

## **ITEM 10 – Information**

February 20, 2019

### **Bus Transformation Project**

**Staff Recommendation:** Briefing on the Bus Transformation Project.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** In September, Metro and its partner jurisdictions and transit agencies launched the Bus Transformation Project with the goal to create a bold, new vision and a collaborative action plan for the future of bus in the region. The project will explore factors that influence the quality of bus service, from technology and transit priority, to funding structures, coordination, and service provision roles. Rich Davey, from the project team, will share the context and vision for the project, and provide an overview of progress to date, including stakeholder participation.

# BUS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

Project Overview  
February 20, 2019



## Objectives for today's session

- Share context & vision for Bus Transformation
- Provide overview of Project process
- Engage in Q&A and discussion



# Context & Vision for Bus Transformation Project

## Three problems driving need for bus transformation...



### Bus speed declining

Bus traveling slower today than 10 years ago – causing \$30M increase in expenses



### Bus ridership decreasing

13% decline in bus ridership across the region over the past five years

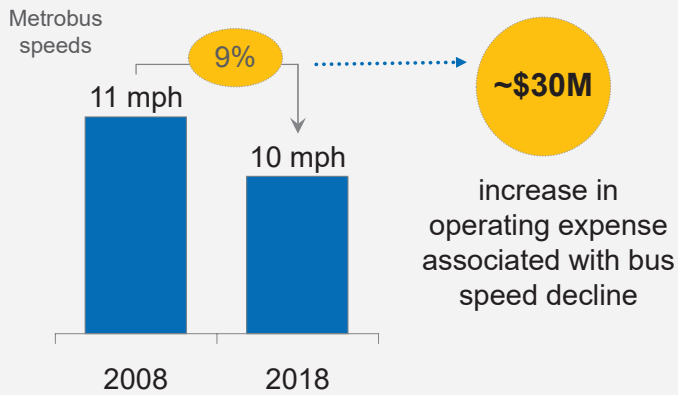


### Business model pressures

Rising operating costs + declining ridership revenues = operating loss increases

## The Problem: Bus is not as fast as it used to be

Buses traveling slower today than 10 years ago...



Source: National Transit Database, WMATA FY19 budget, BCG Analysis

...as a result of several landscape changes

Increased **congestion**

On-street **parking**

Proliferation of **bus stops**

**Curbside** developments

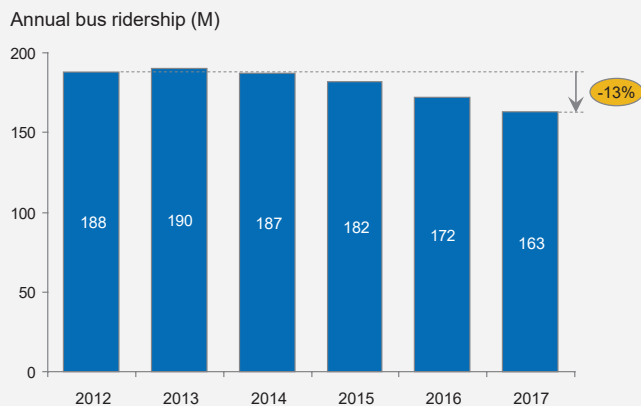
Lack of **enforcement** for deliveries, taxis, etc. in bus lanes and at stops

Elimination of historical **bus lanes**

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## The Problem: fewer people are riding bus

Bus ridership in the region declined by 13% over the last five years



Key reasons riders are switching from bus to other modes

Increased **customer expectations**

Underlying **mobility trends** and **trip patterns**

Rise of **new mobility** options

Intensifying **competition** for smaller pool of riders

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# The Problem: Mounting pressure on bus operating model



## 3% subsidy growth cap for Metrobus

Metrobus operations funded by fares and an operating subsidy (contributions from jurisdictions)

As of FY2019 WMATA must comply with a 3% cap on operating subsidy growth for bus and rail



## Difficult to achieve at current service levels

Metrobus operating losses continue to increase, driven by rising costs and declining revenues

Meeting subsidy cap will require substantial changes to the operating model in place today, and the process and procedures that support that model



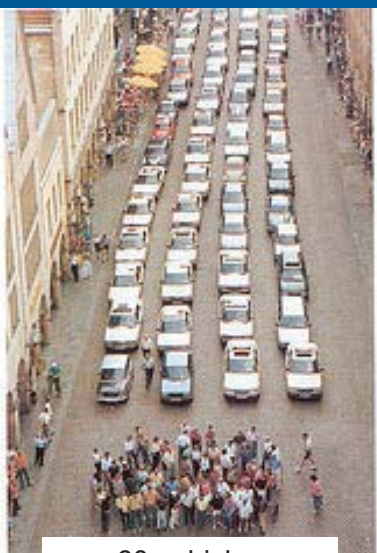
## Will have implications for regional bus system

Not clear that local bus operators can fill service gaps that could be left by Metrobus in the absence of regional plan

Challenges are not for WMATA alone to solve, but for the region as a whole to solve together

Subsidy growth cap creates greater urgency around regional action

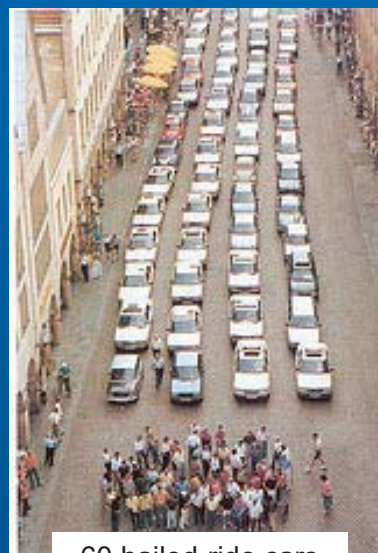
# Bus is the most efficient way of moving large numbers of people...now and in the future



