



November 22, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chair and Members of the Board

SUBJECT: Regional Bus Conference

This memorandum provides an overview of the Regional Bus Conference to be held on November 30, 2006, at the Marriott Bethesda North Hotel and Conference Center, located at 5701 Marinelli Road in Bethesda, which is adjacent to the White Flint Metrorail station.

The goal of the conference is to produce regional action plans that will help improve the overall experience of bus riders by giving them a seamless beginning-to-end bus trip that's easy, affordable, and comfortable.

The conference will begin with registration and continental breakfast at 8 a.m. At 8:45 a.m., welcoming remarks will be offered by Mr. Art Holmes, Montgomery County Director of Public Works and Transportation, Mrs. Gladys W. Mack, Mr. Christopher Zimmerman and myself. I am also pleased to inform you that incoming General Manager John B. Catoe, Jr. will join us for the Regional Bus Conference.

Immediately after the welcoming remarks, Mr. Gordon Linton will moderate a general session on national best practices related to four issue areas: traffic management, bus stops, service integration, and fare policy. There will be a 30-minute break from 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., during which conference participants will be allowed an opportunity to look at the exhibit of buses located on the lower level parking lot. There will then be concurrent workshops focused on one of the four issue areas with each workshop moderated by a local jurisdiction transportation director.

We will break for lunch at 12:30 p.m. to Salon D where Mr. Charles Deegan will provide the introduction for our lunchtime speaker, Mr. Craig Keish from Southwest Airlines Marketing Group.

After the luncheon, the second general session will commence at 2 p.m. and will feature reports and recommendations from the four workshop sessions. This session will also be moderated by Mr. Gordon Linton. The conference wrap-up will feature a WMATA Board Members' Roundtable and a regional Call to Action to be moderated by Mr. Christopher Zimmerman.

**Washington  
Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority**

600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202/962-1234

By Metrorail:  
Judiciary Square—Red Line  
Gallery Place-Chinatown—  
Red, Green and  
Yellow Lines  
By Metrobus:  
Routes D1, D3, D6, P6,  
70, 71, 80, X2

*A District of Columbia,  
Maryland and Virginia  
Transit Partnership*


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Conference participants will have a final opportunity to view the exhibits of buses from each jurisdiction and local agency showcases, including a demonstration of WMATA's NextBus Passenger Information System.

The Regional Bus Conference will end with a reception, sponsored by COMTO, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Attached is the program brochure detailing the purpose of the conference as well as delineating the schedule for the day. Additionally, a one-page summary describing the tasks undertaken by each subject-area work group as well as the action plans developed by each of the work groups are also included. Finally, a listing of each bus exhibit and description of jurisdictional showcases is provided.

If you have any additional questions, please contact Edward Thomas, Assistant General Manager of Planning and Joint Development, at 202-962-2100.



Jack Requa  
Acting General Manager  
Attachments

no minimum regional guideline for new stops. The Bus Stops Working Group will discuss proposals for addressing these deficiencies. Proposed actions include: agreement on design features, a communication campaign about the regional bus system, provision of Next Bus information, integrating Bus Stop Survey results with the Trip Planner, implementing accessible sidewalks and developing a regional agreement on bus stop maintenance.

***Service Integration, Salon C***

**Kathy Ichter, Fairfax County, Moderator**

In the Washington region there are 13 transit agencies that carry 190 million passenger trips annually. Bus service plays a major role in the movement of people in the region. Jurisdictions make daily decisions regarding the movement of traffic along the major corridors in the region. The regional transit agencies have identified priority transit corridors that will be their focus for future transit improvements. An integrated planning process that incorporates sustainable transit and transportation projects along corridors needs to be developed. The objective is to have local transit and transportation agencies—as well as state agencies—develop a multi-year planning process that incorporates transit (facilities, customer information, and service) and transportation projects.

***Fare Policy, Oakley Room***

**Chuck Woodruff, WMATA, Moderator**

The Fare Policy Working Group will discuss several fare proposals for FY 2008. These proposals will impact all regional operators and are dependent on completing the implementation of SmarTrip®. In addition, they afford opportunities to explore better ways to load buses quicker and facilitate seamless transfer between bus and rail services. The main action areas at the bus conference are: raising cash fares at a faster rate than SmarTrip®; eliminating paper bus-to-bus transfers, rail-to-bus transfers and day passes; and reaffirming the principles of fare simplification.

