

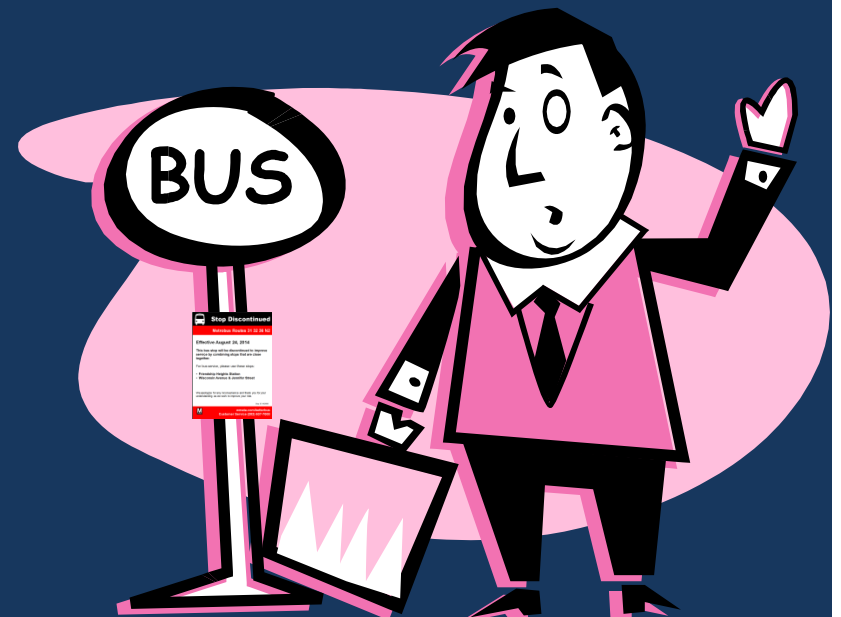


Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Public Outreach and Bus Stop Consolidation at WMATA

Jamie Cepler
Bus Operations Specialist,
WMATA Office of Bus Planning

MWCOG
TPB Regional Bus Subcommittee





Background

- Bus stop consolidation is the 3rd rail of transit planning
- Bus stop consolidation is the holy grail of transit planning
- Passengers want faster service, but not at the expense of their bus stop
- Buy-in from the public and from politicians is key
- WMATA has had both good and bad experiences; public outreach is the key to success





Background

- In 2009, WMATA had two studies conducted to analyze its bus stops. The findings were:
 - Bus stop flags are small, and look old; they should be replaced with a larger, more modern design
 - Timetables and maps at bus stops should be presented in a way that is easier for customers to understand
 - Many bus stops are too close together; their spacing should be 4-5 stops per mile





First try: December 2010

- Four routes selected for stop consolidation:
 - U8, G8, 62/63, X2
 - 67 total stops
- Little advanced notice to the public
- No coordination with community groups
- No coordination with government officials
- Packaged as a part of a group of service enhancements, such as the introduction of X9 limited stop service





The aftermath: January-March

- Bus riders were not happy
- Negative media attention
- Public, Neighborhood Commissions, and Politicians demanding answers, and restitution

I sign below to Protest and Request reinstatement of the Metro Bus Stop located at 4th & Channing St. N.E
3/25/11 Metro Bus Stop Removal I use this stop more than 3 times a week

Name	Address	Contact
1. Pat Fisher	Edgemoor St	855-0511
2. D. Johnson	Edgemoor St	855-0511
3. Thomas Burnett	Edgemoor St	720-3333
4. Gloria Murchison	Edgemoor St	(202) 444-4444
5. ARR, Wendy S.	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
6. Carolyn Vance	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
7. STEEL BOUND	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
8. Queenie Rose	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
9. LAMONT FOL	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
10. Edward Richardson	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
11. Sylvia Young	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
12. Amanda White	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
13. Catherine Moore	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
14. Kate Marie Tate	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
15. Judy A. Mitchell	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
16. Dorothy Smith	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
17. Frances N. Frazier	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
18. L. LIE NINE MERRY 62	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
19. Ruth Abrams	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
20. JENNY L. ROSE	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
21. Shirley Blount	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
22. Bessie Parker Gil	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
23. Wendy Lyn Moore	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
24. Shirley Johnson	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
25. HALLIE HARRIS-635	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
26. Stella Surratt	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
27. Barbara Sellers	Edgemoor St	202-881-1111
28.		
29.		



