

Your Metro, The Way Forward

Strategic Transformation Plan

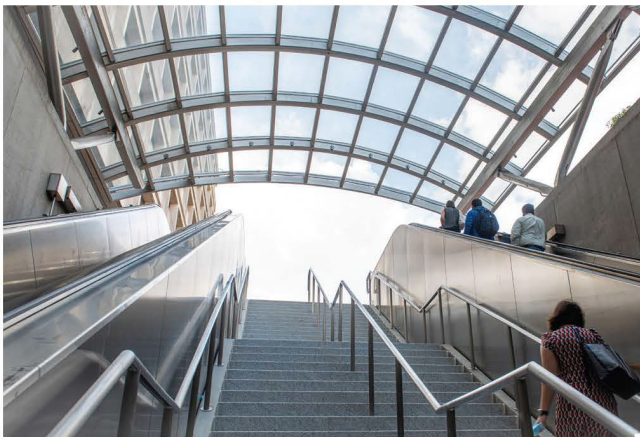


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1 Letter from the Chair and General Manager

Metro is vital to the region's residents and visitors to the nation's capital. We provide the bus, paratransit, and rail network to ensure everyone has equitable access to jobs, school, medical appointments, sporting events, parades, restaurants, and nightlife, as well as to visit elected officials, historic landmarks, monuments, and world-class museums in the National Capital Region. Metro is the safest way to travel, supports the region's emissions reduction goals to combat climate change, and represents a \$100 billion investment in a transit system that is a powerful economic engine driving our prosperity.

Thanks to customer and community engagement and a shared sense of urgency among our Board, staff and workforce, last year Metro started to rebound from the pandemic and restore public trust. In addition to increasing service and resuming operations with our newest rail fleet, we opened the Silver Line extension, delivering long-awaited service to Dulles Airport and Loudoun County. We finished platform reconstruction and other customer upgrades at five Orange Line stations, advancing work for Metro's first electric bus garages at Northern and Bladensburg, and connected Metrorail tracks with the new Potomac Yard Station, which opens in May. We are restoring orderly conduct and fairness with fare enforcement that helps pay for services.

We rolled out Metrobus improvements to 29 routes to enhance service and kicked off our Better Bus network redesign with 12,300 customer interactions, 18 pop up events and 5,300 survey responses.

We are listening to our customers and stakeholders. In addition to continuing our steady restoration of frequent bus and rail service, we have proposed a budget that drops peak fare surcharges and initiates a low-income fare program. We are also investing in a new Metro training center that will create a collaborative environment to promote enhanced safety, technical training and staff development.

But we are just getting started, and we know there is more work ahead. We are seeking the region's feedback on our strategic plan *#YourMetro, The Way Forward*. This plan was developed by the Board of Directors and management to guide Metro's decision-making over the next five years. It will serve as our North Star and begins to call the question about how we fund the Metro the region needs, wants and deserves.

#YourMetro, The Way Forward establishes clear priorities for Metro, expands transparency around performance metrics, and promotes collaboration with our teams and partners. Most importantly, this plan recognizes that we exist to serve our customers. Metro connects you to opportunities and the way forward holds endless possibilities. We look forward to your comments.



Paul C. Smedberg

Chair, Board of Directors



Randy Clarke

General Manager & CEO

2 Executive Summary

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) operates the third-largest heavy rail system and sixth-largest bus network in the United States and serves the Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) megaregion.¹ The Metro transit system is critical to the DMV's economy and is a proud employer of over 12,000 individuals that serve the region's customers every day. *Your Metro, The Way Forward* (the plan) was developed to guide Metro's strategy and actions over the next five+ years as Metro works to meet the evolving needs of its customers and employees. The plan will guide both long-term strategy and day-to-day decision making as Metro continues to regain ridership post-pandemic and respond to changing mobility patterns to ensure the agency captures the needs of the community.

The plan was developed by the Board of Directors (Board) and management through direct and active input from Metro's customers, employees, and regional stakeholders. The plan's purpose is to deliver what Metro customers deserve and the region needs. The plan defines Metro's priorities and connects the mission, vision, and goals with actionable initiatives that will drive progress. This will enhance transparency and build trust with Metro's customers, staff, and stakeholders, and align the organization on:

- **Values and Mission:** What Metro lives by and does
- **Vision, Goals, and Objectives:** What Metro aspires to be and where it wants to go
- **Initiatives:** How Metro will get there



Metro's mission: Your Metro – connecting you to possibilities

Metro's vision: Becoming the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently

Metro plays a vital role in the community, connecting people in the DMV to jobs, schools, major attractions, key destinations, and recreational activities. With this forward-looking plan, Metro's vision is to expand on this role and become the region's trusted way to move more people safely. Metro will earn and restore public trust, enhance its talented, diverse, and engaged workforce, ensure accessibility for all

¹ <https://www.design.upenn.edu/news/post/defining-americas-megaregions>, December 17, 2021

customers, and strengthen its contribution to the DMV's economic prosperity and efforts to combat climate change. In building to this future, Metro will keep the safety of customers and employees as top-of mind, take a customer-centric lens to decision-making, be ethical and transparent, and think boldly to innovate and transform the organization to meet the needs of our customers and growing region.

Metro's vision will be achieved by advancing four goals that were developed through data and direct input from our customers, employees, and stakeholders:

1. Service excellence: Deliver safe, reliable, convenient, equitable, accessible, and enjoyable service for customers.
2. Talented teams: Attract, develop, and retain top talent where individuals feel valued, supported, and proud of their contribution.
3. Regional opportunity and partnership: Design transit service to move more people and connect a growing region.
4. Financial stewardship and resource management: Manage resources responsibly to achieve a sustainable operating, capital, and energy-efficient model.

Each goal contains supporting objectives (e.g., service excellence has three supporting objectives for reliability, safety, and convenience) which will be delivered through the implementation of detailed initiatives (e.g., Better Bus Network Redesign for regional opportunity and partnership) linked to each objective. Some initiatives are currently underway, while others are proposed and prioritized across the next several months and years. The annual budget process will determine which initiatives are prioritized and funded within a given year.

To monitor and report success and progress, Metro will track metrics specific to goals and objectives. Goal metrics represent top line performance measures that the entire organization works toward meeting. Objective metrics are critical to the achievement of goal metrics and are achieved through the execution of various initiatives. Metro is committed and excited to build a better future for our customers, community, and staff. Metro will continue to engage the public and stakeholders as the agency strives to become the DMV's trusted way to move more people safely.

