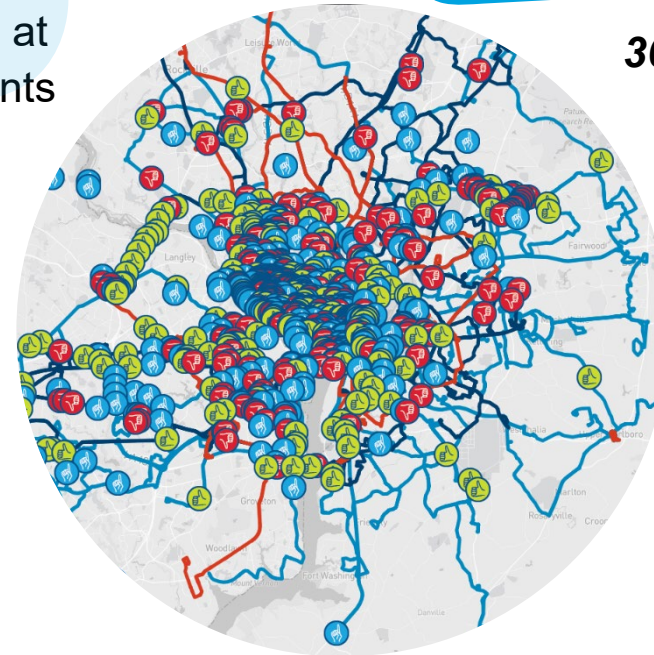
20,000+
interactions at 60+
public events
(21% non-English)

500+
bus operations staff
at 11 Preview Parties

330+
Metro employees at
2 Coffee Chat events

Received
8,000+ comments,
1,900+ surveys, and
360+ operator comments

10.5% of daily ridership



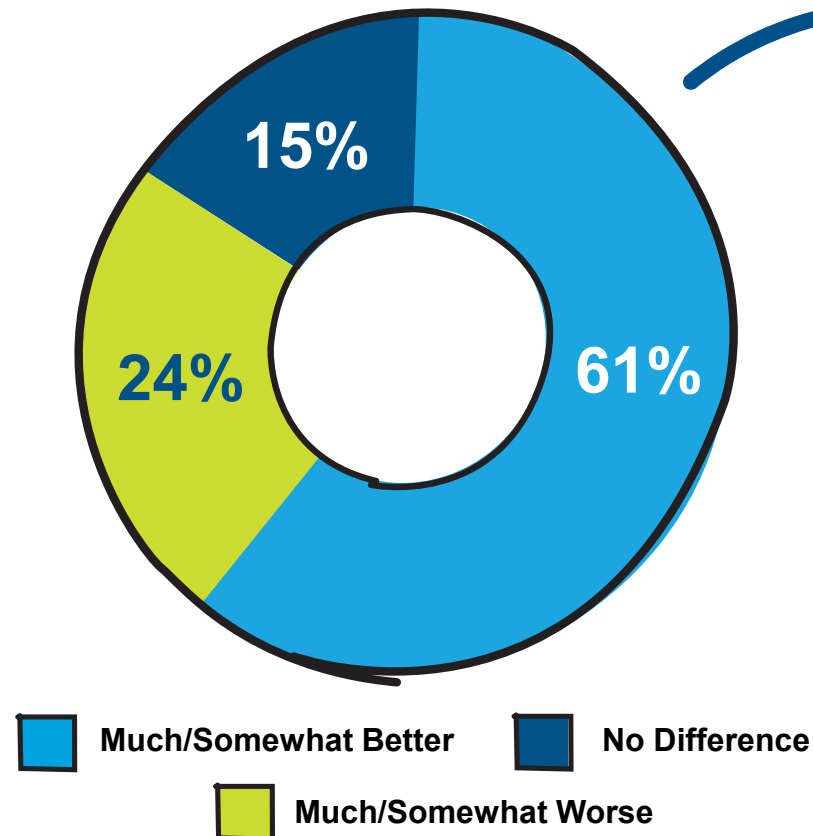
Briefed
110+ elected officials
and **15+ advocacy**
groups, CBOs, and
committees

*Multilingual advertising
through **21 outlets,**
600,000+ social media
impressions, **40,000+** Visitors
to the Experience Lab page*



The Visionary Network Will Make The Bus Better

Overall Impressions of the Visionary Network*



61% of respondents had a **positive impression** of the draft Visionary Network

- At in-person events, it was **70%**
- For the web survey, it was **49%**

This is likely higher due to attendees receiving a walk through of the network to better understand its potential impacts

