Metro Bus Action Plan

Riders Advisory Council

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

September 2, 2026

Delivering Your Metro, the Way Forward

Focus Today

Service Excellence
Deliver safe, reliable, convenient, accessible, and enjoyable service for customers.

Talented Teams
Attract, develop, and retain top talent where individuals feel valued, supported, and proud of their contribution.

Financial & Organizational Efficiency
Ensure Metro's long-term financial health by streamlining operations and efficiently allocating resources

Objectives of Service Excellence Goal

- **Safety and Security |** Ensure all customers and employees feel safe and secure using and delivering services.
- **Reliability |** Provide dependable service that the community trusts.
- **Convenience |** Deliver frequent, accessible, and easy-to-use service to enhance the customer experience

Customers Want Frequent and Reliable Service

Customers continue to rank frequency and reliability as key drivers of ridership

Customer Priorities:

- More frequent service
- Buses arriving on time
- Faster trips / Bus priority
- Connecting to where they need to go
- Buses at all times of day

*Results from Bus Network Redesign survey (2022) and DMV*Moves* survey(2024)

Metro is Delivering More Service and a More Useful Network at Lower Unit Cost

Investments in technology and service are delivering more efficient transit service for our customers, Metro, and the region

- Aligned service to ridership with consistent service all day → Reduced peak vehicles and swing shifts
- Reduced amount of travel at beginning and end of bus routes (“deadhead”) → Improved productivity of buses and operators

13% ↑ More service (revenue miles)
(FY2027 vs. FY2020 budget)

-5% ↓ Decrease in operating cost* per revenue hour
(FY2027 vs. FY2020 budget)

*Operating costs adjusted for inflation using U.S. Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for DC-VA-MD-WV region

Recent Metro Bus Investments Continue Years of Continuous Improvement

FY2022

- Launched **all-day frequent service** network on **36 bus lines**
- Added **10 miles** of bus lanes
- Free transfers to rail and bus

FY2023

Added lines to the **all-day frequent service** network

FY2024

- Introduced **24/7** DC bus service network
- Launched Clear Lanes
- **All-door boarding** on 8 routes

FY2025

- Metro Pulse launched
- Added **13 miles** of bus lanes

FY2026

- Launched new **Better Bus** network
    - 13% more revenue miles since FY2020
- Tap. Ride. Go on bus
- **Managing headways** on C53

FY2027

- Expand bus priority program
- Add frequency and longer hours
- Improve reliability, frequency and hours of operation on **21 routes**

Visionary Network

Continuing Investments in Bus Reliability Reduces the Impact of Congestion and Improves Speed and Safety

Bus Priority

- Identified seven high-priority bus priority corridors, through DMV*Moves* and included investment levels in updated Service Guidelines
- Developed Next Gen Transit Signal Priority (TSP) concept of operations with partners and started procurement
- New Virginia and Maryland legislation enables Clear Lanes regionwide, building on DC success

Headway Management

- Implemented headway management on the C53, shifting from managing schedules to managing spacing
    - Positive impact, reducing bunching and improving prediction accuracy
    - Resource intensive, requiring active oversight

What’s Next

- Continue collaborating on Gold Line (DC), Route 7 (VA), and other bus priority corridors
- Phased implementation of TSP
- Expand Clear Lanes regionwide

- Improve technology for operators to self-manage spacing and for MICC and terminal supervisor to support
- Expand to additional high-frequency routes

Continuing to Modernize Facilities and Fleet Improves Safety, Productivity, and Work Environment

Facilities

- Rehabilitated, rebuilt or closed aging facilities
- With the region's investments, five of Metro's nine bus garages are less than 14 years old, creating a better work environment for our workforce

Fleet

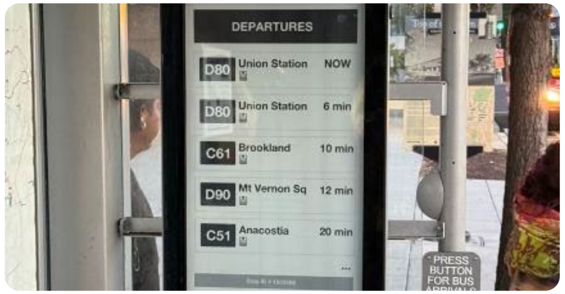
- Invested $357 million in 300 40-foot buses
- Added digital signage on some buses
- Tested increased space for strollers, mobility devices, and carts

What's Next

- Update capital plan for bus facilities to optimize investments (Fall 2026)
- With additional regional investments, advance Western Bus Garage project
- Update Fleet Management Plan to modernize and maintain our fleet (Fall 2026)
- Begin procurement of up to 300 articulated 60-foot buses and exercise options on 200 additional 40-foot buses
- Expand digital signage to all new buses

Continuing Investments in Customer Amenities Improves Customer Experience

Bus Stops and Customer Information



- Expanded real time info at 340 stops by installing e-paper signs
- Collaborated with jurisdictions and partner agencies through DMV*Moves* to begin:
  - Designing new regional bus stop sign
  - Addressing amenity issues at shared stops

