

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE DMVMOVES REGIONAL BUS SERVICE GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), as the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorized on November 15, 2021 when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law, for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the region demonstrated unified leadership through the 2024 launch of the DMVMoves initiative, when the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Boards of Directors adopted a joint resolution formally establishing DMVMoves as a shared commitment to strengthen long-term coordination and planning for regional transit; and

WHEREAS, the appointed DMVMoves Task Force of regional officials, assisted by two Advisory Groups, and supported by TPB staff, led the DMVMoves effort and developed a shared vision for the future of the region's transit network and the identification of sustainable, long-term, dedicated funding sources to support it; and

WHEREAS, the culmination of this Task force's work was the development of the DMVMoves Plan, which outlines both a funding recommendation to address WMATA's long-term capital needs and a Regional Transit Integration Action Plan that calls for coordinated investments and actions to make travel across the region faster, safer, more integrated, and more reliable; and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2025 the COG and WMATA Boards of Directors adopted a Joint Resolution endorsing the DMVMoves Plan, adopting the DMVMoves Vision and six regional goals, directing WMATA and local agency staff to implement the DMVMoves Plan, and calling upon elected officials, agency partners, and regional stakeholders to support and advance the commitments necessary to realize the DMVMoves Vision and ensure a stable, integrated, and sustainable future for the region's transit systems; and

WHEREAS, in the Joint Resolution the COG and WMATA Boards of Directors urged the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) to act as lead coordinator for implementation of the DMVMoves Plan, responsible for convening stakeholders, monitoring progress, and issuing annual reports to WMATA, state and local partners, and the public, and that such reports will include progress reports on the implementation of the DMVMoves Plan, including bus priority corridor advancement, implementation of fare policy changes and regional service guidelines, and uniform reporting of transit system performance; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2026, in Resolution R9-2026, the TPB accepted the charge to act as lead coordinator for implementation of the DMVMoves Plan, convening stakeholders to develop regional integration actions for implementation, including the developing of a set of regional bus service guidelines for the TPB to adopt; and

WHEREAS, COG and WMATA staff convened a working group on transit service guidelines, which met over the course of the year and developed a set of regional bus service guidelines that defined common service classifications, activity tier land use context criteria, service type classification criteria (core, coverage, peak, and other), service criteria: span (hours per day) of service and service frequency, and used these criteria to proposed minimum span and frequencies for each grouping along with a “use” statement for the guidelines to provide policy and application context; and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2026 the WMATA Board of Directors adopted a set of transit service guidelines for Metrobus as well as Metrorail which reflected the proposed regional set of bus service guidelines; and

WHEREAS, in July 2026, the TPB and the TPB Technical Committee were briefed on the proposed set of bus service guidelines and use statement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board:

1. Adopts the following set of bus service guidelines to:
 - i. Set clear, consistent expectations for customers across the region, with flexibility to meet local needs;
 - ii. Support more seamless, coordinated service planning;
 - iii. Enhance customer understanding and confidence in the system and encourage increased ridership; and
 - iv. Enhance transparency and accountability.

Adopted by the Transportation Planning Board at its regular meeting on September 16, 2026.

Minimum Hours of Service and Frequency Standards			
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
At least 50% of bus stops along a route are within a census block that has populations and employment density of:	30 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	15 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	5 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)
Core routes <i>Serve major corridors with moderate frequency and all day service. Tend to be more direct</i>	16 hrs per day Bus every 15 mins	14 hrs per day Bus every 20 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins
Coverage routes <i>Serve lower density residential communities with lower access to transit and connect them to higher density areas, activity centers, and/or transit hubs.</i>	14 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	10 hrs per day Bus every 60 mins
Peak routes <i>Use regular buses to provide service or connections to transit hubs/high frequency lines, central business districts, or employment centers</i>	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed
Other routes <i>Don't meet above definitions</i>	No regional standards		

Eliminate different standards for peak and off-peak, applying one frequency standard for all day service.

2. Endorses the following “Use” statement to provide context for implementation of the bus service guidelines:
 - A. Service guidelines set expectations [standards] for frequency and span by route purpose and the density of the areas the routes serve.
 - B. They are used by transit agency staff to design or restructure service, to inform resource requests, and to prioritize improvements when resources become available.
 - C. Resource limitations may require transit staff to make trade-offs between meeting these route-level guidelines and meeting standards for network accessibility – i.e., ensuring that most of the service area has access to at least some level of transit service within walking distance.
 - D. As a result, transit agencies operate routes for different goals; therefore, there may be cases where certain routes do not meet the service guidelines, but do meet other agency-specific goals or legal requirements.
 - E. It can be valuable to track adherence to the guidelines to (1) understand the level of additional resources that would be needed for the existing network to comply and (2) establish priorities for future investments.
3. Calls upon the region’s transit agencies to adopt these bus service guidelines, whether through:
 - i. Formal adoption by their board of directors or other body of governance;
 - ii. An update of their Transit Strategic Plan or Transit Development Plan (TSP/TDP); or
 - iii. Issued internal guidance.