

ANC3C Resolution 2023-0XX

Resolution Regarding WMATA “Visionary Network” for Bus Routes and Schedules

WHEREAS the Washington Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has released a proposed “Visionary Network proposal” for bus transportation in Washington DC and surrounding areas;

WHEREAS WMATA is [seeking comment](#) on the Visionary Network proposal and has set a June 5 deadline;

WHEREAS WMATA has provide only limited options for providing comment on the Visionary Network, primarily through a website at <https://betterbus.wmata.com/>;

WHEREAS Metrorail and most Metrobus routes provide good north-south service for getting users to and from downtown, east-west service has been limited;

WHEREAS, the Visionary Network proposal would eliminate the 96 bus route, which travels across the city from Tenleytown to the Maryland border in Anacostia;

WHEREAS, there is no supermarket in Woodley Park, so residents need the 96 bus to use Safeway in Adams Morgan or Giant and Wegmans on Wisconsin Avenue;

WHEREAS, there are a number of schools along the 96 route (including Jackson-Reed, Deal, Maret, Hearst, Eaton, National Presbyterian, Washington International, National Cathedral, Oyster-Adams Bilingual and Sidwell Friends), and students and school staff use the 96 bus to get to and from school;

WHEREAS, workers who live in neighborhoods east of Rock Creek Park use the 96 bus to get to their jobs;

WHEREAS, there are over a thousand new apartments under construction or recently completed on the Wisconsin Avenue component of the 96 route (City Ridge, Upton Place, 3427-3433 Wisconsin, and 3219 Wisconsin, among other developments), and the people living in these apartments will lack easy access to Metrorail;

WHEREAS, there will be nearly another thousand new apartments on the Woodley Road component of the 96 route, on the former Wardman Park site;

WHEREAS, the 96 bus links the Tenleytown, Cathedral Heights, North Cleveland Park, Cleveland Park, Woodley Park, Adams Morgan, and U Street neighborhoods, among others;

WHEREAS the Visionary Network would not provide bus service similar to the 96 to the west of the Duke Ellington Memorial Bridge (from Woodley Park up through Tenleytown);

WHEREAS the DC300 route proposed in the Visionary Network is not an acceptable substitute for the 96 bus because it is too far south, does not travel along Wisconsin Avenue, and would run at low frequency;

WHEREAS on the WMATA Better Bus website, the proposed changes to the 96 route have received nearly universal negative responses and have among the most negative responses of any proposed changes in the Visionary Network;

WHEREAS, the L1 Bus Line provided two-way peak-direction rush hour service on weekdays, which is already a reduction from its previous service;

WHEREAS, the L1 Bus Line began at the Potomac Park apartments at 18th and C Streets, jogs to Constitution Avenue via 18th and 20th Streets, turns right on 23rd Street, proceeds through Foggy Bottom and the campus of the George Washington University until Washington Circle, switches to New Hampshire Avenue, turns north onto 20th Street to avoid Dupont Circle, reaches Connecticut Avenue by way of Massachusetts Avenue and Florida Avenue, and terminates at Chevy Chase Circle, just south of Western Avenue and the Maryland state line;

WHEREAS, while there is some shared routing between portions of the L1 and L2 bus lines, without the L1 there is no direct bus service from upper Northwest neighborhoods to Foggy Bottom, where a number of government and non-governmental organizations have offices, and between the Connecticut Ave corridor and George Washington University, Hospital, and Medical Offices, which is important for ANC 3C residents to access work, school, and medical care;

WHEREAS, the Visionary Network does not contain bus service similar to the L1;

WHEREAS, the current 31/33 service along Wisconsin Avenue NW is insufficient for people who need to commute to or from downtown, especially coming from downtown in the evening;

WHEREAS, traffic on the 31/33 route often causes lengthy delays and bus bunching, especially during rush hour;

WHEREAS, traffic in Georgetown is particularly disruptive to the 31/33 route and can add more than 30 minutes of delay to the scheduled service;

WHEREAS, even without traffic, traveling to downtown via Wisconsin Avenue NW from Tenleytown, Cathedral Heights, North Cleveland Park, and Cleveland Park is a very indirect route;

WHEREAS, in 2007 WMATA completed a comprehensive strategic study of the 30s bus routes, noting that “[t]he Metrobus 30s Line has the highest ridership of any Metrobus line,” but “[t]he

30s line has long suffered from continuing performance-related issues including on-time adherence, bus separation, detours, incident response, traffic congestion and passenger crowding”;

WHEREAS, specifically in response to the study, in 2008 WMATA created the 37 route as an express line to complement the other 30s bus routes. The 37 route started from Friendship Heights down Wisconsin Avenue, then turned onto Massachusetts Avenue at the Cathedral, and then continued to Dupont Circle and further downtown. By bypassing Georgetown, the 37 route approximately halved commute times between Cathedral Heights, North Cleveland Park, and Cleveland Park and downtown. Without the 37 route, public transit downtown for these neighborhoods is much less viable.

WHEREAS, WMATA proposed eliminating the 37 route in 2019 but backed off after strong opposition, including a public survey where 88% of respondents were opposed. However, WMATA suspended the 37 bus in 2020 at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and, unlike most other bus service suspended during the pandemic, has not resumed operating the 37 route;¹

WHEREAS, WMATA has not provided bus routes that would allow viable transit to the proposed Ward 3 high school in the Palisades from other parts of the in-district area, including the area of ANC3C;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Commission opposes the elimination of the 96 bus route and calls upon WMATA to restore the route with at minimum medium frequency in the the Visionary Network;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ANC 3C asks the L1 bus route to be restored in the Visionary Network and reiterates the request made via [resolution](#)² passed January 19, 2022;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commission asks north-south service on Wisconsin Avenue NW for lines similar to the 31 and 33 buses be increased in the Visionary Network and be increased in the near term, regardless of when and how WMATA implements the visionary network;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ANC 3C asks the 37 bus route be included in the Visionary Network and be reinstated in the near term, regardless of when and how WMATA implements the Visionary Network;

¹ WMATA has continued to describe the 37 bus line as suspended or currently not operating.
<https://www.wmata.com/about/news/Metrobus-service-changes-Dec-2021.cfm>

²

<https://anc3c.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ANC3C-Resolution-2022-CONSENT-Regarding-ANC-3C-Support-of-Reinstating-the-L1-Bus-Line-by-Including-Funds-in-the-Washington-Metropolitan-Area-Transit-Authority-Budget-for-Fiscal-Year-2023.pdf>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commission calls upon WMATA to provide more time and opportunity for residents to learn about and evaluate the Visionary Network proposal and to provide substantive comments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ANC authorizes the Chair and the Commissioners for 3C05 and 3C07 to represent the Commission on this matter.

Attested by xxxx

[edited on 17 May]