Fare Payment

- Provided many ways to pay including Smart Trip, mobile, cash, and Tap. Ride. Go. (contactless credit/debit cards)
- Relocated fare vending machines to bus loops at three stations*, with more to come
- Improved fare reader reliability from 84% to 99%, enabling customers to tap more reliably

What's Next

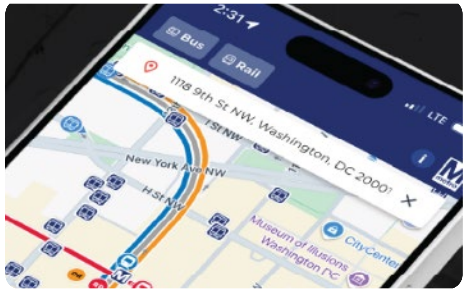
- Procure and install e-paper signs at 150 additional stops
- Develop joint service agreements with jurisdictions and agencies
- Finalize and implement regional bus stop signs

- Advance regional fare integration, consistent fare discounts, and Tap. Ride. Go. to partners
- Launch Kids Ride Free on Android
- Update Fare Policy and Systems Modernization Strategy (Fall 2026)

*Anacostia Regional Entrance, Fort Totten, Silver Spring Transit Center

Continuing to Invest in Our Workforce Improves Efficiency, Reliability, and Quality of Service

Technology



- Implemented HASTUS Scheduling software
- Increased reporting of bus locations to every 5 seconds (from 30 seconds) to improve prediction accuracy
- Improved Metro Pulse based on customer feedback

Workforce

- Increased class sizes in FY2026
- Implemented 4-day work week at Shepherd Parkway, improving work-life balance for operators
- Gathered operators' feedback on routes and run-time, which influenced FY2026 and FY2027 service changes

What's Next

- Improve information available to operators and dispatchers to respond to disruptions
- Improve real time customer data for detours and disruptions
- Develop predictive maintenance capabilities to improve reliability
- Implement HASTUS Operations Management software

- Introduce new uniforms for operators
- Assess 4-day work week, with potential to expand at other divisions
- Modify training approach in FY2027 with smaller, more frequent new hire classes and restructured in class/in vehicle time

Bus Service Today is More Consistent, Frequent and Connects to Where People Want to Travel

Increasing Customer Access To:

Destinations
People can access **20,000 more jobs** within 60 minutes on Metro

Frequent Service
27% more customers have access to service every 12 minutes or better

Midday, Evening & Weekend Service
11% more bus service on weekends and **6% more** during midday and evenings

Customers Can Access 20,000 More Jobs within 60 Minutes on Metro Compared to FY2025

New Connections to Key Destinations

- Access to jobs on transit increased across the region (on average)

New Direct Connections

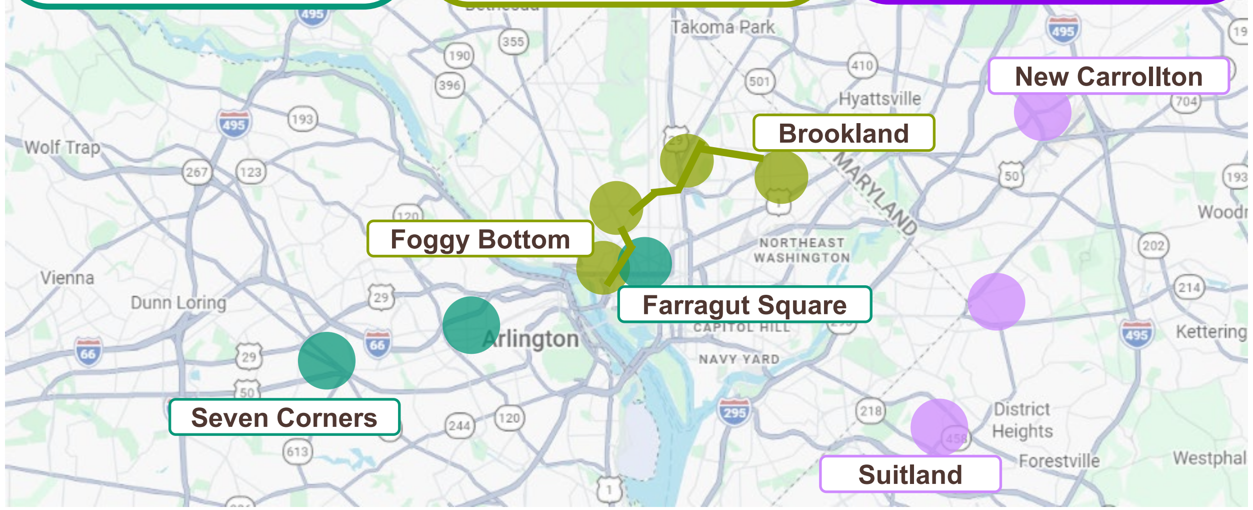
- 1 in 6 trips are on new or extended direct routes, indicating that customers are using new direct connections to reach their destinations