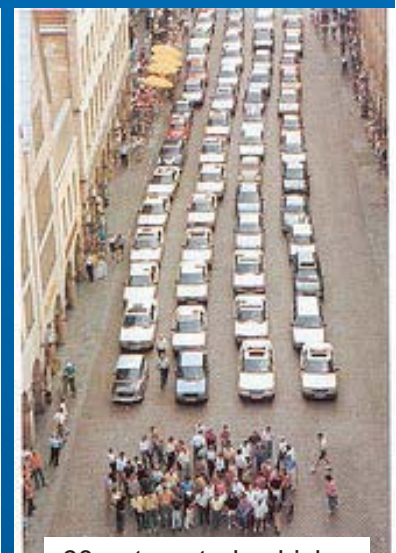
60 vehicles



1 bus



60 hailed-ride cars



60 automated vehicles



The Bus Transformation Project will create a **bold, new vision** and a **collaborative action plan** for the future of buses in the region

*Project Vision:*

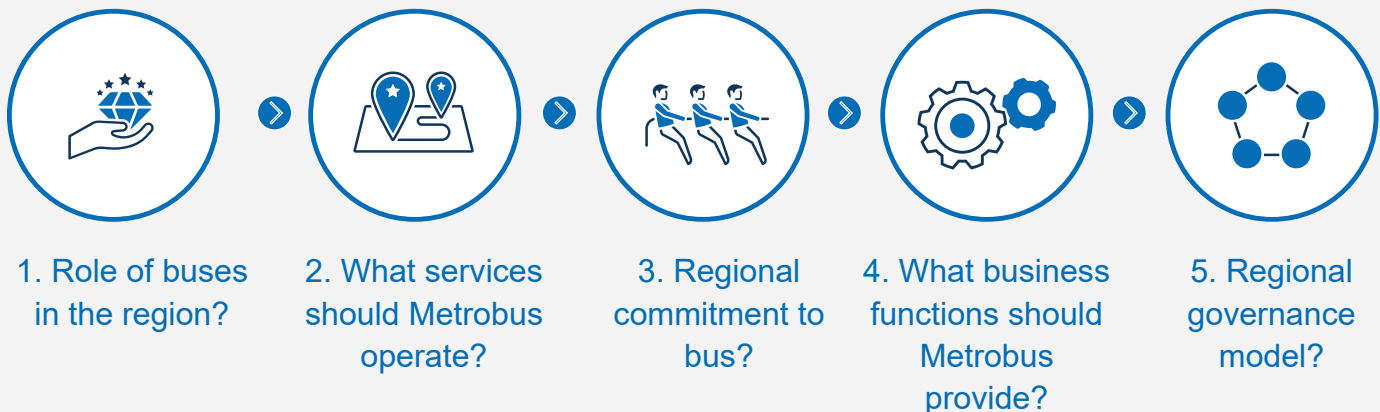
Bus will be the **mode of choice** on the region's roads by 2030, serving as the backbone of a **strong and inclusive** regional mobility system.



# Goals for bus in the region as voiced by stakeholders

Theme	Goals
1 Regional connectivity	Provide <b>high-quality</b> on-street transit options that <b>efficiently and reliably</b> connect people to places and improve mobility
2 Rider experience	Ensure that bus is a <b>convenient, safe, easy-to-use, user-centered</b> mobility option
3 Financial stewardship	Maintain a transit mode that is <b>financially responsible</b> in the long-term
4 Sustainable economic health & access to opportunity	Encourage <b>vibrant, economically-thriving and sustainable</b> communities through investments in bus
5 Equity	Create a transit system that is <b>affordable and equitable</b> to users

## In light of these goals, the strategy will aim to answer five key questions



Together, we will define the future of bus in the region, and develop a roadmap to get there



# Overview of Project **process**



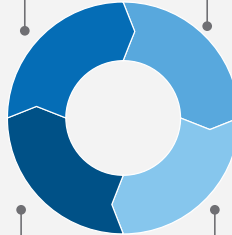
# Four-part team leading the Bus Transformation effort

## Executive Steering Committee

Recognized leaders that are closely involved with strategy development and manage political risks and benefits to the region

## WMATA Leadership Team

Decision-makers within Metro that manage and evaluate actions that affect the organization and its operations



## Strategic Advisory Panel

Senior staff and appointed members that review major work products and advise consultant team

## Technical Team

Recognized discipline leaders within Metro and senior jurisdiction transit staff that review technical and financial analyses

## Public stakeholder engagement will inform regional strategy

Engagement to date

- 5,679 responses to **survey**
- 20 regional **pop-up events**
- 1 **summit** (140+ participants)
- 14 committee **meetings**
- 13 operator **listening sessions**
- 35+ **stakeholder interviews**
- 11 project **briefings**
- Over 696,000 social media **impressions** and 2,450 clicks



## Plan to complete Bus Transformation strategy by Summer

*We are here*

**Set strategic direction**

*November*

Define core strategic considerations for bus in the region and understand stakeholder perspectives on where region should land

**Develop draft strategy**

*Nov. to Spring*

Conduct focused analysis to develop draft strategy, including high-level understanding of key costs and benefits

**Align on final strategy**

*Spring-Summer*

Refine strategy and define expected outcomes

**Develop roadmap**

*Summer - Fall*

Identify specific actions required to achieve strategy vision in a 1, 3, 5, and 10-year action plan

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## Q&A and discussion

[www.bustransformationproject.com](http://www.bustransformationproject.com)

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