



2.0 Program Overview

2.1 Program Planning and History

DC Streetcar is the product of over a decade long series of studies and plans beginning in 1997 with the completion of the *Transportation Vision, Strategy and Action Plan* by the District Department of Public Works. The 1997 plan, included in this package, identified the continued need for better internal cross-town travel by transit. The plan also identified the key corridors that would benefit from increased transit investment, including “light rail” (a precursor to the development of modern streetcars) on H St/Benning Rd and Georgia Ave. In 2001, the *DC Transit Development Study* further assessed the feasibility of the candidate corridors for high-capacity transit investment.

2.1.1 District of Columbia Transit Alternatives Analysis (DCAA)

In 2003, DDOT initiated the *DC’s Transit Future (DCTF) System Plan and Alternatives Analysis (AA)* which consisted of a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of alternative modes and levels of investment in 14 corridors across the District. The evaluation compared the performance of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and streetcar modes to no-build options in each of the system corridors. The evaluation considered more than 30 individual measures that addressed the following four primary goals established for the project:

- Improve Access and Mobility
- Encourage Community and Economic Development
- Enhance System Performance
- Promote Environmental Quality

The process resulted in an integrated system of recommended transit service investments in the District, including combinations of streetcar, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and enhanced bus service in appropriate corridors. The *DCTF System Plan and Alternatives Analysis (AA)* was substantially completed in 2005 and updated in 2008 and 2010. The updated AA is available for review at www.ucgsupportdc.com.

Implementation of the enhanced bus services proposed in the plan began in 2007 with the new *Metro Extra* (since rebranded *Metro Express*), a limited-stop bus service in the Georgia Avenue Corridor and 16th Street NW. DDOT and WMATA will launch the X9 limited stop service for the H St/Benning Rd corridor in December 2010. DDOT also completed an Environmental Assessment for the K Street NW Centerway (designed initially for BRT service with later conversion to streetcar).

Implementation of the recommended streetcar element of the plan was divided into three major phases. The District is currently constructing two Phase 1 streetcar projects: (a) H Street NE and Benning Rd NE between Union Station and Oklahoma Avenue NE and Benning Rd NE; and (b) the Anacostia Initial Line Segment (AILS), connecting the Anacostia Metro Station to Naval Annex.

DC Streetcar Task Force



A goal of the multi-corridor, multi-modal system plan was to identify additional connections between the existing Metrobus and Metrorail lines and between key activity centers within the District. The system plan also supports community development initiatives articulated in the District's Comprehensive Plan. The revised system plan reflects the results of continuing coordination with the DC Office of Planning (DCOP), DC Deputy Mayor's Office for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED), National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and DDOT. Finally, the revised system plan also incorporated the results of an extensive public outreach effort that included public meetings in each of the eight wards of the District in Fall 2009.

2.1.2 Great Streets Initiative: H Street NE-Benning Road Framework Plan (2005)

The Great Streets Initiative is a multidisciplinary approach to corridor improvements composed of public realm investments, strategic land use plans, public safety strategies, and economic development assistance. It is a partnership between multiple District government departments and offices, including DDOT, OP and DMPED. There are six target corridors for improvement under the Great Streets Initiative, including the H St NE/Benning Rd corridor. The 2006 *H Street NE-Benning Road Great Streets Framework Plan* (see www.ucgsupportdc.com) for the 5-mile corridor included recommendations for \$30 million in improvements to the roadway, pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, transit facilities, and vehicle/parking facilities.

The Great Streets project along H St/Benning Rd is a complete reconstruction of the right of way from building face to building face. The current construction on H St and Benning Rd was initiated as part of the Great Streets Initiative. Given the need to reconstruct H St and Benning Rd and the need to construct streetcar tracks, DDOT elected to pursue both projects simultaneously. These (completed) projects comprise the first phase of streetcar construction along H St/Benning Rd.

The second phase of construction along H St/Benning Rd NE (which is currently on-going) will complete an operable streetcar line in the corridor, providing high-capacity and high-quality transit service to District residents. The District's investment in transit infrastructure will catalyze economic development in the emerging commercial and residential corridor.

The H St/Benning Rd NE corridor hosts the region's busiest bus line and demand continues to grow as the District's population continues to increase. Currently, the H St corridor relies heavily on Metrobus lines. Metrobus routes X1, X2, X3, and U8 currently operate along the corridor and collectively carry more than 18,000 daily passengers. The corridor needs new transportation services for residents and workers within the District that will connect activity centers, facilitate intermodal transfer opportunities, and relieve crowded Metrorail and Metrobus lines. The corridor also serves an area that the District has targeted for commercial and residential redevelopment. The streetcar line will support neighborhood plans for medium- to high-density mixed-use development.

2.1.3 ANACOSTIA INITIAL LINE SEGMENT

On February 17, 2009 DDOT initiated the construction of the 0.75 mile Anacostia Initial Line Segment (AILS), with the goal of providing an opportunity for the public to see and experience streetcar vehicles in operation, the original AILS project connects the Navy Annex with the Barry Farms Residential Area

DC Streetcar Task Force



to Anacostia Metro Station. The project also connects the streetcar to the first maintenance and storage facility for the system east of the river.