Examples of Routes Providing New Connections

A58
Seven Corners, Ballston & Farragut Square

D74
Brookland, Petworth, Adams Morgan & Foggy Bottom

P60
New Carrollton, Addison Road & Suitland



Frequent Service Drives Ridership

The network prioritizes high-frequency service that comes at least every 6 to 12 or 20 minutes

Reallocated service to Frequent Service Network

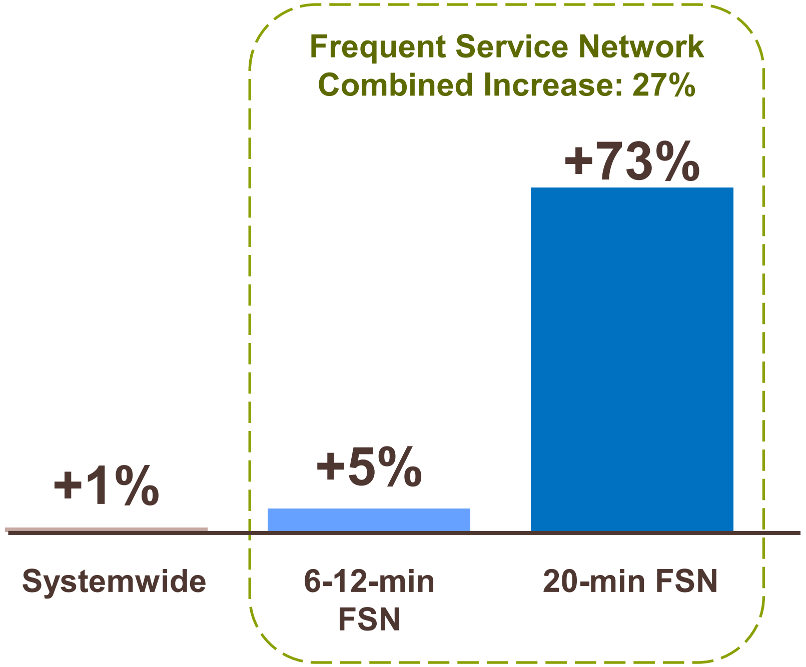
27% More service on the **Frequent Service Network**

- Increase largely from putting resources towards bringing routes into the Frequent Service Network (FSN)
- Average customer wait times have decreased

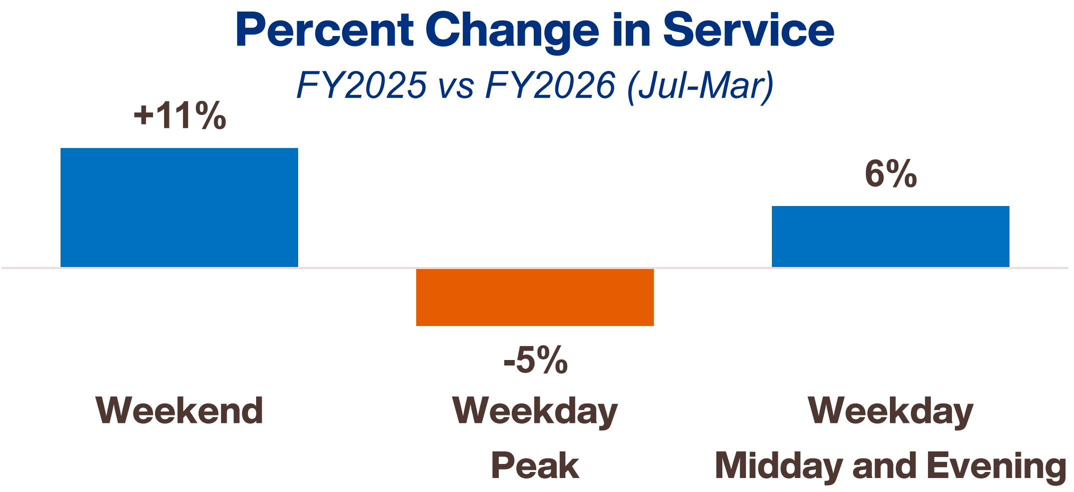
Percent Change in Service

Number of Bus Trips: FSN v. Systemwide

New network has similar overall trips, with service redistributed toward FSN



Improving Service during Midday, Evenings & Weekends



- Metro delivers more service on weekends **(+11%)**, and on weekdays during the midday and evening **(+6%)**
- Some service shifted away from the weekday peak **(-5%)**

Example: P10 and P1X

+33% **Increase in Weekend Ridership**

- Doubled weekend service between North College Park and Rhode Island Avenue station
- Compared to the 83/86, more frequent service (every 12 mins vs 30 mins) and longer hours (until midnight Saturday and 10pm Sunday)
- Weekend ridership increased 33% (from 3.4k to 4.6k trips in Sept)