The aftermath: January-March



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

January 21, 2011

Mr. Richard Sarles
Interim General Manager
Washington Metro Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Sarles:

I am writing as a follow up to your letter concerning eliminating the bus stop at Longfellow and 5th Streets NW.

I cannot over emphasize how much I object to eliminating the bus stop on Longfellow St (north/south). The residents in the area who use the Metro bus Routes 62/63 regularly and are now forced to board at 5th & Kennedy Streets.



Agency response: January-March

- Posts on our website explaining the methodology
- Public meetings to discuss the stops that were discontinued
- WMATA worked with the public and put back several stops
 - 7 stops reestablished
 - 6 stops relocated
 - 7 other stops were abolished, with community consent





The conclusion: March 2011

The Examiner
WASHINGTON

Metro restores bus stops after rider complaints

BY KYTJA WEIR | MARCH 21, 2011 AT 12:05 PM

Metro has had to backtrack on an effort to consolidate bus stops, restoring a handful of stops and relocating others just months after the change.

The transit agency had quietly eliminated 67 stops from four bus lines when it rolled out new "service enhancements" amid fanfare from public officials in December. The agency targeted the lines because they had the most stops per mile in the system and the agency was trying to find a way to streamline the routes and keep the buses moving.

But as The Washington Examiner first reported, riders started complaining after the change, wondering what happened to their stops.

The agency has since relocated six of the stops and reinstated seven others. The reinstated stops were on the 62/63 lines, which travels between Takoma through Petworth to Federal Triangle station, and the G8 that travels on Rhode Island Avenue from Farragut Square through Brookland to the city's



Next try: 2012

- This time, WMATA would host large public meetings about bus stop consolidation

The Examiner WASHINGTON

Metro seeks input on which bus stops to cut after past surprise for riders

BY KYTJA WEIR | MAY 03, 2012 AT 8:20 PM

Metro is seeking input from its riders about which bus stops to scrap, following a botched attempt to consolidate Metrobus stops without commuter involvement 17 months ago.

The agency is trying again to make the bus system more efficient, likely starting along the 70s and 90s routes, though with three public meetings this time.

In December 2010, the transit agency quietly eliminated 67 stops from four bus lines when it rolled out new "service enhancements." But riders immediately complained, as *The Washington Examiner* first reported. The agency backtracked, restoring seven bus stops and relocating six others.

Want to have a say?

Metro is hosting three public meetings in the District to get input from bus riders and community members about which bus stops to consolidate in an effort to streamline service.

- 7 p.m., May 8: Matthews Memorial Baptist Church, 2616 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE
- 7 p.m., May 10: Mount Airy Baptist Church, 1100 North Capitol St. NW
- 7 p.m., May 17: Trinity Episcopal Church, 7005 Piney Branch Road NW

At the time, agency officials said they would try to come up with a process of getting the community involved earlier so Metro didn't need to make changes after consolidating

stops. Just over a year later, it is hosting the community meetings.



