



Safety and Operations Committee

Board Information Item III – B

Service Design & Management Update



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OVERVIEW			
PRESENTATION NAME	Service Design and Management	DOCUMENT NO.	300092
ACTION OR INFORMATION	Information		
STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION PLAN GOAL	Service excellence;		
RESOLUTION	No		
EXECUTIVE OWNER			
EXECUTIVE TEAM OWNER	Davis, Allison;		
ORGANIZATION	Planning and Performance		
DOCUMENT INITIATOR	Jordan H. Holt		
OTHER INFORMATION			
COMMITTEE	Safety and Operations Committee	COMMITTEE DATE	2/12/2026
PURPOSE/KEY HIGHLIGHTS	Provide the Board with information about the 'Service Design and Management' priority program in Metro's Strategic Transformation Plan. The plan was approved by the Board on December 11, 2025. approved by the Board on December 11, 2025.		
DISCUSSION	The Service Design and Management program is one of 18 major portfolios of work outlined in Metro's Strategic Transformation Plan. It is a key component of Metro's strategy to meet the ambitious targets for reliability and access to destinations laid out in the plan. The program is focused on continuously improving the overall		



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network to support regional mobility and access to places people want to go and operational reliability to support on-time performance and meet customer expectations. It aims to improve service to drive ridership and revenue growth, building on several major successes over the past three years:

- Launch of Metro's first redesign of its bus network in 50 years which operates seven percent more service for the same amount of funding
- Full return to Automatic Train Operation, creating significant efficiencies by reducing end-to-end train travel times by 4-11 percent per line
- Addition of 15 miles of bus lanes between CY2023 to CY2025
- Opening of seven new Rail stations in FY2023

The program addresses opportunities through projects in three areas: improving scheduling and planning, advancing operational strategies like headway management and all-door boarding, and expanding bus priority by working with regional partners to advance the high priority bus corridors identified in the DMVMoves Action Plan.

Scheduling and Planning

Metro's strategy is to identify efficiencies in scheduling and operations that can be reinvested to both expand service to improve access to destinations and schedule service more reliably. Metro will implement three projects aligned with this strategy to drive ridership growth:

- Rolling 3-year service plan to enable better workforce and fleet forecasting, reducing missed trips, and inform regional and household planning decisions that drive ridership. The FY2027 proposed budget introduced this concept for FY2028 and FY2029 and Metro staff will continue to improve the process and proposals in subsequent budgets. The service plan has important positive feedback loops with two other priority programs in the Strategic Transformation Plan: fleet management and workforce planning and availability optimization. The service plan informs fleet plans and acquisition strategies, including the decision to retire 26 3000-series railcars by this Spring and acquire more 60-foot articulated buses. The service plan also informs monthly forecasts that drive decisions about the pace of recruiting and training to minimize missed trips due to operator availability. Likewise, efforts to maximize vehicle availability and to reduce operator absenteeism have a direct impact on service reliability by reducing missed trips.

- Updated service guidelines and standards for frequency, hours, and performance. These guidelines and standards are the



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basis for decision-making regarding the service plan. Metro last updated its bus service guidelines in December 2020 and its rail service standards in February 2022. As part of DMVMoves, Metro has been working with regional partners to develop common guidelines and performance metrics that can provide consistency for bus riders across the region and support more seamless, coordinated service planning. In Spring 2026, staff will work on updating Metro’s guidelines and standards to incorporate regional principles, aiming for Board adoption in June 2026.

- Continuous data-driven schedule improvements to increase efficiency and on-time performance. Metro’s twice yearly schedule updates are an opportunity to address reliability through running-time adjustments, staffing strategies, and vehicle spacing. Metro staff will continue to build tools and improve processes to leverage data as inputs and evaluate the impact of decisions. Specifically, Metro is developing a data-driven bus service improvement plan – updated every six months--to identify and prioritize adjustments in alignment with available resources. Rail scheduling and planning will implement a simulation software that can test the resilience of schedules under different operating scenarios in order to optimize the use of resources. and identify reliability improvements.

Operational Strategies

The Metro Integrated Command and Communications (MICC) center opened in October 2023 to enable real-time coordination of operations and faster, more collaborative incident responses. Over the past year, the bus section of the MICC has increased its active management of service disruptions, taking almost 100 actions each day to reduce early arrivals, ensure on-time departures, and minimize bunching. Twenty-two Metro Bus routes operate at 5-12 min frequencies and are candidates for operational strategies that focus on managing the spacing between buses (headways) as opposed to strict adherence to schedule. This is an opportunity to reduce bunching and gapping that can lead to longer-than-expected customer wait times. Beginning in December 2025, staff launched headway management on the C53, one of Metro’s most frequent routes that serves over 12,000 customers each weekday. Lessons learned from this effort will be used to inform a headway management playbook and deployment on other routes.