Bus Performance Today is More Reliable and Convenient, with Opportunities for Improvement

Bus network provides more reliable and convenient service

Improving Run-Time Reliability

On-time bus performance is the **best in 3 years** with the new network

Reducing Crowding

Only **2%** of operated trips at or above seated capacity, less than in FY25

Continued Missed Trips

Missed trips from operator availability **have increased**

More Reliable, Less Crowded Buses

Improving Run-Time Reliability

Best on-time bus performance (OTP) in 3 years

- OTP is up by more than 1% compared to this time last year, even as traffic has gotten worse
- Better schedules mean better customer experience
  - Schedules built with more run time and recovery time between trips
  - Result in increased on-time performance and reduced bus bunching
- Bus priority investments would improve reliability and reduce cost to provide service

Reducing Crowding

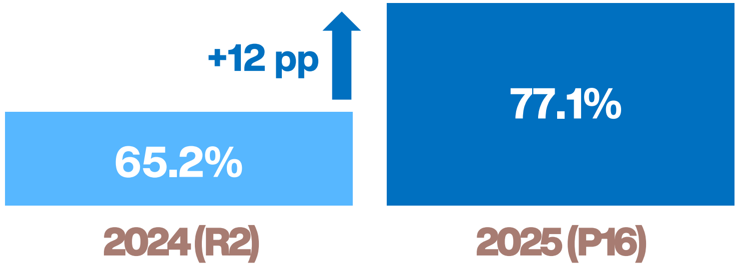
- 2 percent of operated trips at or above seated capacity through March 2026
  - 27 percent decrease (80 fewer daily) compared to FY2025

Results in Action: Riggs Road (R2 v. P16)

+12 pp OTP improvement on Riggs Road route from network redesign

- **R2 was one of the least reliable routes in the previous network**
- **P16 now has more accurate run times and new layover requirements, improving reliability**

OTP: September 2024 v. 2025



Missed Trips Continue to Impact Customers

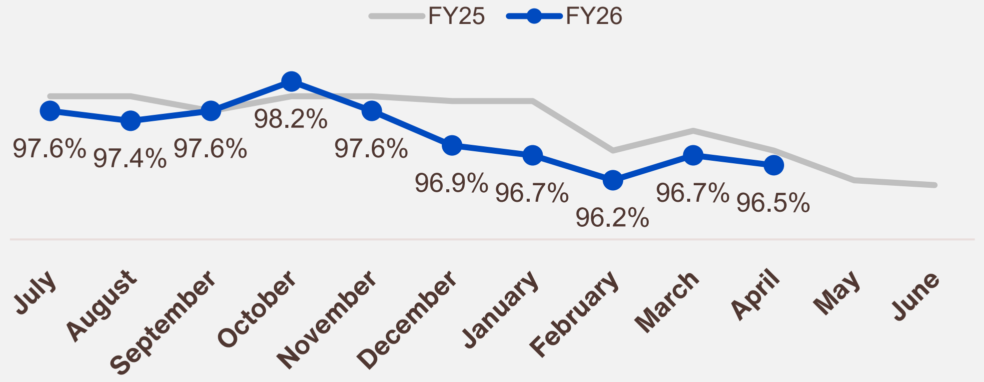
Continued Missed Trips

Missed trips account for only 3.5% of all trips but have a disproportionate impact on customer satisfaction

- There is a tradeoff between service delivery and overtime wages

Missed Trips Impact Service Delivered

Percent Service Delivered by Month



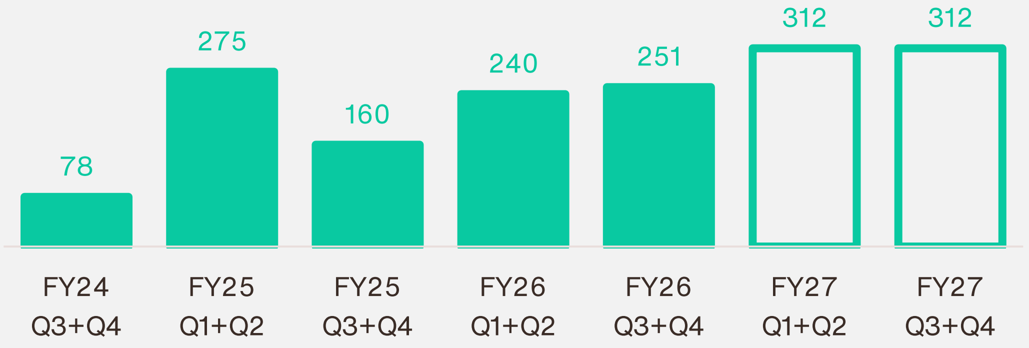
Addressing Operator Availability

Bus operator availability remains a challenge that Metro is actively working to address

- Hired more operators by expanding class sizes, resulting in nearly 500 new operators graduating in FY2026
- 4-day workweek initiative will support service delivery
- Higher missed trips on Mondays and Fridays due to absenteeism

Increasing Operators to Reduce Missed Trips

New Bus Operator Graduates by Six Months



FY27 estimates reflect current hiring schedule and projected training completion rates.

