

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 3, 2015
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
THROUGH: MARK B. JINKS, ACTING CITY MANAGER *MR for MBJ*
FROM: NELSIE L. BIRCH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET *MR for NLB*
SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #12: ALTERNATIVES TO METRORAIL BLUE LINE

This memorandum responds to questions from Councilman Wilson regarding City reliance on the Metrorail Blue Line and fiscal impacts of WMATA bus alternatives versus DASH bus alternatives.

WMATA staff provided several bus alternatives to supplement the reduced peak hour Blue Line Service (Attachment 1). These alternatives ranged from a no-cost option of encouraging commuters to use existing bus service, to adding a shuttle bus service at a capital cost of almost \$4.0M and annual operating subsidies ranging between \$115K and \$694K. City staff proposed to proceed with the no-cost option. However, City Council may choose to consider additional options in future budget deliberations.

DASH provided the following information: DASH alternatives ranged from a no-cost option of encouraging commuters to use existing bus service, to adding a shuttle bus service at a capital cost of \$2.0M - \$3.5M million and annual operating subsidies ranging between \$110K and \$407K. This information is based on the alternatives WMATA provided for the Blue Line Reduction.

WMATA has announced that new eight car trains will debut on the Blue line April 14th, relieving some of the current congestion during rush hour. The link to that article can be found here:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/metros-long-awaited-new-subway-cars-set-to-debut-april-14-on-the-blue-line/2015/03/26/19259a08-d3ec-11e4-ab77-9646eea6a4c7_story.html

It should be noted that the Metro 2025 program proposes to order 220 new rail cars in 2015 and when these cars are deployed the Blue Line will see added capacity and depending on how the deployment (a few years out) is arranged, the frequency of train service on the Blue Line could be increased.

ATTACHMENTS:

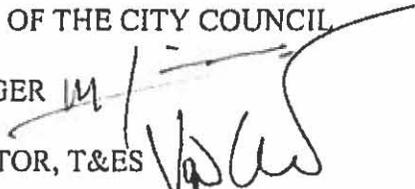
Attachment 1 – WMATA Proposal to Supplement Blue Line Service

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2015

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: MARK B. JINKS, ACTING CITY MANAGER 

FROM: YON LAMBERT, AICP, ACTING DIRECTOR, T&ES 

SUBJECT: WMATA PROPOSAL TO SUPPLEMENT BLUE LINE SERVICE

As a follow up to concerns raised by City Council about changes to Blue Line service on Metrorail last fall, City staff reached out to WMATA staff who prepared the attached memorandum outlining a number of alternatives to supplement the reduced peak hour Blue Line Service.

The information we received included alternatives that ranged from a no-cost option of encouraging commuters to use existing bus service, to adding shuttle bus service at capital cost of almost \$4 million and annual operating subsidies between \$115,000- \$694,000. The alternatives were considered in the FY 2016 budget process, and in light of WMATA's funding requests, staff is planning to proceed with Alternative 1, at no additional cost. The other three alternatives range in up front bus purchase capital cost from \$2.3 million to \$3.8 million and have ongoing annual operating subsidies ranging from \$0.1 million to \$0.7 million (see summary chart on page 5). The Council may choose to consider additional options in future budget deliberations. If you have any questions on these alternatives, please contact Sandra Marks, Deputy Director of T&ES Transportation at 703.746.4026 or Sandra.marks@alexandriava.gov.

Attachment: WMATA Proposed Alternatives to Supplement Blue Line Service

cc: Mark B. Jinks, Acting City Manager
Emily Baker, P.E., Acting Deputy City Manager
Sandra Marks, AICP, Deputy Director, T&ES
Jim Maslanka, Capital Projects Manager, T&ES

**METROBUS SERVICE PROPOSALS
TO SUPPLEMENT PEAK HOUR BLUE LINE SERVICE
NOVEMBER 7, 2014**

Attachment

Following are three alternatives WMATA has developed for possible services to relieve Blue Line overcrowding. All of these are feasible, except that a key component needs to be factored in to the equation. WMATA does not have a large reserve of buses which can easily be placed in to service. The peak vehicle requirements vary depending upon whether the service is for Virginia, Maryland or the District of Columbia. In the case of a new Virginia service, buses could be provided for new service in the morning but not in the afternoon. Thus, if the City wanted to initiate the service, they would have to agree to buy WMATA new buses to run the service.