**12:30 - 1:45 p.m.  
Luncheon, Salon D**

*Providing Outstanding Customer Service*  
Introduction of Keynote Speaker  
Charles Deegan, WMATA Board Vice-Chair

Keynote Speaker - Craig Keish  
Southwest Airlines Marketing Manager

**1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Break, Regional Showcases  
Conference Lobby Area**

**2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.  
General Session Two, Salon D**

Gordon Linton, Moderator  
Reports/Recommendations from Workshops  
*Traffic Management*, Michelle Pourciau  
*Bus Stops*, Howard Benn  
*Service Integration*, Kathy Ichter  
*Fare Policy*, Chuck Woodruff

**2:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Conference Wrap-up**

Chris Zimmerman, Moderator  
WMATA Board Members Roundtable  
Call to Action

**3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Bus Exhibit and Regional Showcases—  
A Final Look**

**4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Reception, Salon E**

Sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Chapter of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO). The guest speaker is Ms. Shirley Delibero, the National Chair of COMTO's Board of Directors.

# THE 2006 REGIONAL BUS CONFERENCE

## Charting A Common Route

**November 30, 2006**

**8 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

**Marriott Bethesda North Hotel  
and Conference Center**



## Welcome to the 2006 Regional Bus Conference

This one-day conference will bring local and state leaders together with transportation experts for productive discussions aimed at implementing the strategies from the Regional Bus Study and Mobility Initiative.

### Conference Goal

The goal of the conference is to produce regional action plans that help improve the overall experience of bus riders by giving them a seamless beginning-to-end bus trip that's easy, affordable and comfortable.

### Conference Objectives

The conference will foster and encourage fruitful dialogue and allow the exchange of information on regional and national best practices. We will discuss opportunities and challenges to adopting similar practices in the Washington Metropolitan area.

We will address the following issues:

- Traffic management to provide safe, secure, efficient and reliable bus service through coordinated traffic and transit management operations.
- Bus stop accessibility, information, maintenance and design standards to improve customer experience.
- Regional service integration strategies to enhance bus service quality.
- Fare policies to simplify payments, implement targeted incentives and raise necessary revenues.

### Conference Program

**8:00 - 8:45 a.m.**

#### Registration and Continental Breakfast, Conference Lobby Area

Bus Exhibit, Marriott Lower Level Parking Lot  
Regional Showcases, Conference Lobby Area

**8:45 - 9:15 a.m.**

#### Opening Session, Salon D

##### Welcoming Remarks

Jack Requa, WMATA Acting General Manager  
Art Holmes, Montgomery County, Director of Public Works and Transportation

##### Setting the Framework

*Improving Bus Customer Service through  
Regional Integration*

Gladys Mack, WMATA Board Chair  
Chris Zimmerman, WMATA Board Second Vice-Chair

**9:15 - 10:30 a.m.**

#### General Session One, Salon D

##### National Best Practices

Gordon Linton, WMATA Board Member, Moderator

##### Traffic Management, Roderick Goldman, Los Angeles, CA

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) has worked closely with the various city and county traffic departments to coordinate traffic and transit operations.

Mr. Goldman will discuss various actions and programs implemented by LACMTA to improve transit and traffic integration and operations that resulted in increased transit ridership.

##### Bus Stops, Maribeth Feke, Cleveland, OH

Ms. Feke will discuss her agency's experience in improving bus stops and shelters in the greater Cleveland area. The Greater Cleveland Transit Authority has developed a comprehensive planning process and guidebook to guide efforts in working with over 67 communities to provide bus stops and shelters that not only provide a comfortable waiting area but also reflect community values.

##### Service Integration, Michael Bolton, Arlington, IL

Mr. Bolton will discuss PACE's successes in integrating bus service in the greater Chicago area through an intelligent bus system, implementation of "Arterial Rapid Transit" and other planning initiatives in their Strategic Plan Visions 2020.

##### Fare Policy, Heather Ferguson, Chicago, IL

Ms. Ferguson will share Chicago's experiences with recent fare increases and how they are eliminating paper transfers, providing discounted fares on the Chicago Card and coordinating a regional fare.

##### Question and Answer Period

**10:30 - 11:00 a.m.**

##### Break

#### Bus Exhibit, Marriott Lower Level Parking Lot

**11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

#### Concurrent Workshops

##### Traffic Management, Salon A

Michelle Pourciau, District of Columbia, Moderator

The need to meet mobility, environmental, and energy objectives places demands on public transit systems. The current systems—especially the bus system component—need to improve performance, adopt new technologies and introduce innovations to meet these demands. The Traffic Management Work Group consists of traffic engineers, transit experts and Intelligent Transportation System professionals. The group has identified planning, engineering and management recommendations for improving bus running times. The actions include, but are not limited to: transit signal priority, urban street geometric improvements, exclusive bus lanes and parking restrictions. The objective is to have local and state governments to incorporate these actions into their transportation budgets.