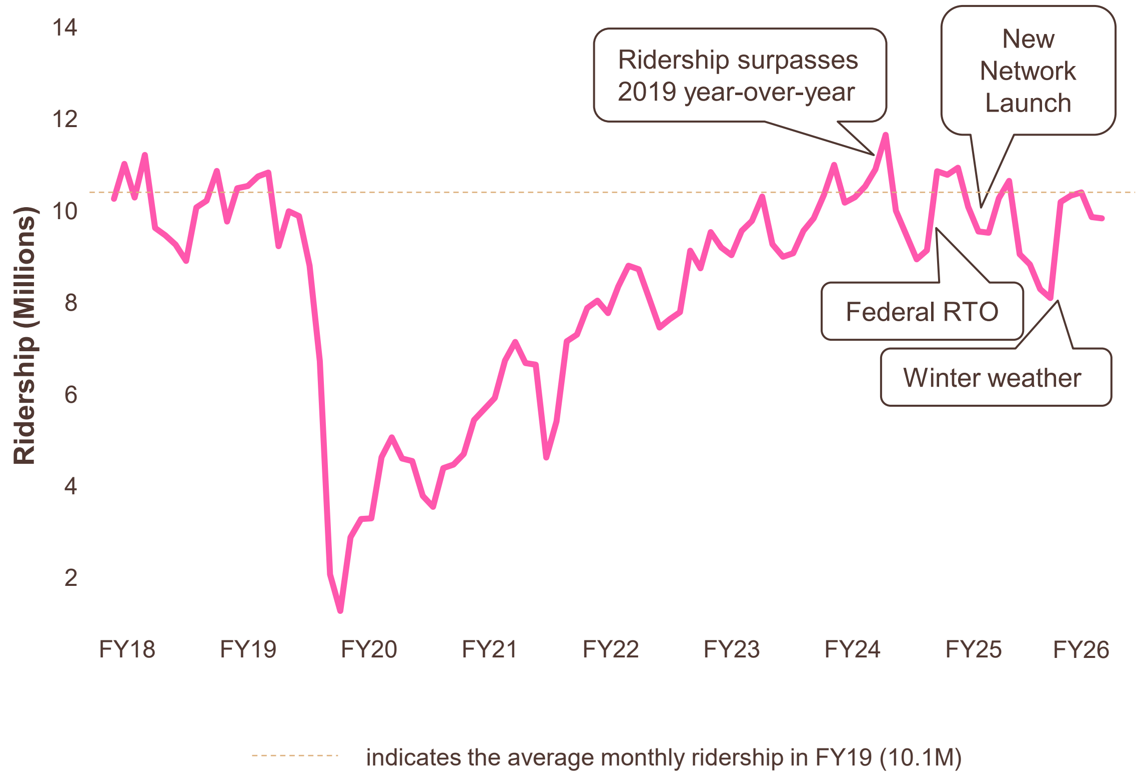
Bus Ridership is Close to 2019 Levels, Despite Being Down Year-Over-Year

- October 2024: Metro Bus exceeded 2019 ridership, especially on weekends
- January 2025: Ridership began declining and was down 7% in FY2026 compared to FY2025
  - Federal return to office somewhat masked decline
- Travel speeds are slower and ridership declined even where service did not change

Example: Georgia Avenue (DC)
D40/D4X operate identically to the 70/79, serving the same stops with the same frequency

- ~10% decrease in ridership (1.8k fewer daily riders) in the last year, including in the period prior to yellow line improvements
- Buses are slower due to congestion 9% decrease in bus speeds FY2024 – FY2026