Your Metro, The Way Forward

Values	Safe	Customer centric	Ethical	Innovative
Mission	Your Metro - Connecting you to possibilities			
Vision	Becoming the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently			
Goals	Service excellence	Talented teams	Regional opportunity and partnership	Financial stewardship and resource management
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Reliability • Convenience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention • Engagement, empowerment, and recognition • Professional and technical skill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional network and partner service optimization • Community partnership and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial responsibility • Energy efficiency
Activation	Initiatives	Metrics	Board Reporting	Public Facing Dashboards

3 Overview

3.1 Agency and Region Overview

As home to the nation's Capital, the DMV is a dynamic entertainment, cultural, and historic destination drawing individuals from around the world, while also housing some of the country's most critical government institutions. Due to its expansive and unique urban space, reliable and convenient public transit is critical to the regional transportation system, helping to connect individuals to personal, educational, and professional opportunities and enhancing livability.

The 2020 Census data reports that the DMV served by Metro has seen substantial population growth in the last decade. Washington DC's population increased by 15 percent, the Commonwealth of Virginia reported an 8 percent increase, and Maryland's population grew by about 7 percent.²

Since 1967, Metro has been a major transportation partner for the DMV, and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, helped nearly 1 million people connect across the region daily. Metro delivers service through its fleet of over 5,000 vehicles across rail, bus, and paratransit modes and non-revenue fleet and an infrastructure network of nearly 100 rail stations (including six newly opened Silver Line stations), over 11,500 bus stops, and more than 270 facilities. Metro provides the following services to the DMV:

- **Metrorail:** Heavy rail transit service.
- **Metrobus:** Local and regional fixed route bus service including bus rapid transit (BRT).
- **MetroAccess:** Shared-ride, door-to-door, paratransit service for people who cannot independently use the accessible bus and/or rail system due to a disability.

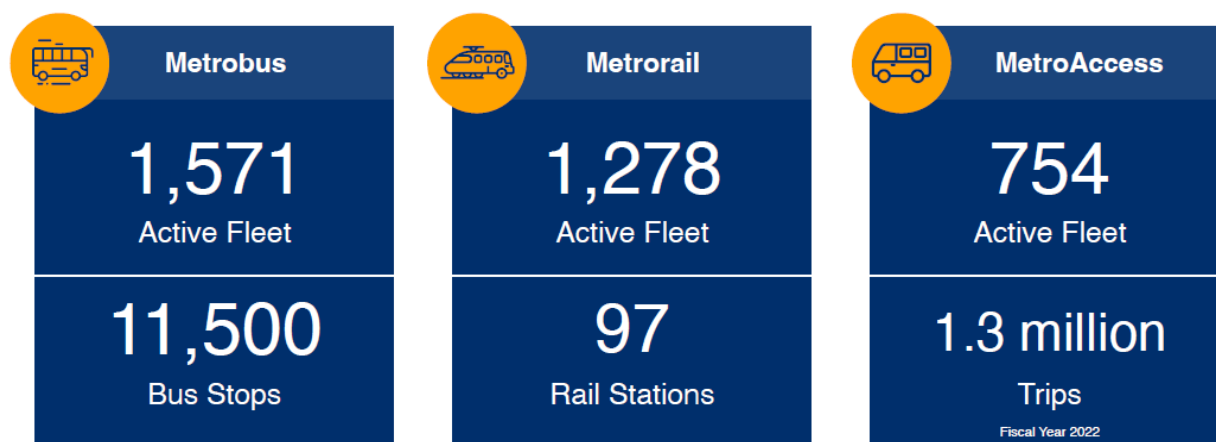
Metro's challenges and opportunities have changed substantially since the adoption of the agency's previous guiding document, *Keeping Metro Safe, Reliable and Affordable*,³ released in January 2019. While Metro has been actively expanding the system to increase coverage accessibility, and frequent service, customers have increased their reliance on other forms of transportation (e.g., ride sharing, pedestrian and bike lanes, personal vehicles, and taxi). Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed commuting patterns and the way many people work. In March 2020, at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Metro ridership fell sharply, reaching as low as 10 percent of its pre-pandemic level. In the DMV and across the US, employers are increasingly integrating remote ways of working and expanding flexible work arrangements, decisions that will impact the future of transit. Declining ridership has also imposed significant financial challenges on Metro and other transit agencies across the country. While the federal government has provided substantial funding for Metro to address gaps, federal funding is not permanent.

However, Metro saw a rebound in ridership in 2021 and provided a total of 106 million trips, with Metrobus accounting for 60.4 million (63 percent), Metrorail accounting for 33.9 million, (35 percent), and MetroAccess accounting for 1.3 million (2 percent). In November 2022, Metro ridership across bus and rail modes was 60-70 percent of pre-pandemic levels. Figure 1 illustrates the current bus and rail networks.

² Census: DC, Maryland, Virginia See Population Growth – NBC4 Washington ([nbcwashington.com](https://www.nbc4.com/news/local/dc-population-growth))

³ <https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/strategic-plans/upload/KMSRA-Strategic-Plan-Jan-2019.pdf>

Figure 1: Rail and Bus System Fact Sheet



3.2 Strategic Plan Purpose Overview

This plan will guide the organization over the next five years in its response to the changing world and its own operational challenges. The plan has been shaped by community and employee needs and desires for accessible, reliable, convenient, and safe transportation. The plan's purpose is to:

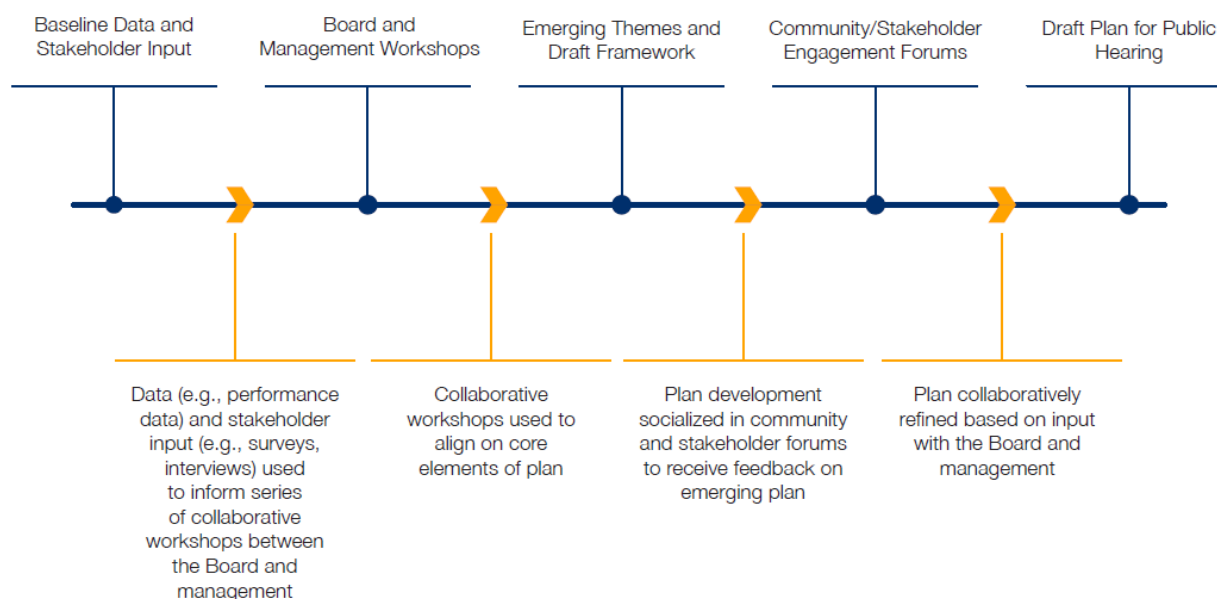
- Guide Metro's long-term strategy and near-term activities based on a set of values, a mission and a vision supported by goals and objectives, concrete initiatives to execute the strategy, and metrics to measure and monitor progress and success.
- Improve the customer experience by providing services that meet the region's needs through the development of operational and capital priorities for more frequent and daily service, improved customer communications, enhanced safety, new fare simplifications, and capital improvements.
- Direct actions to improve the experience of Metro employees and other stakeholders, including enhanced community outreach.
- Inform future capital programs and operating budgets by aligning funding with programs of initiatives, informed by the new goals and objectives.

Metro will face many challenges on its way to delivering a world-class system in the next five years. The operating funding shortfall and increased costs of labor and materials will drive overall project costs, and labor shortages will continue to place demands on the desire for increased service. A comprehensive and robust strategic plan will provide the scaffolding necessary as the agency navigates these challenges.

3.3 Methodology and Plan Development Process Overview

Metro used a detailed methodology and plan development process to create a comprehensive strategy for transformation focused on the most critical needs and desires of the Metro community and employees. Figure 2 summarizes the plan development process deployed by the Metro team to create a revised strategic transformation plan. The following sections provide further detail on the individual efforts within this plan development process.

Figure 2: Plan Development Process



3.3.1 Baseline Data Gathering and Stakeholder Input

The development process was initiated by gathering and collecting a variety of qualitative and quantitative baseline data (Figure 3) to ensure the plan was evidence- and community-driven.

Figure 3: Baseline Data and Information Guiding Metro's Strategic Transformation Plan

Staff and community input are shaping a robust, customer-center are Strategic Transformation Plan to be adopted in winter 2023



Data gathering included developing baselines to measure plan progress for three separate data categories:

1. **Customer and Community Baseline:** Data derived from current and prospective Metro customers. Approximately 2,600 customers provided input via survey, which was conducted in fall 2022.

2. **Employee Baseline:** Data derived from Metro employees including Board, management, and staff members. Thousands of employees repeatedly contributed to baseline metrics through interviews, townhalls, and surveys.
3. **Performance Baseline:** Data obtained through a review of previous Metro efforts and analyses.

Baseline data gathering methods for each category are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Baseline Data Gathering Methods

Category	Methods Description
Customer/ Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administered interviews to obtain data on customer perceptions, experiences, needs, and perceived opportunities for Metro. Hosted events and other customer and community forums to obtain input on their needs. Developed a baseline diagnostic customer survey to understand customer satisfaction, perceptions, and needs of Metro, drivers of those perceptions, and opportunities for improvement. Analyzed nearly 100,000 social media posts relating to its service to identify conversational themes and overall public online sentiment towards Metro.
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted interviews with Board members, senior management, and staff across the organization and led multiple staff townhalls to gather data on staff experience at Metro, opportunities for improvement and organizational strengths. Developed both staff and management surveys to assess overall employee engagement and areas for improvement and strengths in existing Metro processes, structures, and systems.
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed ongoing strategic initiatives and prior studies, surveys, and reports to understand previously identified opportunities and current efforts to improve Metro internally. Reviewed performance statistics to understand Metro's existing operations, financial, and safety performance. Conducted reviews of peer institutions.

3.3.2 Strategy Framework and Plan Development

After compiling the diagnostic data, Metro began a series of workshops designed to align the organization's Board and management around a strategic framework and transformation plan. The workshops, held throughout fall 2022, were designed to be highly collaborative, safe spaces for sharing ideas that could transform Metro. The initial workshop helped management come together to agree on the strategy framework, review the current baseline, and discuss emerging opportunities and potential risks. In subsequent workshops, Metro management reached a consensus on the core strategy, including the organizational mission, core values, and a vision for the future.

Metro Board and management then established goals and objectives that link the organization's vision for the future with clear and measurable actions to drive progress. Metro management also agreed to a series of metrics and targets to measure progress towards each of the plan's goals and objectives as an accountability effort. The utilization of metrics is critical to the process as they ensure the plan's goals and objectives are data-driven, and that employees are accountable for and transparent about progress.

Metrics for this effort have been separated into the following two categories:

- **Goal Metrics:** Metrics that are tied to specific goals and track progress across the entire organization.
- **Objective Metrics:** Metrics that are tied to specific objectives and track progress against specific objectives.

Metric progress and success will be evaluated based on improvements towards targets and will inform initiative programs. A full list of metrics can be found in **Appendix A**, including descriptions, current measures, and targets. Figure 4 provides an illustration of the process for developing the strategy framework for the plan.

Figure 4: Strategy Framework Illustration



3.3.3 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Forums

After developing the initial strategic plan, Metro began the process of collecting input on the plan through stakeholder and community engagement forums. This feedback period was designed to ensure that the plan's mission, vision, values, and goals aligned with those of Metro's stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups were based on Metro's existing stakeholder database and included the following groups:

- Metro Staff and Collective Bargaining Units
- Advisory committees (i.e., the Riders Advisory Council and Accessibility Advisory Committee)
- Customers and community
- Public advocates and non-profit organizations
- Business community
- Government partners and elected officials

Figure 5 provides a summary of stakeholder engagement methods and forums used throughout the development of the plan.