Over the next year, Metro operational, planning and scheduling staff will build on lessons learned to deliver service in support of multiple high-profile regional events that will draw higher ridership: Cherry Blossom festival, Fourth of July and America’s 250th celebrations, and the NFL Draft.



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Finally, all-door boarding is an opportunity to reduce dwell time at Metro's busiest stops, speeding up service for customers. It can be particularly effective at stops with five or more customers boarding and/or when the wheelchair ramp is deployed. All door boarding is officially encouraged on five routes, but since all buses have targets at the rear door, customers board organically using all doors on many other routes. Approximately seven percent of all customers board through the rear door. All door boarding will provide greater benefits as more customers tap, ridership grows, ramps are deployed, and the region embraces Bus Rapid Transit. This spring, Metro plans to launch all door boarding on all routes with guidance to operators on when to deploy, aligned with a comprehensive fare payment communications campaign and continued enforcement activities.

Bus Priority Treatments

Bus priority treatments, including dedicated bus lanes and transit signal priority (TSP) at intersections, make buses faster and improve reliability by reducing travel time variability. Metro currently operates service in 30 directional miles of bus lanes, about two percent of the total lane miles operated. On corridors with bus-only lanes, Metro buses are traveling 13 percent faster than in 2019, even as overall speeds have declined by 11 percent. Bus-only lanes also have safety benefits: roadway crashes have declined by about 30 percent in two recently added bus lane segments in Washington, DC. Over the next three years, Metro will work with regional partners to advance DMVMoves actions related to bus priority: identifying outcomes, targets, and performance levels for the seven highest priority corridors, and partnering on designing specific investments or treatments to meet the targets. The goal is to fund, build, and operate fast and reliable Metro Bus service along these corridors within the next six to eight years.

In addition, Metro staff has coordinated with fourteen regional agencies on a concept of operations for TSP, with the aim of procuring a next-gen system and beginning phased deployment on key corridors within the next year. Metro's current TSP system, cutting-edge when implemented in 2016, is antiquated today and unable to meet our functional and performance goals consistently. At the same time, TSP technology has advanced, and local jurisdictions are in the process of making generational upgrades to their signal systems. TSP, when deployed in partnership with traffic agencies adopting operational best practices such as 24/7 signal priority on 80 percent intersections on each high frequency route, has the potential to reduce travel times by 8-15 percent, lowering



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	the unit cost of service and creating efficiencies that can be reinvested into providing a more useful network.
INTERESTED PARTIES	Kittelson and Associates, Jacobs Solutions, Inc., Hayden AI
RECOMMENDATION/NEXT STEPS	Information only Next Steps: Periodic Board updates on progress on implementing this priority program
FUNDING IMPACT	Improving service design and management aims to boost ridership and revenue.

Service Design and Management



Safety and Operations Committee
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
February 12, 2026



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Focus Today



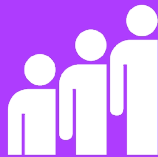
Service Excellence

Deliver safe, reliable, convenient, accessible, and world-class service that customers can trust across all modes.

Objectives of Service Excellence Goal

- **Safety and Security**
- **Reliability**
- **Convenience**

Priority Program:
Service Design and Management



Talented Teams

Attract, develop, and retain world-class talent where individuals feel valued, supported, and proud of their contribution.

Objectives of Talented Teams Goal

- **Recruitment and Retention**
- **Learning and Development**
- **Customer Service Mindset**



Financial & Organizational Efficiency

Steward public resources and efficiently allocate resources where they drive the most value, to ensure service delivery.

Objectives of Financial & Organizational Efficiency Goal

- **Financial Responsibility**
- **Organizational Efficiency**
- **Energy Management**

Program Aims to Improve Reliability, Convenience, and Access

Continuous improvements in:

- **Network convenience** to support regional mobility and access to places people want to go
- **Operational reliability** to support on-time performance and meet customer expectations

Projects

Scheduling and Planning

- Rolling 3-year Bus and Rail service plan
- Updated service guidelines to align with region
- Continuous data-driven schedule improvements

Operational Strategies

- Bus headway management
- All-door boarding
- Continuous improvement strategy for events

Bus Priority

- Regional rapid bus corridors
- Transit Signal Priority

Drives key results:

- Ridership
- Regional mode share
- On-time performance
- Increase service frequency
- Increase coverage and destination access