Monthly Metro Bus Ridership

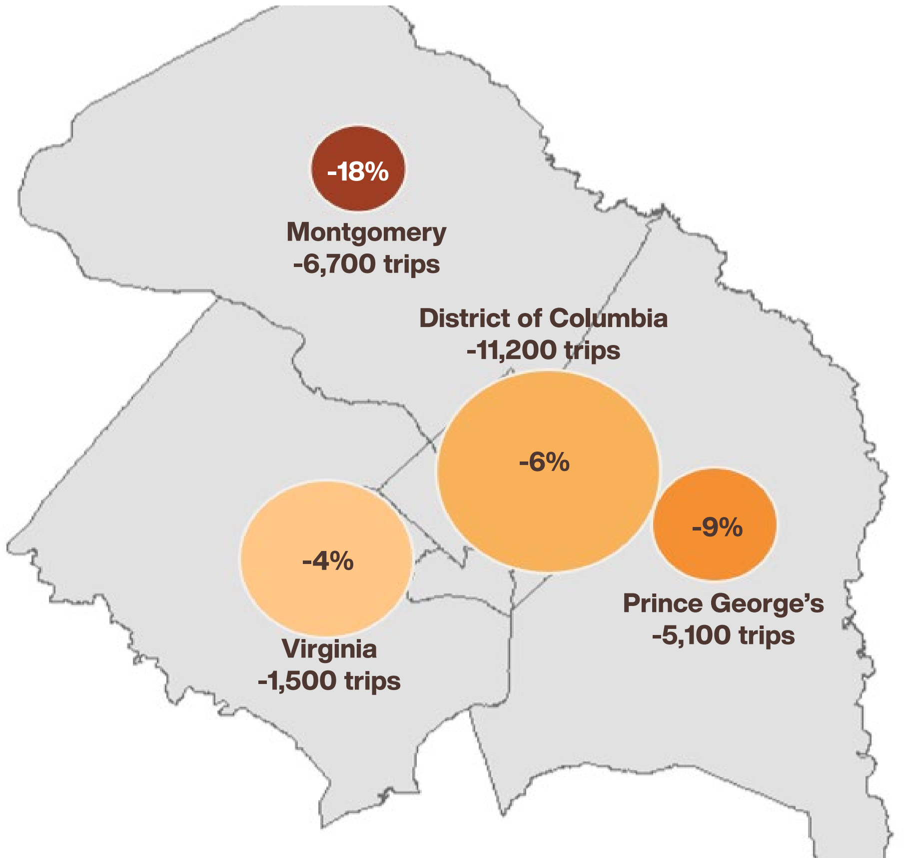


Many Factors are Impacting Ridership Regionwide

Significant Factors Impacting Ridership

1. Route realignments comprised 25 percent of decline
   - Stops now served by Ride On, such as Veirs Mill Rd, and Prince George's County Transit (PGCT) previously carried more than 6k average daily Metro Bus customers
2. Ride On and PGCT ridership has increased, but those gains do not fully replace the ridership previously carried on Metro Bus service
3. Economic trends (e.g. unemployment, consumer sentiment) align with bus ridership declines
   - DMV: Higher job loss than any other major metro area (2025)
   - District: Lost 45k jobs since June 2025, now near COVID lows.
4. Growth from new services lower than where service was revised or eliminated

Change in Metro Bus Ridership (trips) by Jurisdiction



Size represents total ridership and color represents percentage change
Jul –May FY2025 vs FY2026

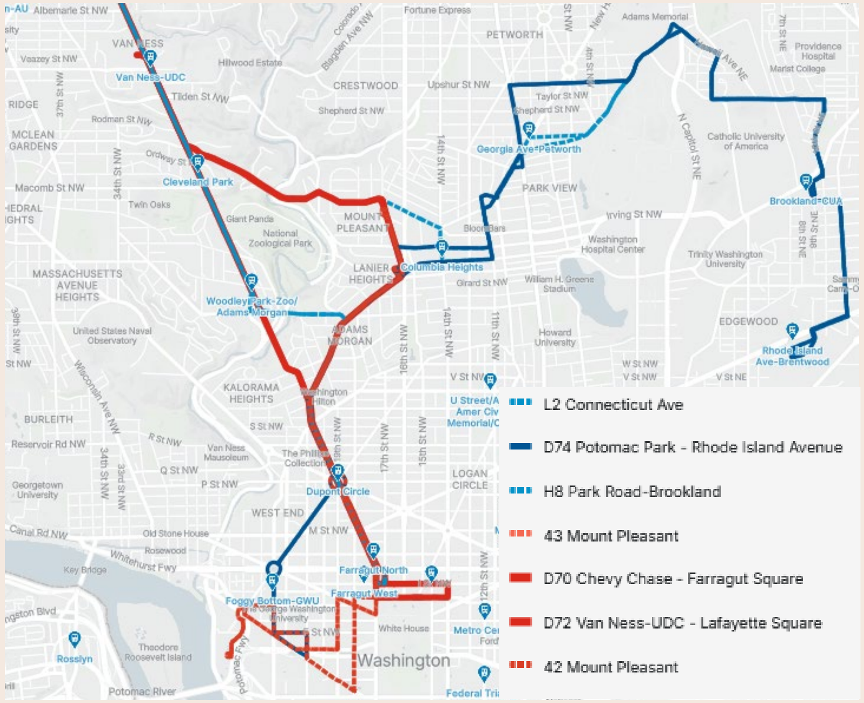
Ridership is Growing Where We Invested In Service

Peers' experience indicates that it can take 18 months or more for ridership to adjust and the last four months show positive signs

- Bus stops where we significantly increased service have had ridership gains
- Since April 2026, these gains are now greater than the ridership we lost at stops where we significantly reduced service
- New stops have been gaining ridership in CY2026
- Overall ridership is only down 2% since April

Example: D70, D72, and D74

- Increased service compared to the L2, 42, 43, and H8
- In the first 6 months, ridership was up 3%.
- April to July, ridership is up 6% year-over-year