##### Bus Stops, Salon B

Howard Benn, Montgomery County, Moderator

Great strides have been made regionally to improve the quality and increase the level of bus service. Bus fleets now offer new clean fuel buses and buses with low-floors and ramps for easier access for people with disabilities. On the other hand, some bus stops continue to be inaccessible. Poorly maintained stops are located throughout the region. Many stops lack useful information on available services, and there is

*continued on back*

# 2006 Regional Bus Conference

## Charting A Common Course

### Work Group Summaries

**Traffic Management.** The need to meet mobility, environmental, and energy objectives places demands on public transit systems. The current systems, especially the bus system component, need to improve efficiency, to adopt new technologies, and to introduce innovations in order to serve these demands. The Traffic Management Work Group consists of traffic engineers, transit experts and ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) professionals. The group has identified planning, engineering and management actions for improving bus running times. The actions include, but are not limited to: (1) transit signal priority; (2) urban street geometric improvements; (3) exclusive bus lanes; and (4) parking restrictions. The objective is to have local and state governments incorporate these actions into their highway budgets.

**Fare Policy.** The Fare Policy Working Group will discuss several fare strategies proposed for FY 2008. These proposals will impact all regional operators and are dependent on the implementation of SmarTrip on regional providers. In addition, they afford opportunities to explore better ways to load buses quicker and to facilitate seamless transfer between bus and rail services. The main action items at the Bus Conference are: (1) raising cash fares at a faster rate than SmarTrip; (2) eliminating paper bus-to-bus transfers, (3) rail-to-bus transfers and day passes; and (4) reaffirming the principles of fare simplification.

**Regional Bus Stops.** Great strides have been made regionally in improving the quality and increasing the quantity of bus service. Bus fleets now contain new clean fuel buses and buses with low-floors and ramps providing easier access for people with disabilities. On the other hand, some bus stops continue to be inaccessible. Poorly maintained stops are located throughout the region. Many stops lack useful information on available services, and there is no minimum regional guideline for new stops. The Bus Stops Working Group will discuss proposals for addressing these deficiencies. Proposed actions include: (1) a communication campaign about the regional bus system, (2) provision of next bus real time information, (3) integrating Bus Stop Survey results with the Trip Planner, (4) implementing accessible sidewalks, and (5) developing a regional agreement on bus stop maintenance.

**Service Integration.** The Service Integration Working Group will review background studies and programs on regional bus service. These include the Regional Bus Study, Capital Improvement Plan, Metro Matters Bus Program, Bus Network Evaluation, studies of replacement bus garages, corridor studies with bus alternatives, and implementation plans for high priority bus corridors. Georgia Avenue, University Boulevard and Jefferson Davis Highway are examples of high priority bus corridors where service enhancements are being implemented or are to be implemented in the upcoming months. The working group will prioritize regional bus service improvements and improvements planned for high priority bus corridors.

# Traffic Management Working Group Action Plan

Action	Purpose	Description
Investigate Practical Application of Transit Signal Priority	Improve bus schedule adherence on selected corridors	<p>Establish common TSP strategies and goals.</p> <p>Apply at appropriate intersections.</p> <p>Balance the needs of transit and automobile capacity requirements.</p> <p>Select a communication system between buses and controllers.</p> <p>Promote open ITS architecture.</p>
Promote Exclusive Bus Lanes	Provide Prime Bus Service	<p>Join effort to apply for Federal funding.</p> <p>Conduct corridor studies with local jurisdictions to assess impacts and configurations.</p> <p>Provide system and service planning.</p>
Evaluate Geometric Improvements	Access bus running way	<p>Establish Measure of Effectiveness to analyze and evaluate queue jumper, boarding island, curb extension, turning provisions, parking restrictions and bus stop.</p>
Advance HOV and HOT Lanes	Enhance bus speed and reliability	<p>Enhance transit use on HOV/HOT, consider park-and-ride lots, transit/carpool transfer centers and transit stations in the adjacent areas of highway ramps.</p>
Integrate ITS Strategies	Promote uniformity in ITS architecture	<p>Promote open ITS architecture so that ITS devices with different technologies can communicate with each other. This will fully utilize on-board devices.</p>