Large public meetings

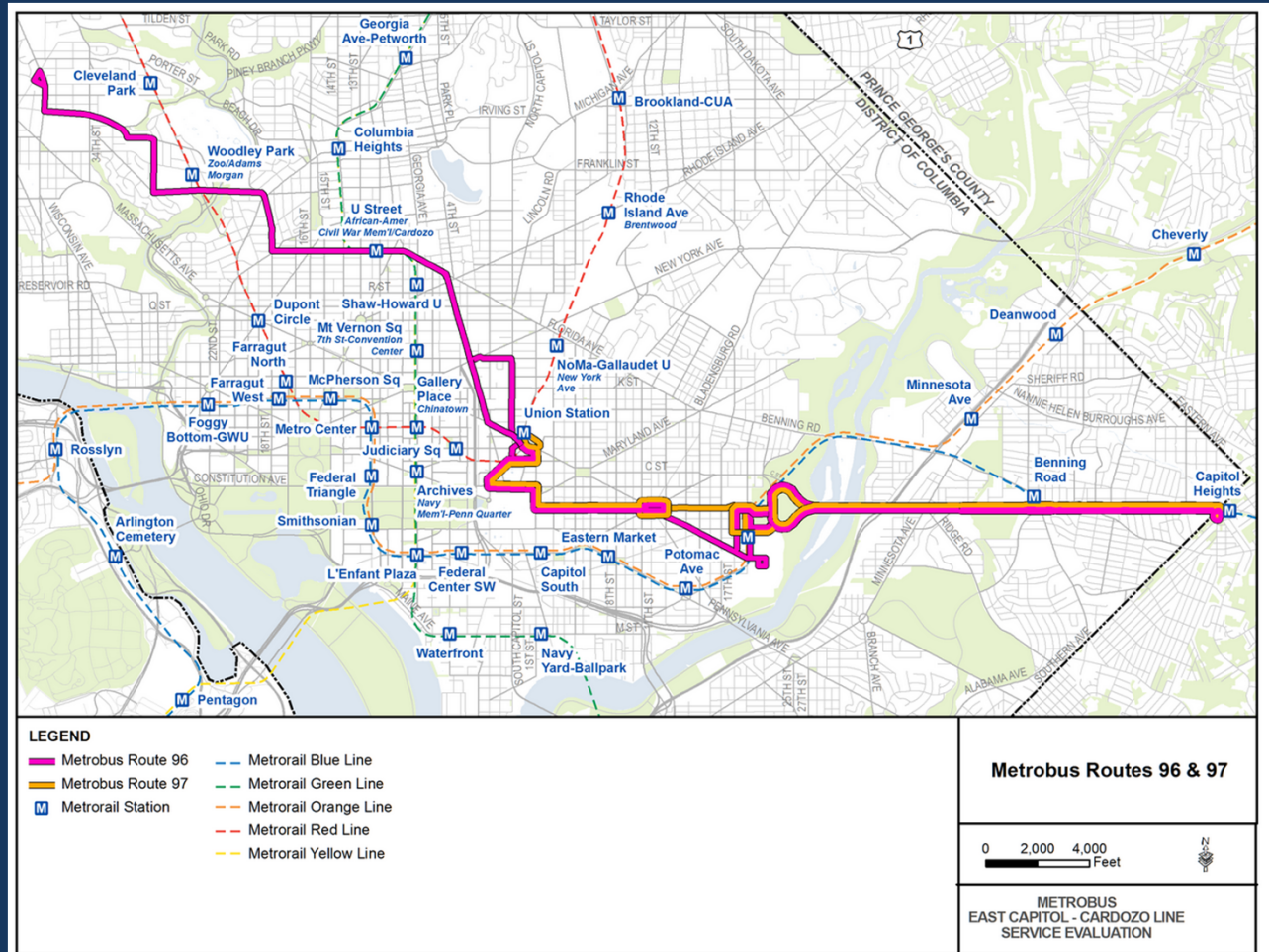
- This turned out to not be such a good idea.
- Poor attendance
- Angry attendees complained about everything except bus stop consolidation
- WMATA decided that the process was too difficult, and too controversial
- The process was modified
- The program was put on hold





A new approach: Fall 2013

- We chose the Route 96/97, which had a recently completed Service Evaluation Study
- The 96 travels between Capitol Heights and Tenleytown Stations
- The 97 travels between Capitol Heights and Union Stations





A new approach: Fall 2013

- Staff drove the route, looking at
 - Stop spacing
 - Adjacent amenities or trip generators
 - Non-ADA compliance
- Back at the office, the list was narrowed down by taking out high ridership stops



A new approach: Fall 2013

- WMATA met with city councilmembers, as well as Commissioners of some Advisory Neighborhood Councils to explain the program and the methodology
 - Set guidelines based on the which stops were controversial the previous time.
- We won't touch stops at:
 - Schools
 - Churches
 - Parks/Recreation centers
 - Senior Housing
 - Transfer locations
 - Stops with >30 ons/off per avg weekda
 - Shelters





A new approach: Fall 2013

- Notices were posted at bus stops that were proposed to discontinue, allowing for a 2 week comment period
- Comments were accepted via phone, email, and a form online

Less **STOP** More **GO**

Metro is working to improve your bus service. One way to make buses run more on-time and reliably is by combining bus stops that are very close together.

Metro is considering combining this bus stop with another stop located 1 to 2 blocks away to improve service. (This bus stop would be discontinued.) We would like to hear your feedback before making any decision.

To offer your comments, or for more information, visit wmata.com/betterbus or call (202) 962-2440, by October 20.

