


Policies to Manage Intercity Curbside Bus Operations

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National Association of City Transportation Officials
November 4, 2011

Agenda



- Overview of intercity bus service in the District
 - Current issues
 - Overview of policy and management solutions
 - Next Steps
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Intercity Bus Service

- Intercity bus service provides low cost transportation for residents in the Washington DC region
 - Majority of the service provides connections to Washington to New York
 - Demand for additional destinations from Washington Region increasing (Richmond, Philadelphia, Roanoke, Raleigh/Durham)
 - Several major carriers provide the bulk of the service
 - Bolt
 - Megabus
 - DC2NY
 - Washington Deluxe
 - Other smaller carriers (Eastern, Tony Bus Lines, New Century, Knowit Express)
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Intercity Bus Service(cont'd)

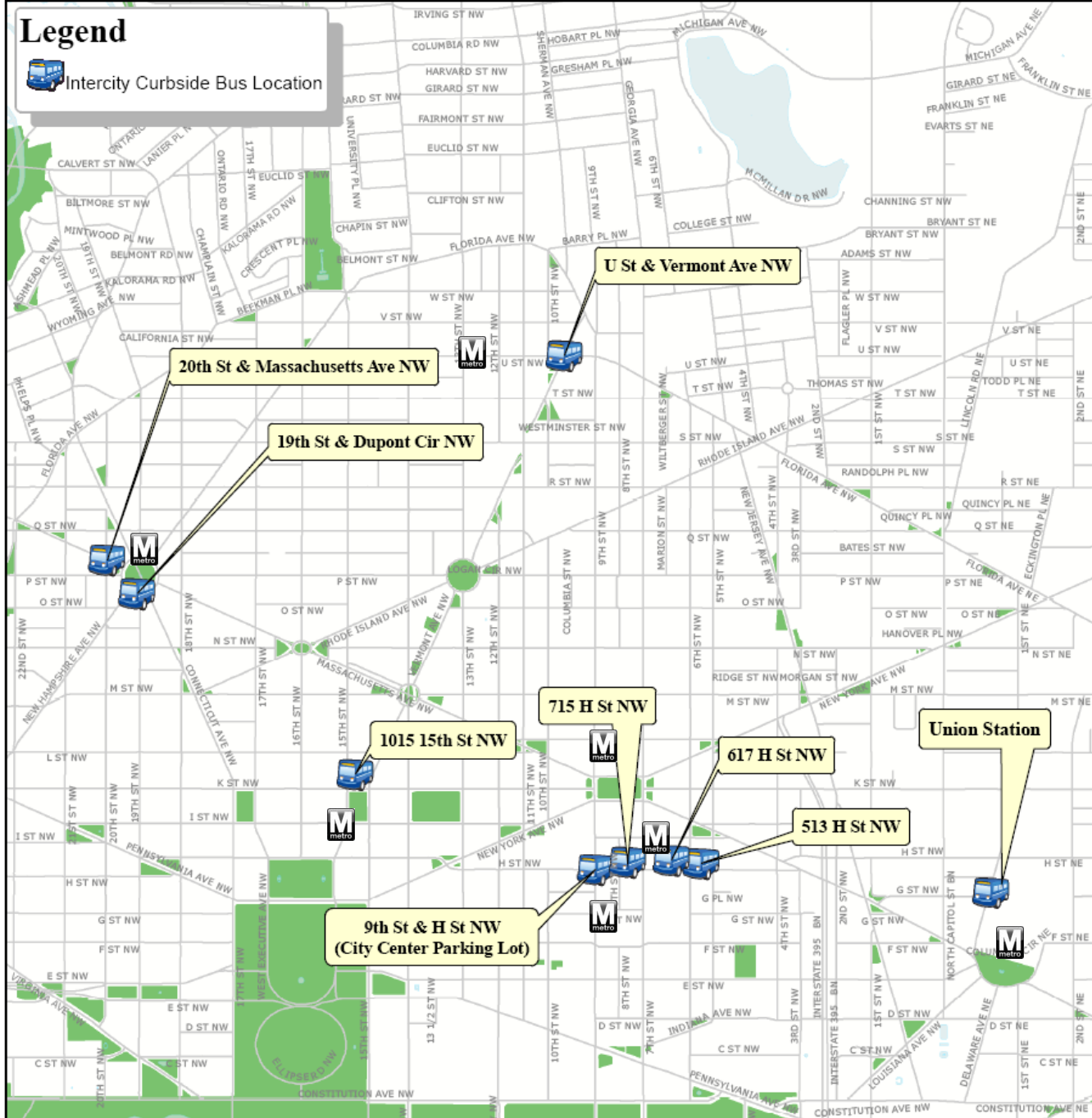
- Almost all operators in the District impact curbside usage
- Heaviest volume occurs on Sundays and Fridays
- Approximately nine (9) pick-up/drop-off locations in the District in proximity to Metro Stations
- 50% of customers arrive by private vehicle
- Approximately 90 plus buses travelling daily in the District providing intercity bus service
- Time sensitive schedules- Majority of the service occurs between 9:00am and 8:00pm- Larger carriers have departures over a 24-hour period
- Low Cost Operators
 - Operations occurs from curbside locations currently free of charge
 - Carriers have branded specific locations; provides consistency for customers