70% of **low-income**** respondents said it was *somewhat or much better*

68% of **people of color** who responded said it was *somewhat or much better*

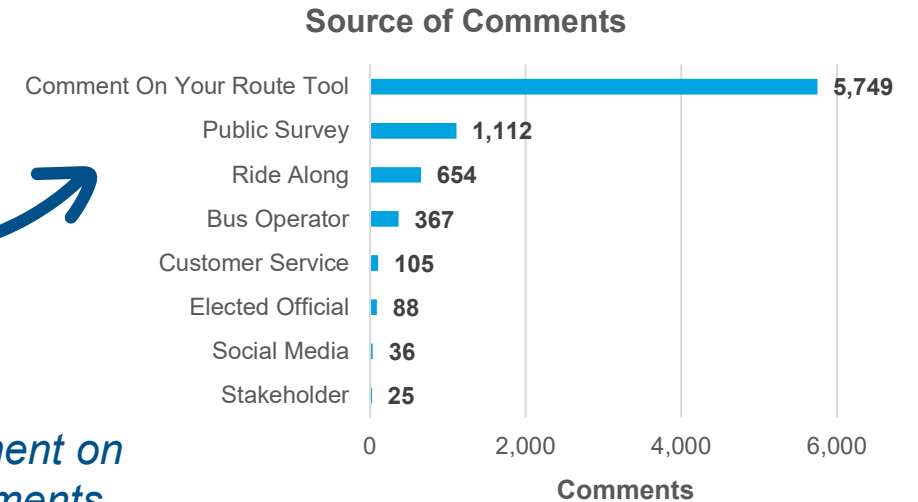
We Gathered A Lot Of Input On The Proposed Routes

8,000+ total comments on routes

Most comments are about:

- **Route Alignment**
- Level of Service
- New Destinations

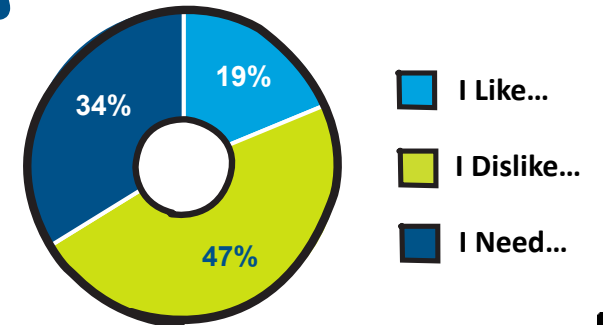
The Comment On Your Route tool brought in **5x more comments** than any other source



Nearly half of Comment on Your Route tool comments were categorized as “**I dislike**,” while 34% were categorized as “**I need**”

Wards 2 and 3 in DC account for 40% of the total comments received and 60% of the “I Dislike” comments in the Comment on Your Route Tool

Comment on Your Route Tool Comments



Revised Visionary Network at a Glance

Revisions to the Visionary Network were made based on:



- Comments and ideas from the public, stakeholders and elected officials
- Data on travel needs and demand



Revisions continue to prioritize **equity, connectivity, and the customer and operator experience**



Expanded frequent service



More service all day/all week



Increase crosstown & cross-county connections



Service is easier to understand along major routes



Direct, frequent routes connecting key destinations & transit hubs



Extended service beyond jurisdictional borders



Modernizing the Bus Experience

Building a Better Experience

- Put the customer at the center of our decisions
- Focus on usability, consistency, and equity
- Engage our region collectively to help make a better transportation system for the entire DMV



Bus stops are the front door to our transit system and route names help people make connections

Bus Stop Amenities: A Regional Approach

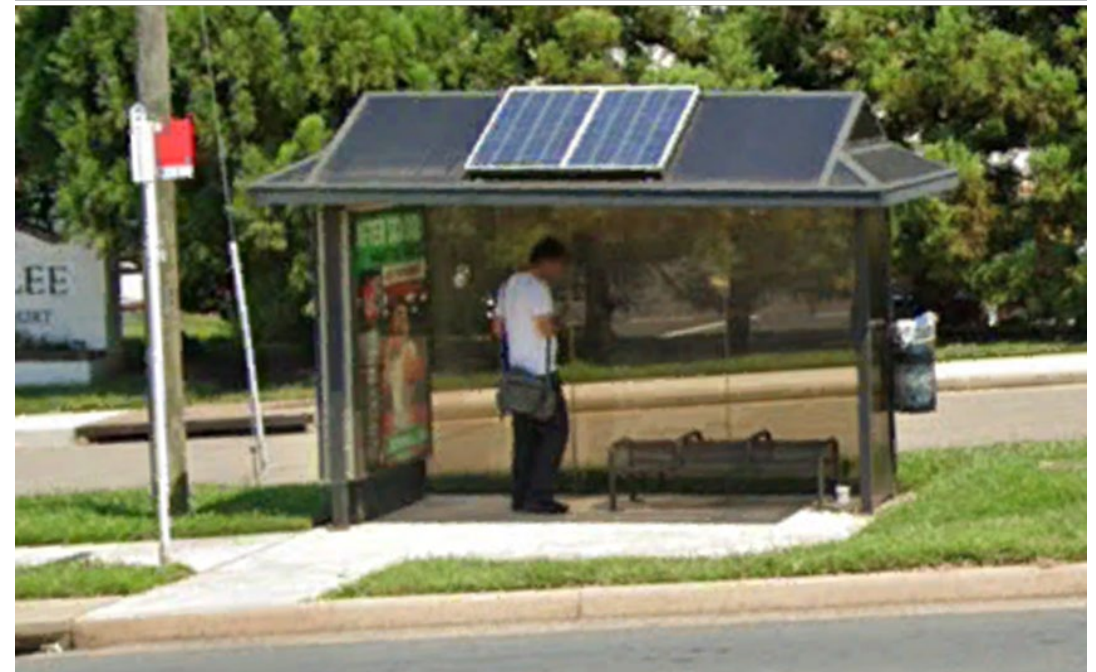
Best Practice: Standardized bus stop amenities and design across the region