Figure 5: Stakeholder Engagement Forums Summary



3.3.4 Your Metro, The Way Forward Plan Framework

The result of Metro's process was a comprehensive strategy focused on the most critical needs and desires of the Metro community, customers, and staff. To thoughtfully create this strategy, Metro leveraged a framework to define different layers of the strategy:

- **Values and Mission:** What Metro lives by and does
- **Vision, Goals, and Objectives:** What Metro aspires to and where it wants to go
- **Initiatives:** How Metro will get there

Figure 6 provides an overview of the plan resulting from the plan development process. **Section 4** and **Section 5** provide detailed explanations on the plan's values, mission, vision, goals, objectives, and initiatives.

Figure 6: *Your Metro, The Way Forward* Plan Overview

Your Metro, The Way Forward				
Values	Safe	Customer centric	Ethical	Innovative
Mission	Your Metro - Connecting you to possibilities			
Vision	Becoming the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently			
Goals	Service excellence	Talented teams	Regional opportunity and partnership	Financial stewardship and resource management
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Reliability • Convenience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention • Engagement, empowerment, and recognition • Professional and technical skill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional network and partner service optimization • Community partnership and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial responsibility • Energy efficiency
Activation	Initiatives	Metrics	Board Reporting	Public Facing Dashboards

3.4 Supporting our Community

Good public transportation is a powerful and unique driver of strong communities and thriving economies. Safe, reliable, and efficient transit service enhances mobility and connectivity to economic and social opportunities for all DMV residents. A well-designed transit system supports access to employment, education, healthcare, and recreational activities, ensuring that everyone in the region can fully participate in community life.

Metro is committed to engaging with the community in shaping the future of transit. The approach to soliciting public stakeholder input was designed to ensure broad representation and meaningful feedback from all residents. The initiatives outlined in this plan address areas for improvement identified through surveys conducted with Metro employees and riders, ensuring that Metro continues to meet the diverse needs of the region.

3.4.1 Strengthening Communities through System Design

Metro defines a strong transit system as one that enables all residents to access the region's opportunities and resources. Metro has created an effective transit system by:

- Recognizing that access to reliable transportation is essential for individuals to reach jobs, education, and essential services.

- Understanding that the agency's investments and operational decisions impact the daily lives of residents and therefore commits to designing, implementing, and evaluating strategies, policies, practices, and investments with the goal of maximizing community benefit.

Metro is actively working to improve mobility in the DMV as a service provider for a diverse population. Through transit services, Metro enables many residents to participate in the economy and access essential resources. In 2016, the Metrorail Passenger Survey reported that 16 percent of its rail riders were low-income and 45 percent identified as people of color, highlighting the significant role Metro plays in supporting the region's workforce. In 2018, the Metrobus Passenger Survey reported that 55 percent of riders were low-income and 80 percent were people of color, demonstrating Metro's vital role in providing accessible transportation options for all.

3.4.2 Supporting the Community through Employment

Metro defines a strong workforce as one where all employees have the opportunity to succeed based on their skills and contributions. Metro has built a strong workplace by:

- Committing to a work environment that recognizes, respects, and values the contributions of each employee.
- Creating and implementing policies, practices, and procedures that ensure fair treatment of all employees.
- Making merit-based decisions on promotions, training, professional development, and other career opportunities.

As a major employer in the region, Metro plays a key role in providing career opportunities for approximately 12,000 staff members. Metro values a diverse workforce and aims to recruit and hire employees that reflect the community it serves. Metro also invests in local businesses, spending more than \$175 million annually to support small and locally owned enterprises.

By fostering a workplace culture that supports professional growth and career advancement, Metro ensures that its employees are well-positioned to serve the community effectively. Through strategic workforce planning, Metro continues to strengthen its role as a major contributor to the regional economy and a key provider of high-quality transportation services for all residents.

4 Mission, Vision, and Values

The plan's mission, vision, and values resulting from the plan development process are defined by what Metro lives by and does, and what Metro aspires to be and where the agency wants to go.

4.1 Mission

The mission statement defines what the agency lives by and does regarding business practices and providing transit service. In coordination with the Board and through the plan's stakeholder engagement effort, Metro developed the following mission statement for this plan: ***"Your Metro - Connecting you to possibilities."***

Metro exists to serve the DMV by providing connections and mobility to everyone that lives in or visits the area. Metro currently does so by connecting:

- Children to schools, empowering them to fulfill their dreams and build a better future
- Talent to the workforce, fostering opportunities for employers and employees, and making the DMV a more prosperous area
- People to entertainment, culture, and sports, nurturing a vibrant and diverse metropolitan area
- Tourists to the nation's capital and unique attractions, enabling them to explore nature, art, and America's history in a place like no other
- Families and friends together, providing access to be closer to the people they most care about

Metro provides these connections through the large and complex transportation system the agency manages and the committed and dedicated employees that support the system, fostering prosperity and quality of life across the DMV.

4.2 Vision

The plan's vision statement will guide Metro's aspirations for transformation over the next five years and beyond. Metro developed the following vision statement for the transformation effort: **"Becoming the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently"**

To build on its mission, Metro will become the preferred way of travel in the DMV, as well as a trustworthy system that provides safe, reliable, and seamless transportation that is accessible to everyone and increases access to opportunity. As customer needs change, Metro will evolve to continue providing a modern, convenient, and enjoyable travel experience customers are willing to recommend.

Metro will be an impactful employer, sustained by a talented, and engaged workforce that is proud to serve the region and has a strong sense of community. Metro will be a great place for its employees and enable everyone to experience a rewarding and meaningful career.

On a broader level, Metro will be a foundation of the DMV's prosperity by designing the transit solutions that the community requires.

4.3 Values

Metro has a set of core values that make up the foundation for all the decisions and actions that the organization and its employees make to accomplish the agency's mission. Table 2 displays and defines the agency's core values.

