

A Fresh Look at the DC Streetcar Program

April 2015

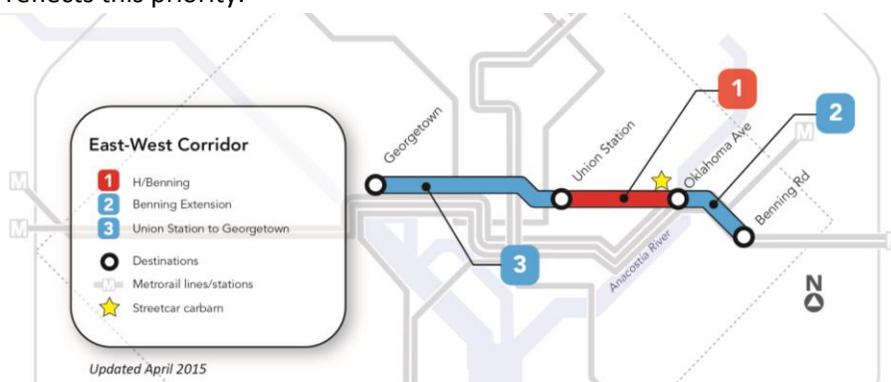
Nearly 5 years from the last major streetcar system planning effort, the Bowser Administration and DDOT have taken a fresh look at the streetcar program, including the vision, project delivery approach, and the timing of investments.

Key themes emerged from this program review:

- Streetcar remains an important part of the future transit infrastructure in the District and is vital in supporting current and future residents, businesses and visitors;
- The District needs to match expectations for streetcar service with what can reasonably be delivered;
- DDOT needs to focus on getting the initial corridor (H Street/Benning Road) right and prepare any future corridor project for potential Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and/ or innovative project delivery and;
- DDOT’s internal organization structure needs to change so it is more responsive to the needs of delivering a streetcar system.

Top-to-Bottom Review

- **APTA Review** – The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) conducted a peer review of the H Street/Benning Road streetcar system from March 9-13, 2015. DDOT released APTA’s initial findings on March 30, which included 18 recommendations but found no “fatal flaws” that would prevent passenger service.
- **Launching Service** – While the APTA recommendations are implemented, DDOT continues to address additional steps needed to start passenger service with a comprehensive launch plan which includes:
 - Expanding and enhancing community outreach and engagement.
 - Improving the transparency of program decision-making.
 - Finalizing a fare policy and fare collection method.
 - Developing an operations plan which provides predictable service frequencies.
- **East-West Corridor** – Successfully launching the H/Benning Line is critical to the long-term success of the streetcar program, but it is only a start.
 - The District is fully committed to an East-West Corridor, stretching from downtown Ward 7 to the Georgetown waterfront. The line comprises H/Benning, the Benning Extension, and Union Station to Georgetown. The proposed FY16-21 Capital Budget reflects this priority.



Reboot, Retool, Recommit

DDOT's top-to-bottom review demonstrates a commitment to building a successful, accountable and transparent streetcar program.

- **DDOT is retooling its internal structure to provide a solid foundation moving forward.**
 - The organization of DDOT's streetcar program needs change to reflect a new direct responsibility for transit service.
 - DDOT is also committed to re-engaging project stakeholders and the community around the future of DC Streetcar.
- **DDOT is re-tooling the project delivery approach to align with real program needs and schedules.**
 - In 2014, responding teams to DDOT's Integrated Premium Transit (IPT) RFQ were notified that DDOT was re-evaluating the program.
 - Despite the private sector interest in prior Streetcar projects, DDOT needs to incorporate the industry's current thinking and methods as future management decisions are made.
 - As projects are determined to be viable and achievable, DDOT will determine how to best deliver and pay for them.
- **DDOT is recommitting to a robust vision for transit in the District.**
 - The District's investment in its transit network is much broader than the Streetcar program alone.
 - DC Circulator – DDOT is investing in the next generation of Circulator buses to replace its aging fleet and expanding the system to the National Mall.
 - Kids Ride Free – The District has pledged to provide its students free transit trips with the expansion of the Kids Ride Free Program to include Metrorail.
 - Metro – The District funds Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess.
 - DC's share of Metro's operating budget is currently 37%, based on a regional cost-sharing formula.
 - Metro is the 5th biggest agency funded by the District in terms of its operating budget.
 - The District matches federal capital funds and also provides additional funding to help ensure safety and a state of good repair.
 - Metro is the 3rd biggest agency funded by the District in terms of its capital budget.