Improving Service Design and Management Positively Interacts with Other STP Goals and Programs

Examples of how Service Design and Management drives key results across all goals

Service Excellence

Higher fleet availability improves **scheduled service delivered**, reduces **crowding**



Improve **fleet planning and management** through 3-year rolling service plan

Better **operator availability** through **workforce planning and absenteeism management** improves **scheduled service delivered**

Talented Teams



Improve **operator availability** by enabling **better forecasts** through 3-year rolling service plan

Financial and Organizational Efficiency

Reinvest in service to drive **ridership, OTP, mode share**



Reduce **operating costs per revenue mile** by increasing speeds through **bus priority**



Scheduling and Planning: Reliability Starts With the Schedule

Recent Accomplishments

- **New bus network launched** June 2025
- Re-invested **\$20 million in operational savings** into service frequencies, improving reliability
- Scheduling efficiencies enabled by HASTUS contribute to **better Bus OTP (+1pt)**
- Scheduling efficiencies enabled by ATO implementation contribute to **better Rail OTP (+0.6pt)**
- **Data-driven approach to train length** improves efficiency, more robust schedules

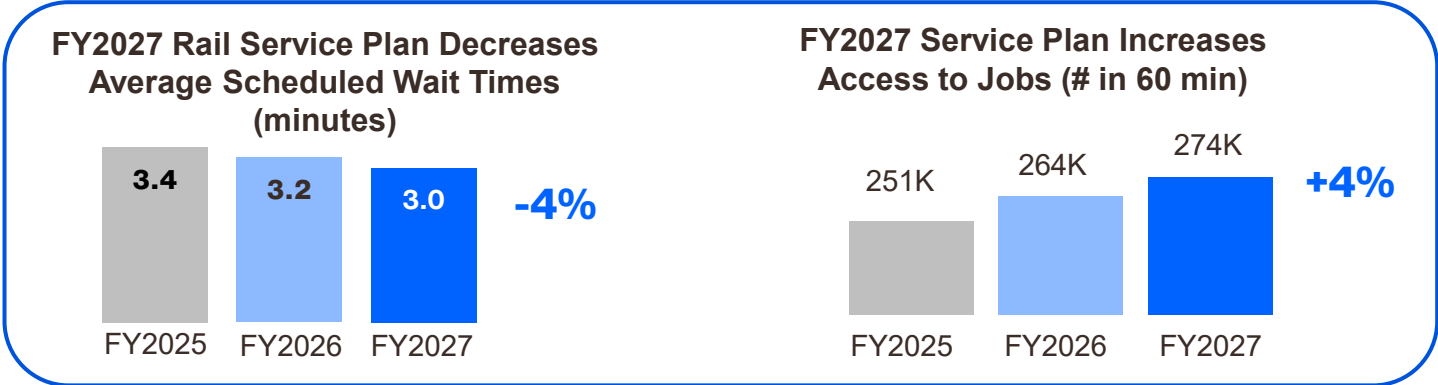
Up Next

- Continue to refine **rolling 3-year Bus and Rail service plan** to improve workforce and fleet forecasting, reduce missed trips, and inform regional and household planning decisions that drive ridership
- **Update service guidelines and standards** to align across the region, enabling consistent expectations for customers and supporting coordinated service planning. Targeting June Board approval
- Continuous **data-driven improvements** to improve on-time performance and convenience
 - Schedule updates 2x per year (December and June)
 - December 2025 Bus adjusted service on 50 routes
 - December 2025 Rail adjusted running time for ATO, train spacing on interlined segments, terminal reliability
 - Bus service improvement plan to identify opportunities
 - Rail simulation software to improve schedule reliability

Rolling 3-year Service Plan Introduced in FY2027 Budget

Strategy: Drive ridership and access to destinations through investments in frequency and coverage

- Useful networks quickly take customers where they want to go, when they want to travel
- Customer research tells us that short wait times, reliable service and fast travel times are most important
- Service plan prioritizes investments in frequency, extending service coverage, and longer service hours
- Options refined based on probable impact on ridership, reducing wait times, and increasing access to jobs



Bus Service Improvement Proposals: FY2027-FY2029

Service Improvement Goals	FY2027 Proposal	FY2028 Concepts	FY2029 Concepts
Improve service frequency, service span and add weekend service	C57, C91, D24, C43, D4X, D6X, P12, P40, P97, M60, M70, A49, A76	C51, C53, C55, M12, P30, P63, P90, P94, F44	C57, C77, C81, D40, D60, P12, P35, P73, A76, F50
Provide consistent service (remove short turns and extend routes)	D72, C35, C63, M12, P93	M12, M20	D24, M12
Provide new overnight service	-	A58, F20	P30, P94, M12, A16, F59
Adjust service to align with the Purple Line	-	Route adjustments to be developed (P31, P32)	
Potentially add new routes via local grant funding	A6X, F2X	Future opportunities to be developed	

FY2028 and FY2029 service concepts are in development; programming subject to availability of resources and annual budget process.