2.1.4 Interconnectivity with Transit Nodes

The Anacostia Initial Line Segment will connect the Navy Annex and Barry Farms Residential Area to the Anacostia Metro Station.

2.1.5 The Current Program

In order to move forward towards the broader vision presented in *DC's Transit System Future Plan*, DDOT is advancing a Priority System as the next step in achieving the goals articulated in the plan. As currently envisioned, the program for the Priority System is comprised of streetcar and bus service elements

2.1.6 Streetcar Elements

DDOT has identified a 22-mile priority network from the larger envisioned 37-mile network that will build upon the two segments currently being readied for service and create a robust system that establishes the highest-priority linkages. The corridors that comprise the Priority System were chosen due to their anticipated performance in achieving overall system goals. From an access and mobility standpoint, the chosen corridors provide key links between highly developed activity centers in the District and areas that currently do not have direct fixed guideway links to these areas. The Priority System will also provides links that complement Metro Rail service by providing redundant service over some of the system's bottlenecks and providing alternate links between Metro corridors. These new links will serve to enhance system performance by adding capacity and providing a mode alternative for local trips within the District. The Priority System will also provide links between developed activity centers and priority economic development areas. By linking these development areas to current trip demand generating areas of the District, the Priority System will enhance the attractiveness of these development areas by making them a more attractive location to live, work and play. Finally, by introducing streetcar technology to corridors which are currently heavily subscribed with other transportation modes, the Priority System is anticipated to shift users onto a potentially cleaner and more sustainable transit alternative.

The 22-mile system shown on the following page represents the network for which a unified project delivery approach is being considered through this RFI. It should be noted that while many of the components of the 22-miles system closely match the 37-mile vision, some alterations may be included. The 22-mile system includes the following segments, as illustrated in Figure 1, following page.

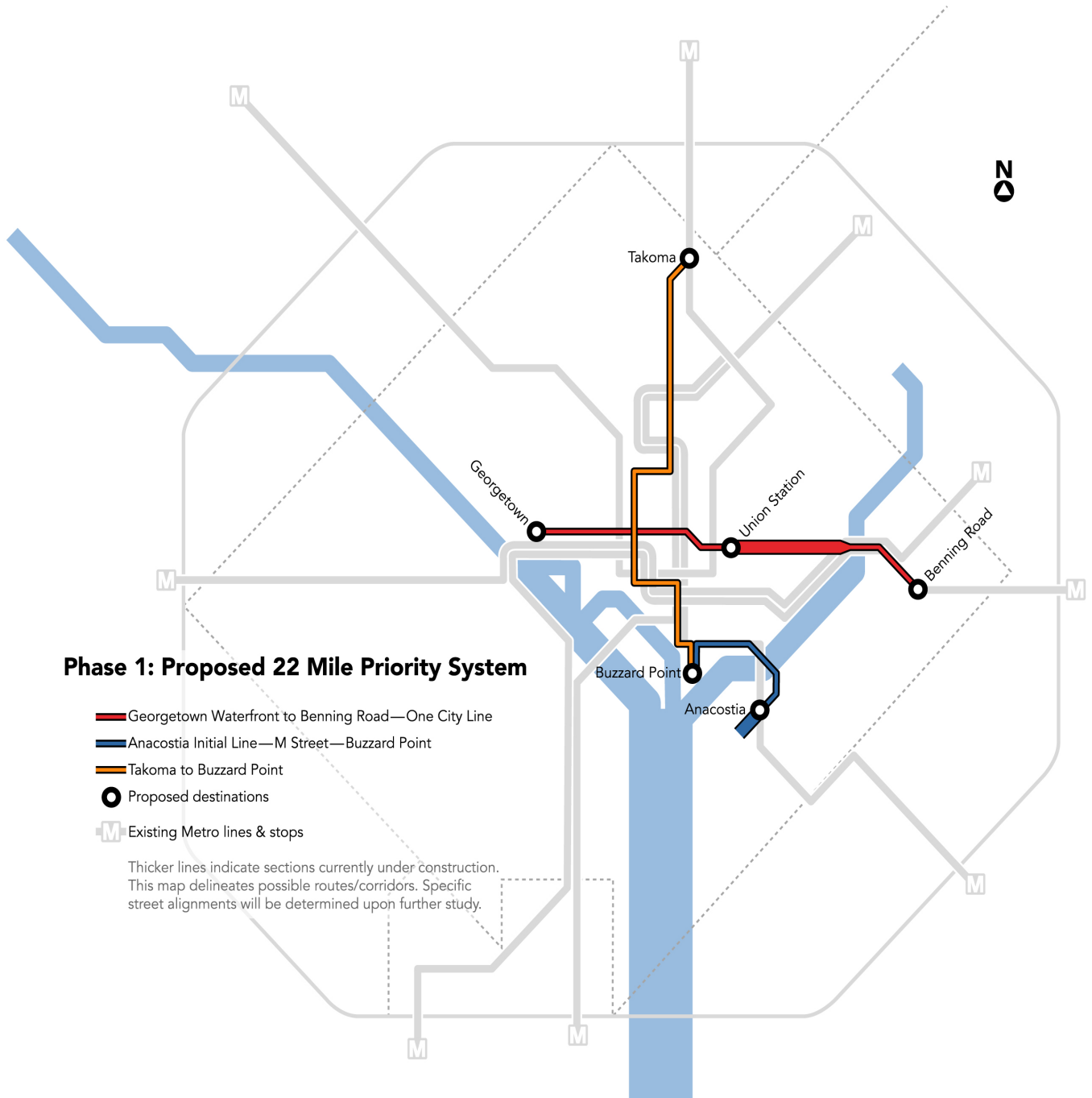
- East- west line, which includes the initial H/Benning Line and extensions east along Benning Rd. to the Minnesota Ave. Metro Station and west to Georgetown along H St. and K St.; a 7 mile segment providing much needed east-west connectivity.
- The Anacostia Initial Line Segment with added connections to MLK Jr. Ave and the southeast waterfront, from Bolling Air Force Base, through historic Anacostia, across the 11th St. bridge, and onto M St.; and