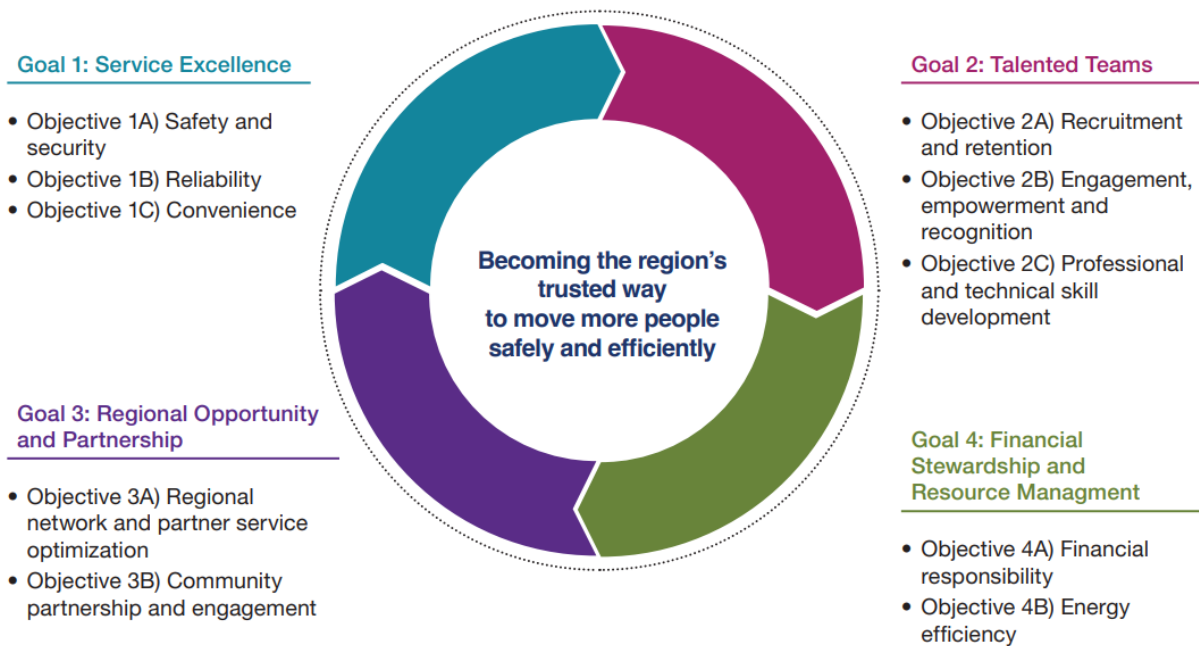
Table 2: Metro Values

Safe	Metro does everything with the safety of customers and employees at the top of mind.
Customer-centric	Metro exists to serve our customers and the region; everything Metro does is in the pursuit of better service.
Ethical	Metro is ethical and transparent .
Innovative	Metro thinks boldly and challenges the status quo to continuously improve.

5 Goals, Objectives, and Initiative Programs

Metro has identified four goals that represent long-term outcomes that the plan seeks to achieve. Each goal is paired with select thematic objectives that serve as measurable actions to achieve the overarching goal. Figure 7 displays goals and objectives for this plan. The plan is activated and accounted for through the initiative programs, metrics, public dashboard, and Board reporting.

Figure 7: Goals and Vision Alignment



Following the development of goals and objectives, Metro identified initiative programs that will tactically drive progress through the grouping and implementation of specific projects. The initiative programs are not designed to be an exhaustive list, but merely a proposed starting point for Metro's transformation; accordingly, initiative programs will be added as innovation and/or other proposals become apparent and will be prioritized across multiple years. The plan's initial initiative programs, detailed in the sections below, resulted in "near-term focus" lists, or projects, that are ongoing or likely to begin within the next year. These focus areas will help kick-off Metro's five-year transformation.

Metro aims to use these initiative programs and the strategic framework as future prioritization and funding guidelines. The annual budget process will determine which specific projects or initiatives are funded within the broader plan each year.

5.1 Goal 1: Service Excellence

Customer feedback makes it clear that customers want safe, reliable, convenient, accessible, and enjoyable service. Surveys used to create a snapshot and inform this plan show that less than 70 percent of customers are satisfied with Metro.⁴ This is a 15 percentage-point difference from pre-pandemic satisfaction⁵ and even fewer customers (around 55 percent) are confident in Metro's ability to improve.⁶ However, more recent surveys are showing these numbers are trending higher.

To improve service throughout the system, Metro has established three objectives:

- A. Safety and security
- B. Reliability
- C. Convenience

These objectives are supported by initiative programs. Progress will be measured through a mixture of operational performance metrics (e.g., on-time performance) and customer satisfaction metrics obtained through surveys. Detailed information on the metrics can be found in

Appendix A.

Near term focus:

- Improve reliability of real time bus tracking information
- Increase number of 7000 series trains in operation
- Rehabilitate Yellow Line tunnel and bridge
- Enhance customer experience
- Improve wayfinding and digital signage
- Integrate customer call center
- Expand last mile connectivity

5.1.1 Objective 1A: Safety and Security

Objective statement: Ensure all customers and employees feel safe and secure using and delivering services.

Fewer than two-thirds of riders across all modes of transportation are satisfied with their safety from crime or harassment while riding Metro. Currently, only 56 percent of Metrobus customers and 58 percent of Metrorail customers believe that Metro is proactive in notifying customers about safety issues. Similar numbers of customers (57 percent of Metrobus customers and 52 percent of Metrorail customers) believe that Metro is proactive in addressing safety issues.⁷ However, ongoing and planned Platform Improvement Project upgrades benefit customers' feelings of safety; customers cite adequate lighting, presence of Metro Transit Police Officers, use of cameras, and easy way to notify operators about safety issues as features to enhance perceptions of safety while using Metro services. By expanding this kind of rail station and bus stop infrastructure improvement, Metro can increase customer satisfaction, comfort, and safety.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Increase public orderliness and safety programs** to increase passenger and employee safety and perceptions of safety across the system.
2. **Install safety-oriented station and bus stop infrastructure** to improve passenger safety.
3. **Enhance operational safety for employees** from injury and assault.

⁴ Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey, 8/24/2022 to 9/14/2022

⁵ Metro Performance Report, Fiscal Year 2022

⁶ Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey, 8/24/2022 to 9/14/2022

⁷ Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey, 8/24/2022 to 9/14/2022

4. **Implement Safety Management System (SMS)** to create a formal, organization-wide, data-driven approach to proactive safety risk management, assuring effectiveness of safety risk mitigations, building a positive safety culture, and reducing safety incidents.

5.1.2 Objective 1B: Reliability

Objective statement: Provide dependable service that the community trusts.