Intercity Curbside Bus Locations in Washington, DC

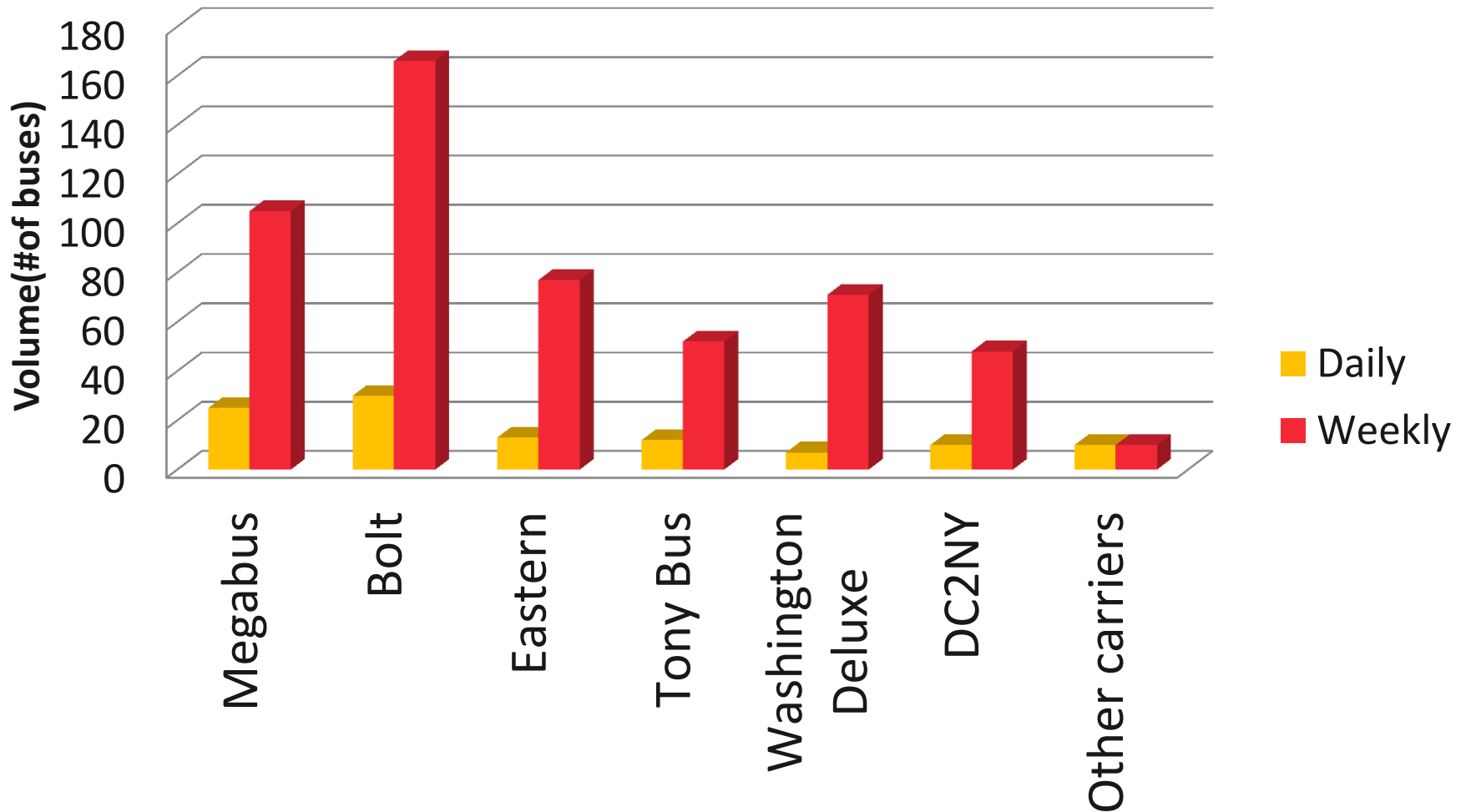
Legend



Intercity Curbside Bus Location



Intercity Bus Volume (Curbside Locations) Washington, D.C.