A Resource Neutral Network Required Intentional Trade-offs

Before Redesign: Stops closer to more customers

Trade-off: Faster buses

Example

14th Street NW
Added more limited stop service and reduced local service

Before Redesign: Less frequent direct routes

Trade-off: Connected high-frequency routes with more transfers

Example

Minnesota Ave SE
Restructured service to provide single high frequency route the length of Minnesota Ave (C31)

Examples of Other Changes Impacting Ridership

Consolidated Metro service to main corridors

Burtonsville to Silver Spring (M52)

Made service more direct, but bypassed a residential area

Edgewood Street (D36)

Eliminated low ridership routes to **add service elsewhere**

Langston Boulevard (3Y)

**Branches served by regional partners*

Customer Satisfaction Remains Strong and Steady

Overall satisfaction is consistently high among peers, remaining consistent with both last quarter and the same period last year

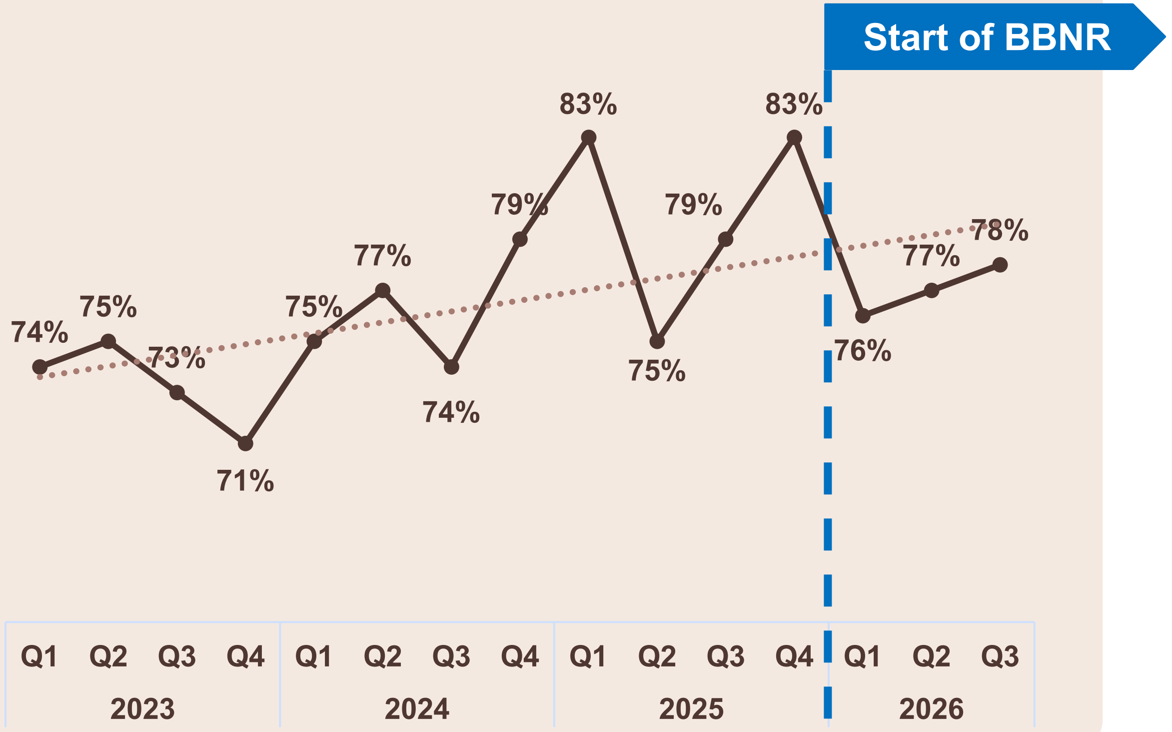
- Major satisfaction drivers are reliability, wait times, and travel times
- Key metrics remain relatively flat since the launch of the new network, with slight improvement in travel time perception

Key Bus Customer Satisfaction Metrics by Quarter

Pre-BBNR (FY2025 Q3) v. Post-BBNR (FY2026 Q3)

Metric	Pre BBNR	Post BBNR	*Change*
Reliability	70%	68%	***-2%***
Wait Times	61%	62%	***+1%***
Travel Times	78%	83%	***+5%****