Only half of Metro customers are currently satisfied with wait times between buses and trains. Too often, service delays and disruptions impact customer commutes, with recent cuts to service frequencies contributing to an increase in these events. Customer on-time rail performance fell from 91 percent (from July 2020 through June 2021)⁸ to 79 percent (from July 2021 through June 2022).⁹ However, in the same period, Metro met the bus performance target with 77 percent of buses arriving on time. Schedule and service changes need to be clearly communicated so that customers are not left stranded. For example, customers relying on busETA, Metro's real-time bus tracking service, reported that they have been left stranded due to incorrect information provided about the arrival times.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Repair and modernize infrastructure and equipment** to minimize time in maintenance, number of failures, and improve operational reliability.
2. **Implement reliability-centered maintenance** using advanced analytics, imagery, and other tools to improve and coordinate preventative maintenance.
3. **Improve operational effectiveness** to deliver better service and improve maintenance with minimal disruption.
4. **Complete the implementation of a Quality Management System (QMS) and continue to monitor outcomes** to better coordinate and direct activities.
5. **Modernize signal infrastructure** to allow for more consistent and efficient rail operation.

5.1.3 Objective 1C: Convenience

Objective statement: Deliver frequent and accessible service that modernizes and enhances the customer experience.

Customers should find transit easy, comfortable, and convenient. When a customer chooses to use Metro, they make their decision based on available travel information, including travel time, service frequency, and location. The service needs to be easily navigable and conveniently located. Customers should find it easy to plan and pay for rides, navigate through passenger facilities (e.g., fare gates and escalators), and transfer between bus and rail.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Modernize and enhance end-to-end customer experience** for user-friendliness and attractiveness.
2. **Optimize service and scheduling across system** to improve frequency of service and allow for seamless transfers.

⁸ Metro Performance Report, Fiscal Year 2021

⁹ Metro Performance Report, Fiscal Year 2022

3. **Improve customer service and communications strategy** to solicit consistent input and provide proactive, frequent, and real-time support to customers.
4. **Modernize station operations** to streamline station management/operations to deliver consistent, high-quality service across network.
5. **Expand last-mile connectivity options** to provide safe accessible routes to transit and critical amenities for bicyclists (secured parking, bikeshare, scootershare, e-bikes, etc.) and pedestrians.

5.1.4 Service Excellence Example Initiatives

Table 3: Example Initiatives for Goal 1

Objective		Example
1A	Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch platform screen door pilot • Increase visibility of Metro representatives across the system • Launch Metro Integrated Control Center
1B	Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of 7000-series trains in operation and begin 8000-series train implementation • Rehabilitate Yellow Line tunnel and bridge • Improve real time reliability of bus information
1C	Convenience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of digital interfaces for customer information and to improve wayfinding

5.2 Goal 2: Talented Teams

With the large, specialized workforce required to support today's service and tomorrow's challenges, effective recruitment, hiring, and employee development practices are key to providing quality service at Metro. However, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit, train, and retain enough candidates to meet the organization's needs. Metro must attract, develop and retain top talent where individuals feel valued, supported, and proud of their contribution.

Metro has defined three objectives that will help engage and support staff and increase staff pride. These objectives are:

- A. Recruitment and retention
- B. Engagement, empowerment, and recognition
- C. Professional and technical skill development

A series of initiative programs support each of these objectives and the goal of talented teams overall.

Progress will be measured through ongoing pulse surveys (e.g., willingness to recommend Metro as a great place to work), and performance metrics (e.g., employee turnover rate). Detailed information on the metrics for the Talented Teams goal can be found in **Appendix A**.

Near term focus:

- Expand talent pool through part time jobs, apprenticeship programs, and partnerships with universities and technical and trade schools
- Develop competency framework and redefine career paths
- Strengthen recognition efforts across the organization

5.2.1 Objective 2A: Recruitment and Retention

Objective statement: Attract and retain the best talent at all levels of the organization to deliver Metro's future vision.

In November 2022, Metro had over a thousand vacant positions, including mission critical frontline roles like bus operators and Metro Transit police officers. Transit agencies across the country are experiencing similar labor shortages that result in increased workloads and difficulty meeting service schedules. Through this plan, Metro will expand its talent pipeline to increase access to candidates and streamline its hiring processes to convert more offers into new hires and reduce vacancy rates. Metro is competing against a competitive labor market in terms of compensation, benefits, and work flexibility. An efficient hiring process is a vital element of ensuring adequate labor force to deliver service.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Develop strategic workforce planning** to close talent and skill gaps through recruiting, retraining, and/or upskilling.
2. **Execute recruiting and hiring strategy** to develop additional talent pools, increase access to candidates, and reduce vacancies.
3. **Establish employee value proposition** to establish Metro as a great place to work, develop careers, increase overall satisfaction, and have a positive impact in recruitment and retention.
4. **Implement succession planning** to provide continuity to the business and reduce uncertainty among staff.

5.2.2 Objective 2B: Engagement, Empowerment, and Recognition

Objective statement: Empower employees and promote effective collaboration and continuous culture improvement so employees feel supported, recognized, and engaged.

Engaged employees are more likely to stay at Metro and contribute to achieving its vision. Currently, 66 percent of staff would recommend WMATA to friends as a great place to work.¹⁰ However, surveys reveal opportunities to recognize staff for their contribution and empower them to drive change. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has made retaining talent harder. Most of Metro's employees are frontline workers who have directly faced the negative effects of the pandemic, including high degrees of mental stress. Increased focus on supporting employee's physical and emotional health through wellness and employee assistance programs may increase Metro's ability to retain talent.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Develop culture change strategy** to increase engagement across the organization.
2. **Create innovation incubator** to empower people with innovative ideas and foster creativity and innovation. Rewarding and recognizing those who put forth noteworthy ideas that improve safe operations, increase efficiencies, improve processes, and reduce silos.
3. **Establish a performance evaluation framework** that supports engagement and recognition across the organization.
4. **Implement realignment and business process improvement** by identifying resource needs, clarifying decision rights and accountabilities, eliminating duplication, and reducing inefficiencies.
5. **Develop internal customer service strategy** to enable better collaboration and positively impact external customer service.

5.2.3 Objective 2C: Professional and Technical Skill Development

Objective statement: Invest in staff to expand career pathways and develop the next generation of Metro leaders and technical skills experts.

Employees at Metro look for support throughout their career lifecycle, including attractive work experiences and development opportunities. There is an opportunity for the organization to support career paths more effectively through more specific training programs. Training should also serve as a foundation of great performance. Innovative training methods and tools, like simulation, can support staff in acquiring skills and capabilities to improve their individual performance and organizational outcomes. Employees at Metro expressed the desire to strengthen leadership trainings for managers and supervisors that will impact the rest of the organization and help develop the agency's desire to develop future Metro leaders.

