Move DC: Local Bus Study Updates

- Originated out of stakeholder feedback from Idea Exchange and priorities during first round workshops
- Focused on Circulator and WMATA “Non-Regional” routes to identify opportunities for service improvements
- Explores operating models and considerations
- Findings folded into short- and long-term planning for local transit
Move DC: Local Bus Study Updates

- Updates on:
  - Market Analysis
  - Stakeholder Interviews
  - Route Evaluations

- Provide preview for:
  - Scenario Development
MARKET ANALYSIS
Purpose

• Understand market for transit
  – Population & employment densities – strongest indicators of transit demand
  – Socio-economic characteristics - Low income, non-white, no vehicle
  – Travel flows

Relationship between densities and transit supported
Process

- Map population density/employment density
- Determine transit levels supported by neighborhood
- Create composite propensity map
- Understand market for transit

Composite transit propensity map (darker colors indicated higher demand; lighter colors lower demand)
Market Analysis Findings

- Moderate to high transit demand throughout the District
- District generally well-covered by transit services (Metrorail, Regional bus, Non-Regional bus, DC Circulator)
  - Regional bus routes are generally direct and fast
  - Non-Regional bus routes generally maximize coverage and are slower
  - Majority of District covered by Regional bus supplemented by Non-Regional service
  - Major exception is Wards 7 and 8, which are served predominantly with more circuitous Non-Regional service
STAKEHOLDER & OPERATOR INTERVIEWS
Interviewees

- City of Alexandria DASH
- Arlington County ART
- DC Surface Transit
- Fairfax County Connector
- GoDCGo
- Montgomery County Ride On
- Prince George’s County The Bus
- WMATA Bus Planning and Long Range Planning divisions
- WMATA Riders Advisory Council
History/Current Practice

- All other DC-area jurisdictions except Prince George’s County have taken over part or all of WMATA’s Non-Regional service
- Taking over routes in other areas was relatively easy because of clear distinction between Regional and Non-Regional routes
Business Models

- Montgomery County directly operates
- All other operators contract for service
  - DASH contracts out management and operations
  - Others manage and contract operations
  - Arlington leases its maintenance facility from its contractor
  - Others own their own facilities
  - Many ways to structure contract
Perspective on Operating Models

- **Contracting Service**
  - Potential to manage cost in some areas even while maintaining a unionized workforce.
  - Potential new/additional costs in contracting/procurement and some line administrative line items.
  - Reducing costs can result in deferred maintenance issues.

- **Direct Operations**
  - Perceived as providing higher quality service (usually in maintenance-related areas)
  - Provides more flexibility to change service or add programs
Funding

- Operating costs:
  - Vary between MD and VA
  - At all systems, significant local contributions for operating costs

- Capital costs
  - MD: State pays 90%
  - VA: State pays up to 80%
  - WMATA does not charge jurisdictions for bus purchases for Non-Regional service

- With DDOT operation, 100% funding for buses would be a cost item not incurred by other jurisdictions
ROUTE EVALUATIONS
Purpose

- Develop clear understanding of all routes in terms of:
  - Service Design – transfers, alignment, schedule
  - Ridership – by trip, stop and time of day
  - Boardings and alightings by stop
  - On-Time Performance
  - Performance – productivity (passengers/hour, passengers/mile, average speed, stop spacing, total vehicle hours to revenue vehicle hours ratio)
  - Options for improvement

- To be completed for all Non-Regional and Circulator routes

- Example: M6 Fairfax Village
Example – M6 Fairfax Village

- **Design & Schedule**
  - Ward 7/8 connector from Fairfax Village/Fort Davis to Potomac Ave Metrorail
  - Direct route except for loop (eastbound direction only)

- **Performance**
  - Strong productivity
  - High ridership and moderate service levels
  - Compared to Non-Regional routes, good weekend ridership

*Passengers per revenue vehicle hour on M6 and Non-Regional routes*
Example – M6 Fairfax Village

- **Assessment**
  - High ridership and good performance
  - Direct service with clear purpose (get people to Metrorail)

- **Service Options**
  - Reduce non-productive weekend time (deadhead)
  - Begin weekend service earlier to match demand
  - Consolidate with M2 (serves Naylor Road and overlaps with M6 loop)
  - Revise loop operation – counterclockwise in AM and clockwise in PM
Next Steps

- Evaluate existing service and potential options
- Identify and evaluate other issues and opportunities:
  - Service integration (WMATA, DC, Circulator, etc.)?
  - Fare integration (with WMATA/other services)
  - Maintenance facility locations
  - Facility ownership and operations (lease/own?)
  - Potential partnerships (other operators, public-private?)
- Evaluate cost impacts
- Identify possible business models
- Develop three scenarios for service and operations