Overall Bus Customer Satisfaction by Quarter



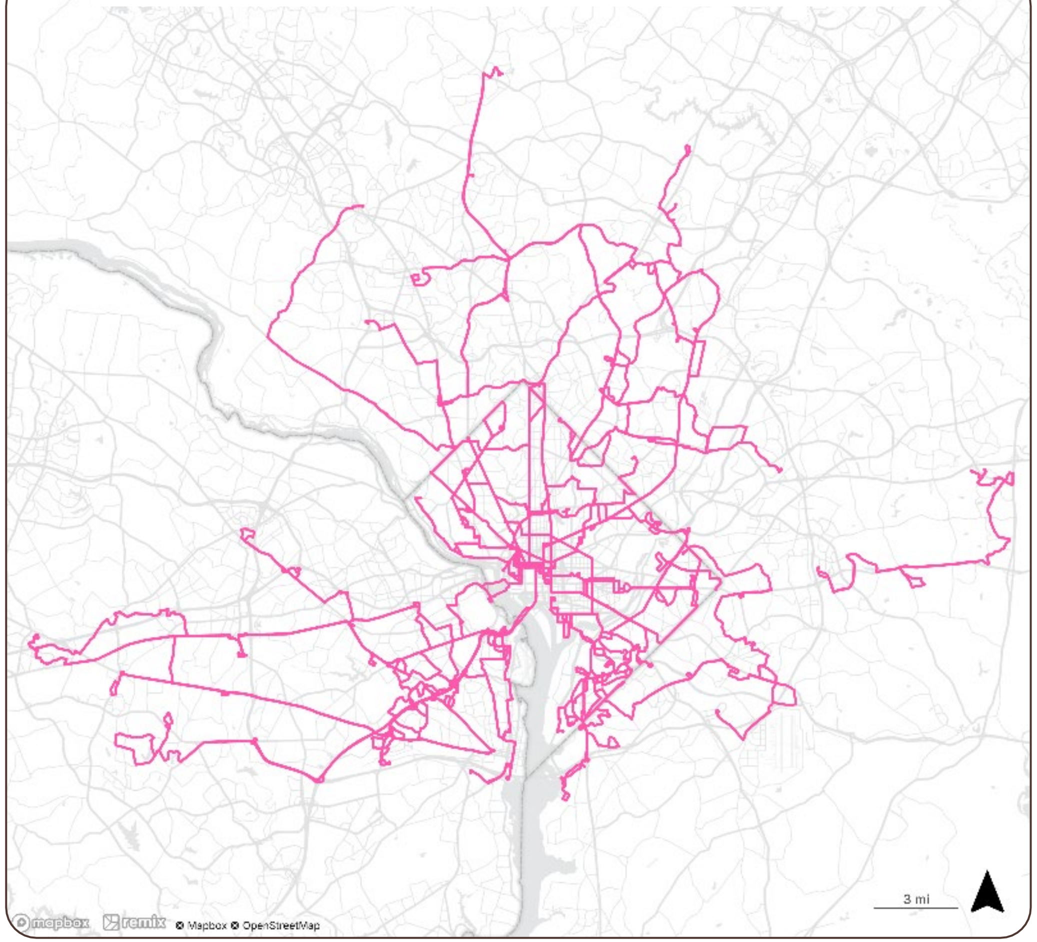
**Only travel time has a change that is considered statistically significant based on sampling from customer research*

Metro Continues to Improve the Network within Existing Resources

Made improvements to over 60 routes since implementing the new network, while building toward the Visionary Network

- Investments were prioritized using data, customer and operator feedback, and planning expertise to maximize impact
- September and December 2025 changes focused on reliability, access, and efficiency, including:
    - Route adjustments and extensions (ex: C63, C25, C26)
    - Expanded service hours (ex: A40, A49, M52, P66)
    - Additional trips to reduce crowding (ex: C11, D94, F28, P62)

Routes that have been improved since June 29, 2025



Building Toward the Visionary Network

Metro is not done improving bus service – we are continuously working to build the network our region deserves

- Through the annual budget cycle, Metro uses data and customer/operator input to identify and prioritize service change recommendations that build toward the Visionary Network
- This allows Metro to incrementally improve service as resources become available

Three Priorities for Continuous Improvement

- **Improve Performance**
- **Increase Access & Frequency**
- **Enhance Service Strategically**

Bus Service Proposals

Building toward a visionary network that will:

- Provide **at least 30-minute frequency** throughout the day for most routes
- Add **new routes**, including more connections between Metrorail branches and emerging activity centers
- Create a **regionwide 24-hour bus network** including overnight connections to the region's airports
- Deliver **more consistent frequent service all day and all week**

Next Steps

Operations & Workforce

- Using data and feedback to continue to improve service
- Conducting bus customer satisfaction survey
- Assessing 4-day work week, with potential to expand

In Partnership with Region

Build toward Visionary Network

Fleet & Facilities

- Procuring new 40- and 60-foot buses
- Expanding digital signage to all new buses
- Continuing to modernize bus garages
- Updating capital plans for feet and faciities

Bus Reliability

- Expanding headway management on additional high-frequency routes

In Partnership with Region

- Implement bus priority, with emphasis on DMV*Moves* corridors
- Advance Next Gen TSP
- Expand Clear Lanes to Maryland and Virginia

Bus Amenities

- Procuring and installing e-paper signs at additional stops
- Updating Fare Policy and Systems Modernization Strategy

In Partnership with Region

- Develop and install regional bus flags
- Continue to advance regional fare integration and consistent discounts