¹⁰ Metro Staff Survey, 9/8/2022 to 9/20/2022

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Create talent / career / skills development plans** that provide attractive work experiences and expands career opportunities across Metro.
2. **Establish center of excellence training academy** to provide staff with the right skills and capabilities that Metro's operations require.
3. **Provide leadership development and applied training programs** to support emerging leaders and develop the next generation of Metro leaders.

5.2.4 Talented Teams Example Initiatives

Table 4: Example Initiatives for Goal 2

	Objective	Example
2A	Recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with university and technical trade schools to increase candidate pipeline and expand talent pool• Develop competency framework and redefine career paths
2B	Engagement, empowerment, and recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen employee recognition efforts
2C	Professional and technical skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide leadership development and applied training programs to support emerging leaders and develop the next generation of Metro leaders• Centralize training structure for Metro employees and launch training academy• Expand career pathways at Metro

5.3 Goal 3: Regional Opportunity and Partnership

Metro works alongside over a dozen other bus, rail, and shared mobility providers in the region to connect people to jobs, critical services, and amenities within the DMV. Metro will align service networks and customer information to maximize infrastructure, enhance convenience, increase ridership, and promote prosperity in the region. Metro also contributes to livability and economic growth by providing opportunities for small businesses. Further, Metro's high-quality transportation options have played a major role in the location of major employers and household selection within the DMV, making the agency's service one of the most elastic criteria for economic development in the DMV. In this landscape, effective community engagement and close collaboration with other transportation players, employers, small businesses, and developers is critical to impact and sustain change.

Metro is also an integral part of the DMV economy. Over half (54 percent) of the region's jobs are within a half-mile of a Metrorail station or Metrobus stop, and nearly one-third (28 percent) of the region's property tax base is within a half-mile of a Metrorail station.¹¹ Despite many being accessible near transit today, there are opportunities to enhance connectivity through partnerships with business leaders and employers. Increased partnerships with major employers can make Metro more affordable, increasing enrollment in free commuter programs like Smart Benefits.¹²

Aligning regional service networks translates to more seamless transit experience that allows individuals to focus on what matters most to them, without needing to think how to get there. Improved fare and service policies and supporting infrastructure contribute to a more robust society. Metro's collaboration with other transportation partners, businesses, and developments will promote economic growth, enhance mobility opportunities, and foster increased community pride and ownership.

Metro has defined two objectives that will help further regional opportunity and partnership, listed below:

- A. Regional network and partner service optimization
- B. Community partnership and engagement

Metro also defined initiatives to support each objective and the goal overall. Metro expects partnership and community engagement to continue to improve, translating to higher monthly ridership. Progress will

Near term focus:

- Implement more frequent service on Green, Yellow, and Orange lines
- Develop and select a plan for the Blue, Orange, and Silver Line Corridor
- Redesign and implement bus network(s)
- Implement simplified fare structure
- Launch low income fare program
- Establish housing production & affordability goals for stations & high capacity bus corridors that maximizes ridership potential
- Create economic development plans for select stations to grow counter commute potential
- Adopt policy to right size parking and bus facilities to accelerate transit oriented development (TOD) on Metro properties
- Establish community relations office
- Engage seniors, low income, and other groups to maximize awareness of products
- Build directory for new Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program
- Hold "Meet the Primes" training programs for businesses to learn about opportunities

¹¹ Metro Snapshot 2022

¹² Smart Benefits is a WMATA commuting program that allows employees of participating employers to use public transportation to commute tax free and save up \$1,200 per year; the program also provides employers with tax benefits.

be measured through several metrics focused on frequency and convenience (e.g., percent of bus customer trips with 12 minutes or better frequency, average number of jobs accessible within 30 minutes on Metro) and indicators of partnership (e.g., percent of contracted dollars for small businesses). Detailed information on the metrics for the Regional Opportunity and Partnership goal can be found in **Appendix A**.

5.3.1 Objective 3A: Regional Network and Partner Service Optimization

Objective statement: Align regional service networks, fare and service policies and supporting infrastructure to increase convenience and, use of transit in the region

Frequency, convenience, and affordability have become key drivers in mobility decision-making. Although customers value the individual contributions of providers in the region, they often think of “public transit” cohesively and assume a high degree of operational coordination. This means Metro needs continued focus on service coordination across agencies and ways to improve system frequency, affordability, and convenience, while collaborating with other mobility providers and roadway owners and operators to make transfers between systems seamless and arrival/departure data shared openly and frequently across platforms.

Regional partnership will be undertaken to ensure that Metro is available and accessible to all people who live in, work in, or visit the region. Understanding the barriers to and priorities for transit in these communities will help to inform improvements in service access and affordability. Metro then can introduce new programs, such as reduced fare options or work with jurisdictions to implement local policies to subsidize fares to better meet customer needs.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Initiate Metrorail service optimization** to increase core frequency and enable efficient transfers where most customers are riding.
2. **Implement Better Bus network redesign** to realign and expand bus service to best serve customers where and when they need to travel.
3. **Reevaluate fare policy** to make fares simple and affordable to promote access to transit, while delivering improvements to Metro’s payment system for easier access to transit.
4. **Focus on customer-centric regional mobility** to streamline customer information across services to provide a better experience and increase regional transit use.

5.3.2 Objective 3B: Community Partnership and Engagement

Objective statement: Collaborate with regional partners to promote economic growth, enhance access, and foster sustainable community development that supports ridership recovery & resiliency.

Metro’s success will depend on its integration with several economic partners as well as the community at large. While Metro already has some community relations dedicated personnel and initiatives, there is opportunity to establish a more formal office focused and equipped to drive engagement as part of the recently announced realignment to support ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Accelerating transit-oriented development (TOD) by** resolving feasibility gaps delaying higher-density buildings from being constructed near rail stations and along high-capacity bus routes.
2. **Program service capacity capital investments** to make forward-thinking investments that increase Metro's capacity to expand transit service in the region.
3. **Proactively** engage with the community to deepen and expand Metro's relationships with customers and foster a sense of shared ownership in regional transit services.

5.3.3 Regional Opportunity and Partnership Example Initiatives

Table 5: Example Initiatives for Goal 3

	Objective	Example
3A	Regional network and partner service optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and select a plan for the Blue, Orange, and Silver Line Corridor (a potential mega-investment to increase regional transit ridership, address East-West transit capacity constraints, and support development) Redesign and implement bus network(s) Launch simplified fare structure with low-income fare program
3B	Community partnership and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish community relations office Promote transit-oriented development

5.4 Goal 4: Financial Stewardship and Resource Management

Significant annual investments in Metro are necessary to keep services running efficiently, and to maintain a state of good repair and continue system expansion. These investments help Metro provide excellent service, which is essential for driving ridership and meeting community goals. Getting more people to ride Metro not only reduces roadway safety issues but is the best way to manage environmental resources.

