



New DASH Network & Free Fares

TPB - RTPS Meeting

May 25, 2021

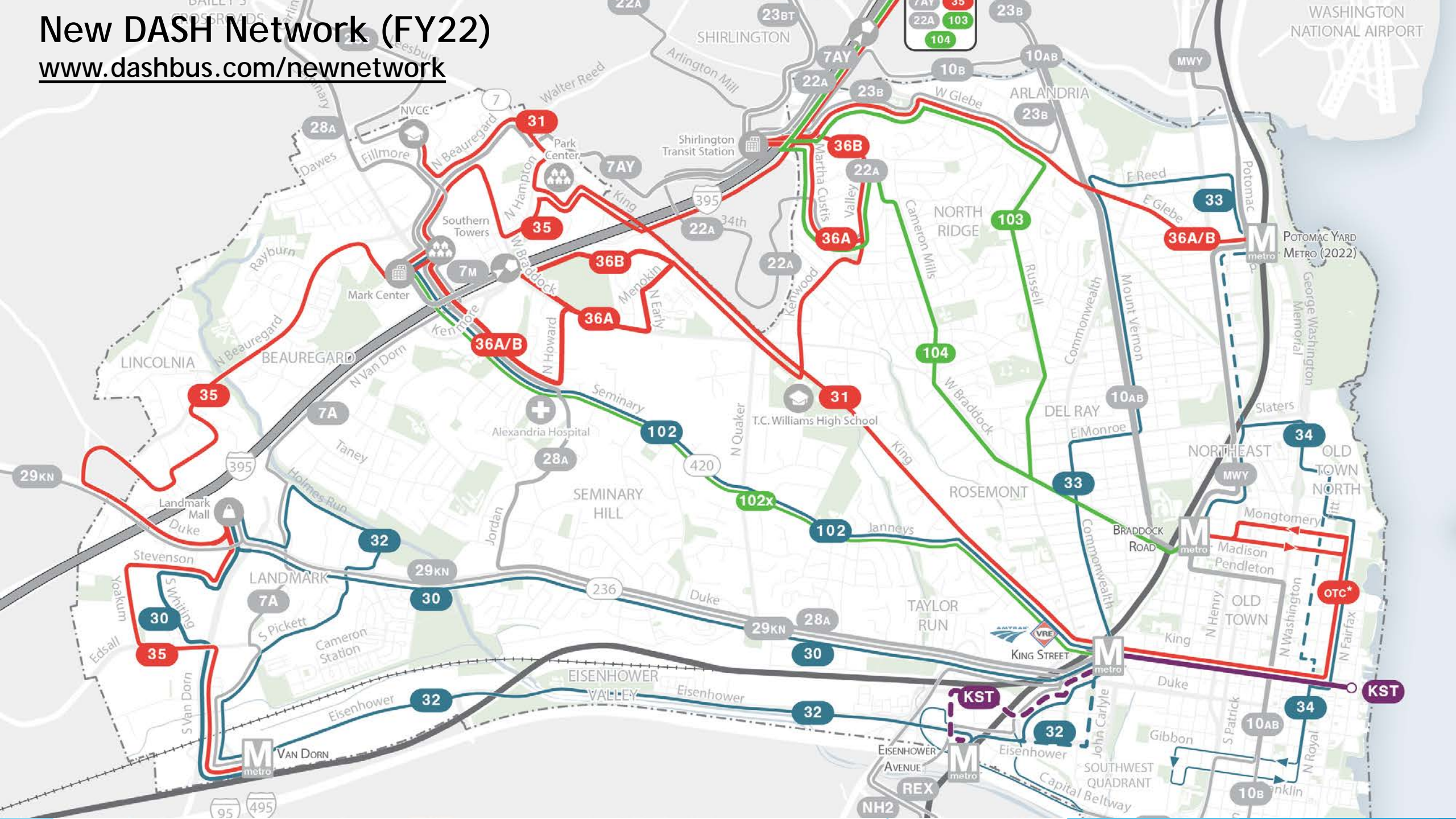
FY 2022 NEW DASH NETWORK

- ▶ New DASH Network launches September 5, 2021
- ▶ First phase of 2022 Alexandria Transit Vision (ATV) Plan
- ▶ Modern network that expands access to frequent, all-day bus service and improves overall mobility.
- ▶ I-95/395 Commuter Choice program
- ▶ NDN Website - www.dashbus.com/newnetwork



New DASH Network (FY22)

www.dashbus.com/newnetwork



BENEFITS OF NEW DASH NETWORK

- ▶ Introduces new **frequent, all-day bus network** on major corridors across the City of Alexandria.
- ▶ Major increases in access to frequent, all-day bus service:

	Existing	FY22 Network	2030 ATV Plan
All Residents	27%	66%	83%
Low Income	29%	73%	89%
Minority	22%	70%	87%
Seniors	23%	62%	78%
Jobs	40%	66%	81%

- ▶ Maintains bus service for 99.5% of existing DASH bus boardings
- ▶ Expected to increase ridership, reduce traffic congestion, improve climate outcomes, lessen pollution, and strengthen economy.



DASH FREE FARES

- ▶ Final FY22 Budget adopted by City Council includes funding for “Free Fares on DASH” starting Sept. 5th.
- ▶ Free fares are intended to accelerate economic recovery and provide equitable access to transit.
- ▶ Planning for free fare program to extend multiple years, but future funding is not yet determined.
- ▶ City is exploring new statewide Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) grant program.



FARE FREE CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Impact on Ridership & Crowding Levels
- ▶ Funding Availability for Service Improvements
- ▶ Fare Collection Equipment Planning
- ▶ Ridership Data Collection - Fareboxes vs. APC's
- ▶ Implications for SmarTrip & Regional Partners
- ▶ Program Evaluation Criteria & Framework
- ▶ Timeline for Potential Return to Fare Collection

FREE/REDUCED FARE STUDY

- ▶ City/DASH study to evaluate potential free and reduced fare programs for low-income riders.
- ▶ Funded by MWCOG TLC Grant; led by Foursquare ITP
- ▶ Study evaluated three different scenarios
 1. Free Fares for DASH
 2. Free Fares for Low-Income Riders on DASH & WMATA
 3. ½ Price Fares for Low-Income Riders on DASH & WMATA
- ▶ Evaluate ridership, cost and admin/logistics of each



STUDY RECOMMENDATION – FREE FARES

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Easiest for the City to implement.■ Benefits the largest number of residents, including many just above typical low-income thresholds.■ Easiest program to access for participants.■ Better service performance and lower travel times.■ Lowest cost relative to number of residents served.■ Greatest increase in ridership (11% in FY 2025) and associated environmental benefits.■ Highest savings due to not collecting fares (\$450,000 in FY 2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Relatively high net cost (\$5.0 million in FY 2025).■ Does not enhance affordability of WMATA services.■ May reduce ridership revenue to WMATA, as riders may switch from a paid service to a free service.■ Offers less support for an integrated regional transit network, as envisioned in recent regional plans.■ Loss of employer-subsidized fare revenues through SmartBenefits

Questions/Discussion

For more info on New DASH Network, please visit www.dashbus.com/newnetwork

To view full City of Alexandria study on Free/Reduced Fares for Low-Income Riders, please visit: www.alexandriava.gov/Transit