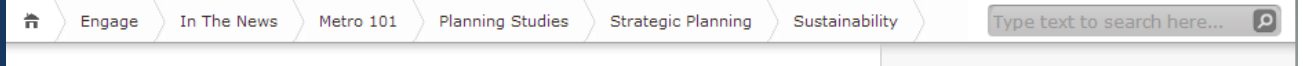
When buses spend more time moving and less time stopping, everyone enjoys a faster, more reliable trip.





A new approach: Fall 2013

- We posted an explanation of which stops we were taking, with maps, on the PlanItMetro blog.
- Accepted comments via the blog as well



Home > In The News > Planning Studies > Metrobus Studies > Planning Studies

Improving Bus Service with 'Less Stop, More Go'

October 3rd, 2013 Jamie [Go to comments](#) [Leave a comment](#)

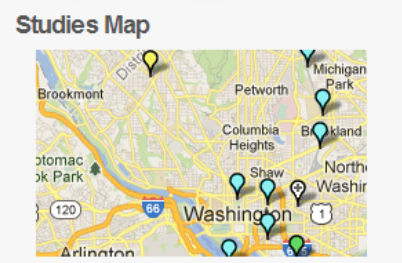
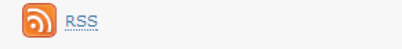
[Like](#) [Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) [+1](#) [Share](#)

The distance between stops is of key concern to Metro and its customers. More closely spaced stops provide customers with more convenient access, as they are likely to experience a shorter walk to the nearest bus stop. However, closely-spaced stops are also likely to result in a longer ride for customers because of the number of times the bus stops — to decelerate, come to a complete stop and then accelerate and re-merge into traffic — is increased.



Having fewer stops along a bus route benefits passengers not only by reducing the time it takes for them to make their trip, but by making the service more reliable and predictable. Customer benefit is maximized when the only stops considered for removal have low average weekday ridership for boarding and alighting. We have chosen the 96/97 line, known as the East Capitol Street-Cardozo line, which runs between Capitol Heights Station, Stadium-Armory Station, Union Station, U Street Station, Woodley Park Station, and Tenleytown Station. Some of the bus stops in the Woodley Park area are also served by the X3 route.

As a part of the Metrobus Service Evaluations, a study was done on this line which ended in January 2013. That study, which recommended bus stop consolidation, was reviewed by the District Department of Transportation, and went through several rounds of public meetings. During the month of September, WMATA met with affected officials from council members' offices and ANCs. A map of those low ridership stops, and a list, is below:



Endorse Momentum

Show your support for

MOMENTUM

metro The Next Generation of Metro

[Click here to endorse!](#)

Momentum Endorsed By:

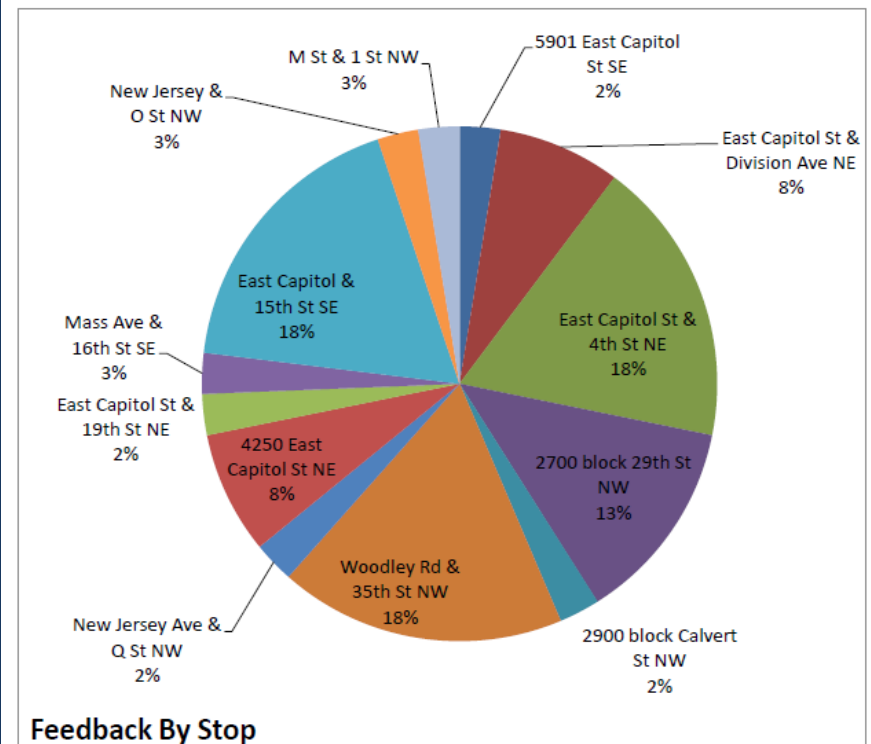
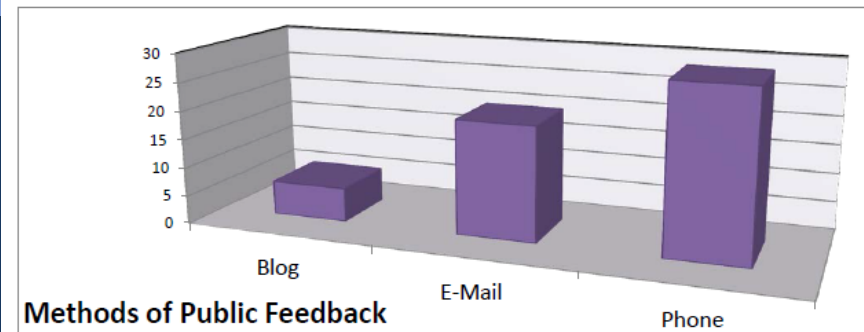
- ### Site Pages
- [About PlanItMetro](#)
 - [Non-Metro Regional Transit Projects](#)
 - [Regional Transportation Links](#)