Rail Service Improvement Proposals: FY2027-FY2029

Lines	FY2027 Proposal	FY2028 Concepts	FY2029 Concepts
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late Night: 7-8 min Improved from 10 min Peak Period Capacity Schedule adjustments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late Night: 6 min Improved from 7-8 min Peak Period Capacity Schedule adjustments
O S B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daytime Weekday: 10 min Improved from 12 min Peak Period Capacity Schedule adjustments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daytime Weekend: 10 min Improved from 12 min Late Night: 12 min Improved from 15 min 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late Night: 10 min Improved from 12 min Peak Period Capacity Schedule adjustments
Y G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Greenbelt service (starts Dec 31, 2025) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daytime Weekend: 6 min Improved from 8 min 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late Night: 6 min Improved from 7-8 min

min = train headways

FY2028 and FY2029 service concepts are in development; programming subject to availability of resources and annual budget process.



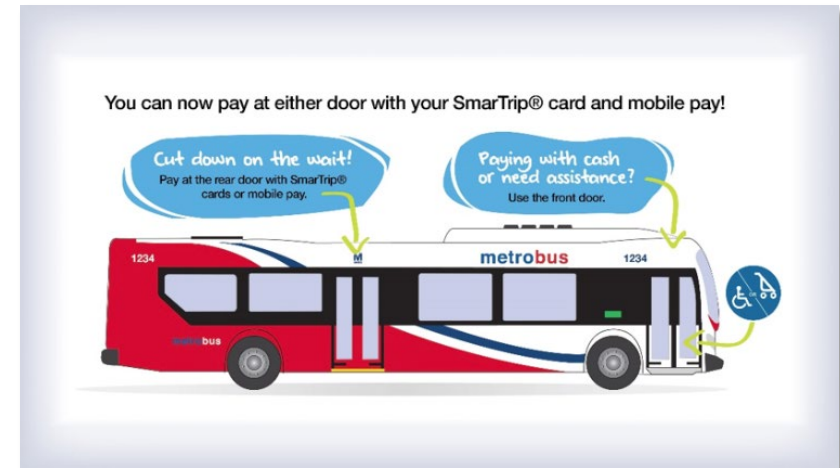
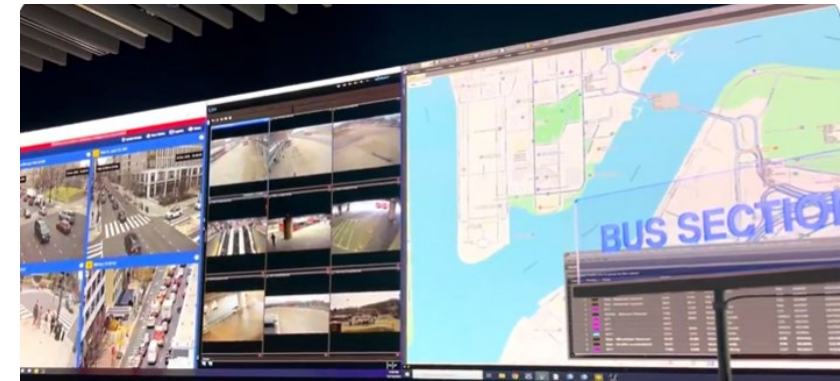
Operational Strategies: Daily Improvements to Reliability

Recent Accomplishments

- Abilities Ride, contractor management contribute to **better Access OTP (+2pt)**
- Active service management contributes to **better Bus OTP (+1pt)**
- Enhanced response to incidents, terminal management contribute to **better Rail OTP (+0.6pt)**
- Completed installation of targets on all bus rear doors

Up Next

- Bus **headway management** to enable consistent customer wait times on most frequent routes. Started on C53 in December 2025
- Continuous improvement strategy for **supporting regional events** (Cherry Blossom, Fourth of July, America's 250th, 2027 NFL Draft)
- Expand **all-door boarding**