Create consistency in:

- Signage and real-time information
- Accessibility
- Lighting and other safety/security elements
- Shelters, seating, trash receptacles

Opportunity to incorporate into the National Capital Region Bus Leaders Committee this fall

Fairfax County Solar-Powered Bus Shelter





Making Connections Simple and Easy

Best Practice: Simple and easy connections across all transit providers

Create simple and intuitive connections including:

- Signage and real-time information
- Wayfinding
- Maps and apps

Make it easier to understand and use the region's interconnected transit services



Metrobus Route Renaming

To align with a customer-focused network and enhance ridership, Metrobus needs a route naming convention that...



More intuitively **explains the structure** of the network



Flexibly **accommodates future changes** in the network



Is **simply communicated** across print, digital, and on-street media

What We've Learned through Customer Research

Positive feedback for naming routes after streets or states

- **Streets provide the most useful information** about where a route operates but require rider education
- **States are easiest to understand and learn (D, M, V)** but have limited informational value
- **Frequency is important to know, but not in the route name itself**
 - Using a numerical key for frequency has a steep learning curve
- **Three-digit route names are harder to remember** compared to alphanumeric names



Next Steps

Next Steps

Bus Network Redesign

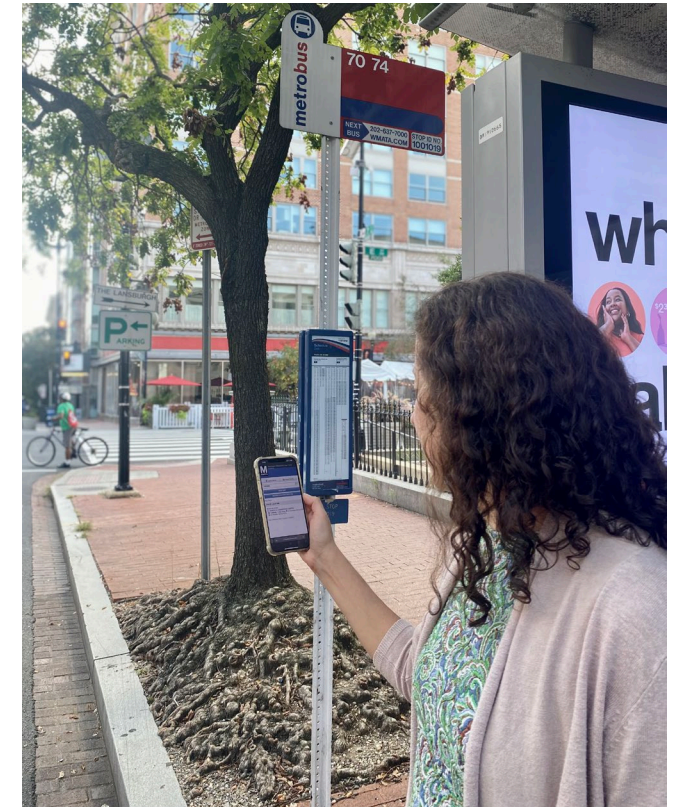
- Finalize Revised Visionary and draft Year One networks
- Develop engagement plans, tools and materials

Bus Stop Improvements

- Continue to work with partners on bus stop guidelines and improvements

Route Renaming

- Analyze results of the public survey (2,100+ responses received) and results of the demographically representative sample of 1,000 customers, lapsed customers, and non-riders
- Apply results to draft Year One Network



Thank you!



For Community Connections Committee Use Only