As far as funding the purchase of new buses, in the past WMATA has started services without having to wait a year-and-a-half until new buses are in place as long as WMATA has a commitment from an outside agency, such as the City, to buy expansion buses. WMATA Bus Maintenance has agreed in the past to hold a few buses back from retirement as long as they have a guarantee of how long that extension in useful life will last.

ALTERNATIVE 1: Encouraging People to Use the 7Y to Go Into DC

Relatively recently, WMATA began a peak hour only service, which operates from the Beauregard Corridor to the Pentagon, to the western portion of the District of Columbia's Central Business District called the 7Y. During the morning peak hour, the service starts in the Beauregard Corridor, travels to the Pentagon using I-395. From there it uses the Jefferson-Davis Highway, the Memorial Bridge, Constitution Avenue, 18th Street, and K Street to get to 9th and New York Avenue. In the evening the bus travels down L Street, 19th Street, Constitution Avenue, the Memorial Bridge, and Jefferson Davis Highway to get to the Pentagon and then uses I-395 to the Beauregard corridor.

This is an excellent option which could be implemented easily if the City and WMATA marketed this service as an alternative to the Blue Line. This option would be very attractive, since it is relatively fast, and would cost less than transferring to a train. Currently, there is capacity on this line, so there would be no initial cost to the service, if this campaign was successful in bringing many additional patrons to the line, adding a trip to this line would be less difficult than starting a brand-new bus route.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Pentagon – Dupont Circle shuttle

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Route: From Pentagon via Jefferson Davis Hwy. (Rt. 1/110), Memorial Bridge, Constitution Ave., 18th St. (N/B a.m.)/19th St. (S/B p.m.) to/from Dupont Circle

Service Span: Weekdays 7 to 9 a.m. northbound to Dupont Circle, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. southbound to Pentagon

Service Frequency: Every 12 minutes (11 a.m., 11 p.m. trips)

Annual Passengers: 138,000 (25 per trip)

Annual Cost: \$842,000

Annual Revenue: \$148,000

Annual Subsidy: \$694,000

Subsidy/Passenger: \$5.03

Peak Buses: 5

Capital Cost for Buses: \$3,750,000

Proposed schedule:

Leave Pentagon*	18 th St. & Pa. Ave.	Arrive Dupont Circle (P & 20 th Sts.)
703A	724A	734A
715A	736A	746A
Then every 12 minutes until		
851A	912A	922A
903A	924A	934A

Leave Dupont Circle (Mass. Ave. & 20 th St.)	19 th & F Sts.	Arrive Pentagon
430P	440P	456P
442P	452P	508P
Then every 12 minutes until		
618P	628P	644P
630P	640P	656P

*A.M. trips would leave 3 minutes after N/B Blue Line trains at Pentagon

11 Trips each AM rush

11 trips each PM rush

**METROBUS SERVICE PROPOSALS
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ALTERNATIVE 3: Landmark – Dupont Circle service (bypass Pentagon)

Route: From Stevenson & Whiting via Stevenson Ave., Yoakum Pkwy., Edsall Rd., Reynolds St., Duke St., Paxton St., Holmes Run Pkwy., Van Dorn St., Kenmore Ave., Seminary Rd., I-395 HOV Lanes, Washington Blvd. (west side of Pentagon), Memorial Bridge, Constitution Ave., 18th St. (N/B a.m.)/19th St. (S/B p.m.) to/from Dupont Circle

Service Span: Weekdays 6:45 to 7:45 a.m. northbound to Dupont Circle, 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. southbound to Landmark

Service Frequency: Every 30 minutes (3 a.m., 3 p.m. trips)

Annual Passengers: 37,650 (25 per trip)

Annual Cost: \$345,000
Annual Revenue: \$40,000 (regular fare) / \$117,000 (express fare)
Annual Subsidy: \$305,000 (regular fare) / \$228,000 (express fare)
Subsidy/Passenger: \$8.10 (regular fare) / \$6.06 (express fare)
Peak Buses: 3