Opportunities for All Door Boarding

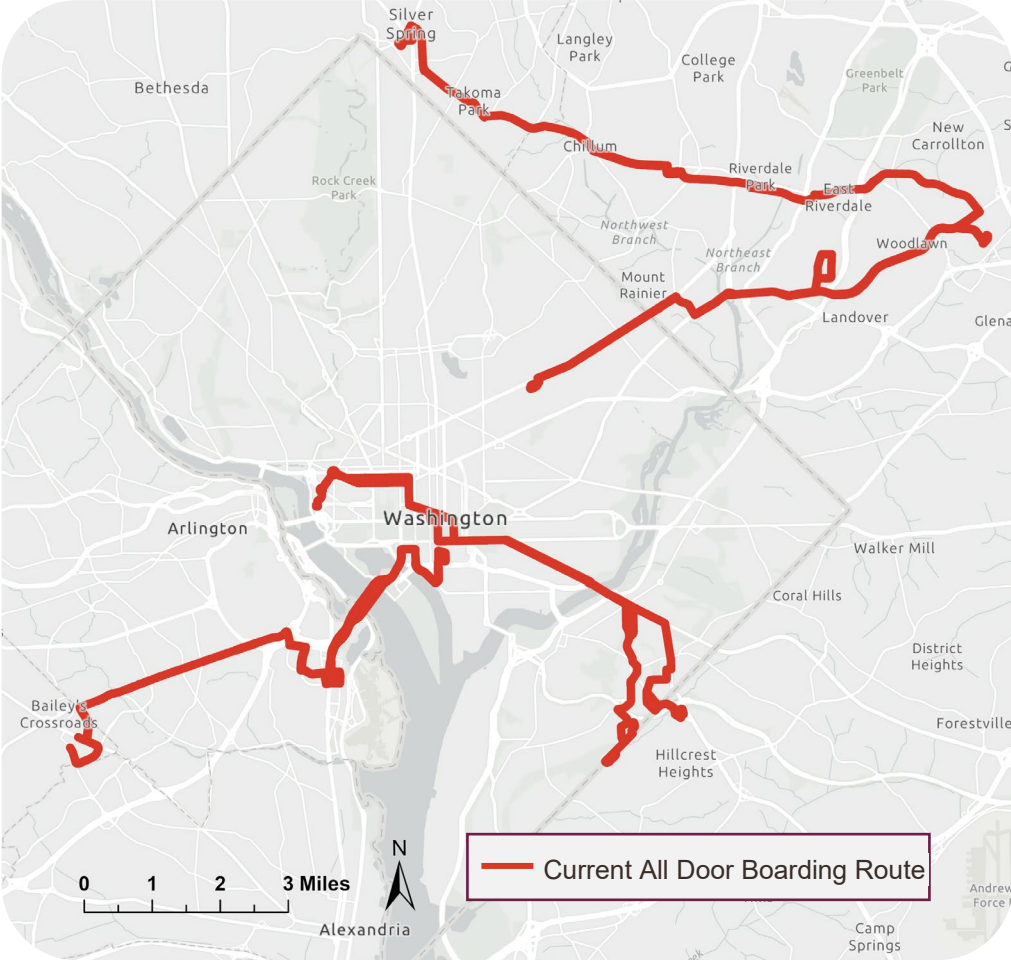
All door boarding is most beneficial at stops with 5+ customers and/or when the ramp is deployed

- Taps on Metro Bus are increasing, but fare evasion remains an ongoing challenge
- ~7 percent of customers are boarding through the rear door, with tap rates similar at both doors on most routes

All Door Boarding will provide greater benefits as more customers tap, ridership grows, ramps are deployed, and the region embraces Bus Rapid Transit

Next Steps

- Launch All Door Boarding systemwide, aligned with comprehensive fare payment communications campaign (Spring 2026)
- Provide guidance to operators and customers on when to use
- Bolster fare enforcement activities



Bus Priority Treatments: Improve Speed and Reliability

Recent Accomplishments

- Added **13 miles of new bus lanes** in FY2025 for a total of 30 directional miles (2% of total travel lanes where buses operate)
- Buses traveling in segments with priority are **13% faster** since 2019
- **Roadway crashes declined 32%** on the Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor with dedicated bus lanes

Up Next

- Partner with jurisdictions to implement regional bus priority network as identified in the DMVMoves Action Plan
- Upgrade Transit Signal Priority

Faster speeds lower costs, enabling reinvestment in service

To keep buses running every...

10
minutes



On a route that takes...

50
minutes



Metro needs to provide...

5
buses and operators



When that service becomes **10 minutes slower** because of congestion...