# Bus Stop Working Group Action Plan

Action	Purpose	Description
Communicate Theme	Increase knowledge and awareness of importance of bus stops.	Emphasize that bus service does not exist independently of pedestrian access. Ensure regional awareness of importance that properly designed bus stops play in transit by communicating this report at all levels.
Implement Bus Lane Parking Restrictions and Enforcement	Encourage use by and make bus stops more accessible to disabled and elderly customers.	Advocate the promulgation of parking regulations in all jurisdictions. Seniors and disabled customers are unable to board accessible buses because of cars in bus stops. Request jurisdictions to reevaluate current regulations.
Communicate Bus Stop Status Change	Provide reliable bus service information to customers.	Provide appropriate and timely route and schedule information so customers can efficiently use bus service.
Maintain Bus Stops	Provide functional bus stop facilities.	Execute an agreement between bus stop owners for the maintenance of physical portions of the bus stops. Local authorities need to provide snow removal within a reasonable period after a storm.
Access Trip Planner	Provide information on accessible bus stops to customers with disabilities	Utilize data from bus stop surveys now underway to identify accessible bus stops in Trip Planner for customers requiring bus stops to make their trip.
Develop a Bus Stop Checklist	Provide common “worksheet” to be used by local jurisdictions	Implement a regional bus stop planning checklist. Bus stops are often planned only the development that triggers need for bus stops is complete. Require urban and development planners to follow guidelines in TRCP Report 19 and Regional Bus Study. Provide benches where possible independent of shelters.
Identification of Bus Stops by Customers	Customers to identify and prioritize curb cuts needed to access accessible bus service.	Recommend that set asides from existing curb cut funds are targeted to make curb cut installations that customers request, following the Kansas City Model.

# Service Integration Working Group Action Plan

Action	Purpose	Description
Reaffirm Recommendations from Current and Former Studies	Reacquaint participants with commitments and recommendations from the Regional Bus Study, Blue Ribbon Panel, Network Evaluation, etc.	Report on the progress of projects and emphasize the importance of bus service in the region
Affirm Regional Priorities	Identify an integrated system with coordinated fares, schedule, routes and information as the goal to achieve a high quality transit network	Achieve the “Family of Services” concept by identifying and coordinating the type, level and providers of service providing passengers varying choices of services and information.
Focus on Priority Corridors	Operate high-capacity routes along major corridors and arterials where congestion and other service impediments contributing to the degradation of bus service	Restructure service along high-capacity corridors to provide improved service, travel time, information and facilities and improve the overall image of bus service in the region. Improvements will be coordinated with the transportation plans of local agencies to identify shared benefits for both private autos and transit.
Establish Multi-Year Planning Process	Develop a multi-year planning process to obtain regional consensus on go forward strategies and projects	Establish a four part planning process that 1) develops an operating concept; 2) obtains Board and local agency approval; 3) funds commitments; and 4) implements changes.

# Fare Policy Working Group Action Plan

<b>Action</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Description</b>
Eliminate Paper Transfers	Encourage the use of SmarTrip/reduce operating cost	Install SmarTrip on all local bus service provider buses by start of FY08. Transfers will be available with SmarTrip only.
Eliminate Day Pass	Reduce operating cost	Eliminate the 1-Day Pass. The pass is currently used by approximately 1% of customers. There is concern a substantial number of boardings come from individuals fraudulently using the day pass.
Develop SmarTrip Discount	Encourage the use of SmarTrip	Charge a lower fare if passengers boarding the bus pay using SmarTrip.
Apply Full Fare Discount from Bus to Rail and Rail to Bus	Encourage bus access to the Metrorail system	Provide a discounted Metrorail fare for customers transferring from bus. Provide an identical discounted bus fare for customers transferring from Metrorail. Implementation requires SmarTrip on all regional operators.
Simplify Regional Fare	Promote uniformity in regional bus fares	Continue the region's seven year effort to reach a common boarding charge on bus service throughout the region.

# 2006 Regional Bus Conference

## Charting A Common Route

### Exhibits

	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Number of Buses</b>
1	Fairfax County - Connector	1
2	Fairfax City - CUE Bus	1
3	Prince George's County - The Bus	1
4	Arlington County - ART Bus	1
5	Arlington County - Mobile Store	1
6	City of Alexandria - DASH	1
7	Montgomery County - Ride On	2
8	District of Columbia - Circulator	1
9	WMATA	2
10	Orion Bus	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

### Showcases

	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Fairfax County	Transportation Service and Program
2	Prince George's County	Ridesharing
3	Arlington County	Crystal City Busway Study
4	Arlington County	Arlington County Commuter Services
5	City of Alexandria	Crystal City Busway Study
6	Montgomery County	Ride On Info, North Bethesda TMD, Route 355 Plan, Commuter Service
7	District of Columbia	Circulator Rapid Bus
8	WMATA	NextBus Display and Demonstration and Metrorail PIDS Demonstration
9	WMATA	Metro Bus Info, Maps and New Buses
10	WMATA	DC Transit future