PLAN Links



Public Comment

- We proposed to remove 27 stops along the route, out of a total of 186 stops.
- We received 40 stop-specific comments, 7 general comments, and 4 about other routes
- All comments were tabulated, and each call or email was returned to tell the customer that it was received
- Five stops were kept in service as a result of the feedback
- 22 stops were discontinued, which was 12% of the total stops
- Compiled a report explaining all of this, distributed to stakeholders





The difference?

- The first time, citizen calls their city council member or ANC and complains about their bus stop being removed.
- Council member or ANC has no knowledge of project, is hearing about this for the first time, and is upset.
- They demand answers,
- They demand that the bus stop be put back.





The difference?

- The second time, the phone call is the same (although the citizen may have known beforehand), but the answer is different.
- “Yes, I am aware of this project, and I support WMATA’s efforts to improve bus service. According to the list they gave me, there is another stop one block from your home.





The difference?

- The number of bus stops on the 96/97 that WMATA was asked to put back by politicians.....

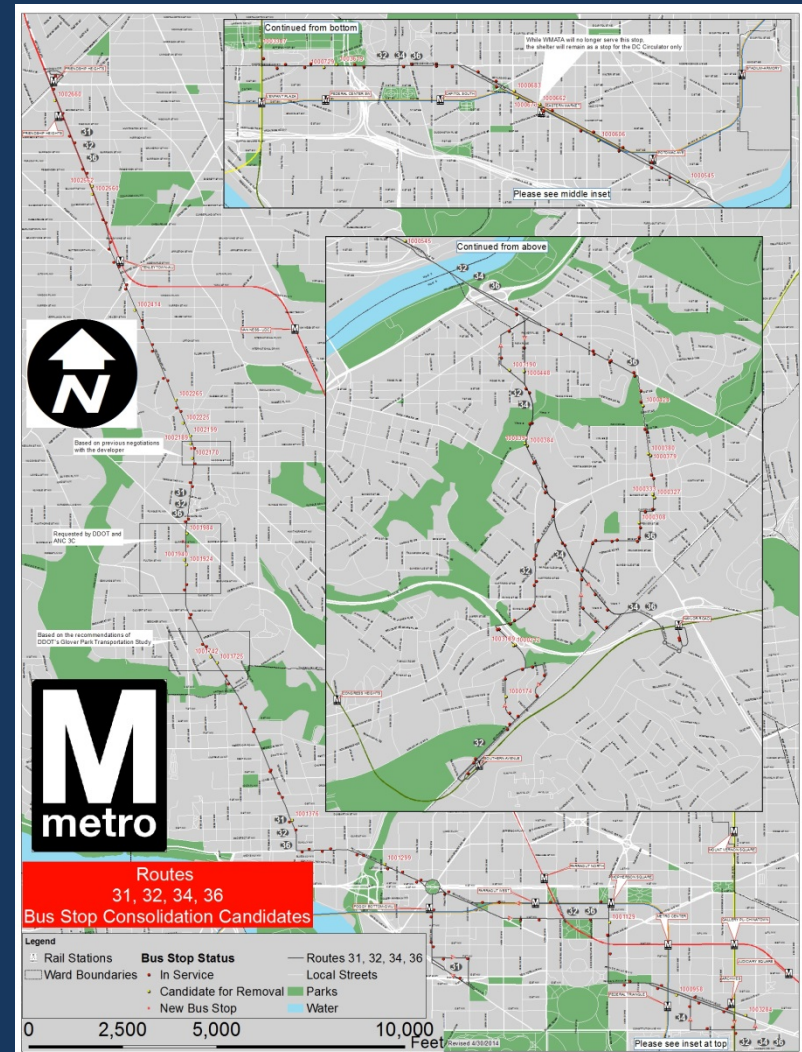
ZERO

One pair of stops was reestablished in June 2014 after a customer left us a message every day for a week asking to please put her bus stop back.



Summer 2014

- WMATA proposed to consolidate bus stops on two lines
- The 23A,B,T, running from Crystal City to Tysons Corner in Virginia
 - Had the highest bus stop density in Virginia
- The 30's Line (31,32,34,36), running from Friendship Heights to Southeast in DC.
 - In concert with a major restructuring of that line.
 - Such a high ridership route, we may not be able to adhere to all of the previous guidelines
 - Shelters
 - Ridership cutoff





Summer 2014

- DC Councilmembers and ANCs had already heard our pitch once; so they were receptive the second time around.
- They requested that some stops remain in service, and others be relocated, so we made adjustments to the plan.
- Arlington County DOT also requested some changes to our proposal
- The requested changes were made prior to publicizing the list.





Summer 2014

- Next, we attended several meetings of the various Advisory Neighborhood Councils.
- These groups released our plans to the public.
- Reaction was mixed
 - Cautiously optimistic editorial in the local newspaper

THE NORTHWEST CURRENT

Davis Kennedy/Publisher & Editor

Chris Kain/Managing Editor

Speeding up bus service

We appreciate the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority's current effort to improve bus service along Wisconsin Avenue. The agency proposes removing about 40 stops and altering routes in an effort to speed bus traffic.