60
minutes



+20%

time penalty for customers

6
buses and drivers



+1

bus to purchase and maintain, additional bus operator to hire

Bus Priority Treatments Improve Speeds and Reliability

Policies



San Francisco's Transit First Policy



DDOT's Bus Priority Plan

Design Treatments



Dedicated Bus Lanes



Intersection treatments, e.g., transit signal priority, turn restrictions for automobiles

Operations Tools



Buses at high frequency and with long spans of service

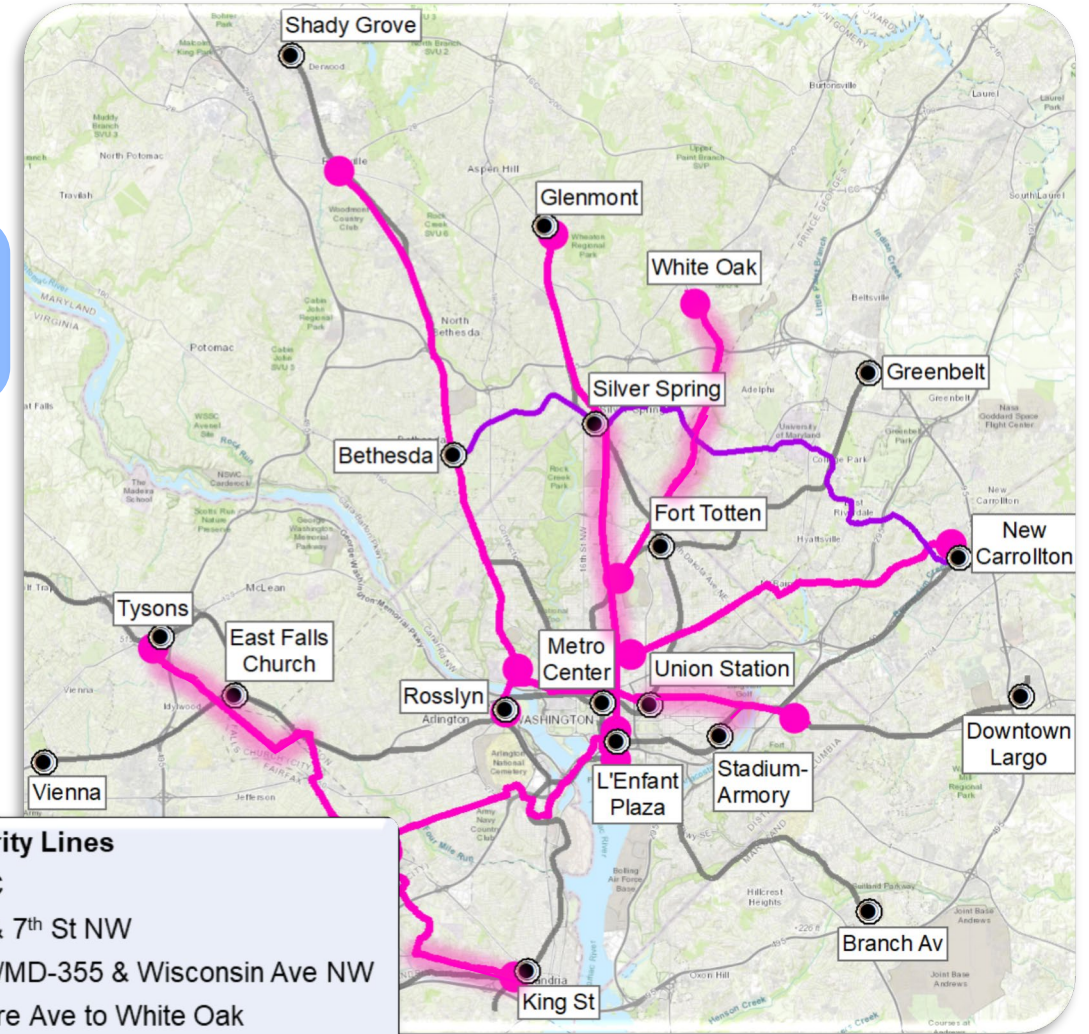


Rapid boarding from all doors or off- board fare collection

Regional Approach to Better Bus Service

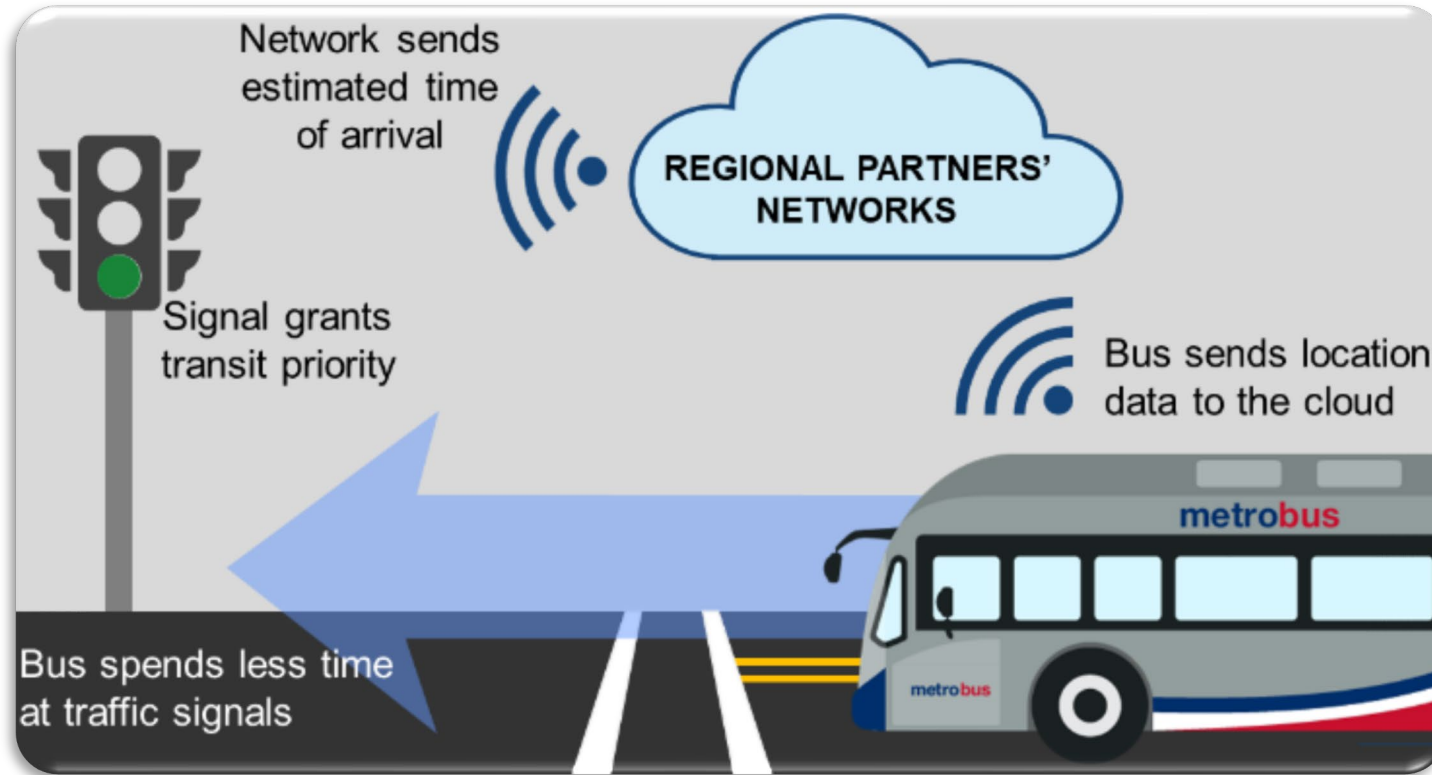
DMVMoves offers a path for **regional action** on high-priority corridors

- **Set ideal outcomes and performance targets** to achieve service needs through priority investments
- Metro and jurisdictions partner to **design investments to meet targets**
- **Implement:** Fund, build, and operate within the next 6-8 years



- **Bus Priority Lines**
 - Crosstown DC
 - Georgia Ave & 7th St NW
 - Rockville Pike/MD-355 & Wisconsin Ave NW
 - New Hampshire Ave to White Oak
 - Rhode Island Ave & Annapolis Rd
 - Columbia Pike & 14th St Bridge to L'Enfant Pl
 - VA Route 7
- **Metrorail Lines**
- **Purple Line**

Shared Responsibilities for a Next Gen TSP



Transit Signal Priority is a **shared system** relying on Metro's **bus-side capabilities** and **traffic agencies' signal operations**

Pairing **operational best practices with newer technologies** can deliver **10x travel time benefits** than technology alone