To deliver financial stewardship and resource management outcomes tactically, Metro has defined two objectives for this goal:

- A. Financial responsibility
- B. Energy Efficiency

A series of initiatives will focus on each objective to ensure Metro has resources to execute current and proposed plans and contribute to a healthier DMV. Success and progress for each initiative program will be measured through several financial indicators like bond rating, and operating costs among others. Detailed information on the initiatives and metrics for the Financial Stewardship and Resource Management goal can be found in **Appendix A**.

5.4.1 Objective 4A: Financial Responsibility

Objective statement: Establish dedicated, ongoing, regional funding to support multi-year operating and capital plans and steward public investment.

Metro will achieve financial stewardship to invest in and fund Your Metro's goals and objectives. Metro faces major challenges to fund existing and improved service levels, financial stewardship will provide the certainty that Metro will be there as a mobility choice for riders and for location-based decisions. Federal relief funding ends in 2024 and Metro will only be able to cover 70 percent of costs to run the system at existing service levels. To achieve financial success, Metro needs to close funding gaps through dedicated public investments, reduced fare evasion, increased advertising, and expanded corporate partnerships, among other efforts. Metro will steward resources effectively as well through strategic sourcing and optimized asset management. Metro cannot provide service levels without sufficient funding and resources and will fall short on executing initiatives that improve service, empower employees and natural resource stewardship.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Secure dedicated, ongoing, regional, non-fare, non-subsidy funding stream(s)** to increase funding and resources supporting projected/optimal service and related capital investments.
2. **Update subsidy formula and jurisdictional funding model** to increase focus on servicing the region's and customers' needs.

Near term focus:

- Pursue state & local budget approvals of new dedicated funding sources for transit operations and capital investments
- Pursue regulatory approvals and permits to allow outdoor advertising at Metro properties & station entrances
- Pursue portfolio funding solution to accelerate joint development feasibility
- Monetize assets by offering leasing opportunities for retail, parking, and bike facilities
- Deploy new anti fare evasion gates and displays at demonstration stations
- Strengthen policies, procedures, and data dashboards to identify cost saving opportunities, improve cost controls, and manage financial resources more efficiently
- Adopt decarbonization strategy
- Complete solar carport installation and commissioning at several stations
- Improve rider recycling
- Pursue green certifications for three new administrative buildings and first certified transit station
- Launch climate resiliency program

3. **Optimize advertising strategy** to increase non-fare revenue through more relevant and visible ads for riders and non-riders via outdoor digital displays (e.g., at station entrances, buses, etc.), corporate partnerships, or other revenue opportunities.
4. **Expand non-fare, non-advertising revenue** to better utilize existing spaces in stations/lines to drive revenue (e.g., station commercialization/retail, joint development, and parking leases).
5. **Improve asset management and cost-effective sourcing of materials and contract services** to be a better steward of resources and service delivery to modernize and reduce costs.
6. **Mitigate fare evasion** to increase fare revenue and reduce instances of passengers boarding without paying fare or tapping free ride program cards.

5.4.2 Objective 4B: Energy Efficiency

Objective statement: Take action to manage energy consumption, and steward natural resources.

Metro is a major energy consumer and can support the region by reducing energy and resource consumption, increasing energy efficiency. Metro will also actively contribute to the region to ensure livability and health for DMV residents. Removing cars from the road saves people time in their commute and provides a safer way to travel.

Preliminary initiative programs include:

1. **Manage energy efficiency in Metro's infrastructure and equipment** to be more energy efficient.
2. **Optimize natural resource stewardship** to protect, conserve, and enhance places where Metro operates
3. **Modernize design, construction, and operations** to meet financial and resource management goals.

5.4.3 Financial Stewardship and Resource Management Example Initiatives

Table 6: Example Initiatives for Goal 4

	Objective	Example
4A	Financial Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen digital and other pathways to increase advertising revenue Explore dedicated public investment for Metro
4B	Energy Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce non-revenue vehicle fleet

6 Plan Management and Internal Progress Tracking

The plan establishes the foundation for the organization moving forward, and Metro will monitor and report on progress as it works to meet the goals and objectives. Following Board adoption of the plan and to manage progress Metro will establish the Your Metro Transformation Office. The Your Metro Transformation Office will facilitate the coordination and implementation of the initiatives, while facilitating collaboration enterprise-wide. Metro will be accountable to report progress to the public at Board meetings using established metrics on an ongoing basis. The Your Metro Transformation Office will also manage feedback channels with stakeholders, including customers, elected officials, employees, and others in the region as it relates to the ongoing initiatives and performance detailed in the plan. This elevated transparency will help hold Metro accountable for progress, while allowing for additional input from customers and the region about their evolving needs. This enables the plan and execution to be continuously improved.

Your Metro, the Way Forward is meant to be dynamic and continuously evolve with customer and employee needs. While some parts of this plan are already ongoing, some of the initiatives have not begun. Metro will need to assess funding to execute the plan in full, as several of the objectives will be tied to future funding availability. Ongoing and iterative initiative program prioritization (e.g., sequencing on when to start and end projects in line with other priorities) will help guide the investment decision making. Additionally, as the region's needs evolve, Metro may determine additional initiatives or opportunities to progress towards the vision and will have the flexibility to adjust priorities while still achieving the objectives of the strategic plan.

The Your Metro Transformation Office will work with the newly established community engagement team to enhance public engagement and transparency of plan implementation. Metro will continue to engage key stakeholders to assess initiative program and plan progress, including periodic customer and employee surveys and other engagement forums (e.g., community meetings) to assess current sentiment and collect ongoing feedback.

Metro is committed to a culture of continuous improvement and transparency. The Your Metro Transformation Office will be tasked with plan implementation, but the entire organization will realize the plan's vision of becoming the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently.

Despite the challenges over the last few years, Metro will continue to keep the economy thriving and bring residents and visitors to the places they want to be. The plan charts a path to thoughtful and strategic continuous improvement and establishes clear and visible priorities for Metro, expands transparency around Metro's performance through defined metrics, and will help to promote collaboration amongst Metro's employees and with agency partners. *Your Metro, The Way Forward* will guide Metro and create more possibilities for the region.