Proposed changes would shorten the 31 route, combine the 32 and 36 and shorten their path, and create new 30S and 30N lines — running once an hour — to cover the entire length that the 32 and 36 now run.

The agency also intends to eliminate pairs of stops (northbound and southbound), decreasing the number per mile from about seven to five. A spokesperson said there's another stop within a block or so of those suggested for removal. The agency has also said it intends to maintain stops that serve a school, recreation center or place of worship.

While some will undoubtedly oppose aspects of the plan — and perhaps for good reason — the overall concept seems appropriate. Many people rely on these Wisconsin Avenue routes, even in areas also served by a Metrorail stop, and with improved service we imagine the numbers could grow.

For outreach, the agency says it will post signs on buses and at stops next month and launch a website. Metro has already provided preliminary information to advisory neighborhood commissions. The Georgetown group has opposed elimination of a stop at Dumbarton Street, and the Glover Park commission cited a preference for eliminating only the northbound stop at W Place and keeping southbound in favor of a removal at 35th Street.

A collaborative approach is essential. All bus riders — or prospective riders who might start if they see improvements — should consider weighing in before the plans become official in mid-July. Over in the Dupont area, ongoing tweaks to 16th Street buses seem to be improving the rider experience, and residents have come up with their own solutions to ease extreme overcrowding — indicating that crowdsourcing can yield excellent results.



Summer 2014

- Reaction was mixed
 - ANC resolution asking that we not do anything until we gave them more information as to why the bus stop would be removed

Re: WMATA proposal to remove the northbound bus stop for 30's buses at Wisconsin Avenue and Dumbarton Street, NW

Dear Mr. Saries:

On May 2, 2014, ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by seven of eight commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution:

ANC 2E requests further information on the reasons for removing the bus stop and oppose the removal of this bus stop until such time as persuasive material can be provided.



Summer 2014

- We responded that we would still post the notices at affected stops, to allow the public the chance to comment.
- We extended the comment period to 3 weeks
- We also posted the notices in Spanish



Menos PARADAS

Mas FRECUENCIA

Metro está trabajando para mejorar su servicio de autobús. Una manera de hacer que las unidades recorran segura y a tiempo es combinando las paradas de autobuses que están localizadas cerca una de la otra.