Improving Bus Performance with Next Gen TSP

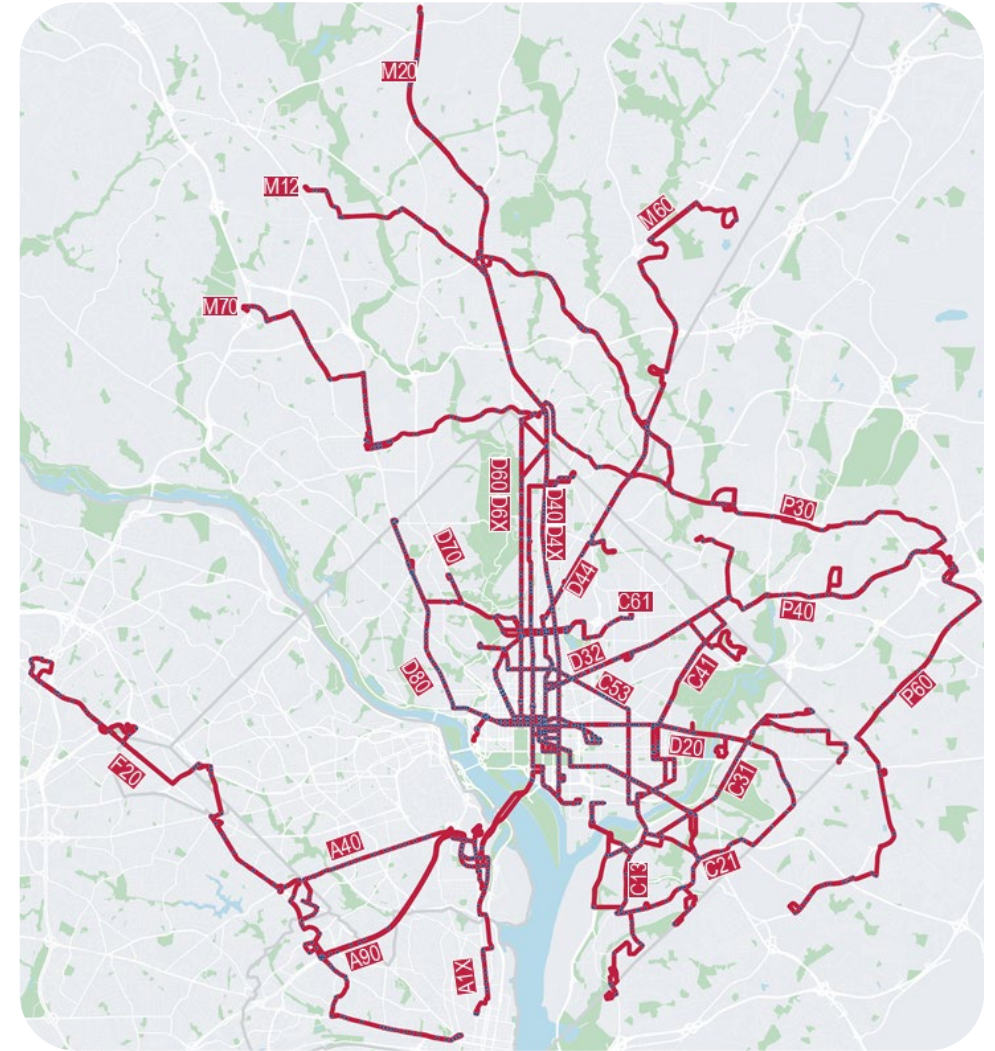
Metro Bus spends **25-45% of its total travel time** waiting at traffic signals*

- Transit Signal Priority (TSP) reduces bus delays at intersections by adjusting traffic signals when buses approach
- TSP is invisible and works in tandem with other bus priority tools
- Opportunity: 8-15% travel time savings

Next Gen TSP can save **travel time and improve reliability on all high frequency routes**, allowing Metro to deliver better service with fewer resources.

Next Steps

- Ongoing coordination with 14 agencies on regional Concept of Operations
- Vendor solicitation (Spring 2026), selection (Fall 2026)
- Phased deployment starting with 3 corridors CY2027
- Jurisdictions are aligning signal controller upgrades with Next Gen TSP



**Based on May 2023 weekday data from the following routes: 70, 79, 52, 54, S2, S9, J2, and MW1.*

Next Steps

Metro staff will provide the Board with regular updates on progress through presentations and memos, with quarterly Service Excellence reports tracking progress on key results

Upcoming milestones include:

- Public Comment and Board Adoption of FY2027 Budget (inclusive of **rolling three-year service plan**) in April 2026
- Launch **all-door boarding** systemwide in Spring 2026
- Board adoption of updated **service guidelines and standards** in June 2026
- Bus and Rail **schedule changes** begin in June 2026
- Participation in Metropolitan Washington Council of Government-led Working Group on **Regional Bus Priority** beginning Spring 2026
- Procure next-gen **Transit Signal Priority** system by Fall 2026
- FY2028 – FY2030 draft service plan as part of FY2028 Budget Proposal in December 2026