Challenges

- Identification of the universe of intercity bus providers
- No regulations or policy for intercity bus operations in the District
- Conflicts with curbside usage
 - Accessibility
 - Traffic impacts
 - Conflicts with surrounding businesses and residencies
- Parking needs for layover purposes for peak AM and PM periods



District Intercity Bus Regulations

- Specific regulations have been crafted pertaining to intercity bus service and the use of public space (revision to DCMR title 24, Ch. 2, sec 225; new chapter 35)
 - Carriers will be required to apply for a permit to operate in public space
 - Provides guidelines on the selection of appropriate curbside locations
 - The permit holder will be required to indicate specific routes in the District and locations of signs
 - Establishes consistency on operations and signage



District Intercity Bus Regulations(cont'd)

- Formalizes approval process for stops
 - Requires approval from public space committee
- Clearly defines “intercity bus service provider”
- Establishes a fee structure
 - Time of usage
 - Amount of space needed to operate (cost per 100 feet)



Union Station Pilot Program

- Pilot program was established to test moving intercity carriers to a centralized facility
- Joint effort by DDOT, Union Station, Congresswoman Norton
- Bolt, DC2NY and Washington Deluxe participated
- Benefits of the pilot program
 - Moved operations off curbside
 - Provided covered facility with transit access
 - Improved management of operations




Union Station Pilot Program(cont'd)

- Redevelopment plans of Union Station to include enhancing bus garage to accommodate intercity bus carriers
- Potential impact of other operations
- Impact of pedestrian circulation within garage
- Impact of shifting type of bus operations on existing facilities



Next Steps

- Final rulemaking implementation expected by Spring 2011
 - Increase data collection on curbside operations
 - Begin to integrate intercity bus travel in existing traveler information systems
 - Continue coordination with Union Station and intercity carriers
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Contact

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Commuter Bus Service


- Commuter bus service provides transportation for regional residents for DC based employers.
- Region-wide service in 15 counties and cities
- Majority of the service provides connections to locations in the city with high federal employment
- Heaviest volume occurs during AM and PM peak (7:00am-9:30am, 3:30pm-6:30pm)
- Approximately over 200 plus buses travelling daily in the District Monday-Friday
- Time sensitive schedules similar to Metro bus service



Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission



District Commuter Bus Regulations

- DCMR Title 24, Ch. 33
 - A permit will be required for the placement of signs in public space
 - Rental fee required for the placement of signs
 - Permit will describe specifications for signs
 - Operational plan
 - Immediate implementation
 - Resolves current issues
 - Standardizes operations on public space
 - Establish ongoing committee regarding commuter bus operations hosted by DDOT
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Commuter Bus Plan (Methodology)

- Review of existing documents
 - Existing Map
 - Schedules
- Identification of sectors, areas and corridors
 - Sector- Defined geographical boundary
 - Area- group of stops within a defined vicinity
 - Corridor- Street level
 - 3 sectors, 6 areas and 13 corridors
 - 163 am stops, 149 pm stops

Commuter Bus Plan (Methodology, cont'd)

- Assessed all known stops based on carrier schedules
- Observations conducted between 7:00am-9:30am and 3:00pm-5:30pm
- Observed each location for approximately 15 -30 minutes when commuter bus activity was present
- Specifically identified location of each stop (GPS device, Google Maps)
- Documented observations at each location
 - Evaluation criteria:
 - Shared Metro bus stop
 - Shared stop with other commuter bus carriers
 - Curbside signage
 - Volume of commuter buses and other vehicles at a location
 - Proximity to other known scheduled stops
 - Qualitative data regarding conflicts observed or anticipated

Methodology

(cont'd)

- Analyzed data based on observations to determine recommendations
- Basis for recommendations:
 - Conflicts (Metro, curbside usage, safety etc.)
 - Frequency of stops along a corridor
 - Routes
 - Proximity to major employers

Results

- Decreased number of AM stops by 19% (163 to 131)
 - Decreased number of PM stops by 14% (149 to 128)
 - Increased the number of shared stops to 85%
 - Improved coordination with carriers
 - Established a committee to implement plan and guide carriers through the permit process
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