- A north-south line extending from the southeast waterfront on M St. north along 7th St., 14th St., and Georgia Ave. to the Takoma Metro Station.

This scope envisions a turnkey approach to project delivery for the 22-mile priority streetcar network, including design, construction, financing, and on-going operations and maintenance during a contract term offer of 30 or more years.

Figure 1: 22 Mile Priority System Map





2.1.7 Bus Elements

In addition to the 22-mile streetcar system, the current intent of the program is to integrate local (non-regional) bus services with streetcar service. Bus services that would be included as part of the overall Priority System program include: the existing DC Circulator service as well as WMATA's non-regional service.

The DC Circulator bus system began service in 2005, and has grown from an initial two routes to a more extensive network of five routes. The Circulator is known for its strong brand, including:

- Distinctive, comfortable buses;
- High-frequency service (10-minute headways during all hours of operation);
- Easy to understand routes; and a
- Simple, affordable fare structure.

In 2011, the DC Circulator provided more than 5.77 million trips and over 180,000 annual revenue hours of service with a fleet of 49 buses. It is the fourth largest bus system in the region in terms of ridership. This success has led to increased demand for additional Circulator service, and DDOT completed a DC Circulator Transit Development Plan in April 2011 outlining service needs for the next 10 years. DDOT recognizes that there may be some overlap in service between Circulator and Streetcar along various planned corridors when Streetcar is implemented. DDOT anticipates that a more in-depth study will be needed before implementing any potential service changes to Circulator operations due to Streetcar. The DC Circulator Transit Development Plan anticipates an additional 102 peak vehicles and 557,163 annual revenue hours of service in its FY 2012 – FY 2020 service expansion plan.

The scope of the Project includes performing on-going operations and maintenance functions associated with the DC Circulator system inclusive of current service levels. Additionally, the scope will need to include some provisions for accommodating future planned growth as identified in the Circulator 10 year plan. These provisions should include measures for fleet augmentation, vehicle replacement and other capital purchases as required.

WMATA's bus services are categorized as "regional routes" (i.e. generally those on major arterials that cross jurisdictional boundaries) and "non-regional routes" (i.e. those contained within the District and not subsidized by other jurisdictions). The non-regional routes serve more of a local circulation function, as compared to intra-regional trips. In 2012, approximately 20 WMATA routes are classified as non-regional routes, providing approximately 400,000 hours of service.

The scope of the Project includes performing on-going operations and maintenance functions associated with the services currently operated as the WMATA non-regional bus network.

2.1.8 Moving Forward

The District is moving the 22-mile Priority System program forward by investigating the opportunity for implementing the program via a public-private partnership (P3). DDOT has conducted a Request for Information (RFI) process in order to gauge industry interest in the project and to inform any future

DC Streetcar Task Force



procurement process. Given the positive indications of interest in the project, the District is following up on the findings of the RFI process with additional analyses to support a future procurement effort.

In addition to these project delivery and procurement exercises, the District is also proceeding with other activities necessary to support the re-establishment of streetcar service in the District. The District is underway or schedule to begin a series of planning and environmental review exercises to evaluate the corridors contained within the Priority System. These planning and environmental review processes will be used to help inform final alignments, service levels and other project details. Additionally, these processes will help determine potential project impacts and inform mitigation strategies. Finally, these processes will allow for additional public input for the Priority System. Alongside these efforts, the District is also working to establish the necessary regulatory and policy framework required for streetcar delivery and operations. Areas such as a system safety and security, overhead wire restrictions, fiduciary requirements, system integration with traffic operations and others are the subject of current or future actions.