Capital Cost for Buses: \$2,250,000

Proposed schedule:

Leave Landmark	Seminary & Kenmore (N)	18 th St. & Pa. Ave.	Arrive Dupont Circle (P & 20 th Sts.)
645A	712A	731A	741A
715A	742A	801A	811A
745A	812A	831A	841A

Leave Dupont Circle (Mass. Ave. & 20 th St.)	19 th & F Sts.	Seminary & Kenmore (S)	Arrive Landmark
445P	455P	514P	540P
515P	525P	544P	610P
545P	555P	614P	640P

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ALTERNATIVE 4: Enhance existing 11Y service

Existing short trips between Hunting Point and downtown DC would be rerouted via Slaters Lane and the Route 1 Transitway. One a.m. and three p.m. short trips would be added to provide a viable Old Town-downtown DC service via the Transitway.

Route: Existing route between Hunting Point and Abingdon & Slaters, then via Slaters Lane, U.S. Route 1, Route 1 Transitway (at Potomac Ave.), continue Route 1 (at E. Glebe Rd.), I-395, 14th Street Bridge and continue present route to/from Potomac Park.

Trips to/from Mt Vernon would continue to operate via G.W. Prkwy.

Service Span: Short trips would operate weekdays leaving Hunting Point northbound between 6:40 and 8:06 a.m., and leaving Potomac Park southbound between 4:25 and 5:55 p.m.

Service Frequency: Varies. A total of five a.m. northbound short trips (four existing plus one new a.m. trip), and four p.m. southbound short trips (one existing plus three new trips) would operate.

Annual Passengers: 34,000 (15 new/additional passengers per short trip)

Annual Cost: \$221,000

Annual Revenue: \$106,000 (express fare)

Annual Subsidy: \$115,000

Subsidy/Passenger: \$3.38

Peak Buses: Additional 1 A.M., 3 P.M.

Capital Cost for Buses: \$2,250,000

Proposed schedule (new and rerouted trips in bold):

	Leave Mt. Vernon	Hunting Point	Abingdon & Slaters*	Rt. 1 Transitway & E. Glebe Rd.	14 th & C Sts. SW	Arrive Potomac Park (19 th & Va. Ave.)
REROUTE	—	640A	649A	657A	711A	729A
	634A	703A	712A	—	723A	741A
NEW	—	713A	722A	730A	744A	802A
	654A	723A	732A	—	743A	801A
REROUTE	—	734A	746A	754A	812A	831A
	713A	745A	757A	—	810A	831A
REROUTE	—	756A	808A	816A	834A	855A
REROUTE	—	806A	818A	826A	844A	905A
	745A	817A	829A	—	842A	903A

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	Leave Potomac Park (18 th & C Sts.)	14 th & C Sts. SW	Rt. 1 Transitway & E. Glebe Rd.	Abingdon & Slaters*	Hunting Point	Arrive Mt. Vernon
	410P	428P	—	438P	449P	515P
NEW	425P	446P	503P	511P	524P	—
	440P	501P	—	514P	527P	559P
REROUTE	510P	531P	548P	556P	609P	—
	515P	536P	—	549P	602P	634P
NEW	525P	544P	558P	606P	617P	—
	540P	559P	—	609P	620P	650P
NEW	555P	614P	628P	636P	647P	—
	615P	634P	—	644P	655P	725P

*Trips rerouted via Transitway would serve stops on Slaters, west of Abingdon

Cost summary of alternatives:

Service Proposal	Annual Cost	Annual Revenue	Annual Subsidy	Subsidy Per Pass.	Bus Cost
Encouraging People to Use the 7Y	\$0 Initially	?	?	?	None initially
Pentagon-Dupont Circle (new service)	\$842,000	\$148,000	\$694,000	\$5.03	\$3,750,000
Landmark-Dupont Circle (new service)	\$345,000	\$40,000 (regular fare)	\$305,000 (regular fare)	\$8.10	\$2,250,000
		\$117,000 (express fare)	\$228,000 (express fare)	\$6.06	
Enhance existing 11Y service	\$221,000	\$106,000	\$115,000	\$3.38	\$2,250,000