



# The Bus Revolution is Underway! Let us know what you think.

When it comes to redesigning a bus network, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to address every issue. Instead, the objective of the SEPTA Forward: Bus Revolution is to design a transit network that works for our diverse community of riders. This is why we need to hear from you – our frequent, occasional and new bus riders. We are asking you to weigh in on various trade-offs over the coming weeks through our Bus Revolution pop up events, Virtual Transit Talks and surveys.

## WHAT IS A TRADE-OFF?

Transit agencies like SEPTA have limited resources and they must use them as effectively as possible. This means we have to be thoughtful about how we design transit service and about how we trade-off or prioritize different aspects of the current bus system. For example, do you prefer a bus that travels faster but stops less often, or one that travels more slowly but stops more often? These are some of the important questions that we are asking you so we can understand your values and use those to drive the Bus Revolution.

The current phase of the Bus Revolution project is centered on asking these trade-off questions, outlined below, to better inform how our bus network should be designed. Your input will be vital in designing the different options to improve the network. And stay tuned, we'll be looking for more feedback when we have those ready in early 2022.

## I. Faster and More Reliable Service

In our initial research, customers indicated that they want bus service that is frequent, fast, and reliable. That's aligned with why customers find high speed transit like the Broad Street Line and Market-Frankford Lines attractive. Comparing these services with some of our bus routes shows that despite being frequent, some bus routes are slow and unreliable. There are many contributing factors to why some of the bus routes are slow and unpredictable, some of which are in SEPTA's control and others of which are controlled by the City of Philadelphia and other municipal partners. Addressing these issues is a key component in the Bus Revolution. Some of the ways service can be improved, include:



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- Increase the frequency on key bus routes and highly-traveled corridors.
- Increase the number of streets and roads where bus service is prioritized. This means giving buses dedicated roadway space and/or managing traffic signals so buses move through them easily. Specific steps include:
  - » Dedicating roadway space for transit vehicles.
  - » Installing bus-only lanes at congested intersections so that buses can move to the front of the line.
  - » Managing traffic signals so buses move easily through them.
  - » Converting four-way stops to two-way stops and/or to signalized intersections.
  - » Extend curb at bus stops. “Bus bulbs” mean bus stops are still accessible from the sidewalk, but buses don’t need to pull in and out of a travel lane.
- Reorganize bus stops – if passengers are willing to walk an extra one-half block to bus stops, service will be noticeably faster and more reliable.

## Trade Off Questions to Consider:

### Would you prefer:

1. A shorter walk to a slower bus – or – a slightly longer walk to a faster bus?

### Do you think:

2. Buses should have their own travel lanes – or – buses should share the road with cars and other vehicles?

## II. Better Service Design

Many of our bus routes are located close to each other, serve similar places, and operate in similar ways. For example, two bus routes will follow parallel streets that are only one block apart, beginning and ending at similar times and offering riders the same type of service. As a result, while riders can choose between a lot of bus routes, there isn’t a lot of difference between the routes.



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A different way to organize bus service could be to design key bus routes around the most heavily-traveled corridors and offer the most frequent service on those routes. Other streets can still have good bus service, but with slightly lower frequency. Some riders may not mind walking a little bit further to get to a bus that comes every 5 minutes, while others may prefer a shorter walk even if the bus is less frequent (for example, every 20 minutes).

## Trade Off Questions to Consider:

### Would you prefer:

1. A bus that takes an indirect path and is slower but stops closer to your destination – or – a bus that travels more directly and is faster, but stops a little bit further from your destination?
2. Fewer options with higher frequency or more options with less frequency?

## III. Coverage v. Ridership

Many areas of the City of Philadelphia are an excellent market for public transit. This means lots of people and jobs are near one another, and bus routes are very accessible. In suburban areas, however, people and jobs are more widely distributed. As a result, even though people in suburban areas need bus service, fewer of them can easily walk to a bus route.

In suburban areas, there is a choice of covering large areas with infrequent service or serving a smaller area with more frequent service. This coverage vs. ridership approach is fundamental choice in designing transit service.

- A coverage model means our buses will serve a large geographic area. More roads will have a bus route, but service will be infrequent. For example, some of our suburban routes are available about once an hour, or in some cases every 90 minutes.
- A ridership-based model means we will concentrate service on specific corridors, connecting just the densest communities with important destinations, like hospitals, shopping centers, and community colleges. By focusing resources, we will be able to offer more frequent service, with buses arriving every 20 or 30 minutes.



## Trade Off Questions to Consider:

### Would you prefer:

1. Buses serving a larger area with less frequent service – or – buses serving a smaller area with more frequent service.

## About Bus Revolution and SEPTA Forward:

Bus Revolution is a comprehensive redesign of SEPTA's entire bus network to make buses more reliable, efficient, and simpler to understand and use. This project is a key part of the Authority's strategic plan, SEPTA Forward, and our efforts to revamp our services and better connect people across the region.

Together with other *SEPTA Forward* projects, such as the Rail Transit Wayfinding Master Plan and Trolley Modernization, Bus Revolution is a game-changing effort to proactively align transit services with the needs of a growing, changing region. Changes to the bus network will be implemented in 2023.

**WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR INPUT!**

Visit the website to weigh in and help us drive the  
Bus Revolution forward



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