Metro está considerando que esta parada de autobús con otra parada localizada entre una y dos cuadras mejorara el servicio. (Esta parada de autobús será descontinuada.) Nosotros queremos escuchar su opinión antes de cualquier decisión.

Para ofrecer sus comentarios, or para más información, visite wmata.com/betterbus o llame al **202-962-2440** antes del 20 de junio.

Cuando los autobuses toman más tiempo en trasladarse haciendo menos paradas, todos disfrutan de un viaje seguro y rápido.





Summer 2014

- We received 44 comments on the 23 Line
 - Some changes were made due to the construction of the Crystal City-Potomac Yards Transitway
 - One other stop will remain in service since the previous stop cannot be served during the PM rush

Number	Name	Date	How	Response	Bus Stop	ID	Comments
1	Gerald Auten Gerald.Auten@treasury.gov	5/31	Email	Reply Email	general	general	Cautions against removing bus stops that will cause people to stop riding the bus
2	Colin Winkler	6/3	Blog		general	general	Rides another route, approves of consolidation
3	no name given, 202-710-2476	6/11	Phone		Arlington Ridge Rd & 23 St	6000118	Bus stop is convenient, and caller is disabled
4	no name given, 202-834-1320	6/11	Phone		Fairfax and Taylor		We should only abolish stop if we can enforce no smoking at main station stop, called twice
5	no name given, 703-615-8438	6/11	Phone		Fairfax and Taylor	1745?	in favor of moving stop to Ballston Station
6	Grafton Moten	6/12	Email	Reply Email	general	general	not in favor of making people walk further
7	Joonsuk Lee	6/12	Email	Reply Email	Fairfax and Taylor	6000531	Believes the stop is the most convenient to the station
8	Larry Kaufman 703-979-6631	6/12	Phone		S Glebe Rd & 14th		It is a good idea, not many people use it, next stop is not too far
9	no name given, 202-445-0912	6/12	Phone		no stop given	no stop given	against
10	no name given, 703-979-6631	6/13	Phone		S Glebe Rd & 14th	6000186, 6000189	support
11	Maria Freund	6/13	Email		Shirlington & Kemper		Rides the bus every day, stop is frequently used
12	Lauri Silverman 202-361-8895	6/13	Phone & Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper		Rides ART, frequent rider
13	KP	6/13	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	That stop is used regularly by many people in the surrounding neighborhood to jump on the 23
14	Bridget 571-839-1705	6/13	Phone		no stop given		Rides metro since 1981. Harder to walk a longer distance
15	Kyle Boyles	6/13	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper		There is no other north bound bus route within three blocks of this location for the 87 north ro
16	Lisa Anderson	6/13	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Lots of people use it, bought the house because it was there. Other stops are not safe in the d
17	Seth Rogier	6/13	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper		Keep the stop, remove previous stop if need be
18	Robert Harvey	6/14	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Keep the stop, next stop is too far away, area not safe for pedestrians
19	Corry Grimm	6/14	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Walking to the next stop would considerably increase commute time
20	Michele McCarthy	6/14	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Thinks alternate bus stop is 24th Street
21	Ankit J. Mody	6/15	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Shirlington Transit Center is too far away
22	Jeff Chernosky	6/15	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	It is hard for him to walk, terrain slopes too much
23	Joanna Kim	6/16	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	ART 87 does not utilize previous WMATA stop
24	Andrew Freund	6/16	Email	Reply Email	Shirlington & Kemper	6000056	Close stops are less utilized
25	Gina Grier	6/16	Email	Reply Email	N Glebe and Woodley		serves local residents and employees of adjacent retirement home. 900 ft to previous, 591 ft t
26	Mina Hohlen	6/16	Email	Reply Email	N Glebe & 13th	6000608	Stop is very close to her home; does not understand where the alternate stop is.
27	Mina Hohlen	6/16	Email	Reply Email	Fairfax and Taylor	6000526	Uses this stop sometimes, but can understand taking it out
28	no name given, 703-402-0631	6/17	Phone		S Glebe Rd & 14th	6000186, 6000189	Not well used, other stops down the street
29	no name given, 301-653-8654	6/17	Phone		S Glebe Rd & 14th	6000186, 6000189	difficulty with English
30	no name given, 703-795-8805	6/17	Phone		Fairfax and Taylor	6000531	Stop is convenient, will consider switching to driving



Summer 2014

- We received 76 comments on the 30s Line
 - One pair of stops will remain due to their proximity to a school
 - DDOT requested that we move a pair of stops from an uncontrolled intersection to a controlled intersection for safety reasons
 - Other stops were also relocated for safety reasons
 - Final decisions will be made this week on several stops that various ANCs sent a resolution against removing.



Next steps

- The final list will be sent to the jurisdictions
- The final list will be posted on the PlanitMetro blog
- Notices will go up at affected stops telling customers the 1 or 2 closest alternative stops



Stop Discontinued

Metrobus Routes 31 32 36 N2

Effective August 24, 2014

This bus stop will be discontinued to improve service by combining stops that are close together.

For bus service, please use these stops:

- **Friendship Heights Station**
- **Wisconsin Avenue & Jennifer Street**

We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your understanding as we work to improve your ride.

Stop ID 1002660

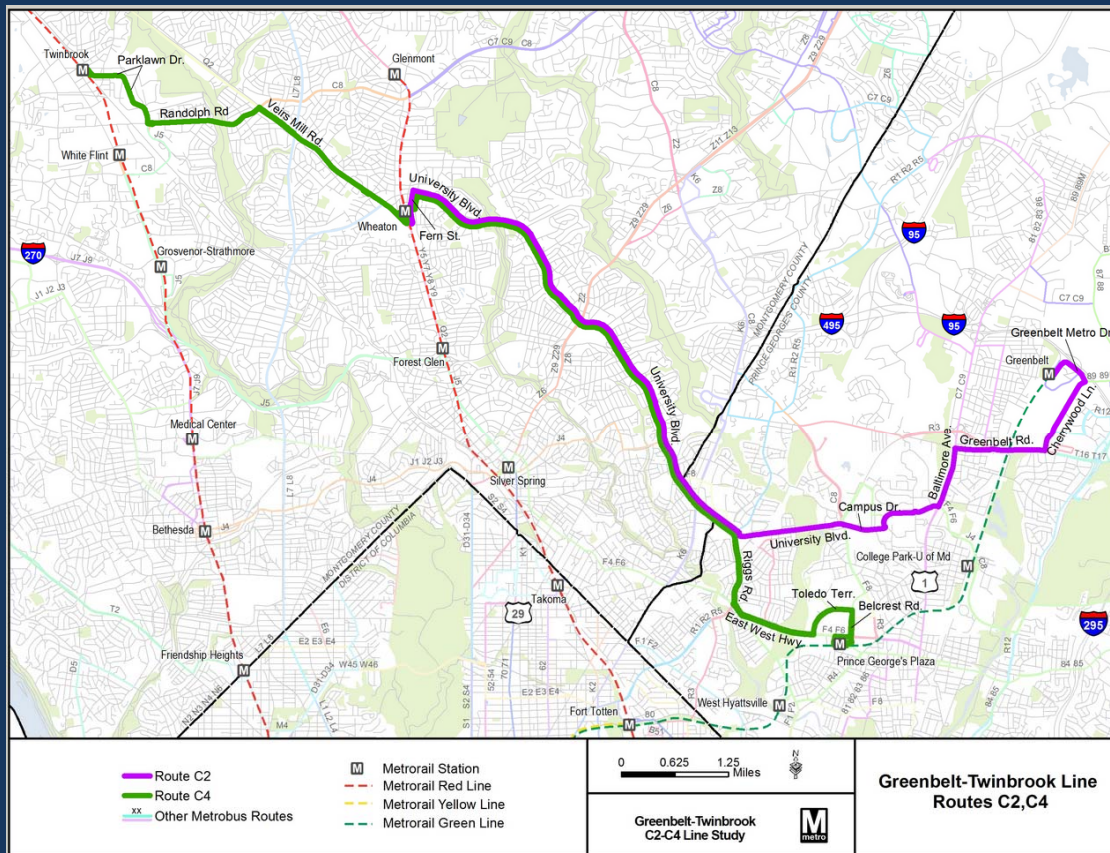


**wmata.com/betterbus
Customer Service (202) 637-7000**



Next Steps: Winter 2014

- We plan on doing the C2/C4 in Montgomery County, and possibly another route in Virginia





Conclusion

- Bus stop consolidation can be done- but success depends on Public Outreach.
- Thank you for your kind attention
- Any questions?

